

THE CAMPAIGNER

Published by the National Caucus of Labor Committees

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THE CAMPAIGNER

The CAMPAIGNER is published quarterly by the NATIONAL CAUCUS OF LABOR COMMITTEES

Subscription Rate: \$2.50 for 4 issues; \$4.00 for 6 issues

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Box 49, Washington Bridge Station
New York City 10033

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Fall 1971

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Theory Becomes Practical

The Crisis of Capitalism and the Dilemma of the Left

Revolutionaries, like all other members of bourgeois societies, tend not to respond to ideas as ideas, but rather react on the sociological basis of organizational norms and institutional affiliations. Were this not the unfortunate case, and did revolutionaries actually display a correspondence between professed commitment and social practice, the National Caucus of Labor Committees would today be the dominant socialist organization in the United States, with the Communist parties and the "Trotskyist" organizations reduced to empty shells.

For today, no thinking individual can deny that the political and economic analysis presented by the NCLC and the strategy flowing from it stand completely and absolutely vindicated by the events of August. While the miserable pretensions to "economic theory" of the CP, the SWP, Sweezy, etc., must be regarded as completely refuted and discredited by these events.

The devaluation of the U.S. dollar, the kingpin of world capitalism as was the British pound in 1931, and the resulting imminence of a new world depression, has thrown not only the capitalist political system but the socialist movement as well into a severe crisis. While the political crisis of capitalism is obvious to the most casual observer, the theoretical-practical crisis erupting within the socialist movement is not even generally clear to the participants themselves. The scathing refutation in reality of the self-comforting notions of "neo-capitalist" stability, of "next generation" socialism, poses the most fundamental questions to this generation of socialists. Their resolution is of the most critical importance to humanity as a whole, for what is at stake is nothing less than the determination of whether socialism or fascism and barbarism will be the final outcome of the 1970's great depression.

These are the compelling terms in which questions of the competence and quality of socialist leadership must be debated. The nature of the present political-economic conjuncture and the program and strategy nec-

essary to establish socialism within the decade: these are the interpenetrating principal questions facing the movement today—other questions are at best diversionary and at worse outright counterrevolutionary.

THE PRESENT SITUATION

Capitalism today is plummeting into a classic breakdown crisis of the same fundamental sort as that of 1929-31. That crisis was resolved politically through fascism in much of Europe, and through "New Deal" measures in the U.S.; economically, the crisis was never resolved but was simply swept over by World War II. Following the war, Marshall Plan investment in Western Europe laid the basis for a new round of capitalist expansion, which had reached its lawful limits by the mid-1960's. At that point, as investment outlets were saturated, world capitalism entered into a series of monetary crises, the phenomenal expression of the underlying growing discrepancy between capitalist credit expansion—the spiraling growth of capitalists' capital—and the production of real use-values. To avert a general liquidity collapse, the capitalists, especially since about 1965, have been forced to loot constant and variable capital in order to meet the expanding demands of fictitious capital, as a means of shoring up the liquidity and credibility of various sectors of world capitalism.

This is not simply a matter of "greedy capitalists" out for more profits, as the commonplace "left" explanation of wage-price controls, higher taxes, etc. goes. To stave off a general monetary collapse and an ensuing depression, the capitalist class is forced to take on the labor movement even though they themselves are not prepared for a head-on confrontation.

Under modern state capitalism, in its initial stages this assault is less likely to take the form of direct wage cuts than tax increases, cuts in wage-equivalent public services (local budget crises), undertaken while inducing various sections of the working class to fight it out among themselves. This latter tactic has manifested itself in various "domestic CIA" community control schemes, pitting community against community and community residents against unionized teachers, etc., and in union-busting

schemes such as the notorious Philadelphia Plan. The ruling class has had no small assistance in these vicious anti-working class schemes from left-radicals pushing various "local community control" chimeras as well as openly strikebreaking and scabherding, as in the New York (1968) and Newark (1971) teachers' strikes.

As the inevitable hour of reckoning for the bloated capitalist credit system approaches, the ruling class is forced to resort to direct attacks on the labor movement, such as Nixon's wage-price controls and open strike-breaking. As parliamentary democracy breaks down, the capitalist class finds itself unable to rule by the normal method of cooptation and selective concessions, and is forced to break the ties that bind the working class to the bourgeoisie, such as the labor-Democratic alliance. The "normal" mode of government under such circumstances is no government at all, as we see in contemporary Italy. Attempts to rule through non-fascist police state measures must eventually give way to opening the door to genuine fascist forces, as the bourgeoisie exhausts all its alternatives.

The situation summarized above has been consistently foreseen and analyzed by the Labor Committee and its predecessor organization since 1966. Prior to that, theses predicting a late 1960's monetary crisis and a new world depression were circulated in the socialist movement beginning in 1958-59 by L. Marcus, the founder of the Labor Committees, while a member of the Socialist Workers Party.

"MARXISM" AND MARXISM

Why is it that every socialist organization— with the notable exception of the NCLC— was caught unawares by events, generally even denying their existence, or at best plagiarizing "explanations" from The New York Times?

The first point to note is that the Marxian method has never— with a handful of exceptions— been the basis of "Marxist" organizations. "Marxist" was an appellation used to designate the factional opponents of the anarchists, LaSalleans, and pure-and-simple trade unionists in the First International. To call oneself a "Marxist" meant that one identified one's factional position in the movement as opposed to anarchism and various forms of reformism; it never signified an actual comprehension and assimilation of Marx's dialectical method as developed in Marx's 1844-46 writings.

With the present-day exception of the writings of Marcus, Marx's actual method regarding economic analysis has been replicated only by Rosa Luxemburg.

Particularly since the founding of the Third International, the "method" employed by communist organizations has been that of canonical adherence to "official" sacred texts and creeds— among which Lenin's erroneous economic views have had holy status, while Luxemburg's opposing views were anathematized by such Comintern high priests as Bukharin and Zinoviev.

Lenin's blundering analysis of imperialism— borrowed from Hilferding— views capitalism as a "closed system" and designates the export of capital as the mediating feature of relationships between the capitalist and the colonial sectors. This has been decisively and dramatically refuted, while Luxemburg's opposing views identifying primitive accumulation— the looting of real capital— as the essential relationship between capitalist and non-capitalist sectors has been undeniably vindicated by the past fifty years of world history. Nonetheless, it is a measure

of the theoretical bankruptcy as well as the intellectual dishonesty of the "official" socialist movement that Lenin's IMPERIALISM continues to be regarded as a sacred catechism while Luxemburg's ACCUMULATION OF CAPITAL is patronizingly dismissed out-of-hand, with a few Bukharinite slanders thrown in for good measure.

One must secondly note the role of "theory" in today's "official Marxist" organization. The CP or SWP will serve as excellent examples. "Theories", that is, quotations from the "classics" plus a few standard liturgical recitations, serve only to rationalize the most outrageous discrepancies between professions of belief and the actual movement of hands and feet. They are there to be dragged out on ceremonial occasions and other appropriate times, e.g., note the socialist rhetoric of the sham CP and SWP electoral campaigns, while the main thrust of their actual organizational practice in the anti-war movement and elsewhere serves to boost the electoral stock of capitalist politicians such as McGovern, Hartke, and Lindsay. Theory as a guide to action? Perish the thought! First find the action, then one can surely dig up a theory someplace to justify the most degrading opportunism as "a step toward the revolution."

LEADERS OR THE LED?

The consequences of this theoretical buffoonery we see around us today: allegedly revolutionary socialist organizations, with a commitment— at least in principle— to defending the working class against fascism, and to establishing socialism. Yet these parties are like ships tossed about on the sea; having lost any semblance of theoretical grounding, they find themselves incapable of even grasping the nature of the present crisis, much less responding to it in a manner worthy of the "heirs of Lenin", rather than as the miserable tail-ending opportunists they are. With the world on the verge of a new depression, with the situation crying out for revolutionary solutions, we see the CP and SWP obliviously carrying on as if they had fifty years to tag along after bourgeois politicians and narrow interest-group struggles. Supposedly committed to establishing working class control and management of the worldwide productive forces, they stand mystified and stupefied by the operations of the economy. Yet they expect working people to entrust their lives and their futures to this leadership.

The irony of the present conjuncture is that just when socialists are presented with the concrete opportunity to explain capitalism's inability to expand and provide for the needs of the population, the two largest socialist organizations in the U.S. are absolutely incompetent to even recognize the nature of the crisis, much less to explain it or offer any way out.

The capitalists themselves are doing more to demonstrate the unworkability of capitalism than are the CP and SWP. Just at the point in history when socialism begins to become a practical alternative to working people, the leading socialist organizations are incapable of presenting ANY practical alternative. (The SWP recently disgraced itself and its own history to an unprecedented degree by announcing that the main difference between socialists and capitalists is that capitalists lie! Who needs socialism? Who needs theory? Who needs Marxism? All we need is a truth squad!)

Both organizations offer nearly-identical explanations of the economic crisis—not surprisingly, since they both use the same method, cribbing from the New York Times—that the war in Vietnam is the cause of inflation, unemployment, and budget crises, that the monetary crisis results from the combination of war-induced inflation and “rivalry” between “competing” imperialist powers. As if these fierce “competitors” were anything but satrapies of a unified world-wide U.S. imperialism! For embellishment, both organizations occasionally enlighten their audiences with polite references to “overproduction”—a piece of Marxism via Keynes.

Both the CP and SWP, proceeding on the basis of the most elementary sense-impressions, delude themselves that they are somehow “radicalizing” economic issues by explaining them in terms of the war, when in fact what they are accomplishing is explaining away the lawful and recurring general collapse of capitalism. In other words, there’s nothing wrong with capitalism that electing McGovern and ending the war won’t solve. (Incredibly, the Daily World recently scolded McGovern for saying that the economy is a more important issue than the war!)

The CP, it should be noted, has at least directed its reformism toward the working class and the strike wave, while the “Trotskyist” SWP proceeds to “build the mass (sic) movements”, helping to fragment the political working class into more pieces than Humpty-Dumpty—women, blacks, Chicanos, gays, high school students, Chicanas, black women, black gay women, black gay women high school students, and so on and so forth. The recent concessions granted by the SWP proprietors to the SWP pro-labor faction in no way alters this madness; it simply adds the call for a labor party to all the other parties the SWP is calling for. Just one more “constituency”.

REVOLUTIONARY RESPONSIBILITY

Among the three leading socialist organizations in the U.S. today, only the National Caucus of Labor Committees has shown that it has any comprehension of the actual ABC’s of Marxian method and revolutionary practice.

We are, nonetheless, aware that trapped within the CP and SWP are many genuinely committed revolutionaries,

who are finding it increasingly difficult to reconcile their own organization’s incompetence and ineptitude with the goal of revolutionary socialism it professes. In spite of our most damning attacks on their organizations, we recognize that such individuals are valuable cadre whose commitment to socialism—manifest by the fact that they have joined a self-proclaimed revolutionary organization—makes their positive contributions essential to the process of establishing socialism.

Every thinking revolutionary—whether presently in an organization or not—is faced with the necessity of deciding through which of the existing organizations he or she can actualize his commitment to socialism. He must evaluate which organization has the theoretical understanding, the moral qualities, and the theoretical and practical competence to organize and lead a revolutionary movement in the 1970s.

We in the NCLC are convinced that only our organization can pass such critical scrutiny regarding the necessary qualities of revolutionary leadership. We do not, however, insist of every revolutionary that he or she immediately genuflect, apply for membership in the NCLC, and pledge us unquestioning obedience and loyalty. We do demand of every genuine revolutionary socialist that he honestly confront the nature of the organization through which he presently mediates his political practice. If he thinks that his organization can become transformed in order to become capable of fulfilling its historic responsibilities, we urge him to try—while at the same time collaborating with us on a united front basis wherever principled agreement now exists. If he does not think that his organization can be reformed, then it is his responsibility to either factionalize or immediately split out, amidst the greatest political clarity, and begin to collaborate with us in joint work and discussions.

The socialist movement has always developed and progressed through a process of splits and fusions. The currently convulsed political and economic environment means that this process will be accelerated in the coming months. It is through such a sifting-out and distillation process that an actual vanguard leadership is molded and tempered; in this arena the eminently practical question of theoretical hegemony—and thus the future of history—is presently being determined.

Crisis of the Cities

By Nancy Spannaus

The 'crisis of the cities' -- what is it? Why is it? What must we do about it? This paper seeks to answer these questions from the point of view that the urban crisis has arisen from the long-term, lawful unfolding of capitalist investment policies and augurs the imminence of world capitalist breakdown. In exposing the cause of the expansion of government services as well as their current deterioration, it must conclude that only an organizing approach toward total reconstruction at capitalist expense is appropriate to the budgetary failures of individual cities.

The Growth of Urban Services: Signal of Capitalist Crisis

A glance at recent history shows that the phrase 'urban crisis' began to take national headlines in the late 1950's. Popularization of the fact that the cities were being overcome by slums, poverty, and general decay stemmed from two critical processes occurring at the time: 1) the aftermath and very partial recovery from the 1957-58 recession; and 2) the building of the Kennedy national political machine. The 'urban crisis' was touted as a crisis for Blacks and focussed attention on ghetto housing, education, and the continuing massive unemployment of approximately 25% among black youth.

Not surprisingly, the popularizers of the 'crisis of the inner city', the Kennedy machine, had 'solutions in mind and on the drawing boards. These 'solutions' - a grab-bag of juvenile delinquency, anti-poverty, and community action programs - were, of course, designed to deal with another crisis as well -- the political bind of a Democratic Party in need of the urban black vote. Needless to say, the ghetto programs succeeded much better in creating a loyal Black Democratic apparatus than in easing the problems of unemployment and poverty. Youth unemployment stayed over 20%; housing and services continued to deteriorate. And, before the poverty program passed

its prime, it helped create a more spectacular crisis -- the explosive black-white polarization that erupted as early as 1963 in the South and reached its zenith with the Newark/Detroit/Watts riots in 1965-67.

Around 1965, however, the urban crisis took on a less racial aspect. Major industrial centers in the United States which had practically doubled their expenditures since 1957, began to experience a budgetary squeeze. Higher interest rates on city bonds; the need to increase expenditures on services just to maintain previous poor standards (i.e. -- increased costs of maintaining decrepit schools, subways, etc.); strong political pressure against skyrocketing local taxes -- all contributed to the rise of anxiety, among bondholders in particular, that the cities could pay their way. The very 'remedies' applied -- imposing even higher taxes on working people; allowing stagnation in quantity and quality of vital services; increasing borrowing, though on a longer-term basis -- have, of course, only led to greater budget crises. In 1970 these began to take the form of layoffs of thousands of public employees in major metropolitan areas, not to mention the acceleration of layoffs by attrition. Such crises now threaten, in a more obvious way than ever before, the total breakdown of education, health, and sanity throughout the entire 80% of the U.S. population that lives in cities -- be they black, white, or green.

By now it is excruciatingly evident that the Kennedy liberals' campaign cries signified far more than a political gimmick. The Democratic Party's outreach to ghetto blacks demonstrated an inadvertent recognition that the United States would not recover from the '57-58 recession in such a way as to reintegrate black youth into the work force, and to relieve the related problems of unemployment, growing slums, and decaying services. Manufacturing of useful civilian goods and technology began to stagnate or decline following

1957-58. No significant amount of decent low-rent housing had been built since immediately after World War II. Expansion of jobs was slated for the arenas of patchwork city services, or the development of military/aerospace not areas of human need, where investment would threaten current profitable ventures. In a real sense the political 'urban crisis' which was used by John and Robert Kennedy signalled the intensification of capitalist stagnation and decay that started in the teens, but had finally begun to move toward an inevitable world depression in the 1970s. The 'crisis of the cities' is, at heart, the crisis of capitalist underproduction.

The Crisis Historically

Throughout the twentieth century, U. S. residents have experienced a relatively-continuous expansion of government services ranging from police and fire 'protection' to education to public housing. The primary role played by these state services appears in bold relief when one looks at the 1930's.

In the depression years, when employment and production had dropped by a third or more, and 'private enterprise' found itself incapable of reorganizing the economy, U.S. corporations turned to the government to bail them out. They asked not only for government regulation of prices, wages, and production, but for services. These services were to mitigate pressure being applied to them by the unemployed and to reduce the costs of establishing and maintaining industry. Consequently the government undertook huge expansion of relief payments and developed such make-work, social-control programs as the Civilian Conservation Corps. Slightly later the government provided more substantive benefits to private enterprise in the form of construction of a widespread industrial infrastructure,

including electric-power plants, bridges, highways, hospitals, and schools. All of these projects greatly aided industry by providing it with a trained, mobile workforce and with easily-available cheaper power and transport -- mostly at wage-earner's expense, but also by redistributing corporate profit for the benefit of the capitalist class as a whole.

Some of these services -- which were largely financed by a vast extension of the federal income tax system--dried up as private industry again expanded its jobs to the point where mass political organizing no longer threatened to erupt. Welfare is the most glaring example, its decline continuing smoothly through the 1940's and becoming precipitous during the relative prosperity of 1952-57. Current levels despite large increases, remain considerably below the 1930's. Local public expenditures for highways and police have also declined somewhat over the last four decades, indicating a relative saturation in the case of the former, and the development of less direct methods of social control in the latter case.

On the other hand, education costs, borne mostly by local governments, have skyrocketed. Business has required these expenditures in order for the work force to adapt to changing technology and the shift from manufacturing to clerical, service, and technical jobs. Education expenditures have increased especially in the areas of remedial/vocational programs for ghetto youth and of higher education -- i.e. expansion of community colleges and state takeover of private colleges. In both these cases monies are being spent primarily to make up the deficit in basic educational services, a deficit caused as much by the low quality of housing, nutrition, jobs, etc. available to youth as to deficiencies in educational content.

While the government has not entered the housing market on any meaningful scale as a competitive builder since the late 1940's, its role in serving real estate interests has expanded over the past two decades. Urban renewal has functioned to bail out landlords and banks holding unprofitable land, but left new construction, complete with tax-abatement, to private profit-makers. Federal, state, and city loan programs -- which guarantee up to 90% of the mortgages and provide interest rates in the range of 1-3%, have mushroomed. The difference between these interest rates and bank rates is, of course, subsidized by tax revenue. Unfortu-

nately for the wage-earner, even these terms are insufficient to attract investment out of speculation in slums and other waste into decent low-rent housing. As a result, the housing shortage has taken center stage of the urban crisis -- and been used as leverage to attack unionized construction workers. Vestiges of housing services for wage-earners and homeowners, instituted during the post World War II labor upsurge, were finally strangled to death on May 26, 1971, with the formal end of rent control and its code enforcement divisions in New York City.

Contraction in the percentage of public funds spent on direct police control has been more than offset by the expansion of slightly less blatant institutions of social control, such as addiction services, correctional facilities, mental hospitals, and so forth. These 'services' have grown in response to a deterioration of housing and job opportunities which makes stable human relationships and sanity less and less possible to achieve. Jails and institutional care facilities throughout the country are notoriously overcrowded. New York City's jails are operating at 120% to 200% of rated capacity, according to the City's 1970-71 executive budget message. Mental hospitals have become so full that some institutions have begun massive programs of rehabilitation to clear wards. These progressive programs often release patients who have lived in institutions 10 to 20 to 40 years and can only 'return' to isolation and early death.

The basic 'service' provided to private industry by the federal government, of course, is military spending, which has doubled since 1959 (as have federal interest payments). The federal contribution to other services is dwarfed by comparison, but has grown faster than military expenditures in the areas of housing, education, and health and welfare. The portion of state and municipal budgets coming from federal grants continues to grow faster than municipal expenditures as a whole; this trend will be greatly accelerated by the pending Family Assistance Plan. Yet federal assumption of the costs of underproduction has not prevented the burgeoning of predominantly local expenses, local taxes, and presently, drastic cutbacks in municipal services.

Financing

Urban services not only dispense benefits primarily in the interest of bankers

and industrialists, but also are financed substantially by wage taxation, whence the bulk of revenue on all levels of government comes (75% of state and local revenues; two-thirds of federal revenue). Rising revenue from federal taxes has been accompanied over the past decade by a decrease in individual income tax rates -- even counting the Vietnam surtax. Tax rates for states and cities have, on the contrary, climbed steadily.

City and state governments pick up most of the tab for protecting property from fire and theft (which amounts to 28% of the budget in cities with over a million residents), education, and health. In addition, they are providing increasingly direct subsidies to business in the form of rising debt service on city bonds and on bonds issued by semi-public authorities and funds (for transit, school facilities, etc.). The debt for municipalities -- approximately \$87 billion in 1968 -- more than doubled from 1958. Debt service payments -- over 10% of the budget in major cities, though the average percentage comes to 3% nationwide -- have been aggravated by the high interest rates of the mid-sixties, as well as increased borrowing. More and more of the national per capital debt comes from state and local (as compared with federal) borrowing.

State and local tax burdens have risen at a much sharper rate than the federal since the end of World War II. The percent of large city population subject to local income taxes increased from 14% to over 39% from 1957-1969. The amount of city income coming from individual income taxes -- which fall mostly on wage-earners -- more than quadrupled from 1959 - 1966/67, as individual income certainly did not. Over the same period local sales tax receipts rose by 70% and property taxes (in most areas paid primarily by single homeowners) jumped 80% -- both reflecting substantial rate increases. Mayor Lindsay's budget message for 1970-71 reports that the cost of city government (expense budget) is growing at rates more than double the growth of personal income in the city -- making it clear that the expansion of the city budget is occurring at the expense of residents' living standards. These jumps in taxation go a long way toward explaining the rise of taxpayer groups and repeated defeats of bond issues, which are the major means of supporting school expenses as well as capital spending throughout the country, since 1965. Yet local tax increases and tax substitutes (ie. transit fares, bridge tolls, etc.) continue to rise for city wage-earners.

Concurrently the proportion of tax revenue coming from businesses has de-

creased. In New York City business taxation pays for only a quarter of the budget, while in 1915 it paid 92%. In New York State the corporate tax burden has decreased over the last decade. Nationwide, corporate income taxes have supplied about 3.5% of local and state revenue over the past decade compared to 4 and 5% in the 1940's.

Most of the federal income tax burden has shifted from corporations, until all federal taxes. Banks are hardly taxed at all, at the same time that receive tax-free interest on state and local bonds. At 7% interest (or more) -- the high for long-term bonds in the sixties, though short-term borrowing can cost much more -- a city pays two to three times the original amount borrowed back to the banks.

As long as taxes can be raised, why are services being slashed? Either way living standards are being cut without the comptrollers of the government - banks and corporations - having to confront the strongly-unionized sections of the U.S. labor movement, which are concentrated in heavy industry. In many ways raising taxes seems preferable to corporate interests. Taxpayers' movements, which require the transcendence of normal capitalist institutions like unions, community organizations, and single issue clubs in program and representation, are a much less probable threat than strikes by city unions facing layoffs or wage cuts.

But taxes cannot be raised indefinitely, especially in a recession, where incomes are decreasing and uncertain. The bankers et al. cannot count on enough revenues coming in. Therefore the government now chooses to cut services as well, an act which carries the threat of public employees strikes. In the current period of widespread labor unrest over declining real wages, the government runs the risk of a strike by public employees triggering mass ferment. But such a chance it has to take.

For what's at stake in this barrage of tax increases and service reductions is the very existence of the capitalist system. So much credit and paper -- much of it government debt -- has been floated through the system that capitalists must gouge wages simply to keep their heads above water. Else they face a world depression. Leery of direct onslaughts on auto or steel workers, they instead cut wages through reducing the quality and quantity of health care, transportation, education, and cultural activities. In this way the standard of living in the U.S. has deteriorated much more than is reflected in the decline in real wages since 1965, as well as rendering wages more and more meaningless in so far as what's

available to buy.

The capitalists cannot avoid a depression, however. As they increase primitive accumulation through taxation and decreased real production, they are not only destroying the cities as physical entities and crippling ghetto youth, but eradicating the productive capacity of an entire generation in human terms. The costs of social control will increase further; markets will decrease. The current budgetary crisis is both a precursor and a contributor to world depression.

Alternate Views

There are two widespread popular explanations for why the budget cuts are occurring now. The first, and most popular on the Left and among liberals, is the Vietnam War. The second, most consistently articulated by Professors Cloward and Piven, 'theoreticians' of the welfare rights movement, and widespread among the working population, is attributing the crisis to the aggressiveness of welfare recipients in expanding the 'public dole', and, more peripherally, to the greed of public employee unions.

A.. Vietnam

There is a large measure of coincidence between the escalation of the Vietnamese War and war spending, and the escalation of the urban crisis. 'Defense' expenditures doubled between 1959 and 1969, as did urban budgets and decay. The astronomical jump of 25% in military spending between 1965 and 1966 coincided with the onset of municipal budget crises. But neither Vietnam nor war spending in general caused the crisis of the cities. Instead both the war and urban crisis result from a common cause -- capitalism's inability to produce and reproduce on an expanding scale.

It is beyond the scope of this paper to unravel the details of causation and continuation of the war in Vietnam. But the identification of three major processes involved with its inception and development will suffice to show its derivative character:

1. Direct military expenditures have constituted at least a third of the federal budget since 1941. Currently war (as opposed to defense in general) expenditures take slightly less than 40% of the budget -- well within 'normal range for post-depression U.S.

2. U.S. military presence in Southeast Asia began with the intention, among others, of opening the area to exploitation by U.S. investors.

3. Contracts for armaments and

other military supplies have propped up the U.S. economy since the late 1930's by providing cost-plus provisions, tax-financed research, and other fringe benefits which provide capitalists an investment outlet that allows them to avoid less lucrative productive investment.

It is clear, then, that the Vietnamese war is derived from long-term basic capitalist investment needs, needs which lead to war spending, foreign loans, and other kinds of waste spending. It should also be evident that, even without this particular war, the same tendencies toward waste spending are in operation. And, finally, we have amply demonstrated that this shift from productive to wasteful investment has resulted in the increase in unemployment, urban deterioration, and city services which have caused the urban budget crisis. There would be a budget crisis even without the war!

Is this argument too complicated or clouded for the Communist Party (CP), Socialist Workers Party (SWP), and Lindsay liberals to understand? No, not at all. They will continue to assert that the war has caused the urban crisis until the end of the war fails to result in increased spending on urban problems -- because they find that linking Vietnam and urban problems allows them to put themselves at the front of, and to appear to lead, masses of people. Sheer opportunism!

In arguing that an end to the War will mean money for the cities, Lindsay et al. and the established Left join hands in a conspiracy to keep capitalists off the hook -- to blame the war, not capitalism itself, for economic and social decay. If the war is the problem, they say, we must build a huge cross-class movement of everyone who's against the war: executives, Democrats, labor leaders, etc. And in order not to alienate any of these persons who lend prestige as well as numbers to our movement, we should not attack the capitalist practices which led to the war; we must not call for reconstruction of the cities at capitalist expense, but at the expense of the workers' taxes which are presently going to the war. By omission the CP and SWP imply that the war will end -- or lead to the end -- of war spending; that an anti-war movement, full of liberal capitalists, is implicitly anti-capitalist.

A glance at their bedfellows Lindsay and Mc Govern and their sponsorship of budget cuts, tax credits, and other boonportunism for what it is. Ending the war will not end the budget cuts or capitalism. Only a movement armed with

understanding of what underlies the war economy can attack the war and the urban crisis in an effective, coherent way.

B. Welfare Crisis

A recent book by Professors Cloward and Piven, *Regulating the Poor: The Function of Public Welfare*, outlines in sophisticated form the argument which the Daily News sells with sensationalism: rioting, aggressive welfare clients and poor people have pushed welfare rolls up so high that they have brought major industrial centers to the brink of bankruptcy.

As in the case of the war, the coincidence of the two events -- budget crises and a 217% rise in families receiving Aid to Dependent Children rolls in the largest metropolitan areas since 1964 -- encourages one to look for a causal connection. Yet scrutiny of city finances reveals that welfare spending still takes a relatively small percentage of state and local revenue: 8% or less. In New York City approximately \$300 million of local tax money goes for welfare, compared to over \$800 million for debt service, \$862.9 million for police and their accoutrements, and \$1.8 billion for education. In Philadelphia welfare spending has taken about 5% of the city general fund revenue throughout the 1960's; police and debt service absorb close to 15% each! A comparison of Chicago's budgets through the 1960's reveals a similar picture: relief took approximately 5% of the city tax revenues in 1961 and even less in 1967. While educational expenditures, among others, are financed separately in both Chicago and Philadelphia, and would surpass police and debt service expenditures, the insignificance of welfare spending in causing municipal budget crises would only be more clear if education outlays were counted in.

Taking federal aid into account, welfare costs have, of course, more than doubled since the mid-1960's. But this rise has not been what put the squeeze on local governments. In the broadest sense the social costs of unemployment and low wages may be said to be causal -- in that they have produced the physical and social decay that raises the budgets for firemen, policemen, courts, narcotics, education, hospitals, sanitation -- as well as welfare.

Cloward and Piven argue correctly that a rise in unemployment or decline in wages, per se, does not lead to increased demand for, much less the receipt of, welfare benefits. But they be-

lieve that the disorderly behavior by the poor in the 1967 riots and welfare demonstrations, partially fomented by Federal poverty programs and partially the consequence of an increase in social anomie in the ghetto, won the increases in benefits for clients. If their argument were correct, an exacerbation of such protest tactics now would again produce higher living standards for the poor -- a patent impossibility.

These social work anarchists comprehend neither the economic nor political role of welfare in a capitalist society. The welfare system is not only a way of quieting the poor and disciplining them to willingness to take marginal or scab jobs; it also serves the function of keeping a reserve labor force just healthy enough to be able to work when needed. Consequently, the Kennedy-Johnson administrations did not consider the raising of welfare standards an unintended, unfortunate side-effect of their efforts to build a ghetto machine; like civil rights legislation before it, this action was seen as instrumental in raising the standard of living of welfare clients who were being bled of all will or capacity for work, so they could be made useful to capitalism. This is not to mention the beneficial results which rising welfare budgets have for slumlords and sweatshop employers who pay wages low enough to be supplemented by welfare.

Today the liberal advocates of a \$4000-\$6000 base for the Family Assistance Plan are not merely playing for welfare votes or those of the working poor: they want to raise welfare budgets (at the expense of the working man's, to be sure) to a level where they'll produce persons capable of an 8-10 hour day, efficient work habits, and so forth. The Urban Coalition, recently joining in coalition with welfare clients in New York around housing and more income demands, has not become anti-capitalist. It seeks to make the system work by reducing some wage-earners' incomes for the benefit of those who are starving, and not so incidentally, banks and businesses as well. The political benefit the capitalists reap is not only the allegiance of welfare groups, but continued exacerbation of friction between clients and working taxpayers.

By overlooking the 'liberal' capitalists' policies for welfare in this period, Cloward and Piven are forced into the conclusion that militance by ghetto residents won the concessions they received by show of strength and numbers. The history of the Welfare Rights Move-

ment since the fall of 1968 shows the fallacy of this belief. As soon as wage-earners began to resist skyrocketing local taxes, the concessions ceased. Special grants were stopped; grant cuts were instituted; in some states many clients were cut off the rolls; in most the rate of acceptance began to decline. No matter that higher taxes were not very much related to increased welfare expenditures; the increase in welfare was used by politicians to divert the wrath of taxpayers toward the poor, not landlords and banks.

If the ghettos had exploded at that point, we might have seen race riots-- but no concessions. For contrary to Cloward and Piven's thesis about the 1930's, it was the political threat of a movement which combined the unemployed with the employed workers that then forced capitalists and the government to make large concessions, not just the threat of 'uncontrolled masses.' The welfare rights movement and the ghetto rebellions posed no such threat: on the contrary, they almost always directed their fury against white unionized workers as well as at government officials. With such an outlook, and the objective consequence of welfare meaning higher taxes on workers, the movement could only accentuate already-existing bitter divisions between the employed and unemployed.

Cloward and Piven would like to believe that the continued numerical growth of the welfare rolls represents gain for the welfare rights movement, even though these clients are receiving less and less. Such self-deception can only be described as pitiful, combined as it is with the delusion that when the rolls reach a certain number, and workers forced onto welfare have been sufficiently degraded and 'radicalized' by the miserable treatment they receive, a revolution (of some undefined sort) will spontaneously occur.

Public Employees

Militancy by public employees (particularly state and local) has recently joined the welfare rights movement as a well-publicized 'prime suspect' in the crime of city bankruptcies. The facts that wage gains for some city workers have equalled or surpassed those for private employees since 1965; that government employees are being more rapidly unionized than any other unorganized sector of the labor movement; and that well over 50% of state and local government payrolls goes to wages (as opposed

to rent and capital construction) -- all have been used by the government and the press to attack municipal unions. Professor Cloward and Piven helped develop the 'liberal wing of this attack as early as 1968-69, by publishing an article that branded any public employee union which fought for improved wages and working conditions as racist oppressors of the poor.

The government onslaught on state and local public employees finds easy support among burdened taxpayers. When taxpayers see state and local jobs doubling between 1959-1967 and payrolls rising 100% over the same period, they can believe - with the help of the press - that city workers are their enemies: people relaxing on 'cushy' civil service, with veto power over the city government and with high salaries 'stollen' from their hard-earned tax money.

The key to demolishing the myth that municipal workers are bankrupting the cities lies with destroying the lie that wages cause inflation. A certain level of wages and wage-equivalents (city and other government services) are the prerequisites for productive job performance -- a level now defined by a wage of at least \$10,000 /year for a family of four, and not reached by a large majority of public employees. It is what job is performed by the wage-earner, not the level of his wage, which determines whether his wage is 'wasted' or not from a social point of view. Since most public jobs are bureaucratic or fruitlessly attempting to compensate for a decline in major U.S. industrial production, public employee wages are in a sense wasted. But only because the government and private business have defined the role of government jobs as subsidizers and handmaidens to the private sector of the economy.

Some government services are essential, of course. And wages will inevitably take up a larger proportion of expenditures in service industries like government than in mechanized heavy industrial sectors. Sectors of the economy like public transit and hospital care, for example, must run 'at a loss' so to speak. The only way to ensure that this 'loss' is compensated is the constant development of productive employment -- where social surplus can develop at accelerating level -- in the economy as a whole. But it is the lack of just such productive employment that led to the rapid rise of 'service' (largely

governmental and unproductive) jobs. Service jobs cannot be 'productive' while major U.S. production industries are being allowed to stagnate and decline.

Public employees have not caused the budget crisis. Instead, the decline in U.S. capitalism has led to a rapid expansion of public payrolls, whose occupiers (putting aside the unknown percentage of patronage and public relations jobs) are battling for adequate living standards.

Without the war, without the welfare crisis and an upsurge in public employee militancy, U. S. capitalism and its urban industrial center would still be in crisis and decay.

An Urban Strategy

If one recognizes the roots of the urban crisis in worldwide capitalist decay, and understands how urban budgets serve banking and corporate interests and divide working people, one must include the following elements in an 'urban strategy'.

1. Proposals for reconstruction of the cities through creation of productive, well-paid jobs, not just for filling the fiscal gaps precipitating local budget crises (see Emergency Reconstruction program, NCLC, 8/70).

2. Programs of taxation which penalize capitalists for creating the current social deficit and take capital out of unproductive use.

3. Political organization of working class and related forces into institutions which unite usually competitive sections of the working class around programs and action in their common interest, helping to create the political working class for itself.

Adopting such a strategy means rejecting the capitalists' terms for battle: the terms of 'every man (or group) for himself', and of addressing 'obvious facts' not causes. Capitalist ideology and organization dictate such actions as the juggling of deficits by New York City's Comptroller Beame, and demonstrations which protest layoffs, but do not deal with budget cuts or taxes. Bourgeois methods of struggle confine the labor movement and unemployed, and major socialist organizations as well, from going beyond defensive, ad hoc actions around special interests. Such methods continue to leave the capitalists' right to govern unchallenged, when every move

of the ruling class proclaims their ineptness to provide the basics of civilized life, much less an expanding standard of living.

The budget crisis is a harbinger of coming world depression. A movement against budget cuts and layoffs must recognize this context and begin to develop the self-consciousness and economic/political alternatives to running the economy; traditional 'protest' will not suffice. Such a movement must break down people's habit of compartmentalizing themselves into 'workers' in one area, and 'consumers' in most areas. Workers must be organized and educated to see themselves as self-conscious directors of society.

A prime example of organizing which retains this compartmentalization is the work of the Metropolitan Council on Housing in New York City, a group strongly influenced in political direction by the Communist Party (CP). In the face of attacks by Lindsay and Rockefeller which have brought rent increases and virtually destroyed all aspects of rent control over the last year, all Met Council can advocate are squatting in vacant buildings and rent strikes. Even if its organizers were attempting to organize on a broader basis than building by building (their current tack), Met Council would not find this strategy effective in preventing rent increases and deterioration of buildings. For to prevent such gouging requires mass construction of housing, not just occupation of the several thousand livable vacant apartments in the city. Tenants must not organize themselves as 'rent-payers' or 'rent-withholders', a view the Met Council methods reinforce. They must see themselves as 'economic planners' and builders who dare to demand housing construction at the expense of banks and big real estate -- in order to get out of their immediate bind. Yet Met Council -- and the CP in general -- keeps tax and construction demands low-key, or separate from 'consumer issues', doing nothing to change the consciousness of their membership as to how solutions can be effected. It's easier to collect membership cards...

Such compartmentalization of 'consumer' and 'producer' issues recurs in most defense movements to save jobs, increase welfare checks, or stop tax increases. Each such movement seeks to relieve immediate pressures, but leaves the question of reconstruction the economy to 'others' or 'later'. This abdication from the responsibility of reorganizing the eco-

We were almost running
 Along the slowly sinking ridge,
 Heat came at us through our feet
 And down from wet hair sweat washed over our eyes.

From out of this earthly oven
 Prickly herbal shoots thrust forth
 Spurting new odours when stepped on
 Or in brief brushing by.

The crickets were moody.

So we came to the brow of the hill.
 Far away, for both of us and all
 Was the bright blue sea.

You saw the heath stretch further on
 Toward blue shadows of uninhabited valley,
 Miles of untrod temperate wildness.

I heard the slamming of cottage doors
 Far below in the miserable fishing port.

May we meet again at the surging shore.

--Richard Rose

nomy in the interests of working people ensures continued depression of living standards under an increasingly repressive state. (See *Centrism, Campaigner*, vol. 3, no. 1)

To fail to take on the task of economic reconstruction means that most 'socialists' and the labor movement will have no alternative to supporting liberal capitalists of the McGovern/McCloskey type, especially in 1972. Having built no independent class-wide institution around expanded production and better living standards at capitalist expense, they will follow the only 'reconstruction' program around -- the anti-war 'reconversion' charade of the liberals. The Communist Party and Socialist Workers Party (plus labor bureaucrats like Victor Gotbaum of AFSCME and Leonard Woodcock of the UAW) will tacitly accept the cry of

'tax reform', rather than expropriation of capitalist income; the end of the Vietnam war, rather than an end to all military spending; and the building of a new 'Urban Coalition' with 'new priorities' rather than a working class party.

It should go without saying that an adequate reconstruction program must demand financing at the expense of capitalist waste and speculation. It should also be evident that specific kinds of political organizations are required to develop and fight for such a program in relation to specific strikes and budget cuts.

Class-for-itself program; class-for-itself organization -- each is the prerequisite for the other in a seeming vicious circle. Therefore it is essential that united fronts from now, initiated by those handfuls of the unemployed,

trade unionists, socialists, and students ready to move on a common-interest program. Such united fronts must undertake consistent propaganda education, and outreach. Under the impetus of current strikes and wildcats, which threaten to break out into mass strikes, such a nucleus alone has the ability to generate a mass-based working-class movement that can meet the needs of the class.

The socialist left in the U.S. -- the CP and SWP -- is essential to the building of class-wide united fronts that can deal effectively with the urban crisis. If these organizations continue to mislead their followers by tailing liberal capitalists and union bureaucrats, while refusing to join anti-capitalist united fronts, they must and can be destroyed. If the CP and SWP join such united fronts, they will help build the only kind of leadership capable of solving the 'urban crisis.'

SOUTHERN LABOR STIRS

By Jim Mills

This paper is not intended as a complete economic and social breakdown of the South. Rather we are considering here highlights of the current forces at work in the South and some suggestions and ideas for work there.

We feel that the trends taking place in North Carolina are fairly representative of the South as a whole, so we have based our analysis primarily on information and experiences in this one state. The exceptions exist but are key only in the specific areas where they operate.

Decades of Change

The past twenty years have seen important changes in the South, changes which greatly affect the degree to which socialists will be able to operate here.

Since World War II and the passage of the draft law, and the maintenance of a peacetime army, there has come to an end the isolation of the young Southern worker from the rest of the United States and the world at large. For the first time large numbers of Southern workers traveled outside the South and returned, having been exposed to all kinds of new ideas and experiences, which they brought back with them. Also, after the Korean War the armed forces desegregated, forcing young Southern whites to work and talk with blacks as people and fellow comrades. Inter-racial experiences in the army laid the groundwork for black-white cooperation back home in the shop.

The second influence for change was the introduction into Southern homes of the television set. Once again a broader world of non-Southern ideas and modes of living was seen by a great number of Southern workers.

The third change in Southern life was a more basic one — the tearing down of the Southern educational system. The South's dual school systems of separate-but-equal had been the key to the Southern rulers' hold on the people. The system guaranteed that both black and white workers would be without the skills and the knowledge to do more than their traditional semi-skilled jobs — textile mills for the whites; tenant farms for the blacks.

If the Southern workforce was to serve for the expansion and development of advanced industry, the Southern worker had to be trained and given enough education to man the new jobs. This new education had to involve a turning around of what had been taught as gospel for several hundred years. The philosophy that blacks are sub-human had to be set aside, with the admission that blacks deserve at least the same treatment as whites. This philosophy had been established and maintained so well by Capital that a near revolution was required to establish even the right to equal opportunity. Just as capital had built the bondage of black people at the cost of the blacks, so was the cost of breaking this new path paid for by the blacks. Needless to say, there has also been a great cost paid by white workers in the South but one of a different sort, unapparent to most.

In order to develop this new workforce, there had to be a battle plan. Beginning in the late 1940's a number of studies were undertaken, the most important being a book by V.O. Key titled **Southern Politics**. This careful study, financed by the Rockefeller Foundation, was to be the blue print of what local powers existed in the South and how they could be overcome.

The Supreme Court decision of 1954 soon followed, stating that separate but equal schools

presently leading city workers in sharp struggle across the South, from Atlanta to Memphis to Greensboro, demanding benefits and union recognition. The resistance from city governments is great. In most Southern states laws make it illegal for a state, county or city body to negotiate with a union. Among teachers discontent is growing as promised wage increases are denied and school conditions become increasingly chaotic and dangerous. This move by teachers is the most feared of all because of the electrifying effect unionization of teachers would have on blue collar workers.

What is clear at just a glance is that the '70's will see the establishment of trade unions in the South. During this interim there will be a huge struggle, but many corporations are already recognizing the inevitable. Some respond by arranging sell-out contracts and paper unions with the AFL-CIO bureaucrats; others respond by deserting the South for new capitalist paradises. One example is the multi-million dollar RCA plant in Memphis, Tennessee. Built only three years ago, the plant was quickly organized by the IUE-AFL-CIO. When it became apparent that the local was actually going to take the company on concerning their wages and working conditions, the company closed down the plant and moved the operation to Taiwan. Some 4,000 workers lost their jobs.

The corporate plans for the South seem to lie in keeping the Southern differential as wide as possible and in getting more production with fewer workers. If this can be done, then much of heavy industry will continue to move and expand South. A few plants, like RCA, can move elsewhere if the workers get too militant about changing the corporation's basic Southern policy, but for most plants this will not be true. The job skills required in the RCA plant were very low, making its transfer to Taiwan easy. The bulk of industry now moving South is one of much higher skill requirements, skills which have taken 15 years of massive educational change to develop in the South.

In the South the struggles of workers to attain trade union must be a political one, for the right to organize at all in the South is a political struggle.

Right to Organize Coalitions

If the Left is to successfully lead the struggle of the Southern workers, taking them beyond not only simple trade unionism but also Wallacite political solutions, then we must intervene at the apex of the growing struggle. That apex is the point where the Southern worker is forced to view his fight for trade unions and other modes of self organization as political in nature.

The right to organize is an all-encompassing slogan for this period in the South. The right to organize does not simply deal with the workers' right to have trade unions but deals with every aspect of life for the worker and his natural class allies. Today in embryonic stages a war is being waged for better health care, housing and education. So far no Left group dominates any one of these areas of movement. Furthermore, no group whatsoever has tied all these isolated struggles into a coherent program. It is here at this time that the Left and only the Left can organize such a total program built on a class for itself organization. If such work is begun now, it is possible that the present and growing upsurge will produce practicing political organizations of leaders around a class-for-itself program. These leaders, recruited from the many phases of existing and developing struggles, will play a major role in the ever increasing political mass strikes which must break out as the economy grows less able to serve the needs of the working class.

Our Immediate Tasks

- 1) To build unity among all Left forces presently existing in the South;
- 2) To adopt a program of action based on the present objective economic and social conditions in the South;
- 3) To Build Right to Organize Coalitions among all people presently ready to take this step.

were unconstitutional and no longer permissible. This move was financed by the Northeastern capitalist powers. Few people saw that the real hand pushing the wheel was white, only covered by a black one. The great civil rights movement was underway.

Correction Mills

The important result of the civil rights movement is the actual changes which occurred in the school systems of the South. Thousands of new schools were built, containing for the first time courses concentrating on modern technical training and industrial arts. At the next level hundreds of adult technical schools have been built with courses in machine tools and other basic, advanced industrial skills. Northern industry rapidly expanded South to take advantage of these new skills. At first the run away plants and new expansions were of the simple production variety, e.g. garment shops and assembly lines.

The fourth major change in conditions in the South is the fading of rural dominance in the economic and political spheres, caused by the growth of industry and trade. We shall use North Carolina as the typical example. In 1937 North Carolina's population was about 3½ million. Roughly 75% resided and earned their livings in rural areas. By 1950 the population of the state stood around 4 million. The growth of urban dwellers had been only 2.3%, up to 27.3% of the population. However, by 1960, when the population had increased to around 4½ million 44% lived and worked in the cities, (39% of the population lived and worked on farms,) another 17% lived in the country but worked in the city. Now, in 1970, the urban dwellers and those rural dwellers employed in urban jobs have become the vast majority. Urban dwellers are 45% of the state's people, with another 15-17% just working in the city. Clearly it is no longer possible to view the South in the same terms as twenty years ago.

All the above forces have brought deep and important changes in the modes of life and thought of Southern people, changes whose effects are just now becoming apparent.

The Long Struggle

Many socialists outside the South know very little about the history of Southern struggles. Some

know the events of the great civil rights movement but their knowledge beyond this is dim or non-existent. The fact is, workers' struggles in the South have been long and hard. As far back as pre Civil War days Southern workers fought to better their conditions and to form unions. However, not until 1929 did a mass strike take place. It began with a strike among textile workers which was crushed. But the waves continued until 1934, when some 500,000 Southern workers struck at once in a massive upheaval. With the help of the AFL, the strike was broken in less than a month. But after this the South has never been the same.

Due to the poverty of the region and the large reserve labor supply of tenant farmers, mountaineers and blacks, the South has never been unionized. North Carolina is the least organized state in the nation, below 7% of of its non-agricultural workers being in unions. For the entire South, an average of 15% of the workers are organized, compared to 28% for the entire country. Within the unions less than 50% pay dues and an even lower 5% of these are active unionists. Thus today the South lives and works essentially unprotected by even the basic organization of unions.

Now, during the '60's, the rumblings of another strike wave are heard in the South. The wave has yet to grow to massive proportions but the process of growth is rapidly increasing. Once again, we use North Carolina as the example. In 1960 twelve strikes were reported in the state, involving some 1,189 workers. By 1969 this number had grown to 44 work stoppages involving 15,100 workers. These strikes are only the reported ones; many wildcats and flare ups never get reported or counted, in order to preserve North Carolina's reputation for "docile labor."

The Coming Struggle

Southern workers have yet to win the right to organize in their own behalf. Today the question of the right to organize is rapidly taking shape on two fronts within the workforce. Industrial workers are fighting to organize into trade unions and government employees on all levels are organizing for the right to bargain. Among government workers the most active sectors are the bottom level sanitation and health care employees, mostly marginal black workers, and the "professional" teachers. Garbage collectors are

Local Control vs. Socialism

Exchanges with the Fourth International

The Unified Secretariat, the "Fourth International" supported by the U.S. Socialist Workers Party, has formally proposed a public discussion of differences between itself and a Labor Committee co-thinker, Leonidas Karipis. This proposal, issued by Unified Secretariat official Serge Niemetz, is the first of the two following documents. The second is a reply drafted on behalf of his tendency by Leonidas Karipis (which, accordingly refers to Karipis in the third person singular.) While these documents will be of most immediate importance for Socialist Workers Party members and other specialists in the "Trotskyist" movement, the principled issues involved should be of importance to the socialist movement as a whole.

Without apology on that account, we trust the general reader will muster forbearance for the "in-group" character of certain sections of both documents. Since the Unified Secretariat has posed questions of fact and interpretation respecting "Trotskyist" organizational history, it was necessary that Karipis reply directly to the 4th International on those specialized historical questions. We trust that this preliminary exchange will clear the way for continuing the discussion in terms better suited to the general reader, along the lines of issues which occupy the concluding sections of Karipis' reply.

Comrade Markakis in 'Epanastatiki Grami' ("Revolutionary Line") has already given a lengthy reply to the article "Trotskyism Today" published in No. 5-6 of the journal "Epanastasi." However we are of the opinion that he was somewhat carried away by his emotions and that at times the tone of his polemic hampers him in making his argument clear. For this reason we think it is necessary to reply to your article in a much clearer and more concise manner, insisting on the essential points, and projecting constructive proposals. We will be brief, hoping that future discussions will allow us to return in more detail to the problems which we shall now discuss.

What is the essence of your article? It demands that the revolutionaries of the 4th International connect their efforts with "Epanastasi," in order to lay the basis for an international party in Europe. To substantiate this you must prove that: 1) the 4th International is bankrupt; 2) that "Epanastasi" offers better prospectives.

Did you succeed?

THE 'BANKRUPTCY' OF THE 4TH INTERNATIONAL

We prefer to believe that the author of the article presents such a "history" of the 4th International which has very little relation to reality--out of ignorance. We shall not analyse "details" such as the accusation of "sectarian anti-communism among almost all the leaders of the 4th International after 1938 with the exception of Trotsky" (in a period when the best cadre of the movement are being murdered by the GPU). We shall not examine the assumptions you make on the number of its cadres, or the fictional relationship you assert between Pablo-Mandel, or on your "free" estimation on the "degeneration" and the political "repentance" of this or that leader.

All of this is not very serious and is hardly a proper way to conduct a political discussion.

What is even worse is that a certain number of political STATEMENTS are so wrong that we ask ourselves if the author has ever read the most basic documents.

He writes : "From the formation of the Left Opposition in the Comintern until his death in 1940, Trotsky had only one organizational perspective--the creation of a new international party..."

This is wrong. A differentiation must be made: In the first period of the Left Opposition (up to 1933: defeat of German proletariat, Hitler's rise to power), Trotsky believed that the International movement could be resuscitated and therefore the Left Opposition still considered itself as belonging to the Comintern.

After 1933 it was clear that:

- 1) Stalinism and Bolshevism are irreconcilable terms:
- 2) The Comintern cannot be reformed and that it has become an organ of the Stalinist bureaucracy:
- 3) As a result the foundations for a 4th International must be laid.

The foundation of the 4th International was "an act of desparation?" Here it is not a matter of psychology; rather one has to have a Marxist understanding. What were the conditions of that period? After repeated defeat for over ten years, the proletariat was on the eve of war under the complete control of Stalinism and Social Democracy. It was necessary before the crisis of war came to organize for the defense of working class conquests, for the defense of the class Bolshevik Program which was betrayed by the 2nd and 3rd International (after the death of Lenin). This was the "basic principle" on which the foundation of the 4th International was laid. And not "to be the consistent programmatic ally of the mass of revolutionary cadre in and around the Communist Party."

What does the author mean? That the programmatic basis of Trotskyism and Stalinism are the same? Because these cadres have only one program: the Stalinist "program," (or some other: then which one?). Then how could organized layers "around" the CP have any program different from the Stalinist? But if the program of the Bolsheviks, which the Trotskyists support, was not irreconcilable with Stalinism it would have been irresponsible and criminal to found the 4th International. And this alone would be enough to condemn the 4th International.

As for the accusation that it "turns its back" on the cadres of the CP's, it is altogether ridiculous. We have never stopped repeating that we will build the Revolutionary Party by winning over to our program the best elements of the Communist Parties. With its struggle against Stalinism and anti-communism, the 4th International has actually succeeded in advancing the conquests of Bolshevism.

And basing itself on these principles today the 4th International continues to live and struggle. It is strange that the author writes about the SWP saying that "...not only did it lose its morale (and was limited to not more than 200 active members), but that for a while it lost all appetite for international action," at the moment in which that the SWP of the U.S.A. is the most "dangerous" organization in America, the most active, and the best organized; especially when we are aware of its role in support of Cuba and Viet Nam. And we can also mention the struggle of our comrades Hugo Blanco in Peru, Mozkozo in Bolivia, Langdis La in India, and Bala Tabo in Ceylon... Is this

what you would call irresponsible activity? anti-communist work? the activity of a bankrupt organization?

WHAT IS A PROGRAM ?

Your article wishes to attack the program of the 4th International? But which program? The author wants a program which will be in the service of the "historical duty which corresponds to the conditions of mankind of 1970 (and not 1919-1922 or 1938)." But here there is an absolute misunderstanding. The historical duties are determined by an entire historical epoch in the conjunctural period of the imperialist epoch, the epoch of wars and proletarian revolutions.

A new program would apply if since 1919, 1922 until 1938 we were in a new historical period. This would mean that imperialism is no longer the "highest stage" of capitalism. Then we would at least have to openly state this. From this standpoint, the historical duties were determined even before 1919...from the programmatic principles of revolutionary Marxism, from Bolshevism.

Perhaps the author meant the strategic tasks? On this point we would agree. It is necessary to have a strategy which conforms to the objective conditions of 1971. On what shall such a program be based? The article talks about some program which will be based "on the existing forces of production of 1970". Correct. From this standpoint we will agree in saying, for example, that Trotsky's "Transitional Program" must be reworked because conditions of today are not the same as those of 1938.

But it is not only a matter of economics.

"The socialist programs which are correct only from an economic standpoint reduce themselves to simple abstract truths...The practical task of every revolutionary armed with a correct economic program..." etc. What is a "correct economic" program? It is a program which 1) corresponds to the real objective conditions but which 2) can be realized only within the context of a revolutionary strategy, and 3) conforms to the principles of Revolutionary-Marxism. In other words it is a program which is politically correct. Thus the criticism which is made of the electoral campaign of comrade Krivin is turned against Karipis "...did they perhaps present a socialist program which solves the problem of real wages and agriculture in France? Nothing of the sort."

What we did during the duration of the electoral campaign was not to present "business" proposals for immediate solution like the CP did. We developed the main axis of our revolutionary perspective: What to do after May '68, how to carry on those struggles, how to struggle politically against the bourgeoisie in order to really solve the problem of wages, etc. And contrary to Karipis' belief, we insist on the necessity of the organization of revolutionaries and the working out of a concrete revolutionary program and a corresponding strategy.

The League Communiste is the sole tendency in France which unceasingly struggles against economism, ("constructive" proposals, "rational" solutions of the CPF), against spontaneism (no strategy, the masses will succeed on their own when the time comes), and insists on the necessity for the organized political revolutionary struggle. With this perspective we are preparing our action program, which will be discussed at the second convention of the

League Communiste during Easter.

But also one more point: You say that programs degenerate into "simple" abstract truisms from the moment we are unsuccessful in bringing them to the consciousness of the masses... "in essence therefore an organization has assimilated Marxist theory only when it has succeeded in making the masses take a step forward toward realizing a new program..." The bad thing is that the author never develops this conclusively.

Such a programmatic view has nothing to do with Marxism (the proof of the validity of a program is that the masses assimilate it). Or else we would have to accept that in 1914 Lenin and Leibnecht did not "assimilate theory" and that on the contrary Bernstein and Kautsky... followed by the masses are not drowned in "futile gossiping and ridiculous efforts."

The problem which your article does not touch, is that the masses are neither spontaneous nor politically virgin. There are periods in which the masses on the whole are counter-revolutionary, periods in which bourgeois ideology and reformism and Stalinism are hegemonic in the consciousness of the working class. We will not go further on this point, for it would be necessary for us to refer to all of "What Is To Be Done." In such a period revolutionaries must struggle against repression, maintain the previous gains of workers and, if possible, advance them, attempting to maintain the contact with the advanced sections of the proletariat.

It is clear that no one can understand the evolution of the existence of the 4th International if he does not attempt to grasp the past and present of Stalinism and how significant is its influence on the masses. We will return with more detail to this point, but for the time being in order for you to prove that the 4th International is "bankrupt" you must prove that either it is based on the principles of Bolshevism and that Bolshevism is no longer valid, or that Bolshevism is valid and that the 4th International betrayed it. So, let us discuss the program of the 4th International.

The article is weakest at this point. The author begins by attempting to lift heavy arguments which immediately fall on his own feet: 'That which was once considered the best characteristic of Trotskyist propaganda is today the common knowledge and belief of every thinking revolutionary cadre in every European Communist Party. But if this is true then how is it that as of yet there is no mass revolutionary international? No comrades, the masses are not as yet "ripe" as you think. What Karipis says about the "Trotskyist Program" in fact makes us glad that such a program has not won the masses over yet. Fortunately, because the "program" which Karipis describes has no relation whatsoever to reality.

"Orientation towards the right leaning renegades." Did you perhaps read comrade Bensard's article on Roger Garaudy? Is this perhaps what we are saying about Poland? Is that perhaps what our comrades who are struggling in the workers' states are doing? We will not go on with more examples; however it would be good if at some future time we seriously discuss, basing ourselves on documents, the positions of the League Communiste and the 4th International.

Nevertheless, there is a contradiction between your initial accusation of "sectarian anti-communism" and that they "used revolutionary movements and the Cuban revolution to build the 4th International." Can anyone say that one

"uses" the struggle of other countries when you organize support for the Algerian revolution (support networks, securing material aid and money, distribution of newspapers, demonstrations)? The Cuban revolution (Fair Play Committee) or the Vietnamese struggle (Student Mobilization Committee, Viet Nam Solidarity Campaign, Comite Viet-Nam National, the international demonstration of 1968 in Berlin)?

This is not the opinion of the Cubans, or the Vietnamese comrades (who support our meetings and officially take part in them). And all this without us ever concealing our criticisms of these movements. Would it not also be correct to say the E.S.O. "uses" the Greek resistance to recruit? For us such "arguments" are a bit weak and almost without value for carrying on a serious discussion between revolutionary fighters.

The Trotskyist program is altogether different from a "left Stalinist" program, and we are willing to seriously discuss the essential points of our programmatic principles: theory of organization, theory of Permanent Revolution, analysis of bureaucracy within working class movements and the workers' states, and strategy of the transitional period. We are even willing to discuss our action program. What do we mean by this? It refers to the program which we are working on, little by little, in relation to our principles and to our experience as an organization. For example, "workers control" is part of the transitional strategy, but the concrete slogans on workers' control must be determined by relating it to the given conditions, our given forces, the level of consciousness among the masses, etc.

We cannot explain here precisely what we mean when we say "the strategy of the transitional period" however we would like to underline another "mistake" of Karipis — which clearly displays the difference between a serious and "non-serious" discussion. Karipis writes that for Comrade Mandel, "workers control" was connected with the struggles prior to 1968, with the absence of mass proletarian struggles. Just the opposite is true. It was especially after the large coal miners' strike in Belgium that we began to speak about the immediacy of workers control in connection with the escalating workers' struggles.

But there is something even worse. Karipis writes: "In the absence of any possibility for political mass struggles by the working class, it was necessary to concentrate on narrow, local action, gradually politicizing workers by engaging them in struggles for control at the place of work, locally." Here Karipis simplifies to an extreme degree, because he does not see that militant local struggles, if advanced politically, exert an influence on a NATIONAL scale, by their exemplary effect. He especially distorts the PERMANENT character of the transitional strategy, wanting instead stages (which ones?).

Furthermore, this allows him to use the usual Stalinist methodology; the mixing up of many ideas, without any attempt to examine them individually, one by one. Thus he arrives at conclusions such as: "workers' control was proposed in different forms by Mandel, the syndicalist Andre Gorz and other centrists..." With the same logic one could say that "Socialism was proposed in different ways by Lenin, Bernstein and other centrists." He simply "forgets" the innumerable polemics which we have made against the reformist conceptions of workers' control.

Concluding that workers' control "...is derelict anti-Marxist syndicalism and of course not socialism" is the

One of the three main political issues of fact is perhaps not a strictly factual question. Your errors of fact in treating the issue of "workers control" reflect a conceptual blunder commonplace among the writings of comrade Ernest Mandel and other leading spokesmen for the Unified Secretariat. However, although our response to your mistake features the bare outlines of the required theoretical conceptions, you have posed the issue of "workers control" as a mere factual question, and therefore we have elected to treat it under that heading.

4th International History in General

You write that you prefer to imagine the article's included history of the various 4th Internationals to be a product of the author's ignorance. Contrary to such an assertion, while allowing for the existence of your different systematic constructions upon the same events, the article, "Trotskyism Today" is the most accurate summary of that history published.

Indeed, although you start your general criticism by the attempt to merely ridicule the historical account, you evidently do not even convince yourself. Your treatment of such topics as SWP history, the problem of the 1940 stenogram, and the topic of "workers control," are exemplary of the point that your exceptions to the article's historical accounts are based on your different interpretation of those events, and not a competent denial of the occurrences themselves.

In a point-by-point treatment, you would be compelled to concede that most of the account given in that article is immediately supported by extant documentation which has never been seriously contested for its value as source material. For example, the history of the International Secretariat from the end of the war through 1954, which was reported in some detail by the 1954 publication of Cannon's correspondence and memoranda on this subject. You might take exception to Cannon's evaluation of that history on certain points as Karipis does on other points, but neither of us nor, for example, the Healy group, could competently argue that Cannon's account reflects general ignorance of the subject.

In respect to several other topics of that history, such as the 1940 stenogram from the "Browder Election Campaign" discussions, extant documentation used as sources for the article had been separately cross-checked over a preceding period of about two decades by extended discussions with several of the leading persons who had not only participated in those particular debates, but had discussed related matters with Trotsky on numerous occasions during the 1938-40 period.

In a few other important matters, including the subject of the negotiations on re-unification sponsorship between comrade Mandel and certain SWP leaders, the author himself wrote from the standpoint of personal, privileged knowledge. In some instances, this knowledge perhaps included items not made available to Mandel at the time. On the general background to the re-unification negotiations, the author's personal knowledge also benefitted from extended discussions with Colvin da Silva over a period of a week during the period of those international discussions.

As for the International Committee's special place in that account, nothing reported respecting the position of that faction lacks support from either internal or published documents of the faction.

In summing up this observation on your criticisms of the article's historiographic competence, we add a most relevant if amusing anecdote which provides a collateral disproof of your assertions.

As you know, the publication of the article in our magazine evoked the wildest grimacing and unearthly noises from certain quarters of London, Duesseldorf and the mass-struggle arena of the Parisian cafes. The later consequence of the clowning from London, for example, was Healy's donation of press facilities to his seven-member Greek emigre grouplet, donated for the palpable object of publishing biweekly paranoid references to the ESO organization. Among the several public reactions from other locations, Markakis transmitted urgent pleas to various addresses on both sides of the Atlantic, demanding the real identity of this Ivan the Terrible of a Karipis. The initial suggestion he received from SWP officials was the name of "James Robertson".

Robertson has two circumstantial qualifications for the otherwise undeserved honor bestowed upon him at first reaction by SWP officials. The assumption that Robertson's writings might turn up in Europe is based on actual knowledge of certain sequelae of the April, 1966 London Conference of the Healygroups. There was much mutual commiseration and a sentimental exchange of personal addresses among the sundry observer-delegations who fled for their safety and sanity from those astonishing proceedings. Thus Robinson, one of those terrified delegates, began a correspondence with Lutte Ouvriere and the Muniz tendency, among others.

More important to the point at hand, Robertson's chief personal distinction is his preoccupation as a fanatical archivist. He has been known to lose control of himself publicly, in a seizure of manic euphoria caused by prospective possession of a single yellowed leaflet produced by the most ephemeral sectlet of the 1930s. To understand the initial blunder of Markakis' SWP informants, one must imagine them inquiring of one another: "Who in Hell has been keeping 4th International documents going back to the 1930s?" The proposal of Robertson's name is the strongest circumstantial evidence that those SWP officials privately, and correctly, regarded the Karipis article as supported by the very best depth of documentation.

"Sectarian Stalinophobia"

As an apposite to your sweeping rejection of the historical account in "Trotskyism Today," you explain that you "shall not analyze 'details' such as the accusation of 'sectarian anti-communism.'" You add the parenthetical discussion of just that "detail", that such a charge is obviously ridiculous in the light of "a period in which the best cadres of the movement are being murdered by G.P.U."

same as saying that Lenin (The Coming Catastrophe, The Order on Workers Control), Trotsky (Transitional Program), R. Luxemburg (Speech on program, What Spartakus Wants), and the first four conventions of the Communist International, to mention only these (because there is also Gramsci etc.) represent "derelict" anti-Marxist syndicalism and not socialism. Because it is not possible to oppose our concept of workers control and theirs—because in essence they are the same. If we want to discuss seriously, we must bring into the discussion the real positions of the former and the latter.

WHAT DIFFERENCES?

By reading your press, after having made contact with some of your cadres, we are convinced that it would be beneficial to try to work together. The basic condition is that our differences will have to be made public and discussed in an honest and comradely fashion. We should never forget that we are not struggling to "fortify" our organizations but to make the revolution, and that we must tutor our cadres and the masses in the school of workers democracy—starting now.

To begin with we believe that you ignore the problems existing out of the European sphere and especially the problems of the workers' states. You never attempted to make an analysis of the crisis of leadership of the proletariat in relation to the degeneration of the USSR. This leads you to compromises with Stalinism which correspond to an abandonment of Marxist methodology in your analysis of Stalinism. In this manner your criticism of the KKE does not lead to a criticism of world Stalinism and therefore is inadequate.

You attribute the degeneration of the CPG (KKE) to "ideological self-delusions" to "philosophical despair" and to the "idiocy" of its leadership. But why then did the strategy for bourgeois democratic revolution become adopted in 1934? What was the role of the Soviet bureaucracy in butchering the Greek Resistance of '44,...etc. Isn't it strange that such idiocy reigns supreme for the past fifty years in almost all the communist parties throughout the world. We are in danger of making idiocy a factor in historical development. Isn't this a little bit...idealistic? Such a conception will no doubt reflect itself in your practical work.

Your ideas on the resistance are at times dangerously parallel to the position of the Partsalides faction. Is this accidental? "Mami" remains silent on Psaradelis (no. 1-3).

(Note: a Trotskyist who was condemned to life imprisonment by the Junta); on the assistance of the workers' states to the Junta; on the massacre of the Palestinian revolution, etc. But such events could not but have driven workers and revolutionaries to do some thinking. The silence of revolutionaries allows for the acceptance of bourgeois interpretations of these events. We do not criticize your intentions, but objectively speaking, silence without in any way being useful, leads to collaboration.

The fourth issues of "Mami" shows some improvement, but still there is no conscious disassociation with Stalinism. Whether you wish it or not the more you apply revolutionary politics, the more so will you be attacked by the Stalinists. Consequently, in order for the revolution to be advanced in Greece, in Europe, and throughout the world, we must draw the line at all points with Stalinism. Neither

the backward state of the masses, nor the "taboos" of working people justify such compromises; Marxists know that only the truth is itself revolutionary.

Comrades, we are willing to discuss with you on all of the problems mentioned here—seriously, honestly, and to show you in practise that the 4th International not only does not hamper the development of the communist movement, but on the contrary, extends its hand to all the revolutionary movements having as their goal the world socialist revolution. We are ready to meet with you and discuss all of these ideas and viewpoints.

With communist greetings,
for the Greek Committee of the United Secretariat,

Serge Niemitz
Paris, March 20, 1971

Reply:

Cologne, May 27, 1971

We have reviewed your criticisms of March 20, chiefly directed to an article in Epanastasi 5-6, "Trotskyism Today," by our Leonidas Karipis. By this present letter in response to the factual and systematic issues you have posed, we are thus proceeding with the public discussion-exchanges you have proposed.

This letter is divided into three principal parts. The first section responds to selected factual errors in your criticism of the article. The second is occupied with the important theoretical issues posed in the exchange to this point: strategic perspective, programmatic conceptions, and notions of the necessary organizing process. The concluding section is occupied with your procedural proposals and related items.

I. YOUR FACTUAL ERRORS

It should be sufficient for the present stage of these exchanges to confine our review of your various factual errors of criticism to four items. In three instances, these items have been selected because of their direct importance to the main political issues. In the fourth instance, your treatment of the reported demoralization of the 1954 SWP cadres, your errors are treated here as an exemplification of the sort of blunders you commit on various such detailed topics.

You then continue with summary references to a variety of other details, of the account and judge that "all this is not very serious and is hardly a proper way to conduct a political discussion.

In fact, the charge of "sectarian Stalinophobia" is most germane to the political thesis of the article as a whole. Some of the most essential strategical points of the article stand or fall on the implications of that charge. Contrary to your argument, discussion of such "detail" is most serious.

Moreover, you repudiate your own argument on this point by the fact that you subsequently devote much of your letter not only to continued discussion of Trotskyist attitudes toward Stalinism, but to strong censure of ESO for omitting more fulsome public exposition on every imaginable aspect of this "not serious" detail.

Do we "compromise with Stalinism," as you contend, or is the Unified Secretariat (and of course, the International Committee) rightly charged with "sectarian Stalinophobia?" That is the burden of your entire point, not an irrelevant "detail."

It is thus ironical that your ad hominem argument, the murder of the best Trotskyist cadres by the G.P.U., was thrown against Trotsky by several SWP leaders in the 1940 discussions of the "Browder Election Campaign." Trotsky responded with cool rage denouncing such subjectivist reasoning, insisting (after 1938!) on a continued "Left Opposition" tactic by the independent 4th International toward the revolutionary cadres within the Stalinist (!) CPs. It happens, respecting the article, under debate, that Karipis concurred totally and exactly with Trotsky's argument on this point, and explicitly identified the source for attributing the authorship of these views to Trotsky.

It is even more ironical that the stenogram of that 1940 debate came into the public domain at the strenuous insistence of the late George Clarke, at a time when Clarke was a leading spokesman for the international factional faction of Pablo, Mandel et al. Moreover, the Pablo-Mandel faction made the most extensive references to this document in making the charge of "sectarian Stalinophobia" against Healy and the majority of the SWP leadership at that time. No matter that the Pablo faction had used the correct argument in defense of the wrong position. No one of note in the various factions of the various 4th Internationals has ever attempted to contest the authenticity of the stenogram.

SWP History In Particular

The worst choice among your various methods of attempted factual criticisms of the Epanastasi article is your effort to disprove the reported state of the 1954 SWP by reference to Mr. J. Edgar Hoover's remarks on the 1970 YSA. You should be warned that widespread knowledgeable opinion in the U.S.A. suspects that Mr. Hoover could not find his way out of the gentlemen's latrine without special assistance from a paid informer. As is the well-known case with most FBI reports, Hoover's account of the 1970 YSA leaves a certain something lacking in the precision.

We shall comment on the gross, empirical aspects of

this subject first and then add pointed remarks respecting the political quality of the YSA.

It should not only be considered but even emphasized that the YSA grew rapidly during a period of approximately eighteen months, following the June 1969 dissolution of SDS. Throughout those regions of the U.S. where the YSA, heavily based in the midwest, met no competent opposition from other "left" groups, it managed to quickly pick up something in the order of 500 of the tens of thousands of former SDSers cast adrift in June, 1969. Despite the YSA's manic assertions of continued growth the main impetus for YSA expansion was manifest in February, 1970, at a Cleveland SMC Conference, where the attendance exceeded that of any former SDS national conference. Although the organization has enjoyed some sustained growth (and considerable turnover) since, the national SMC Conference of February, 1971, and poor response to SWP-YSA institutional activities in the recent Washington D.C. anti-war demonstration, show that the dynamic of the YSA's expansion has substantially ebbed and is presently on the decline.

However, respecting Hoover's report on this subject, during the past year, the YSA has grown more slowly than the CP youth affiliate, the Young Workers Liberation League, and hardly much more than the SDS affiliate of the crisis-wracked Progressive Labor Party.

The YWLL is not only growing more rapidly than the YSA, but, numbers aside, the YWLL is far more important in the political sense.

YSA recruiting remains oriented to campus youth and similar strata and YSA political-tactical orientations are, with a few significant exceptions, markedly hostile to manifestations of working-class ferment. This puts the YSA presently in the position of "riding the outgoing tide." Since early 1969, campus-radical ferment has been in a state of uneven decline. It has progressively collapsed in most of the campus centers which participated in the main upsurges of 1967-68 and has continued with diminishing force, among those campuses in the midwest U.S., etc. which were not reached by the 1967-68 upsurge. (We will return to a significant aspect of that unevenness in connection with PLP-SDS.)

Although the U.S. press and radio-TV is still occupied very much with manifestations of "youth radicalism", the large body of youth who supply such manifestations are not pro-socialist radicals, but part of a growing, drug-ridden "counter-culture" that begs recollections of Stefan Georg and, in a general way, the Italian Risorgimento.

The "center of mass" of U.S. radicalization-processes has shifted during the 1969-70 period, away from the campuses toward a growing strike wave. Despite certain of the usual crimes against the labor movement's struggles and even some outright strikebreaking activity, the YWLL is in the main oriented to this strike wave where the SWP-YSA are decidedly anti-labor in their rhetorical postures and practical orientations. This means that, between the two largest socialist youth organizations, the YSA and YWLL, the YWLL is more politically significant at the moment.

The case of the past year's growth of PLP-SDS contains wild contradictions which warn analysts away from simple numbers' games in evaluating the vitality and viability of socialist organizations. The parent organization, PLP, has been in a process of disintegration since about the first of 1970. PL, once on a par with the SWP-YSA in force and influence, was torn apart by large defections of its anarchist petit-bourgeois members and by loss of its entire Philadelphia and much of its New York campus cadres to a newly-established organization, the National Caucus of Labor Committees. The tactic employed by the latter organization was that of the united front, which was employed with sufficient effectiveness to "cure" PLP of further deviations from strict self-isolation.

In a desperate effort to compensate for major membership losses, PL assigned every available experienced cadre from its one remaining large campus base in Boston, Mass. to campuses in outlying regions of Massachusetts, Rhode Island and Connecticut, applying the same campus-colonizing policy with less concentration in other regions of the country which had been more or less untouched by earlier waves of campus-radicalism. By catering to the anarchist, "counter culture" tendencies of these potential recruits, PL's SDS organization picked up a dozen here, a score there, and the odd few elsewhere. This process was, of course, almost invisible to the rest of the socialist movement, except for several occasions when PL would mobilize busloads of its new recruits for one of the several demonstrations in Detroit, and, more recently, a May Day rally in New York City.

Without drawing further on our detailed reports received on this organization, one concluding observation brings us to the point to be made. The influx of large numbers of anarchist petit-bourgeois youth into an evaporating adult organization has simply accelerated the process of dissolution.

A similar phenomenon exists for the YSA. One may say, quoting, "Man is what he eats," that Feuerbach has taken his revenge on those SWPers who have ignored him. The opportunistic processes by which the YSA (and SWP) have assimilated greater numbers of petit-bourgeois youth now threatens to bring the organization to the point of breaking with every principle it considered fundamental during the first three decades of the U.S. Trotskyist movement!

In this connection one has but to refer to the new line first publicly enunciated by Jack Barnes and other SWP officials at the 1970 Summer Oberlin conference. If one consoles himself that the proposals at that conference were an episodic aberration or a mere exaggeration of one-sidedness, Peter Camejo reiterated the same "new line" in his keynote address to the Dec., 1970 YSA conference, and documentary versions of those political proposals have been published as feature key-note pieces in the magazine and weekly tabloid of the SWP during the first half of 1971.

Barnes, Camejo and other spokesmen explained their sweeping revisions of "Trotskyism" in these terms. Instead of the "old working class," they argued, there was a "new working class," which consisted of an aggregation of the communalist, "self-determination" struggles

of blacks, chicanos, Puerto Ricans, etc. Recently added to the repertoire is "women's self-determination," "gay liberation," etc. The "new line", on examination, is a return from Marx through Proudhon to True Socialism!

We are happy to receive reports that not all SWPers and YSAers are entirely pleased with this development. Fragmented groups of young oppositionists are determined to raise pointed issues at the coming SWP August convention. Some older SWPers are not entirely lacking in restiveness. One may hope that the convention will accomplish something beneficial.

Such facts considered, you should have been a trifle more cautiously enthusiastic in your attempt to put the SWP-YSA under close scrutiny of the European movement.

Workers' Control

In introducing this concluding topic of the present section, two points must be made. In your attempt to equate "local workers control" to the notions of "workers control" promulgated by Luxemburg, Lenin, and Trotsky, you commit the most profound mistatements of simple fact. You are able to do this with apparent sincerity because your tendency has yet to assimilate the significance of Marx's denunciation (The Poverty of Philosophy) of the Proudhonist, original version of contemporary "local control" schemes.

The theoretical form of this issue is the distinction between what Marx respectively terms the "class-in-itself" and "class for itself," a distinction which Trotsky employs in situating the "class-for-itself" conception at the foundation of his transitional programmatic method (e.g. the "Germany" pamphlets).

Your inability to comprehend this fundamental principle thus far in your studies is explicitly illustrated by citing from an article of comrade Mandel's. We attribute to this publication not only Mandel's position as a principal spokesman for the Unified Secretariat, but also the coherence of the views with the general body of his economic-theoretical and other writings, and also the systematic internal parallels between his reasoning and that of other spokesmen for your organization.

Mandel attempts to explain the terms, "class-in-itself" and "class-for-itself," by means of the following glosses. He presents "class-in-itself" as signifying the working class taken objectively, and "class-for-itself" as the working class taken subjectively. He pursues this point by asserting that while Marx -- the "immature Marx" -- did indeed view the working class with emphasis on the subjective (class-for-itself), the "mature Marx" of 1848 onwards shifted his position to emphasize the higher importance of the "class-in-itself."

It must therefore seem unfortunate that a cruel historical accident prevented Trotsky from enjoying the tutelage of comrade Mandel, in which happier arrangement we should have been spared such misleading and immature works as Trotsky's "Germany" pamphlets!

To the extent that Mandel has even a superficial literary comprehension of Marx's usage of the two terms, his conceptions appear to be limited to the aspects of the problem which could be portrayed within the naive (bourgeois) world-outlook of "sense-certainty." Specifically, he goes as far as to recognize that "class-in-itself" corresponds to the fragmented state of localized organizations of workers under normal conditions of their bourgeois existence. This, in the narrowest usage of the term, is more or less correct. One is left to wonder at Mandel's understanding of even his own terminology respecting "class for itself," except as some pure-ideal subjective state of workers' minds. It is nonetheless clear that Mandel is reifying the usage of the terms for the purpose of making the point that "immature Marx" (1845-47) was still mired in mistaken tendencies for idealism.

The point of Mandel's glosses for the issue of "local control" is that Mandel's imaginary "mature Marx," emphasizing the "objective" aspect of the working class' existence, would necessarily locate the origins of any notion of workers' control in the winning of local autonomy over local production, etc., by class-in-itself fragments of that class. If the internal structure of Mandel's argument is fuzzy, his starting-point and conclusion are each stated without equivocation. In effect, he has argued for a repudiation of Marx's attacks on Proudhon, and on such a premise now argues, in effect, that a Proudhonist approach to struggles of the local fragments of the class is indeed the transition toward socialism. Thus, he opposes Marx, who regarded such schemes as a petit-bourgeois chimera which is "transitional" away from socialism.

Of the several celebrated Comintern leaders you list as purported advocates of "local workers control," the only instance in which your identification has a small margin of half-truth is the case of Gramsci. It must be conceded by us that during the critical 1919-22 period Gramsci continued to conciliate anarcho-syndicalist moods and prejudices widespread among Italian workers. Yet, if that seeming vindication of your views is more closely examined within its historical context, Gramsci does not help your case at all. It was principally as a result of such foolish pandering to anarcho-syndicalism that the workers movement was easily and even disgracefully crushed by the fascist counter-revolution. The limitation of mass workers organization to a mere few city-wide organizations, played into the hands of the fascist enemy tactically. The ideological concessions to anarcho-syndicalist sicknesses left the Italian workers generally morally and intellectually vacillating or wholly defenseless against the argument of Mussolini's left-demagogy.

This aspect of Italian (and world) history does, indeed, present Gramsci as a contradictory figure. Despite his complicity in suicidal softness toward anarcho-syndicalism on this count at that crucial juncture, his later brilliant attacks on Bukharin's "dialectical materialism" and his attention to combatting the endemic reactionary philosophy of uneducated workers and peasants represent invaluable contributions to our present efforts to extirpate the moral sickness of anarchism from the movement.

"Local control," a populist conception which has reappeared with each new capitalist conjuncture, is indeed a "transitional" form of the struggles of the ruled. But, transitional to what? By intensifying class-in-itself, or reactionary consciousness to a degree of frenzy, the anarchist slogan of "local control" has always been and will always be either an empty posturing or an actual transition -- toward fascism.

We concede -- we have never argued otherwise -- that Mandel's advocacy of "local control" does date from the Belgian class struggles of the early 1960s. The point is, that while that Belgian working class was in the act of besieging the Belgian bourgeoisie, the thus-imperiled capitalists were rescued from further embarrassments or worse by the timely assistance (in part) of the infamous Renard, a vile creature who did precisely what the British Colonial Office has always prescribed for such predicaments: to set one section (Walloons) of the potential revolutionary forces at the throat of other sections (Flemmings). Mandel, who has more recently subjected Renardism to a certain degree of long-overdue criticism, formerly occupied the pages of *La Gauche* with hero-worship of the wretched counter-revolutionary adventurer.

One should not exaggerate Renard's influence, of course. Long before the unhappy date of his birth, there were more than ample numbers of unspeakable adventurers to incite gullible Flemmings or Walloons into such hideous occupations, and there have been, periodically, large pluralities of working-class Flemmings and Walloons prepared to degrade themselves in such "causes." Such a streak of swinishness within the majority of the working class under capitalism is, of course, a reflection of the parochialism which, in most cases, already exists without any advocates of "local control" to bring such reactionary ideology to a new height of frenzy.

That is the logic of the "class-in-itself" form of class organization and ideology. In this discussion it does not matter whether one currently estimates Renard to have been a small or considerable influence in destroying the socialist potential among Belgian workers. The point is: *La Gauche* kissed the tail of the Renardist pig.

As for the development of this hideous repudiation of Marx among self-styled European socialists. Renard is certainly not the principal factor in this development. In the awarding of credits of authorship, considerable respect must be paid to Quadregesimo Anno, a long-standing Vatican authority for various Christian-social (or, Christian-fascist) recipes. More immediately, credit must be given to the late M. De Gaulle's materialization of such Christian-social "philosophy" in the promulgation of "participation" schemes. Concurrently, while Volkswagen workers were receiving the opportunity to become capitalists from a beneficent BRD government, the old left-Nazi rhetoric of the Strasser faction was being widely resurrected in Germany, in contemplation of the "socialist" virtues of "co-determination." In response to these antics in capitalist circles, various "left mandarins" began to occupy one another with public discussion of their various proposals to hoodwink the bourgeoisie by agitating for "left" amendment to such Papacy-socialism.

You stress a point which we would neither dispute nor regard as having any importance. You emphasize that leaders of the Unified Secretariat have persistently criticized the proprietary distinctions of "local control" schemes offered by anarcho-syndicalist and other left-opponent groups. Such disputes are of no relevance. While we concede that we owe much to Germany's intellectual contributions, there is one common-place trait from that nation which we would wish to absolutely extirpate from the working-class forces. That is the disease of "thoroughness" which impels certain socialists to exactly measure the individual hairs on a fly's head before permitting themselves to apply the fly-swatter. We concede the existence of proprietary distinctions in your formulation of "structural reforms." When we embark on a campaign of swatting all flies, we do tend to overlook the "finer" individual distinctions among the diptera. Except in the mythical swamps of True Socialism, there are neither unicorns nor a socialist version of "local control."

II. QUESTIONS OF THEORY

From a formal standpoint, the principal source of seeming semantic difficulties in such exchanges as these, among different socialist tendencies, is the lack of an agreed-upon corpus of scientific principles. In the usual disputes among mathematical physicists, for example, it would be outrageous to suggest that each specialized point at issue ought to be defended or attacked from a starting-point of kindergarten arithmetic. Unfortunately, as Marx complained to Engels on at least one recorded occasion, this very outrageous spectacle is the sorry state of affairs among disputing socialist tendencies.

It is merely an empty posture to assert that the desired common basis readily exists in reference to Marx's writing. Indeed, properly speaking, Marx's writings, taken in their historical context from the starting-point of 1844-46, admit of only one coherent interpretation. Unfortunately, that interpretation itself does not exist as a fixed mooring whenever we pass from one faction to another even within the same socialist organization.

True as that is, it fails to adequately describe the present state of affairs.

As the evidence of Marx's Critique of the Gotha Programme demonstrates with sufficient force, the organized socialist movement of the past century was non-Marxist or pseudo-Marxist from its inception. Of course, the term, "Marxist," was originally employed as a convenient factional self-designation and did not mean what many pretend it to signify today: a philosophical world-outlook agreeable to Marx's own.

Engels' 1890-93 correspondence on the "Paul Barth Question" is the most damning indictment of the German Social-Democracy's theory and practice through the early 1890's. The "official Marxist" organizations had improved themselves on points of literacy; in content, the Erfurt program of the SPD was hardly much improvement over the mish-mash previously adopted at Gotha.

With a few special exceptions, the discrepancy between Marx and "official Marxism" has increased on

the whole during this century.

Rosa Luxemburg's struggles against the "orthodoxy" of the centrist "proletarian kernel" faction of Bebel-Kautsky, especially during the 1907-14 period, typifies the overwhelming evidence for the documented judgment that the SPD's "official Marxism" was then as wretched as it had ever been before. (Cf. L. Marcus, "Centrism As A Social Phenomenon," The Campaigner, Jan. 1970) (Lest some of your less literate spokesmen should otherwise blunder into raising a false factional issue over this report, we should emphasize the fact -- for them -- that Lenin responded to the lesson of August, 1914 by conceding that he had been wrong to support the "orthodoxy" of Bebel-Kautsky against the "Mass Strike" policy of Luxemburg during the pre-war factional struggle in the SPD.)

The special exceptions are, notably, Luxemburg, Lenin, Trotsky, and certain of their immediate collaborators. Their converging efforts in the emergent Communist International represented a very brief and sudden thrust of socialist views, sharply away from social-democratic "orthodoxy" toward varying degrees of comprehension and application of Marx's actual method and conceptions. Luxemburg's mass-strike program and strategy, Lenin's more conservative efforts to discover the links between the Russian soviets and Paris Commune, Trotsky's analysis of the 1905-07 soviet experience, all represent degrees of systematic comprehension of Marx's class for itself. If Lenin's comprehension of the dialectical method was far, far poorer than Luxemburg's and his comprehension of Marx's fundamental economic notions almost non-existent, he, Luxemburg and Trotsky shared agreement on the most fundamental Marxian notion: the class for itself.

Under Zinoviev and his gaggle of Hungarian hatchet-men, the revolutionary potential of the leading Comintern parties was systematically disassembled even before 1923. The moral fibre of the KPD was destroyed by the Zinovievite and Radek pogroms against the "virus of Luxemburgism" during the middle 1920's. With Lenin's deep illness, Zinoviev moved toward seizing the entire Comintern leadership within and outside the Soviet Union -- but the evil which Zinoviev flinched to undertake was carried forward by Zinoviev's Golem -- Stalin.

Even before Trotsky refused to carry out Lenin's instructions to launch a faction fight to destroy Stalin's power, in 1923, Zinoviev had essentially destroyed the revolutionary potential of the KPD as an organization. By the time that Trotsky belatedly aroused himself from his protracted sleep of organizational fetishism, and extended the Left Opposition struggle into an open fight on a world scale, the cadres who could have been assembled to build a real opposition or even a new international in 1923 had been crushed, fragmented and generally demoralized.

(This will surely evoke indignant protests. We do not simply reiterate Deutscher's mistaken view of 1923, nor do we accept the interpretation of this affair or its sequelae by any of those "scholars" who have set up shop-keeping premises in the profitable vicinity of Deutscher's

Could even the Schachtmanites dream of rivalling the more spectacular medieval jousts of the International Committee? At the April, 1966 London Conference, the well-known P.T. Barnum of "Trotskyism" bestowed the Unique Power of Papal Infallibility upon the collective episcopal person of his stooges, the SLL's Central Committee. During 1963-64, this same SLL had rocked the British Isles and parts of France with Homeric laughter at the spectacle of the SWP's Joseph Hansen using the 1938 "Transitional Program" as a common cookbook of ageless tactical recipes. In April, 1966 the Holy Spirit must indeed have descended upon Greater London; the same SLL conference canonized the Hansen cookbook as the immutable Last Word of the Lord God, Himself.

Your spokesmen differ from Healy's -- in showmanship! ESO committed the alleged mortal sin of reciting a non-liturgical text on "Stalinism." ESO, out of its heathen ignorance, has repeatedly endangered its immortal soul by failing to recite prescribed parts of the Rosary on appointed feast days. ESO's priests cannot be of the True Faith, since they have not celebrated mass at the borders of Eastern Europe. You challenge ESO: "What's your latest position on...?" Can such miserable Talmudism be the "serious" form of political dispute you prefer to critical-historical analysis?

(At least, you do not accuse us of Pabloism!)

The worst instance of extended scholastical argument in your March 20th letter is your treatment, of course, of "Stalinism." Let us consider your method in some detail.

After you have "explained" the scurrilous nature of Karipis' charge of "sectarian Stalinophobia," you occupy yourself at some length in justifying the strictest sectarianism toward the "Stalinist" memberships and peripheries of Communist parties. The item which provokes you to resurrect the very issue you have just-previously ruled out of order is Karipis' report that numerous cadres and peripheries of (for example) the KKE are the most invaluable revolutionary cadres. You contest this optimistic report, arguing that such cadres and peripheries cannot be revolutionary -- in principle!

Your command of dialectical method is, to express the point in a certain way, extraordinary. With major and minor premises arranged in the prescribed canonical fashion, you proceed:

Major Premise: If the CP cadres and peripheries could be revolutionaries, then "the programmatic basis of Trotskyism and Stalinism are the same?"

Minor Premise: "These cadres (CP) have only one program: the Stalinist 'program'."

How could the unorganized layers around the CP have any program different from the Stalinist?

Conclusion: Since the Trotskyist program is revolutionary (axiom), neither the CP mem-

bers nor peripheries can include revolutionaries.

Having thus presented your argument in one way, you continue to express the same mastery of dialectical method by argument reductio ad absurdum:

"...if the program of the Bolsheviks, which the Trotskyists support, was not irreconcilable with Stalinism, it would have been irresponsible and criminal to found the 4th International."

We have encountered that argument before--from Kolyiannis and Partsalidis-Brillakis. This is your simple plagiarism of the method by which a CP bureaucrat convinces all Jesuits that Trotskyists must be criminals and therefore agents of the U. S.'s CIA.

You disagree with that evaluation? You argue that the only fault with the Stalinist's reasoning lies in their major premise? Their premise that the CP and not "Trotskyism" coincides with Bolshevism? Very well, let us apply your second method of analysis pro forma to the case of the (forgive us for mentioning it), persisting division between the Unified Secretariat and the International Committee:

If the International Committee and the Unified Secretariat respectively support the program of the Bolsheviks, it is irresponsible and criminal for either faction to refuse to instantly liquidate its 4th International and join the other-- on any specified terms of submission.

An interesting little puzzle which you may employ to relieve the idleness of quiet evenings. We should be amused to learn how you (and Healy) solve it. (Perhaps it is better to appropriate CP cadres than the logic minted by CP leaders.)

To return now to your continued relentless logical attack on Karipis' article.

You had just demonstrated that CP members and peripheries are absolutely not revolutionaries. Indeed, elsewhere you accuse ESO of a "compromise with Stalinism" for having anything to do with such persons. That accomplished, you have removed all preliminary obstacles to your next exercise in dialectical method. You now more conclusively prove your case against Karipis' charge of "sectarian Stalinophobia."

You write: "As for the accusation that it (the Unified Secretariat) 'turns its back' on the cadres of the CPs, that is altogether ridiculous."

Oh, we are certainly convinced: a ridiculous charge, indeed. Where did those wretched fellows, Karipis -- and Trotsky-- ever find the means to concoct such ridiculous notions?

You immediately continue: "We have never stopped repeating that we will build the Revolutionary Party by winning over to our program the best elements of the Communist Party."

popularity. Contrary to the widespread mythology within the "Trotskyist" organizations, Trotsky is a passionate "organizational hard" by contrast with splitter-Lenin. This is the point of Joffe's testament, of course. It was, as Joffe lovingly chides Trotsky, Trotsky's persistent tendency to subordinate his principles to the expediencies of established, hegemonic socialist organizations— first, the official Russian social-democracy; later, the CPSU, -- which caused his obvious vacillation at a number of crucial junctures, and which trait appears in the almost scholastic wrestling with the "socialist legality" of establishing a 4th International.)

From even earlier than 1923 the Western European and North American Communist Parties had begun to degenerate -- partly for reasons of repression and ebb in mass struggle conditions, partly for reasons of the quality of both Comintern and national-section leadership. With this mainly uninterrupted decline in revolutionary world-outlook, the brief spark of influence of Marx's actual method sputtered out, and "orthodox" and "official Marxism" again became essentially the old pseudo-Marxian centrist rationalizations of the SPD "proletariankernel" apparatus. Of course, tied to the revolutionary "fact" of the Soviet workers state, even the degeneration of the CPSU into a wallow of philosophical despair did not remove the important subjective factor of Soviet power itself in preventing these parties from decaying to the extent of the social-democracy.

"Again! 'Philosophical despair?' one hears you say to yourself. 'Did I not set them straight on that blunder of theirs in my March 20th letter?' On the contrary, the fine-grained analysis of the internal process of decay of CPSU cadres given by Trotsky in his autobiography presents "philosophical despair" as precisely the decisive subjective expression and mediating cause for the political degeneration of communist cadres in general. (cf. Marcus, op.cit.)

A similar process of decay appears in the "Trotskyist" organizations, especially from 1938 onwards, accelerating rapidly after Trotsky's assassination. In the case of the key 4th International group, the U.S. section, it must always be emphasized that the Cannon-Abern-Schachtman leadership had been shot through with philistine anti-intellectualism and associated pronounced centrist tendencies toward "left" trade-union opportunism during most of their history. (The handling of the Wiesbord, Field, Fraina cases, in opposition to Trotsky, are simply better-known examples.) The Cannon group underwent a remarkable revitalization in its I.W.W. mass-strike traditions during the 1934-37 period, but soon afterward reverted toward the old "proletarian kernel" centrism which had characterized the Cannon-Foster faction of the 1920's CPUSA. The general praise of Burnham - Schachtman for "Intellectuals In Retreat," until Trotsky intervened to denounce that literary-political atrocity, is also exemplary of the preconditions for the SWP's decay. (ibid.)

Conceding the horrible circumstances of the ILO and early 4th International, only two promising intellectuals, John G. Wright and Leon, emerged as manifestations of a potential Marxian intelligentsia. Petty Kautskys existed,

and numerous bearers of the old stink of the Bebel-Ebert "proletarian kernel."

The widespread preoccupation of proto-anarchist enragees with the revolutionary genius of Mao Tse Tung is easily discredited by reference to Mao's leading faction documents from the period of his right-wing bloc with Thorez and Browder in the Comintern in support of "popular front" betrayal policies. This refers, of course, principally to such canonical Maoist gospels as "On Contradiction," in which the mandarin ideology of Oriental Despotism (Ying-Yang) is employed to justify an unprincipled bloc with Chiang Kai Chek, and the whole disgusting literary exercise is called dialectics'!

While the Healy faction, the International Committee, represents a curious apparent exception to the otherwise prevailing pattern, all of the various recognized varieties of apostolic successions of "official Marxism" have nothing in common with either Marx's dialectical method or the fundamental principles of his Capital. Healy is to be congratulated on retaining at least a certain dumb faith in the principles of conjunctural strategic outlook, and the "toy Bolshevik" himself is admittedly flanked by several talented writers (Slaughter, Kemp, Jeffries, et al.) but the utter, undialectical rubbish his organization issues on the slightest pretext of factional opportunism sufficiently discredits his claims to represent any principled comprehension of the ABC's of Marxism.

For all of these groups, actual Marxian science does not exist.

Indeed, almost none of the extant groups conduct their disputes as if they actually believed that "Marxism" was anything but a "divinely-revealed doctrine." They may speak loudly enough of "Marxian science" or of "method," as Healy has done, but their methods of argument, Healy's especially, are those otherwise agreeable to a pair of contending Talmudists. In the typical factional exchange of compliments among opponent organizations, one is aptly reminded of the spectacle of two persons recently flunked for poor grades from a Jesuit seminary, nourishing their damaged self-estimations by querying one another on points of catechism.

It occurs to you that such characterization applies only to Schachtmanites? Very well, we shall concede that our portrait is remarkable appropriate to that particular case.

Despite the small size and comi-tragic posturings of the Schachtman tendency, their very clowning and phrasemongering increased the scale of their reputation throughout the world's "Trotskyist" organizations. One remembers the pre-printed "laundry list" their catechism represented. Two young Schachtmanites meeting for the first time or after a prolonged separation did not proceed by a shaking of hands, but rather began querying one another: "What's your latest position on...?" This verbal fencing-match would then continue until one of the two persons had failed to supply the canonical liturgy on some hideously-obscure occurrence. The loser was judged to have lost "status," and the victor would go striding away, relishing his epic victory in that most recent major event of the class struggle.

Who are these "best elements"? They certainly cannot be revolutionaries!!

Only such poor, ignorant heathen folk as you have described us would be so boorish as to call the following troublesome item to your attention. We, too, have constantly repeated that "we will build the Revolutionary Party by winning over to our program the best elements of the Communist Party." To which utterance you responded by accusing us of a rotten "compromise with Stalinism."

This paradox leads us to discover that there is only one possible logical explanation. The only difference in our formal perspective and yours on this matter is that we propose to win over revolutionary members and peripheries, while you propose to recruit only "non-revolutionary 'good elements'." That must be the premise for your charge against Epanastasi.

Certainly we do not "compromise with Stalinism" at all on this next point.

The aroma of the medieval monastery's unwashed cribs is even distinctly more pronounced in CP than "Trotskyist" circles. However, it is not clinically precise to regard CP logic as representing only a certain homogeneous form of argument, as we have just shown to apply to all the various "Trotskyist" factions. In fact, two principal types of "logic" are encountered in CP leadership circles.

In Greece, where the population cannot afford to maintain such complicated apparatus or such advanced education as in North America or the leading NATO nations, it was necessary to simplify matters for the Greek people by creating two KKE parties, with the leadership of each more or less exactly corresponding to a pure type. There is the pro-Moscow faction which, as you know, generally adheres to the same strictly-scholastic methods of argument you employ -- but with slightly different premises, and less exact attention to the more exotic grammatical cases and moods "Trotskyists" sometimes employ. This class of CP spokesmen are simple-minded scholastics, so ingenuous that they are presently preparing to repeat the suicidal follies of 1934, 1944, and 1966-7 for the fourth time. No detailed comment is required.

For the purpose of this review of the state of "official Marxist" theory, we must quickly put aside the special case of certain non-"Trotskyist" Greek revolutionaries whose sterner moral qualities and longer memories imbue them with an incurable distaste for both of the official KKE leaderships. These persons are typified by revolutionaries who trace their political lineage to Civil War fighters, and who therefore have a corresponding view of "Communist leaders" who deliver workers' weapons to "British friends" and "our good patriotic allies" from the almost-socialist faction of the Greek bourgeoisie.

The process of elimination leaves us now with the distilled, if scarcely pure residue of the Partsalidis-Brillakis faction. To examine this species of "revolutionary leader" more closely, it is usually necessary to

pry his face away from the posterior of the King -- or, from that of such eminent working-class educators as Edward Mylonas or famous defender of the liberties of oppressed Communists, Papaspyrou. After certain obvious sanitary procedures have been performed, the desired examination may begin.

Here we encounter the petit-bourgeois populist type, who rises above such sectarian preoccupations as "class", "socialism," and "Marxism" to such unifying sentiments as "national resistance," "Great Patriotic Front," and otherwise expresses an oratorical love of the "oppressed Greek people" of the sort which can only be achieved by persons whose objectivity has been ennobled by a habit of personal distance from actual workers and peasants.

When this remarkable species is within Greece, he is free to do nothing precisely because he is unable to exercise his appointed extremely revolutionary special mission of speaking to the King. When he is outside of Greece, where the Queen Mother prevents the King from granting him audience, he can also do nothing, because the struggle must be led and decided upon by the "masses" within Greece. It may be generally deduced that his confidence in the masses increases geometrically with his distance from them.

You have perhaps met representatives of this type in certain cafes, where they participate almost daily in forming new exile governments, in concert with whatever "patriotic" soul chances to stroll past. Their habituated skills at disguise admittedly sometimes demand extraordinary skill even on their own parts, to distinguish themselves from any number of varieties of "patriots" who, in better times, would be ushering KKE spokesmen into the reeducational institutions of the Asphalia. These types of Brillakisites do, indeed, have a certain logic, which might be described in detail under more liberal laws respecting public obscenity.

In more advanced sectors of capitalism, the Kolyianis and Brillakis types enjoy the benefits of a more sophisticated culture, which enables them to combine their forces into a unified CP. In these instances, the effort to distinguish them from one another as types is rendered more difficult by the frequent circumstance which finds the two persons occupying the same body. Not to venture on such schizophrenic persons' exotic ambivalence in matters of relations to bourgeois spokesmen, it suffices to refer to a particular case of a Greek spokesman for the CPUSA.

In this instance the ambivalence was exhibited not to a bourgeois spokesman, but toward the well-known Mikis Theodorakis. In his capacity as a pro-Kolyannis CPer, this individual was unsparing in his systematic denunciation of Mikis' class treachery. Shortly after this systematic denunciation was presented to representatives of our tendency, the same CPer had the opportunity to meet Mikis, on one of the latter's visits to New York City. On this occasion, the U.S. Greek CPer was present not as a CPer, but in behalf of the anti-dictatorial charitable society. Under those auspices, the U.S. Greek CPer stopped short only of obscene extremes in his maudlin adoration of Mikis' leadership "in the struggle."

LENIN VS. LUXEMBURG: ON THE RIGHT OF NATIONS TO SELF-DETERMINATION

By Peter Brand

The national question is unique among the areas of discord within the socialist movement. Marxian tradition in most respects is alien to such bourgeois-ideological designations as "rights," "duties," "obligations," and other phases drawn from civil society. On the contrary, Marxism fundamentally views human ideas principally in terms of the correspondence between man's subjective view of the world and the immutable objective demands of historical development. Yet, various sections of the socialist movement, since the issue first gained prominence in regard to the fate of the subject nationalities of the Russian Empire, have seized upon sundry groups' "right to determine their own destiny" as a key focus for socialist agitation. The validity of self-determination as a point of socialist program is ostensibly proved by those who point to the apparent pedigree for the issue in its successive appearance in the writings of Marx and Engels, Lenin, and Trotsky.

A serious examination of the background of the national question reveals that Marx and Engels viewed the question of national independence as a point of international strategy under specific historical conditions rather than as a universal "right"; that Lenin's promulgation of national self-determination incorporates mutually antagonistic elements; and that Lenin's and Trotsky's perpetuation of the issue past the turning point of 1917, although introducing severe modifications, erred in precisely the manner diagnosed by Luxemburg in 1918.

It is a recurrent feature of opportunism to locate the validity of a particular demand or point of program in some metaphysical quality of that demand itself, rather than discerning its applicability to the class movement with respect to the movement's needs at a specific phase of development. The interpolation of "classic" points of program out of their historical context can

provide a smokescreen for abjuring the method by which that program was first adduced. In this manner Kautsky, whom Lenin hailed as his mentor on the national question, sanctified the mutual slaughter of German and Russian workers by exhuming rotted formulae from the "lumber room of Marxism."

Marx and Engels rightly considered Czarism to be the bastion of reaction in Europe in 1848, and sought to sever its influence over revolutionary-democratic movements in the west. Czarist intervention across the Polish border posed a visible threat to revolutionary in Germany. Russian diplomacy encouraged the most reactionary side of German bourgeois politics. Kautsky stepped back seventy years at a time when the former "guardian of reaction" herself ruled via the props provided by Western European investors. Thus German soldiers awaited a signal from Petrograd to intervene, if necessary, in 1905. Luxemburg quotes a German public prosecutor in 1904: "It is naturally not indifferent to Germany's public interests whether this bulwark of absolutism stands or falls. Certainly the flames of a revolutionary movement may easily spring over into Germany" (RL Speaks, p. 290).

It was in the identical context of opposition to Russian reaction that Marx and Engels argued that the Polish independence movement assumed a progressive role, mainly as a buffer against Russia. They considered the success of a Polish national movement favorable for the progress of revolution in the West, since an independent Poland would act as a bulwark against possible Czarist intervention. Their attitude, clearly premised on the requirements of international class strategy, is frankly expressed in an 1851 letter by Engels:

The more I reflect about history the clearer it appears to me that the Poles are a nation foutue, useful as a means only until Russia herself is drawn into

One may, in fairness, concede that the customary logic of pseudo-Marxian "Trotskyist" scholastics seems morally preferable to the methods of reasoning employed by CP spokesmen.

Such is the portrait to be recognized of the general history and current state of "official Marxist" theory of all principle apostolic varieties. If we regard this state of affairs with what may seem to some a narrow puritanism, unsparing contempt, we absolutely do not delight that our opponents' organizations within the movement should render themselves so suitable a subject for sometimes cruel irony. On this matter, respecting the cadres of CP, "Trotskyist", and "Maoist" groupings, we aspire to believe that we have learned a lesson on subjectivity from comrade Trotsky. After the butchery of his children, relatives and closest comrades by the counterrevolutionary butcher and Golem, Stalin, Trotsky denounced the "Sectarian Stalinophobia" of the SWP leadership! That is a revolutionary!

This eminent triumph of revolutionary personal qualities in him is not a matter for consolation of petty-bourgeois moralists and priests. Trotsky was never a mere Ghandi. The point, as he put it, is that one must recognize that, despite the crimes of socialist organizations — real crimes, not doctrinal offenses or acts of petty hooliganism, the fact that their rank-and-file members have committed themselves to the duties and hazards of so professing a revolutionary-socialist identity places those individuals as a type above those "pure," apolitical, un-"Stalinized" workers and others who still accept the capitalist order of things, who occupy themselves in the petty pursuits of an alienated existence. However wretched such an organization, one knows that there must be a significant proportion of revolutionaries buried somewhere in the whole membership.

What we regard as your organization's wretched pseudo-Marxism, its tendencies toward scholasticism, etc., offend us extremely. Even so, we also recognize that membership in your organizations tend to represent a certain commitment to a socialist transformation. We further recognize that your active profession of internationalism is a further ennobling qualification of numerous of your cadres, and that you profess to learn from comrade Trotsky is hardly a disadvantage, either.

The revolutionary task is that of revolutionizing the political working class itself, which means that we begin with working-class humanity in all its present philistine debasement, its moral depravity, its stink of scholasticism, pragmatism— which must inevitably reflect themselves as qualities of socialist organizations. It is out of precisely such alienated, debased working class humanity that a revolutionary political working class must be built. There is no room for "subjectivity" in such undertakings. Humanity must be salvaged, and we work with whatever aspects of the working-class forces present themselves as susceptible of such salvaging.

However, all the miserable doctrine-mongering, the wretched practice you share with most socialist groups,

that we do not accept as valid. During the period 1845-46, in the expressed form of marginal criticisms on Feuerbach's Theses... and Principles..., Marx developed an entire new consciousness-in-general, which might be otherwise labelled as his dialectical method. All the essential features of this method, which determines every other accomplishment of his later life, are either explicitly stated or strictly implied from context of reference in two writings, "Theses on Feuerbach," and the first section, "Feuerbach," of The German Ideology. This, even by itself, represents the entire body of Marxian science, in the sense that everything else is implicitly subsumed by the application of the 1845-46 concept-in-general to specific, appropriate empirical materials. That is our only standpoint, which needs no doctrine.

In apposition to that thesis-statement, we specify that it is indeed most fortunate, even in formal terms, that Marx happened to apply his concept-in-general of 1845-46 to produce a wealth of exposition of its application to social phenomena, to economic processes in particular, and to the specific questions of historiographical methods and political program development. In principle, however, we would have an entire Marxian science if Marx had not lived to write a single line after 1846 — provided we had those 1845-6 writings themselves.

We place special emphasis on that point for two reasons of immediate, decisive relevance to the present discussion. Firstly, the heavy overgrowth of scholastic doctrine-mongering, which virtually obscures Marx's writings from any real comprehension by the usual student, compels us to cut through this encrustation of medieval ideological rubble in the most radical way. Peeling off false consciousness's layers, accumulated over a century, layer by layer, would find us still patiently peeling away long after the time when historic conjunctures had taken the possibility of scientific decisions out of our hands. This mass of ideological rubbish concealing the actual corpus of Marxian science must be ruthlessly and radically cut away. There is no time for any other policy.

Secondly, the fact that your leading spokesman has publically iterated that monstrous old "early"- "mature" Marx fraud means that absolutely no agreement can be reached between our organizations until that particular issue is resolved. Our entire view of every part of Marx's work, and of every question of socialist and labor history over the past six hundred years of development, is immediately predicated by the understanding that the 1845-46 writings, taken in their context of reference (Feuerbach, Hegel) are the unique, subsuming basis for all Marxian science.

Any other approach to the discussion would have us continuing to peel away, layer by layer, at a mountain of an onion, for a century or more to come.

(Part II of Karipis' reply to Niemetz will appear in the next issue.)

the agrarian revolution. From that moment on Poland has absolutely no more *raison d'être*. (Nettl, V. 2, p. 283)

Engels thus relegates the usefulness of the Polish independence movement to the historical period preceding the concurrent developments which laid the groundwork for the Russian revolution: the development of peasant upheaval, Russia's decisive entrance into the world market and her industrialization by foreign capital, and the incipience of a revolutionary labor movement. Thirty years later, with no more sentimental regard than previously for the rights of nations in the abstract, Engels enjoined the infant Polish Socialist Party to "Place the liberation of their country at the head of their program." Marx and Engels, unlike Lenin after them, never attempted to generalize this demand for Polish self-determination of subject nations into a sky-borne "right." Conversely, Marx supported the bolstering of the Ottoman Empire — which until the first World War perpetuated the most brutal oppression against the nationalities of the Balkans and the Mideast — in order to further weaken Czarism, the Turks' chief enemy. It remained for the pursekeepers and ideological attorneys of the German Social Democracy (SPD), such as Kautsky, to elevate the "right of self-determination" to the status it afterward held. Kautsky, not Lenin, led the attack on Luxemburg's position on nationalism. Lenin's pre-1914 writings on the question refer incessantly to Kautsky as the exemplar of Marxian national analysis.

Luxemburg's Thesis on Polish Nationalism

Luxemburg's group which, after leaving the Polish Socialist Party (PPS), formed the nucleus of the Polish Social Democratic Party, premised its independence to a great extent on their divergent view of the national question. (The Polish Social Democrats ultimately merged with the Russian Party, while their Polish rivals turned toward Mussolini—"socialism" under Pilsudski's fascist regime). Luxemburg contended that the burgeoning of manufactures in East Europe through infusions of foreign capital, the ensuing growth of a revolutionary movement in Russia alongside the rapid creation of a Russian proletariat, and increasing interdependence between Polish manufactures and Russian markets, reversed the criteria by which Marx and Engels had supported the current Polish independence movement. Russia in the 1890's underwent

tremors which fore-shadowed the great 1899-1905 wave of mass strikes. Luxemburg, like Lenin, argued that the primary social impetus for revolution was the historical birthright of the young Russian workingclass. To place at the head of socialist program a demand compatible (or, as Lenin later qualified it, parallel to) bourgeois nationalism necessarily subordinated the working-class organizations to bourgeois "national" leadership. The emancipation of the Polish working class no longer depended on Poland's freedom from the Russian autocracy, but proletarian revolution against the Polish and Russian bourgeoisie as well. The relative positions of the respective revolutionary movements in Russia and Germany had exchanged places. Germany experienced a thirty-year period of capitalist stability while the crescendo of revolutionary activity in Russia began in full force. Western European capital and its military appurtenances became the mainstay of Russian reaction. As the Russian civil war confirmed dramatically, the threat of counter-revolutionary intervention now pointed from West to East.

In this limited focus, the essential aspects of the "theory of permanent revolution" later delineated by Trotsky and Parvus are present. Luxemburg argues that while according to classic Marxian arguments, the national unit was the "normal political constitution of the European bourgeoisie" (Engels), the historical conditions for "normal" bourgeois development were exhausted. The movement of the working class must cease to subordinate itself to the demands of the "unfulfilled bourgeois revolution." According to the thesis argued variously by Kautsky and Plekhanov (to which Lenin subscribed until 1916), in those countries where the capitalist class had not yet seized power and enjoyed an extended period of rule in its own name and interests, a bourgeois revolution was the historically determined next "stage." State power by the workingclass was thus relegated to a distant further stage following some span of independent capitalist development. Luxemburg's thesis on the national question is incompatible with this now-discredited schema. At the core of her argument is the supposition that overdue accounts better settled by a bourgeois democratic revolution (also referred to as a "national revolution") can, in an epoch of advanced internal capitalist development within the context of an integrated world economy, be settled only by socialist revolution. These overdue accounts include democratic rights, civil liberties,

and, most prominent in the instance of the Russian Empire, elimination of the “special oppression” of nationalities. Luxemburg is most eloquent:

...In a society based on classes, the nation as a uniform social-political whole simply does not exist. Instead there exist within each nation classes with antagonistic interests and ‘rights.’ There is literally no social arena — from the strongest material relationship to the most subtle moral one — in which the possessing classes and a self-conscious proletariat could take one and the same position and figure as one undifferentiated whole. (Nettl, p. 849, from ‘The Question of Nationality and Autonomy,’ 1908).

Did not Marx in the *Communist Manifesto* assert that where the bourgeois parties struggle against absolutism, the communists fight at their side? Luxemburg evokes the concept of the self-conscious proletariat, or “class-for-itself,” organized in its own name and under its own program, struggling to determine its own international destiny free from bourgeois rule.

Throughout the half-century between Marx’s original statement and Luxemburg’s apparent divergence, the victorious Western European and American bourgeoisie had successfully infiltrated the native economies of the remaining sectors of the world’s productive system. In Russia and East Europe, western capital outlays established growing industrial sectors which functioned at the very latest technological level; in the colonial world, capitalism exported funds for railways, mines, etc., only to prepare the physical means of decades of capital-looting of these economies through extractive industries such as mining and plantations, and interest payments on usurious loans. An increasing portion of new investment was forced into “outside” channels because existing capital investments in Western Europe and America increasingly served as barriers to new productive investment. Invariably this outside investment assumed the form of imperialist looting, often coupled with state outlays for military investments in the domestic sector — in short, capitalist parasitism on non-capitalist modes of production. Marx defined this as “primitive accumulation.” As primitive accumulation attained greater relative importance than new productive development, the bourgeoisie ceased to play a progressive historical

role. This process is analyzed exhaustively in Luxemburg’s *The Accumulation of Capital*.

The political significance of this process within the limited focus of the national question flows from the interdependence of the world capitalist class: the impossibility of self-activity on the part of the “national bourgeoisie.” (Lenin recognized this side of the problem long after expression of his views on the national question, in his 1916 pamphlet *Imperialism*, although his economic arguments drawn from Hobson and Hilferding remained erroneous). Luxemburg implies that there is no further basis for the existence of capitalism in any country, an argument fully developed in *Accumulation*. Consequently, the tasks before revolutionaries in her period decidedly did not require their program to contain demands amenable to the national bourgeoisie of a subject nation. Luxemburg’s consistent argument is that the single progressive social force in the epoch of imperialism is the class-for-itself, the working class conscious of its own interests and liberated from the bourgeois ideology that served to bind it to capitalism. All socialist agitation is therefore aimed at stripping away the bourgeois-ideological straight jacket which immobilizes the political development of the working class under “normal” conditions of capitalist rule. As Luxemburg notes, “. . . it was just this concept of nations as one of the categories of bourgeois ideology that Marxist theory attacked most fiercely, pointing out that under slogans like ‘national self-determination’ — or ‘freedom of the citizen,’ ‘equality before the law’ — there lurks a twisted and limited meaning.”

Under no circumstances are the interests of the class-for-itself served by slogans which merely echo bourgeois — ideological forms of radicalism. Rather than call for the autonomy of Poland, Luxemburg proposed class unity between the workers of Russia and Poland. It is “utopian” to expect that workers of an “oppressor nation” will be motivated to action by an abstract claim concerning the “right” of Polish workers to ally with their own capitalist class; the only successful antidote for “Great Russian chauvinism” is workers’ identification with their common international class interest. As events later demonstrated, the demand for national self-determination can only serve to muddle and confuse the class movement. Poland became one of the most notorious cases in point.

Although Luxemburg generalized the application of her analysis of Polish nationalism, it

never became for her a point of doctrine, but rather expressed a concrete application of class-for-itself method to living issues facing current movements. Contradicting Marx, she advocated the breakup of the hopelessly reactionary Ottoman Empire, whose further existence could only block further industrial development — unlike Russia, then developing at a spectacular pace. Therefore she sympathized with the Balkan national movements which challenged Turkish control, where Marx had suggested that a strong Ottoman Empire was useful to contain Czarism. It was this merciless disregard for the canonic points of honor of the Social Democracy, better left interred in the “dust of passing years,” that elicited the hostility of Bebel, Kautsky, and other philistine SPD proprietors.

Lenin “Refutes” Luxemburg

It is not, however, the forgotten polemics of the now-despised SPD bureaucracy that are touted about as gospel by present proponents of national self-determination. Rather, it is Lenin’s muddled and contradictory versions of their arguments (usually quoted from “On The Right of Nations to Self-Determination,” 1913) which provide the theoretic rationale for tail-ending the Palestinian guerrilla movement in its present backward state, promulgating black nationalism, supporting Catholic nationalism in Ulster, and similar crimes of contemporary opportunists. The need to demystify Lenin’s remarks on nationalism systematically is therefore primary. Lenin’s errors furthermore serve as a striking relief against which to portray a revolutionary solution of the question at hand.

Trotsky, in defending his early advocacy of the permanent revolution theory against Lenin, explains that Lenin’s formulation “democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry” was a self-contradictory attempt to assign the proletariat a self-active part in what Lenin envisioned to be an agrarian, bourgeois-democratic revolution. Lenin required Herculean indomitability to resolve this ambiguous notion within Bolshevik ranks in 1917, a labor comparable to that of the Augean stables. Trotsky records, “in the theoretical education of the revolutionary party there had been an element of contradiction, which had found its expression in the equivocal formula “democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry.” We will illustrate below how this equivocation appeared in other of Lenin’s formulas which were based on the stages theory, particularly

on the national question.

Trotsky, like Luxemburg, theorized that the determining role in social revolution was necessarily due to the working class, on the strength of its consciousness and program for the society as a whole. The petty bourgeois peasant strata must take a supportive role (in Luxemburg’s phrase, a “dictatorship of the proletariat based on the peasantry”). This pivotal point in Lenin’s pre-1916 arguments reflected, in its inner contradiction, the development of his ideas concerning the nature of the coming revolution. Lenin’s conception of the conscious class acting in its own interests warred with his acceptance of the Kautskyian stages theory until the former displaced the latter. As Trotsky describes the process, “In this perseverance, in this stubborn resolution of a continual spiritual growth over his own self did his heroic spirit find its expression” (RL Speaks p. 444).

Thus in 1913 Lenin and Luxemburg wrote on different planes, their arguments oddly failing to mesh in a clear way — except in the minds of nationalist partisans whose extraneous motives for pursuing the argument lead them to adopt anything that appears to substantiate their errors. These different planes were the two incompatible views of the nature of the imminent social upheaval in Russia, on its necessary course if successful. Luxemburg then wrote with the permanent revolution theory in mind, Lenin still backg his arguments with saws from Kautsky. While the Trotskyist movement has of necessity avoided religious adherence to the letter of Lenin’s argument before he came to concur with Trotsky, Lenin’s exposition of the national question receives singular handling. In this case the theoretical bread of affliction is transubstantiated into the body and blood of the apostle.

Lenin points contemptuously to Luxemburg’s premises of the international interdependence of economies, noting that “Kautsky... knows this very well” (On the Right of Nations to Self-Determination, p. 294). What Luxemburg has done is to “substitute the question of the economic interdependence of states for the question of the political self-determination of nations in **bourgeois society**” Thus he entirely avoids her thesis, which proceeds from the negation of bourgeois society. Lenin heaps ridicule on the argument thus:

This is as intelligent as if someone in discussing the demand in the program

for the supremacy of parliament, i.e., the assembly of people's representatives in a bourgeois state, were to expound the perfectly correct idea of the supremacy of big capital under any regime in a bourgeois society.

This preposterous attitude was, of course, precisely the one adopted by Lenin after April 1917! Having revised his earlier views, Lenin expunged the primacy of the bourgeois Constituent Assembly from the Bolshevik program, demanding accession to power by the institutions of the conscious proletariat. The fate of this "assembly of peoples' representatives in a bourgeois state" was sealed when Lenin resolved to demolish the bourgeois February regime. This constituent assembly was, in fact, forcibly dissolved by the Bolsheviks immediately after it convened following October.

After chiding Luxemburg for simplistic economics lectures, Lenin proceeds to observe that "...the best conditions for the development of capitalism are presented, undoubtedly, but the national state." Lenin commits the elementary error — reversed in his *Imperialism* — of assuming the growth of capitalism to be primarily a national phenomenon, and the "subject" bourgeoisie to be a nationally constituted class. Historically neither was the case. Least of all was this true in Poland, the focus of this discussion, where the development of Polish industry depended on easy access to Russian markets.

The heart of Lenin's essay lies in the section entitled "The Concrete Historical Presentation of the Question." Lenin stipulates the "necessity of strictly distinguishing two epochs of capitalism radically differing from each other from the point of view of the national movement" (p. 255). In the first epoch, the "epoch of the formation of bourgeois society and state," "in one way or another all classes of the population are drawn into politics by means of the press, participation in representative institutions, etc." "On the other hand," Lenin argues, "we have an epoch of definitely crystallized capitalist states with a long-established constitutional regime... an epoch that may be called the "eve of the downfall of capitalism." This second epoch, according to his schema, features an "absence of mass-bourgeois-democratic movements...when developed capitalism puts in the forefront the antagonism between internationally united capital and the international labor movement."

Lenin was momentarily to react to the "social-patriotic" betrayal of the most important sections of the European social democracy at the outbreak of the World War by precipitously junking these sterile categories. Only four years later he was to eat his words, indeed, to force them down the throats of the recalcitrant Bolshevik leaders. The experience of the Russian revolution can be expressed as the **conjuncture** of "mass bourgeois democratic movements" simultaneous with an "antagonism between internationally united capital and the international labor movement." The rapid metamorphosis of consciousness among the revolutionary masses is described with special elegance by Trotsky in his *History of the Russian Revolution*. What accounts for the burgeoning of mass movements which at a certain point restrict themselves to "bourgeois-democratic" goals, at the moment when their historically determined task is socialist revolution? Granting that proletarian revolution against a post-feudal autocracy presents a special case, the development of class consciousness in the process of revolution manifests certain lawful features which appeared in Russia and elsewhere, albeit in exaggerated ways in the former.

Static Pause of a Wave

The class movement is not sprung fully armed like Athena from the head of Zeus. Quite the contrary. The class movement comes to grips with its historic tasks painstakingly, repeatedly subjecting its current self-conception to the iron test of experience in struggle, consistently abandoning backward ideas, program, and leadership for more advanced ones, until the movement exhausts its historic course. It is the general rule, during the process of casting off bourgeois ideology, that the class movement to a continually decreasing extent, manifests itself in bourgeois-ideological modes of radicalism. Put differently, the class movement, despite the **revolutionary content** of its aspirations, temporarily views its struggle and couches its demands in terms formally compatible with bourgeois society. During this fluid period, it is incumbent upon revolutionaries to point toward the next step for the movement — never to adapt opportunistically to the movement's current bourgeois-ideological view of itself, while always basing agitation on issues which the class movement at its level of organization and consciousness can comprehend. The apparent

“democratic” character of the February revolution falls into this category; the mass movement swept an impotent Menshevik or Liberal leadership into power, dimly aware of its ends but ignorant of the necessary means.

The determined bourgeois-ideological character of the first stages of radicalization of the awakening class is suggested in the famous quote from Marx’s “18th Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte:” “The oppressive weight of past generations rests like a dead hand upon the brain of the living.” So Luther garbed the reformation in Paul’s mantle, and the French revolutionaries assumed the aura of the Roman Republic. In this way the Russian working class marched in February to the strains of the Marseillaise. It is the unexcepted experience of revolutionary movements that workers and their social allies respond to oppression by the international capitalist system by rebelling against the localized and traditional forms of such oppression. Syndicalism is the manifestation of this process among industrial workers. In the United States, we have seen the first political efforts of oppressed minorities take the form of community control fights, ghetto rebellions, demands for preferential hiring for community (minority residents) and, in the most general form, black, Puerto Rican and Chicano nationalism. It is incontestable that each of these groups is reacting to its bottom of the heap position in a world capitalist system undergoing terminal deterioration. It is furthermore incontestable that the legitimate demands of both oppressed minorities and the organized working class of all countries, along with students, professionals, small farmers and other social allies of the working class, can be fulfilled adequately only through the unified activity of a conscious international class in its own name and interests.

The particular forms which radicalization assumes, nationalism among them, are an essentially subjective question; in order for the revolutionary content of such radicalization to be realized, these ideological forms must be discarded. The possibility of revolutionary victory resides in the supercession of bourgeois ideology by a conscious appreciation of the lawful nature of class oppression and the requisite social means toward its alleviation. The intervention of socialists into the mass movement has no other meaning than to catalyze the spontaneous strivings of workers and their allies into a unified class movement.

Aside from the ideological ghouls who continue to defend the multifariously bankrupted theory of socialism in one country, no revolutionary socialists agree, as Lenin did in 1913, that the national problem bears a national solution. In this context it is utterly devoid of meaning to speak of the positive or negative content of nationalism as such ; from the standpoint of the class movement, nationalism is merely the ideological husk, the dead weight of tradition on the mind of the movement, which disguises the raw radical content of “nationalist” movements. It is exemplary of the protean quality of the American movement that organizations such as the Panthers and the Young Lords represent, in their best aspects, a point of inflection between nationalist and class-for-itself politics. The Panthers distinguished themselves from the cultural nationalist current by subordinating the strictly nationalist elements of their program to the class demands for housing, education, and so forth, which by their nature dispose these organizations to united front alliances with other groups of militants. Huey Newton’s recognition that “self-determination means control of a centralized world economy” shows the Panthers, despite their backwardness in other areas, to have attained a more advanced theoretical level than either the Communist or Socialist Workers Parties.

Palestinian nationalism typifies the discrepancy between the objective content of nationalism and the subjective form it assumes. What does the concept of “nation” mean to the expropriated refugees who form the base of the guerilla movement? Not the arbitrary designations of territory marked off by London cartographers after the defeat of the Ottoman Empire in 1918, nor the boundaries agreed to by private conferences between Palestinian and Zionist leaders in 1948, nor the most recent hoax concocted by Western and Nasserite statesman for a West Bank Palestinian state. Nationalism among the Palestinians merely expresses, in traditional form, basic material demands wholly unattainable under imperialist rule. The role of socialist is emphatically not to tail-end the guerrillas and help perpetuate the Palestinians’ current delusions, and thereby play into the hands of the “moderate” Palestinian leaders who advocate the West Bank sellout, but to discuss in critical and uncompromising terms the requisite means toward socialist reconstruction of the Mideast.

The process of breaking down nationalist parochialism in cases typified by the Panthers and the Lords, the left wing of the Republican movement in Ireland, the socialist-oriented guerrillas in Palestine, involves some form of united front work between socialist organizations and left-wing nationalists. The latter, in accordance with their minimal material goals, readily enter into coalitions which offer their movement a greater possibility of success. It is the united front process that wins victims of national oppression over to class-for-itself consciousness, through the development of transitional organizational forms which express the common interest of working people within and also outside the nationalist movement.

Lenin laboriously attempts to reconcile his unshakeable orientation toward class self-activity with his acceptance of the stages theory, and asserts that "the policy of the proletariat in the national question (as in other questions) supports the bourgeoisie only in a definite direction; it never coincides with the policy of the bourgeoisie. The working class supports the bourgeoisie only for...the sake of equal rights, for the sake of creating better conditions for the class struggle." The latter view is familiar as the rationale by which the Mensheviks prevailed upon the terrified representatives of Russian capital to accept the state power won by the working class upsurge, if only they were beneficent enough to guarantee freedom of agitation for socialists. Nevertheless, we must credit Lenin with the honesty unknown to his epigones, of clearly explaining that a bourgeois-democratic demand at the head of socialist program necessarily limits the character of revolutionary activity to "conditional support for the bourgeoisie," as Lenin phrased it.

It is among the most obvious of ironies that contemporary Trotskyists appropriate a thesis wholly alien to their prized "permanent revolution," and, with a graceless bit of ideological sleight-of-hand, pull it inside-out to impute that the radicalization of national minorities necessarily leads them toward a socialist revolution! Compare Lenin's 1913 pamphlet with Trotsky's post-revolutionary assertion in the *History of the Russian Revolution*: "In that gigantic field of experience represented by Russia in the course of her three revolutions, you can find every variant of national and class struggle except one: that in which the bourgeoisie of any oppressed nation played a liberating role in relation to its own

people." It is understandable that Trotsky, desperate to associate his ideas with those of Lenin, had reason to play down these glaring contradictions; but glossing over discrepancies of this magnitude is inexcusable. The ubiquitous vulgarization of Trotsky's views runs as follows: in the era of imperialism, the national bourgeoisie of a subject country "cannot carry the struggle to its conclusion," and therefore the national struggle must in and of itself override the bourgeoisie and transform itself into a struggle for socialism. It is by this distortion that the demand for "national self-determination" is identified as a transitional one, the boorish standard being that "transitional" refers to a demand that everybody wants but can't get under capitalism.

Luxemburg anticipated Trotsky's above-quoted point by damning the call for self-determination as "impractical." When industrial development in a backward country becomes the unchallenged province of foreign investment, it is inevitable that the local capitalist class will grow as the spindly ward of its international mentors, a sociological abortion incapable of severing its umbilical cord to Western capital. The bourgeoisie of colonial countries, generally reduced to a comprador or junior-partner existence, is unable to replicate the pattern of the European bourgeois revolutions; the role for socialist is therefore not conditional support for their debilitated bourgeoisie but, on the contrary, mobilization of the masses of their nation behind the impetus of the urban working class around a program for socialist revolution. The propensity of the "national bourgeoisie" is by no means to struggle for its national autonomy, rather to ally with the ruling class of the nation that "oppresses" it in order to crush a socialist threat. Lenin directed his most vehement criticism of Luxemburg in defending the practicality of his formula: "The bourgeoisie of the oppressed nations will call upon the proletariat to support its aspirations unconditionally for the sake of the 'practicalness' of its demands." This "call" went out from the Polish, Finnish, and Ukrainian bourgeoisie not for unconditional support from their working populations, but to the military chiefs of Germany, Britain and France. Lenin, consistent with the stages theory, predicted in 1913 an entirely mythical chain of events, whose formulation is wholly antithetical to the permanent revolution theory. What the Trotskyist movement has done is to refer to Lenin as their chief authority on the National question, while

seizing upon an argument first used by Luxemburg against Lenin — and then standing this argument on its head.

The unfavorable mutation of “permanent revolution” stating that the need to fulfill nationalist democratic demands in itself produces a socialist mass movement is predicated on the most vulgar spontaneism. This lopsided descendant of Lenin’s argument grants that national movements do not actually understand what they are fighting for. Such movements, the reasoning goes, will, without the benefit of socialist program introduced by a revolutionary leadership, “discover” that it must amplify its bourgeois-ideological radicalism to the point where it overwhelms capitalist forms. What else, then, but to create socialism? Our contemporary camp-followers of black nationalism (and, for that matter, women’s liberation, Chicano nationalism, etc.) exhibit a congruent methodological muddle. Their assumption is that the spontaneous development of several parochial movements will spontaneously prepare black ghetto victims, Chicanos, women, etc. for conscious participation in a socialist movement. (A parallel error is the notion that radicalization over point-of-production struggles on sundry shop floors prepares workers for participation in a socialist movement). Or, that the Palestinian demands for national-self-determination will necessarily transform the guerilla movement into a struggle for a socialist Mideast, since self-determination is “impractical” under capitalist rule. We emphatically reject the fallacy that a class movement can seize power and establish socialism without quite knowing what it is doing.

Kantian Universalization Theory

The pattern is visible in the wreckage of national movements strewn across the past half-century. Those colonial movements which have succeeded in coming to power in isolation from the quiescent socialist movements within the “oppressor,” or advanced countries, have faced limited alternatives. The first, typified by India, is to reduce the administrative costs of the oppressing colonial power by becoming a self-administrating economic colony. The second is to press material demands to the breaking point, and receive the graces of the CIA. There is one case, exceptional in every respect, where a nationalist movement actually did assume socialist dimensions and succeed in establishing a holding operation against imperialism, that is, Cuba. Far more representative are the wave of right-wing coups in the Mideast, at

a moment when even the faintest variety of Arab militancy presents intolerable threats to western oil companies. Since the aggregate impoverishment of the third world has increased alongside the trend toward independence of former colonies, there is little doubt as to the discrepancy between local administration and “self-determination.”

A more insidious scenario for the sabotage of nationalist movements has become tiresome in its repetition. In this case the imperialist agencies intervene and exploit the national divisions within the movement in order to wreck it. Nowhere is this more evident than in the Middle East, where two competing varieties of national self-determination have expended great energy in proving their incapacity to exist in the same world. There has been no visible tendency for the guerrilla organizations to see the light even after the series of disasters beginning with the September Civil War and culminating in the Syrian military coup. Yassir Arafat has responded to the irrefutable evidence of the impracticality of “self-determination” through horse-trading with imperialism by kissing the boot that kicked him — specifically that of King Hussein. The parallel case in this country has been examined at length in Labor Committee publications (“New Left, Local Control, and Fascism”; “The N.Y.C. School Crisis”). The ruling class is not too numb to seize upon the distorted nature of raw black radicalism, and use it as a battering ram against the parochial organizations of the working class (e.g. the teachers’ and construction unions). The only means of avoiding internecine class warfare — and a consequent breeding ground for fascism — is to seek to coopt disparate expressions of radicalism into a common movement of the class, based upon program that represents the interests of the entire class. Similarly, the only alternative to perennial slaughter of Arab militants, or the equivalent, slow death through perpetual deterioration of conditions of life in those countries — is international unity, necessarily involving Israeli workers at an advanced stage, for a socialist Mideast. In other words, the abandonment of the chimerical “right of nations to self-determination” for the right of the working class and its allies to determine its destiny. It is only necessary to view the skeletons of Kurdish, Druse, and Black Sudanese nationalism hanging in the closet of pan-Arabism to comprehend the nature of the problem. The parallel example during the Russian Revolution is white anti-semitic agitation and pragmatism of Ukrainian nationalism by German agents.

Prominent among the hopeless inconsistencies emanating from Lenin's juxtaposition of proletarian self-activity and the stages theory is the question of the role of nationalities within the party. Lenin put forth the contradictory policy that the Polish Social Democrats remained free to propagate unity with Russia in counter to the Bolshevik offer of autonomy, while remaining in the same party.

The Polish social democrats (Lenin writes) have a perfect right to oppose Polish separation, but they fail to understand that in order to propagate internationalism we need not all repeat each others' exact words. In Russia we must stress the right of separation for subject peoples, while in Poland we must stress the right of such nations to unite.

Lenin emphasized organizational strictness as the first line of defense against opportunism, and the party question became a constant generator of conflict with the Bund, the Jewish Social Democratic Federation. The latter were consistent with their reactionary program for nationalities (discussed below) in demanding federal, rather than unified status, in the Bolshevik Party. On the other hand, the Polish Social Democrats under Luxemburg's hegemony subscribed to the concept of the multi-national party in accordance with their rejection of Polish nationalism. Within the entire Marxian tradition of socialist organization, one thread runs unbroken: that the essential premise for organizational unity among socialists is agreement upon program with which they seek to appeal to their potential following. Bewilderingly, Lenin combined a meticulous (and correct) insistence on organizational integrity of all national social democratic sections, and yet advanced utterly contradictory program on the most fundamental of issues. Lenin wrote in 1917, "People who have not thought out the question find it "contradictory" that social democrats of oppressing nations should insist on 'freedom to secede' and social democrats of oppressed nations on 'freedom to unite.' But a little reflection shows that there is no other road to internationalization and to the fusion of nations, any other road from the present position to that goal." The result, as we shall see, was the loss of all the western nations of the Russian Empire during the Civil War. Trotsky attempts to justify the policy by arguing that party structure and the future structure of Russia need not be formally homologous. This is besides the

point. The disaster brought on by this inconsistency was a product of the lack of consistent program and propaganda, which ultimately gave the Polish, Finnish, and other bourgeoisies cover to "secede" under the protection of German arms.

A final point of Lenin's polemic underscores his differences with Luxemburg. Lenin amplifies his call for self-determination by explaining that "The long, age-long oppression of the movements of the oppressed nations, the systematic propaganda in favor of such suppression on the part of the "upper" classes, created enormous obstacles to the cause of freedom of the Great Russian people itself, in the form of prejudices, etc. . . The Great Russian proletariat cannot achieve its aims, cannot clear the road to freedom for itself without systematically combatting these prejudices." The decayed corpse of this argument is presently on display in the form of "Smash Racism" placards. This aspect of Lenin's argument bears special importance only because his epigones cite it to rationalize programmatic inclusion of demands for preferential hiring of oppressed minorities, community control, and so forth. The extreme form of this is the extinct RYM inveighing against "white skin privilege." The partial purpose is to exorcise chauvinism from the class movement. These would-be socialists thus act in the noble tradition of the well-meaning man in Marx's analogy who condemns the law of gravity, expecting that if credulous people ceased to believe in its existence, no one would drown. Lenin, by implying that a socialist demand for autonomy for subject nationalities could be the basis for leading Russian workers to identify with the problems of Polish and other subject national groups, has one foot in the same trap. It is not accidental that the "right of self-determination," a demand culled from bourgeois politics, is consistent with a moralizing approach to the resolution of national divisions within the class movement. Luxemburg's counter is instructive. Her call for the "solidarity and inseparability of the proletarians of all lands" relies on commonality of identification with the class movement, **on the embodiment of the unified interest of both the working population within the subject nations and the Great Russian workers.**

In conjunction with this, Luxemburg explicitly asserted the right of all national groups within the international class movement to pursue their own cultural development, retain their own language, and so forth. Lenin, never audacious

enough to attempt to confuse Luxemburg's position with the Bundist and Austrian Social Democratic nonsense of "cultural-national autonomy" (i.e. community control), nevertheless slurred the Polish Marxists in her faction by this misrepresentation. The radical divergence lay between Lenin's national solution to national oppression (before 1917), and Luxemburg's international revolutionary solution to the particular problems of nationalities. Cultural self-determination, in Luxemburg's view, does not provide the political basis for a unified class movement; it is rather a secondary feature of the socialist movement itself. Raising this point had great educational value where national prejudices impede the development of the class movement. After repeated fiascos during the first year of the civil war, the Bolsheviks recouped at least on the Eastern front partially through their near-adoption of Luxemburg's platform on the national problem. Lenin's most mature view included joint economic development as the objective basis for alleviating national oppression, an approach wholly consistent with Luxemburg.

Is the nationalism of subject peoples different from that of oppressor nations? Without question. The former expresses a nascent radicalism still confined by bourgeois ideology, while the latter expresses the ideological justifications of imperialism. This in no way obviates the need to supercede forms of bourgeois radicalism by class consciousness in the course of an ultimately victorious revolutionary movement. This distinction is misused in order to counterpose allegedly "good" nationalist aspirations among certain sections of the class against "bad" nationalist sentiments among others, and thus uncritically tail-end the national delusions of oppressed minorities. The cadence runs, "Black nationalism good, U.S. nationalism bad, Green nationalism good, Orange nationalism bad, Arab nationalism good, Zionism bad." One of the finest refutations of this nonsense is offered by Matzpen in an article entitled "The Other Israel":

...there is no reason why Zionism should not be recognized for what it actually is, namely — the Jewish version of "Black Power," or, simply, the movement for "Jewish power." The similarity has to be qualified as to social origins, emotional motivations, ideological rationalizations, but not to political implications. In its pursuit of

colonizing Palestine, becoming a majority there, achieving and maintaining political power, Zionism became an integral part of the Imperialist system, whereas "Black Power" — unable to pursue statehood — is diametrically opposed to imperialism... Black power, unable to bring about state power, is forced to reject Western society and denounce it as repulsive. Herzl devotes many pages of his diaries to describe the Jewish state, as a pathetic replica, a liberalized version of the Hapsburg empire, of Viennese society in the late 1890's. "Black Power" portagonists are unable to follow this trail, they are forced to reject American society in toto; they denounce those who wish to recreate a Negro version of it.

In analyzing the social content of nationalism we have not limited discussion to Lenin's precise definition in regard to territorial qualifications, but treated the current usage of "national oppression" in the socialist movement. Lenin made himself clear on the point: "...self-determination of nations in the program of socialists cannot, from an historical-economic point of view, have any other meaning than political self-determination, political independence, the formation of a national state," or, secession. Certain doctrinaires have, in order to cast aspersions on such parvenus of self-determination as the Socialist Workers Party, noted that "orthodox Leninism" does not lend support to national struggles that cannot be consummated in the formation of a national state. This presumption would be valid only if it added Lenin's original corollary, that the first task of a working class movement in a backward country would be to eliminate only "national oppression," postponing its reckoning with imperialism to some future occasion. Evidently those pundits accustomed to jeering at the SWP from the sidelines find this uncomfortable, and demonstrate nothing but their own scholasticism. Lenin clearheadedly intended to give conditional support to the national capitalist class of subject nations in the Quixotic cause of promoting independent development, a premise he later abandoned.

Lenin was nonetheless fully capable of observing first-hand the divisive nature of the Bund's politics, whose misfortune was to represent nationalist parochialism in the case of an

extra-territorial nationality. Lenin recognized the inviolable need for unity of the class movement within the boundaries of a single capitalist state, and consequently spared no energy in attacking the right wing Bundists. The issue was further compounded by differences on the question of party federalism, as noted above. The Jews, largely urbanized and situated in ghettos, occupied a position in pre-revolutionary Russia comparable to that of the American blacks presently. The Bundists, paralleling the rightist Austrian social-democracy, sought to deal programmatically with the issue of national oppression by proposing "extra-territorial autonomy" in the sphere of education and other aspects of cultural life. This in effect guaranteed to the reactionary "community leaders" of the Jews and others a semi-permanent tenure over the most vital aspects of social life. This point of program is identical in every respect to the demand for "Black and Spanish Control of Black and Spanish Communities." Lenin, within the limitations of his previous argument, replied that "If economics unites the nations living in a single state, then the attempt to separate them once and for all in the sphere of educational questions is absurd and reactionary." Unlike Lenin's cogent though erroneous reason for supporting national self-determination, i.e., to improve conditions of class struggle within bourgeois society, "cultural-national autonomy" explicitly binds the working class to its particular "national," i.e. bourgeois culture and ideology. According to Lenin, "The workers can be disunited and weakened by the advocacy of such an idea." The Socialist Workers' Party introduces a purely theological distinction to absolve themselves of doing exactly what Lenin condemned at great lengths, noting that the SWP favors Lenin's view of a multi-national party. The distinction is lame.

However, if one moots that the immediate task at hand is not the effacement of national oppression alone but the overthrow of capitalism itself, the necessary conclusion is that national struggles, whether conducted within a single territory or within the confines of isolated communities, have precisely the same content. Since Lenin upheld the need for a consistent working class movement within the boundaries of a single state at least, it was clear to him that the extra-territorial manifestation of nationalism was reactionary. He did not view the national struggles of the Russian minorities in the same light at first due to his fallacious expectation of progressive democratic revolutions there. The reasons for his

failure to disavow nationalism which embodied a geographic expression are more complex and are dealt with below.

Matzpen's instructive comparison of Zionism and Black Power sheds light on the "distinction" between subject nations and oppressed extra-territorial minorities. The latter is a typical case in advanced nations due to immigration. If the historical task of both these national groups — as well as that of all social allies of the working class — is to liberate themselves through the international socialist movement, the real "distinction" in Lenin's writings is between two arbitrary categories of bourgeois radicalism, i.e. purely subjective.

The Russian Revolution

1917 poured the contending theoretical conceptions of national self-determination into the crucible of revolutionary struggle. At a cursory glance it appears that the essential and non-essential elements of Lenin's view on the national question failed to separate clearly: Bolshevik policy underwent fundamental transformations, changes as basic as the discrepancy between the discarded stages theory of erstwhile Bolshevik orthodoxy and Trotsky's then-hegemonic conception of the permanent revolution. The dynamic of revolution and civil war cast an incendiary light on Lenin's misconception of bourgeois self-determination, and delineated in harsh terms the determining role enacted by the international balance of class forces in deciding the fate of the subject nations. Bolshevik emphasis rotated from "independence" and "liberty to secede" for the subject nations in 1917 to the "right to unite" and "equality" among the national constituents of the Soviet Union in the aftermath of the Civil War. Bolshevik policy, confronted relentlessly by the strategical demands of the Civil War and the political exigencies of military success, inched almost despite its official will toward the policy outlined by Luxemburg twenty years previous. Yet the shell of the old ideology failed to disintegrate once devoid of its content, and the Bolshevik leadership, represented in later years by Trotsky alone, retained its formal position in regard to "self-determination," albeit drastically modified by the experience of 1917-1921.

Immediately following the outbreak of the February revolution, the political representatives

of the Polish bourgeoisie, who had previously desired autonomy against Great Russian entanglement, shifted their call to — exactly what Lenin had propagandized for fourteen years, self-determination for Poland. By no means was it terror in the face of a popular movement that motivated the Polish bourgeoisie to rediscover its innate nationalist proclivities, but, diametrically, their fear of contamination from the upheaval in Russia. At this point “nationalist” Poland was largely under the supervision of German bayonets. Poland, in fact, faced not a choice between self-determination and subjugation, but a choice between allying with the proletarian revolution embodied in “oppressor” Russia, or imperialism behind the standards of the Kaiser. It is indisputable that the cause of the Polish Social-Democrats in their mortal struggle against the Polish bourgeoisie’s betrayal of its own imputed nationalism was in no way furthered by Bolshevik phraseology which, despite argumentative twists, could appear in no other way to Polish workers than to corroborate the counterrevolutionary policy of their bourgeoisie. Later, in 1920, the Polish government summoned French military aid to halt the advance of the Red Army.

The disastrous eventuations of Lenin’s old position of self-determination were nowhere as clear as in Finland, where the breakdown of the revolution can be attributed directly to Bolshevik blunders. Among all the subject nations, Finland reflected the sharpest political divisions along class lines, containing both a strong and well-situated bourgeoisie, and a large and energetic industrial working class under the powerful influence of a revolutionary Social-Democratic Party. Sections of the Russian Army remained in Finland after October in a good position to aid the outbreak of a revolution. However, the authority of the bourgeois Finnish government was not wholly broken, and it seized upon the opportunity provided it by the famous Bolshevik promise of self-determination to demand its own right to secede — that is, escape. Having emasculated the capacity for independent action by the leading sections of the Finnish proletariat, the Council of People’s Commissars acceded in accordance with its dogma. Ironically, even the least notable mind among the Bolshevik leadership, minister of nationalities Stalin, expressed certain forebodings:

In fact the Council of People’s Commissars against its will gave freedom

not to the people, but to the bourgeoisie, of Finland, which by a strange confluence of circumstances has received its independence from the hands of socialist Russia. The Finnish workers and social-democrats found themselves in the position of having to receive freedom not directly from the hands of socialists, but with the aid of the Finnish bourgeoisie.

Stalin further described the events as the “tragedy of the Finnish proletariat” and, in his inimitable style of projecting guilt onto others, ascribed this major failure to the “indecision and incomprehensible cowardice” of the Finnish social-democrats — who chose not to organize a revolt without the slightest indication of forthcoming aid from Russia.

During ensuing period of civil war, when theoretical distinctions concerning degrees of due national autonomy were rudely pushed aside by the direct confrontation of the Red Army and the interventionist forces, the Finnish bourgeoisie emulated its Polish counterpart in adopting the next logical step of counterrevolution. The Finnish “nationalists” called in German arms to hold back the tide of Bolshevism. The delayed workers’ uprising in Finland was crushed by German troops. These events, paralleled throughout the Western theatre of the civil war, elicited Luxemburg’s famous criticism in *The Russian Revolution*:

To be sure, in all these cases, it was really not the “people” who engaged in these reactionary policies, but only the bourgeois and petty bourgeois classes, who — in sharpest opposition to their own proletarian masses — perverted the “national right of self-determination” into an instrument of their counterrevolutionary class politics. But — and here we come to the very heart of the question — it is in this that the utopian, petty bourgeois character of this nationalistic slogan resides, that in the midst of the crude realities of class society and when class antagonisms are sharpened to the uttermost, it is simply converted into a means of bourgeois class rule. The Bolsheviks were to be taught to their own great hurt and that of the revolution, that under the rule of capitalism there is no self-determination

of peoples, that in a class society each class of the nation strives to "determine itself" in a different fashion, and that, for the bourgeois classes, the standpoint of national freedom is fully subordinated to that of class rule. The Finnish bourgeoisie, like the Ukrainian bourgeoisie, were unanimous in preferring the violent rule of Germany to national freedom, if the latter should be bound up with Bolshevism.

Instead of piously declaiming the right of self-determination for these nations — which necessarily redounded to the bourgeois sense of "self-determination," that is, accession to bourgeois rule and consequent defenselessness against imperialist determination — the task of socialists was to denounce and expose the true significance of "self-determination" and propagate unity between the Warsaw, Helsinki, and Petrograd workers. The unsubtle bit of sophistry which seeks to justify the Bolshevik errors by noting — correctly but without relevance — that the Polish social democrats were free to so propagate, evades the whole point. The Bolsheviks had the ear of every conscious worker in the world, more immediately than their indigenous counterparts, and Bolshevik dictums on the national question stood paramount above the contradictory echoes of the unfortunate Polish revolutionaries.

Both in the example of the Western nations of the Russian Empire and in the eastern nationalities discussed below, one salient point is manifest: that the fate of the outlying nations of the old Empire, far from having been determined by either centralized Russian or internal national policy, was governed by the same process that guided the destiny of the Russian revolution through its inception and degeneration — the world socialist movement. Lenin and Trotsky insisted through 1917 and after that the chances of the Russian revolution were wholly predicated on support from revolutionary upheaval in the West. Trotsky predicted that unless revolutions in the more industrialized nations forestalled imperialist intervention, the weak and isolated Russian Soviet regime would stand no chance of survival. (Later Trotsky clarified his earlier views, explaining that although no successful revolutions occurred in Western Europe, the class enemy was hamstrung by persistent revolutionary activity. This alone made possible the narrow success of the Red Army against the Allied invasion). It was not the local counterrevolution alone that tore Poland, Finland,

and the Baltic States from the Soviet Union, but imperialism in the person of German troops which overmastered the hard-pressed Red Army. Under these circumstances, the Bolshevik call for self-determination of these nations was reduced to a utopian chimera, "mere petty bourgeois humbug and phraseology," when the decisive question was the international alignment of class forces. It is therefore impossible to, with hindsight, ascertain whether Poland and Finland might have been retained via a correct policy. It is nonetheless evident that the Bolshevik policy sabotaged their own cause.

The fate of self-determination in the Ukraine and especially in the Asiatic nations is an entirely different question. An analysis of the development of these nations through the civil war contains the answer, in part, to the Bolsheviks preservation of the "self-determination" canon. The Ukraine incorporated a peculiarly varied admixture of national currents and groups. Historically, the animosity of the Ukrainian peasantry had been less focused against the Great Russians than against Polish landlords especially and Jewish tradesmen and moneylenders. More significantly, the industrial development of the Ukraine was almost at a par with Russia and the western nationalities. A correspondingly strong and volatile workers' movement was deeply imbued with revolutionary politics since the 1899-1905 mass strike period. The great majority of the industrial workers of the Ukraine, especially in the leading industrial center of Kharkov, were Great Russian immigrants who journeyed South for employment. The historic peculiarities of the Ukraine thus induced a nationalist fissure into the tenuous link between the proletariat and peasantry.

The development of the revolution in the Ukraine was characterized by two mutually incompatible attempts at "self-determination," neither of which substantially influenced the revolutionary denouement. The first was embodied in the **Rada**, a quasi-democratic assembly composed almost exclusively of petty bourgeois and peasant elements, and was dominated by the Ukrainian nationalist intellectuals who were reclaimed from oblivion during the period of political vacuum before October. The petty bourgeois leadership of the **Rada** synthesized the worst of their traditional proclivity toward deals with "outsiders," with the Polish example — i.e. they allied with the western interventionists against the central Soviet regime in the Ukraine by calling

in the traditional antagonist of the Ukrainian peasantry, Poland, for a supportive invasion, disgraced the nationalists — until the ossification of the Soviet regime enabled the Ukrainian partisans to slither back into vogue. During the civil war, the question was decided by mutinies against the German and French interventionists in the Black Sea.

Soviet policy in the Ukraine, undertaken in the interest of self-preservation, consisted of fostering a Ukrainian Soviet regime based largely on the non-Ukrainian workers of Kharkov and other industrial centers. At certain moments its leaders were appointed from Moscow. It assumed and abandoned power numerous times, as the White and German armies swept across the Ukraine and were in turn driven back, until the Soviets at length consolidated their power over the region. Both the Soviet nationalities and land policies served as a severe detriment to their cause during the civil war, the former in the sense pertaining to Poland and Finland, the latter in its tendency to induce conservatism among a peasantry that became smallholders for the first time. Popular support for the Bolsheviks materialized only after prolonged White occupation of the region, following initial widespread support for the counterrevolutionary guerrilla bands of Makhno and similar peasant and White leaders. Agitation for Ukrainian nationhood was promoted during this period by German agents. Soviet control of the region had the political character of peasant acquiescence to the authority of the local Soviet government, which was composed chiefly of non-Ukrainians.

This form of the “dictatorship of the proletariat based on the peasantry” replicated the means by which the Bolsheviks had come to power save in one secondary respect: the Bolshevik nationalities program had impeded its occurrence until the Bolsheviks themselves reversed in practice their own stated course. Luxemburg writes caustically, “At the beginning of this century, before the tomfoolery of ‘Ukrainian nationalism’...and Lenin’s hobby of an ‘independent Ukraine’ had been invented, the Ukraine was the stronghold of the Russian revolutionary movement.”

The Ukrainian peasantry had not made national demands in the past for the reason that the Ukrainian peasantry had not in general risen to the height of political being. The chief service of the February Revolution — perhaps its only

service, but on amply sufficient — lay exactly in this, that it gave the oppressed classes and nations of Russia at last an opportunity to speak out. This political awakening of the peasantry could not have taken place otherwise, however, than through, their own native language — with all the consequences ensuing in regard to schools, courts, self-administration. To oppose this would have been to try to drive the peasants back into non-existence.

To fulfill the mounting demands of a radicalized peasantry, however, required the political and economic consequences of unity with the Russian revolution. To echo the calims of German agents — in the ears of the Ukrainian peasants, at least — that the necessary conditions for an uplifting of peasant life could be fulfilled by any other means than the conquest of proletarian power, e.g. through the chimerical formula of “self-determination,” was to betray the peasants’ interests. Luxemburg, as noted above, emphasized the importance of freedom for cultural development, and Trotsky’s petulant criticism ignores her feeling for the matter. It is absolutely true that a revolutionary organization in this or any congruent instance must undertake propaganda concerning the cultural rights of subject nations, but the basis for political unity is not the grateful reciprocity vainly expected by the Bolsheviks during the first implementation of their national policy, but rather the unity of the class movement which, in fact, accounted for the ultimate incorporations of most of the Russian subject nations into the Soviet Union.

It is furthermore erroneous to generalize as Trotsky later did, that the political awakening of the most oppressed social strata typically assumes parochial “peasant-only” or nationalist forms. The special case of cultural divisions between workers and peasants in the Ukraine more than anything else led to an ‘independent’ political awakening of the peasantry. It has already been shown that this ‘independent’ peasant expression faced the immediate choice of subordinating itself either to a wide revolutionary movement or to German imperialism. Nevertheless, the pattern throughout the Russian revolution was the reciprocal development of political consciousness between the proletariat and peasantry. Every advance and victory by the workers’ movement fired the rural revolution and the rural upheaval in turn supported and encouraged the proletarian movement.

Trotsky later generalized, with respect to the awakening colonial revolutions, that the political stirrings of the most-oppressed social strata typically come to parochial, 'peasant-only', or nationalist forms of expression. On the contrary, in the case of the Russian Revolution and many revolutions to follow, the rural and urban struggles complemented, reinforced and encouraged one another. The special case of cultural divisions between the Ukrainian peasantry and the local working class above all else produced the 'independent' political sentiments of the peasantry. In Great Russia, the reciprocal development of political consciousness in the proletariat and peasantry is documented by Trotsky himself in the second volume of his **History of the Russian Revolution**. In any case, the specific peasant movement of the Ukraine was forced to give way either to the Red Army or the Germans. The latter, despite their systematic use of nationalist and anti-semitic agitation, alienated the wavering peasantry through the harshness of their military rule, causing the peasants to solidarize with the Bolsheviks.

In the case of the truly backward Asiatic nations, the issue at hand was supremely clear-cut and the Bolshevik response even more muddled than elsewhere. The early Bolshevik espousal of secession rights met the response by local nationalists (and pan-religionists) of alliance with the counterrevolution. The next phase of Bolshevik policy at the height of the civil war rested on the creation of independent Soviets. These withered in the unfertile soil and fell to the scythes of the White Armies. Ultimately these republics were united with revolutionary Russia after Red Army victories. Actually these republics, in certain cases populated heavily by nomads and altogether devoid of economic development and class stratification, lacked even a nominal basis for independence. Even after they joined the Soviet Union, cultural and educational facilities had of necessity to be provided by the Russians. Even Engels, the most implacable enemy of 19th century Czarism, had considered the 'civilizing influence' of Great Russian rule to be a possibly positive factor. During the Civil War these people tasted both Soviet and White administration and found they preferred the latter. It is also true that during the throes of civil war the program of self-determination provided an honorable means of excusing the military loss of any of these provinces, and in such a case would no more represented a betrayal of socialist principle than

the Brest-Litovsk treaty. In such a case, national self-determination would represent a forced concession to imperialism. It is this contingency which caused Lenin, among other reasons, to retain the slogan for 'self-determination' while radically altering its content.'

As the historian of the Russian Revolution E.H. Carr notes,

'The right to separate', in the phase once used by Lenin, was being replaced by the 'right to unite'. In principle it was unthinkable that any socialist nation should wish to secede from the socialist community of nations; in practice, it was unthinkable by the end of 1920 that anyone not irrevocably hostile to the Soviet order should wish to break up such unity as had already been achieved.

During this period the emphasis shifted from self-determination of nations, which Lenin seven years earlier predicated upon his now-discarded concept of the independent economic development of nations, to equality of nations within a socialist community. This in turn rested on mutual economic development, the rapid alleviation of economic underdevelopment, fostering of industry in backward areas, and the rejection of all national discrimination. Nationalism turned irrelevant in direct proportion to the pace of industrial progress. It is noteworthy that at this point Lenin's view of economic roots, political unity and recognition of cultural development. In confusion of the civil war, however, did not jar Lenin sufficiently to cause him to discard the ideological appurtenances of self-determination. A second development, bound up with the breakdown of the Soviet government in its weakness and isolation, reinforced this inertial tendency in Lenin's: thought the reappearance of Great Russian chauvinism.

The analysis of the post-revolutionary bureaucratization of the Soviet Union is too well-known to bear repetition here. It suffices to add that the bureaucracy, which Lenin characterized as 'the old Czarist bureaucracy with a little Soviet holy oil', tended to emphasize its Great Russian standards became a condition of success for bureaucratic careers. As centralization became the increasingly necessary form of administration, the importance of the central trade unions, the Red Army, and the Communist Party itself, assumed in proportion a more dominant role. These centripetal influences, rather than facilitating

socialist unity between the constituent republics of the Soviet Union, served as a transmission belt for bureaucratic authority. The appearance of Great Russian arbitrariness, which assumed pathological forms under Stalin, in turn elicited retrogressive nationalist reaction, which became infamous as an important source of friction between Lenin and Stalin, in turn compounded the grievances.

Ultimately the incapacity of the Soviet Union to solve its national problem through joint economic development emanated from the stifling

of economic development itself, and the consequent failure to overcome peasant backwardness, reinforce the Russian working class, and the accompanying host of debilitating tendencies which undermined the revolution. The final irony of the history of the 'right of self-determination' is that the Bolsheviks, themselves in power, were granted no such right. Their socialist destiny rested on the European working class, and their effacement of the Bolshevik party can be traced to the insufficiency of the international socialist movement.

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necessarily engages himself in the process of spreading that critical knowledge among yet untouched layers of the working class. That is, he himself will become educated as he himself becomes educator.

Cadre as Educators

Thus, the crucial importance of educational questions to the socialist movement is that they are not simply questions which, so to speak, socialists can hand out their "line" on and then pigeon-hole until after the working class has become a government. Far from it. Every socialist cadre must be a self-conscious educator whose fundamental conceptions and method of conveying and developing those conceptions are in every way distinct from bourgeois conceptions and teaching processes. The only way the fundamental distinctions between bourgeois and socialist notions can be really grasped is not just by

studying marxist canonical literature over and over all by itself but by systematically forcing oneself to discover the fallacies implicit in various actually hegemonic bourgeois sources and making such discoveries the public property of the socialist movement. Yet how many socialists there are who have effectively separated themselves into two different selves, a private one and a public, Marxist one, acting as though the former did not even exist or was some kind of secret petit-bourgeois cancer. The self-consciously critical Marxist cadre will no more tolerate such peaceful co-existence between socialist and bourgeois notions within himself than he will in the society around him. A critical education in fundamental principles of knowledge and teaching processes will assist such a process at the same time as cadre, by feeding back discoveries with respect to their own particular areas of competence and teaching experience, help elaborate an increasingly sophisticated Marxist curriculum and pedagogy.

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COUNTERCULTURE

A Campaigner Special Feature

EDITORIAL

The Counter-Culture

In September 1968 following after the Columbia University student strike, and right before the NYC teachers strike *The Campaigner* published the *New Left, Local Control and Fascism* by C. La Rouché and L. Marcus. Despite the fact that this was a signed article it represented the political opinion of the NYC and Philadelphia Labor Committees, arrived at after a period of intensive discussion. For those not familiar with the article the following quotation expresses the thesis:

Our role is determined by the fact that conscious political leadership — or misleadership — will be decisive in the coming period, a period in which the objective conditions for revolutionary struggles are virtually matured. A period in which increasing numbers of people despair of remedies to economic and social crisis through traditional “legitimate” channels. Under these circumstances, the public exposure of syndicalism, as it is expressed by various syndicalist tendencies in the New Left movement, becomes an urgent task, without which there cannot be a revolutionary movement in this country. This means the uncompromising public exposure of syndicalism as it is rationalized by the

Praxis-axis, or by those anarchist variants which substitute running in the streets and violence for socialist program and organization. The self-styled revolutionary who is too polite to expose and extirpate such syndicalist influence is absolutely unqualified to lead anyone.

This is not an abstract or otherwise academic issue. It is not a matter of denouncing bad ideas as such. The alliance of Praxisites and street-syndicalists which has directed and weakened the Columbia strike organization this summer defends its actions with phrases which might almost be a

plagiarism from Mussolini’s anti-Marxist demagoguery. . .

The National Caucus of Labor Committees at its June 1971 bi-annual conference resolved upon the necessity of carrying this struggle still further. Not only must the political practice of proto-fascist anarcho-syndicalism be attacked but we must vigorously challenge its pretensions to producing a revolutionary culture.

Anarchism because it is the extreme political expression of bourgeois individualism inevitably gives birth to fascism — the most radical bourgeois political movement. The rock-drug “counter”-culture, ideological expression of anarchism, is likewise merely a particularly vicious extension of previously existing bourgeois cultural trends. This thesis is developed in the series of papers from the June conference which are reprinted here.

Many who support our thesis on anarchism find it inappropriate for a revolutionary socialist organization to take a position on music, art or literature. Two seemingly opposite but related viewpoints are expressed: the subject is too trivial to absorb the time of serious revolutionaries ; it is inappropriate for a revolutionary socialist organization to seek to legislate areas of “private taste.”

It must be clear from the outset that we do not mean to suggest that everyone who listens to rock is a proto-fascist. Nor is it a provision for membership in the NCLC that an aspirant melt down any Dylan records which he may possess. Inevitably, the everyday practice of even the most revolutionary among us is immersed in bourgeois culture. Nor is it likely that we will produce a revolutionary socialist culture to replace bourgeois culture before the success of a socialist revolution. Nonetheless, the task of destroying the pretensions of the rock culture to revolutionary hegemony is urgent.

The world view implicit in that culture if extended, would lead to specific social relations. The world-view of the rock culture is a return to a state of animality and a celebration of barbarism under the guise of "liberation." It is no more than the symbolic celebration of the monstrously inhuman existence that capitalism has created.

The notion, of how consciousness is produced which is inherent in the drug culture cannot be reconciled with the need to produce an effective revolutionary cadre capable of achieving victory. Purely phenomenal perception, deliberately avoiding the development of critical awareness, leaves people in a state of helplessness in which they will submit to any onslaught, including fascism, which emerges as a social force.

For those to whom this may seem unsubstantiated by practice we offer the following information about Bob Dylan from the May 31 issue of Time magazine:

There may soon be a folk-singing superstar

, One Sunday out in the suburbs of Berlin we met a strange troop by chance on the road. They were not distinguishable from ordinary vagabonds by their short pants, their naked calves crossed by woolen straps, by the enormous and odd load of stuff they balanced on their backs, or by their heavy boots. But they looked like juvenile delinquents, like black-leather-jacket hoods. They had the vicious and tormented expressions of hooligans. They also had the most bizarre headgear: black or grey derby hats of the sort Charlie Chaplin wore, old ladies' hats with the sides decorated with little bunches of feathers and medals, working-man's caps of the type sailors wear, decorated above the visor with an immense sprig of edelweiss. In addition, they had handkerchiefs and scarves of loud colors tied around their necks, half-nude torsos emerging from t-shirts frayed away into tatters, arms marked with fantastic or obscene tatoos, ears loaded with earring and rings, and leather shorts topped by big triangular belts, also made of leather, covered with mystical figures, human profiles, inscriptions like "wild and free" and "bandits". Around their wrists were enormous leather bracelets. In short, they were an unusual mixture of virility and effeminacy.

At the head of the group was a big kid with sensuous lips, and eyes ringed around with makeup, who carried a banner. This was Winnetou,

named Robert Allen Zimmerman. Old Bob Dylan, 30 this week, says he is "thinking about" changing his name back to the one he grew up with. He became Dylan (out of his admiration for poet Dylan Thomas) about nine years ago, because "I had a lot to run away from. Now I've got a lot to return to." What he is returning to is his Jewishness. For a year or more, Dylan has been getting into this ethnic Jewish thing," says his friend and annotator A. J. Weberman. "He's reading all kinds of books on Judaism, books about the Jewish resistance like the Warsaw ghetto. He took a trip to Israel last year that no one was supposed to know about and even, it is rumored, gave a large donation to the Israeli government." Dylan denies giving money to Israel or to the fanatical Jewish Defense league, but he confesses great admiration for that "Never again" action group and its reckless leader Rabbi Meir Kahane. "He's a really sincere guy," says Bob. "He's really put it all together."

the guru of the band. He was not very talkative. But he said enough for us to learn that we had before us a wild clique, a savage band, a gang of disoriented and asocial adolescents, a commune of kids rejected by the community. Back in Berlin, I visited the offices of the extreme left-wing press to find someone who could inform me about these "cliques." I was sent to Christine Fournier, former wife of the writer Rudolf Olden, and a member of the staff of A.I.Z., a weekly magazine published by Willy Muenzenberg, a smart operator and Stalinist propagandist. With care and patience, she had spent some time with these young good-for-nothings. Gradually she succeeded in gaining their confidence, in getting admitted into their company, in learning their most jealously guarded secrets. In the *Neue Weltbuehne* of 20 January 1931 she passed along the fruits of her observations in an excellent article.

She is a woman about 45 years old, with a face that is still interesting and seductive despite her prematurely white hair, and with sharp eyes behind her horn-rimmed glasses. My vagabond get-up didn't seem to disturb her too much; apparently she was used to such attire.

"Where do these bands come from?" "These cliques are nothing new in Germany. They came

into existence during the war and the period thereafter. From 1916 or 1917 on it was possible to find troops of this type in the residential quarters of big cities, or in the suburbs. These were adolescents whose fathers were at the front, and whose mothers were working in factories. Nobody at home took care of them. The post-war inflation, and, during these last two years, unemployment have increased the number of these gangs. They offer to young people who are often rootless and homeless a shared existence, camaraderie, the taste of danger and adventure. To escape the temptation of suicide, they create their own fantasy world, a world based on precepts that are entirely different from those accepted by the usual morality, a world given over to the most unbridled instincts, a world filled with hate for the society that has abandoned them. ”

“What is the significance of their motto, ‘wild and free’ ”? “Wild-frei ” means savage and free, rebels against all authority, rebels and not revolutionaries. Taken in themselves the names they give themselves are enlightening: Blood of the Tartars, Blood of Indians, Blood of Cossaks, Savage Crime, Terror of Women, Red Apaches, Black Love, Bloody Bones, Pirates of the Woods, Guzzlers of Booze. They have all read Karl May, the German equivalent of the French Gustave Aimard, and Winnetou, the nickname they most prefer, comes from the last of the Apache Indians.”

“How about their sex lives?” “Each clique has its own meeting-place in an attic, a cellar, or a storehouse and the only furniture in this clandestine refuge is the stossofa (bang-sofa) where intercourse takes place. But that’s not all. . .” She lowered her voice. “There are secret ceremonies of initiation, at night, in some deserted forest, on the bank of one of the numerous lakes that surround Berlin. The ordeals are sometimes horrible: knife-fights, being thrown completely clothed into the lake, ordeal by fire; the act of intercourse

performed by the candidate before the clique members, in a set time that is enforced by the guru with a stopwatch. But there is worse still. . .”

At this point Mrs. Olden is called to the telephone in the next room, and left me alone for a moment. I took advantage of this to look into one of the envelopes filled with photographs which she referred to, but which she was probably too embarrassed to show me. I came upon a collection of nude teenagers, dangling by their wrists from a tree branch, or bound, with their hands behind their backs, to the top of a tree, while around them the members of the clique, also nude, wave phallic emblems. When Mrs. Olden returns I have already stuffed these pictures back into their envelopes.

“The initiation feast,” she concluded, “always degenerates into a drinking-bout, a wild orgy. The books these kids read, of course, have played a certain role in this: perhaps they are imitating primitive ceremonies. But I think instead that this represents a spontaneous return to barbarism. Civilization is, after all, only a very thin, recent and fragile veneer . . . ”

As I left Christine Fournier, I couldn’t avoid a disturbing thought: a person capable of organizing these carnival apaches could make them into real bandits. Two years later, the journalist of the *Neuweltbuehne* (who had become my mother-in-law in the meantime) told me that, after Hitler had come to power, she met in the streets of Berlin a sinister and powerful Brown shirt, the member of a *Sturmabteilung*. She was surprised when the Nazi spoke to her familiarly, even with affection. Finally she recognized him. It was the guru of the clique she had made friends with. It was Winnetou.

From Daniel Guerin, La peste brune (the Brown Plague), a journalistic account of a hike through Germany in August — September 1932.)

Crisis in the Schools

By Art Leaderman

Public education in the United States is crumbling. This fall most major school systems will attempt to maintain an inadequate level of service on reduced budgets. Reductions in teaching staff are forecast in Philadelphia, New York, Baltimore, Detroit, and San Francisco as well as other smaller school systems. Thuggery and drugs remain the best evidence of the uselessness of high school curriculum and instruction for a large number of students. The failure of millions to achieve functional literacy, on top of all these other problems, fiscal and social, make a desperate public vulnerable to a spate of slapdash remedies now being peddled to save the schools.

The Office of Education and the Office of Economic Opportunity have had the historical function in the last five years of making flimsy educational "experiments" look hopeful and substantial. In reality the efforts have been divisive. They have insulated ruling forces from having to invest in education in a serious way; they have divided communities racially and ethnically; they have scapegoated teachers and their labor organizations for failing the children.

The Example of Newark

This year's Newark school crisis best exemplifies what may well become the recurring scenario in school systems throughout the nation. At the beginning of the school year Newark had a projected city deficit of \$63 million. In October 1970 the School Board said it was \$40 million short on funds needed to complete the school year. 40 of Newark's 75 school structures were more than 50 years old. The property tax rate, highest in the nation, was \$8.44/\$100.

Newark's administration faced this situation with the most stark of conceivable solutions — jettison the school system. They executed a plan to provoke a long teachers' strike. Newark's schools

were closed for eleven weeks. The schools were 75% shut down, bringing savings in teacher salaries, heat, light, and maintenance. These savings helped allow the spectre of further tax increases to recede from the nightmares of Newark's bankers and large mortgage holders. The ledger only tells a small part of the story, however. In order to execute the plan to abandon the schools and to create the best possible conditions for disguising their continued neglect in future years, Mayor Gibson and his school board had to at least appear to offer a policy on the schools.

To direct public attention from the general decay of Newark schools Mayor Gibson and Board Chairman Jesse Jacob tried to tag the Newark Teachers Union as a crassly insensitive broker for selfish teachers. The text of the Board of Education's bargaining position (January 11, 1971) "insists that the current contract be "streamlined and cleaned up." The board demands, however, meant the virtual elimination of the teachers organization. Most significant were these four items:

- 1) The right of teachers to increments, promotion, and maintenance of positions should be determined according to standards of accountability to be determined. (Teachers were to be denied any explicit role in these determinations.)
- 2) The Board of Education refuses to discuss any economic items.
- 3) The Newark Board of Education, as well as the Newark community is totally opposed to binding arbitration.
- 4) Nothing in the contract. . .can prevent the local community at arriving at policies and decisions with respect to educational needs of that community or any of the schools within that community.

government undertook the sponsorship of compensatory education projects. Operation Head Start, probably begun with some sincere, even if incorrect regard for its potential, tried to prove that one or two years of pre-school could mend the fabric of ghetto life. No evidence has yet validated this notion. Later in 1965, as the impossibility of school busing and real integration for most school districts was the accepted political reality, Congress needed a measure to contain militant black pressure that had long regarded this as the key to solving their education problem. That year the Elementary and Secondary schools Act was passed to give local districts subsidies for each poor child enrolled in a school where the total school population was poor. The subsidy generally accounted for \$50/yr. additional instructional funds. In a sense the program put a financial premium on the concentration and segregation of the poor. E.S.E.A. lent further support to the notion that ghetto schools could become good with minor correction. The program also helped to deflate pressure for integration by establishing vested interests in slum school programming. School administrators enjoyed the additional funds and defended their program; the discomfiting integration movement was being abated in many areas.

Blame the Teacher

by 1967 compensatory education had become a well-acknowledged failure. A new strategy for the urban school began to develop; one of its first spokesmen was Kenneth Clark. In November of that year Clark, only recently the recipient of \$4 million from the Ford Foundation to set up an urban research institute, wrote a paper called "Alternative Public School Systems." He called for "viable, aggressive, and realistic competitors" to the present system. He discounted the prospects for significant gains in integration although he still regarded it as a necessary future goal. In the paper he held that teacher organizations were largely accountable for the failure of integration efforts; they perpetuated the neighborhood school myth. His conclusion is that "efficiency" in all Negro schools must be attained before politics and prejudice will recede to allow desegregation. Since the dual factors of teacher organizations and massive central bureaucracies were too awesome to overcome within public-school system, these efficient schools must arise outside of the existing systems. He suggested special Federal schools (detached from local bureaucracies), schools

developed by and oriented to private industrial interests, labor union sponsored schools, and a few other possible sponsoring sources. The paper is confused and slapdash to say the least. Clark says absolutely nothing about how such new schools would be paid for. He does not consider how or what they would teach or why they would educate better. For him the answers to these questions would be discovered through the imagination and daring of a new diverse competitive system.

Clark's proposition was so loose and desperate that it is not surprising that the following year he became the chief theoretical exponent of an equally disorganized plan, the New York City decentralization scheme. The plan divided New York City schools into 30 autonomous districts which would be funded according to no set formula by a central budgeting aegis. The obvious upshot of the plan was to set off competition among these districts for funds, each pleading on the basis of need or ingenuity for a greater share than the others. The plan prepared under the direction of McGeorge Bundy of the Ford Foundation was initiated in the form of three experimental districts. The result of the experiment was the creation of a new educational bureaucracy whose main activity was to bring elements of the community into conflict with New York's teachers' union UFT. The New York school crisis became an excellent vehicle for Clark-Ford Foundation to peddle a new educational panacea and pose the educational crisis in terms most likely to contain serious opposition to ruling circles. Indeed if Clark's desire was to undercut public education to make way for an alternative he could not have found a more disruptive instrument.

In spite of UFT's initial support for the experiment, the union soon found itself being scapegoated by Rhody McCoy, head of the Ocean Hill Brownsville district as well as by Clark, as a purveyor of racism and incompetency. Clark was continually able to emphasize his pet theory that teacher insensitivity was the chief cause of school failure. Clark and McCoy were able to divide the union from the "community" with little difficulty. Racism, not the totally inadequate schools and the ghetto surroundings, became the target set for the community. As such the black community was persuaded to see the problems of their schools in impressionistic anti-union terms instead of seeing the revolutionary requirements for reconstructing ghetto conditions.

The Board position on salaries and arbitration (the only mechanism for enforcing a contract short of strike) was now coupled with the assertion of the completely indeterminate authority of a "community." By assuming the role of self-proclaimed advocate for the community, the Board was driving a wedge between the union and the people. The special irony of the board position was that it made no effort to locate school problems in the obviously inadequate facilities of the school system.

On one hand the board obviously wanted to destroy the Newark Teachers Union. With NTU out of the way the city would be able to depress wage levels of teachers, check the efforts of teachers to hold class size down (public school form of speed-up), and introduce non-professional cheap labor into the classroom. On the other hand the board and Mayor had to bring about the machinery to arouse public support for a disguised policy of educational neglect. To carry out this job all that was needed was to reactivate the symbiotic relationship of Newark's businessmen (through the Urban Coalition and the Chamber of Commerce), Leroi Jones, community organizer and poet voice of Black Nationalism in Newark, and the Office of Economic Opportunity. The unprincipled *quid pro quo* of this arrangement is simply that Jones got financial support and protection from the other two for attacking what all three regarded as a common enemy.

During the first days of the strike, Jones attempted to sell the NTU as a racist outfit, despite the fact that NTU leadership and 40% of the membership is Black. He endorsed goon-squad attacks that hospitalized six teachers. Jones' effort along with those of the Board were successful in neutralizing the black community, even if not generating a city wide anti-teacher movement.

Where does Jones get his support? This year Jones ran the Free Africa School Program at a Newark public school funded by OEO for \$80,000. He also heads the New Ark Fund, a recipient of Urban Coalition and Ford Foundation grants. Finally he is connected with the coalition of white businessmen who sponsored Mayor Gibson's candidacy. In 1969 Jones organized along with Donald MacNaughton, head of Newark's Urban Coalition and a Prudential Insurance executive, the Black and Puerto Rican Convention that tagged Gibson as the peoples' candidate for mayor.

Jones is pushing his Free Africa School as an alternative to the existing public school system. Through his supervision of this school of under thirty children he has tried to gain a credible reputation as an educator. The school is only in its first year of operation and Jones does not yet claim any firm success for his pedagogy. The school's program emphasizes a separatist social studies program, and its head teacher is a firm advocate of rote learning and memorization drills. She reports (N.Y. Times, April 10, 1971), "Black children often learn better this way." OEO's willingness to fund this program could easily be accounted to Jones' formidable political influence in the city of Newark, but more than likely they were eager, not reluctant to support Jones. In fact the recent Newark situation can be added to the list of models of how government has and will continue to intervene in the educational crisis in the next few years.

Patronage and Pedagogy

A survey of past and projected activities of the Federal government in education reveals a combination of political cunning and pedagogical nonsense. OEO and the Office of Education have been acting in the last few years with an acute sense of the imminent breakdown of public education, but have directed themselves only to manipulating the resulting frustrations. In the early sixties the Democratic administration developed OEO and other Federal projects in the ghetto to give the party a close link to the growing voting constituency of blacks in the city. The poverty programs would allow black politicians to bypass unresponsive racist city halls to find Federal patronage monies in the ghetto branches of the United States government. White politicians would also gain a certain measure of insulation from open political conflict with their minority citizens. At the same time the Federal government was creating political influence and power capable of containing increasing dissidence in the ghetto. Neighborhood centers and community participation in Urban Renewal begin to lend credibility to the new responsiveness of the government.

The new poverty network soon found its way into the problems of education. Democratic politicians were unready to make good on promises of school integration and unable to insist on suburban cooperation with inner city schools. Needing more than ever to respond to the egregious inadequacy of city schools the Federal

Who Cares About Education?

What should be noted here is how little the protagonists of the New York school crisis had to say about education itself. Why were thirty school districts going to be more effective than one large one? Mere faith in a competitive situation between the districts? Why would community-related school districts be better? Would black parents and educators bring new curriculum and methods? What assurance was there that they too would not be locked into limiting routines of existing schools? For Clark these problems never existed. In spite of the general decay of the ghetto, Clark regarded only the teachers and administrators as the impediments to the success of black children in the schools. By properly watch-dogging the current system, weeding out racist teachers, and hiring instructors who "believed" in the children, all would be well. Clark became the new advocate of the boot straps myth. Positive thinking in the school could vaccinate ghetto youngsters from all the sad prospects for a productive life: hunger, drugs, and a worthless program of studies.

Ford spokesmen and the liberals and servile leftists who supported their plan did not really try to defend the educational merit of the community-control plan. They posed the struggle for community control as a battle that would help defeat the psychology of powerlessness that demoralized the ghetto. Somehow parent involvement in schools would be easily elicited by the Ford plan and would generate an enthusiasm for education that would radiate from K thru 12.

This hasty summary of the educational philosophy of the crisis protagonists is really not a caricature. Below the surface, the crisis was not in education but in the divisive play of social forces put in motion by the plan. No one put forth a plan for unified programmatic reform of education. What was proposed was an organizational jumble that isolated teachers from parents and students and, if carried to completion, would fragment the city into parent pressure groups jealously competing iwth each other for limited school funds.

The full importance of the Newark and New York situations is seen in present plans to replay the same scenario in other cities. In a large sense they have served as laboratories for perfecting a technique of weakening teacher organizations and splitting school systems into small units for

purposes more political than pedagogical.

Private Enterprise Corrupts Classrooms

Much along lines recommended in Clark's Alternative Public Schools article, the Office of Education and the OEO are now experimenting on a nationwide basis with education subcontracts and the old radical right scheme of tuition vouchers for private schools. The first of these, best known as performance contracting, provides for local school boards to hire private corporations to manage the schools. During the past year OE and OEO supported \$6.5 million of such contracts in 21 school districts around the country. Over 150 proposals are under study for the coming school year. Singer/Graflex and Westinghouse are among the biggest of the dozen or so existing contractors. Although just in pilot stage now, the project is strongly pushed by Commissioner of Education Sidney Marland, a recent Nixon appointee. Before taking his new post Marland was head of the Institute for Educational Development, a lobby and public relations outfit supported by private corporations and designed to foster arrangements such as these between business and the schools, as well as help to market educational materials.

Subcontracting companies and local school boards make a "productivity" arrangement. Usually a standardized test in reading and arithmetic achievement is used to determine whether the company has managed a child's education well enough during a given year to be paid a determined amount for that child's progress. On a reading level test, two or three correctly answered items out of a battery of 30 questions is usually sufficient to register a year's gain. It is not hard to imagine how test-taking practice could easily become a prevalent part of the reading curriculum. In fact, OEO project directors were forced to admit that a 1969-70 pilot experiment in Texarkana had been "contaminated" when the reading test had become the basis for the reading curriculum.

Contractors are able to spend their school budgets as they wish, perhaps on educational hardware in which their corporation has an interest. They can pay teachers bonuses according to the test results of the students. In some existing contracts these bonuses include stock in the company. Children also take part in the profit psychology. They may receive money rewards, transistor radios, and in one district, S and H

Green Stamps. These rewards bring to poor children the kind of competitive incentive that grades seem to provide among middle class children.

Perhaps of greater import than the contract itself is the method that OEO has adopted in implementing these schemes. The standard format for prospective districts for the coming year has been to isolate a junior high school and its feeder elementary schools into an experimental sub-district. This is only the first of a number of likenesses to the New York experimental districts of 1968. OEO guidelines also require the creation of a parent control board by the local superintendent; guidelines do not spell out specific powers of the board however. This board is to assist in some way in the selection of a contract and to aid in its implementation.

Once in power, the contractor makes final determinations of school policy. In such a situation, existing teacher organizations become badly compromised. The status of a teacher contract and its enforcement provisions is likely to be quite uncertain (as UFT's contract was in 1968). The newly formed parent board can likely be used as a group to try to "discipline" teachers to the terms of the performance contract instead of their own. Parents could help decide, for instance, to pay teachers bonuses or allow them to receive a yearly salary step in accord with the standardized tests of the pupils. Teacher opposition could be attacked as anti-community or racist. Some teachers who might be willing to wager on test scores will serve to split and disunify the teachers organization. Hence the performance contract may easily hold the prospect of creating a tax-based boondoggle for private firms and at the same time sabotage the strength of the teachers union. The plan also tries to gain acceptance of the idea that teachers are neither scholars or professionals, but pieceworkers. Prospects for professional creativity, scanty as they are now, are even worse in the contract situation.

Performance contracts stand to be money savers for the cities as well. The American Federation of Teachers reports on a school in Gary Ind., where the contractor transferred 14 of 33 teachers out of his school and replaced them with teaching aides at a wage of \$2/hr. Class sizes ranged in the 40s and 50s. OEO contracts are now being funded under the Urban and Rural Schools Project.

Washington Teachers Union Fights Back

The union-busting aspects of the performance contract were brought out in Washington D.C. over the Clark reading plan. This plan was not tied to any corporation but to Metropolitan Applied Research Corporation, Kenneth Clark's Ford-funded urban policy bureau. The Clark proposal called for teacher bonuses and green stamps for the children based on fall and spring standardized tests. The D.C. school board voted for city-wide implementation of the plan in September 1970, but the Washington Teachers Union alertly organized a series of hearings on the plan in various places in Washington. They attacked Clark's thesis that better motivation was needed to teach the children as opposed to better materials, staffing and an attack on the general conditions of the city. WTU efforts soon showed that there was no enthusiasm for the plan in the black communities. Washington School Superintendent Hugh Scott cancelled implementation of the plan, but members of the D.C. school board have declared their intention to work for the plan next year. Most notable about this attempt by Clark was that he had Rhody McCoy, former head of the Ocean Hill Brownsville district during the New York crisis, hired at \$20,000 to supervise the plan. Also worthy of note is that the Washington Teachers Union, which has never struck or held a city wide action, expects to go out on strike this fall. The familiar personalities of Clark and McCoy can only suggest another anti-labor scenario hidden by an educational "theory."

The Office of Education is now completing feasibility studies for Gary, Indiana and San Diego, California to institute another divisive and false remedy for educational woes — the tuition voucher plan. Under the plan parents would get a tax deduction or money grant for every child they sent to non-public schools. The planners hope to create conditions suitable for a proliferation of private and semi-private schools as an alternative to public ones. The problem, of course, is that these schools are likely to divide along racial and ethnic lines, like the recent private academies of the South. Liberal advocates of the plan, like Christopher Jencks, of Harvard's School of Education, are trying to devise a semi-private system of regulation for these kinds of schools that would assure integration, but these regulations are quite likely to remove entirely the only popular basis for using the plan. At this time it is not certain that even

limited experimentation with the plan will be carried out by the Office of Education in the two cities mentioned. Education Commissioner Marland is not optimistic about its chances for success at this time.

The voucher plan has great potential for the education industry. One can easily imagine franchise schools popping up on the highways like hamburger stands, or some slightly less outrageous form of promoting new educational hardware. Strong business pressure groups will no doubt use all political pull available to increase the value of vouchers to allow themselves greater profits. Once again the strength of teacher organization will be undermined by the fragmentation of school districts. Cheap labor will prevail over efforts to foster pedagogical excellence. The public will find comfort in sending their children to schools which will often reflect the basest or most facile impressions about education, no matter how crackpot they may be. The prospects of law-and-order schools or sensitivity-training schools are not far-fetched.

The attraction of bogus remedies for education can only exist because of the depravity of existing schools. We can attack Mayor Gibson's abandoning of Newark school children at the banker's behest, but we cannot defend public education.

Need for a "Left" Alternative

The "left," most sections of which unfortunately come to the defense of Clark, Jones, and the Newark School Board, (1) must itself come to an understanding of what education is for. What must be exposed about Kenneth Clark, performance contracting vouchers and the rest is how little they deal with pedagogy and how much they have to do with lining corporate pockets, patching up city finances, or isolating a teacher organization. All the above education schemes are grounded not in scientific pedagogy, but in the blind faith of social engineers that a competitive educational system can be better or at least easier to handle.

If an alternative educational program is not put forth, public desperation will strengthen the hand of the educational hucksters. Each of the schemes discussed makes an appeal to the parochialism of local groupings who in the midst of this crisis will covet an opportunity to retreat into its own neighborhood and work out the problem with the

"man from the company." Government officials will likewise feel relieved, since their own accountability will be mediated by small local groups now struggling with the schools problem from a limited point of view and with limited resources. Finally these schemes of school fragmentation will reinforce neighborhood identities at a time when advanced social decay raises the possibility of class wide struggle for decent jobs and services. The community participation charades of OEO and OE simply invite working people to fight for these things within familiar bourgeois institutions and to reject new ones. As the New York and Newark situations have shown, the new educational policies do not merely have disruptive side-effects; but disruption and confusion can be the motivation.

1) See Strike Issue of the Campaigner, Spring 1971, as well as other NCLC publications to learn of the role of the NCLC in opposing local control union busting schemes.

The Socialist Concept of Culture and Education

By Carol LaRosa

With the major exception of the paper "Philosophy of Socialist Education" by L. Marcus, fulsomely praised but ignored by many, Labor Committees until now have failed to deal with the content of education. To our credit, we have demolished the calculated lie that the crisis in public school education is the result of conscious malpractice by "racist teachers." It is not remarkable that we should have found it difficult to go beyond this. Marx described the problem in his third thesis on Feuerbach:

"The materialist doctrine that men are products of circumstances and upbringing, and that, therefore, changed men are products of other circumstances and changed upbringing, forgets that it is men who change circumstances and that it is essential to educate the educator himself. Hence this doctrine necessarily arrived at dividing society into two parts, one of which is superior to society (in Robert Owen, for example).

The coincidence of the changing of circumstances and of human activity can be conceived and rationally understood only as revolutionizing practice."

Fundamentally, revolution is the process of education. As we have developed the forms of the class-for-itself, even if only in embryonic form, within the Labor Committees and in the broader coalitions which we have been able to bring into being, we have begun this process of our own education. The formation of the Committees out of the 1963 Columbia strike and our continuing identity in opposition to all other political tendencies has been based upon this crucial insight.

Nevertheless, we have failed to relate our political practice to the question of education. This failure reflects a more fundamental weakness. We have only begun to attack the "counter-culture." We have yet to expose its "revolutionary" posture as the strut of the radical right. It took a prolonged period of discussion before the Committee was ready to actively contend with the Communist and Socialist Workers Parties for political hegemony. The struggle for cultural hegemony is just as necessary. We can only do this as we develop an authentic Marxist revolutionary counter-culture.

We recruit to ourself on the basis of our rejection of the anti-intellectualism rampant among petit-bourgeois youth within and without the so-called revolutionary movement; yet our typical college-educated member is a 'dropout' when it comes to the area of his or her previous specialization. In seeking a new revolutionary identity it seems easier to slough off the crushing dead-weight of academia than to contend with it. Unfortu-

nately we can no more forget about the bourgeois ideology we have been forced to imbibe than could the Victorian ladies whom Freud treated forget about sex. The penalty for intellectual repression is a loss of revolutionary vigor and self-confidence, an ambiance of petit-bourgeois pessimism and despair.

The Committee as a whole is weakened because those of us with special training and talent do not develop and share them. We are committed to the notion that only a cadre party can offer a successful revolutionary leadership, yet we overlook opportunities for members to develop rounded competence. If like Plekhanov we could believe that history would provide us with a Napoleon at the appropriate moment this would not be a serious problem. Unfortunately such is not the case.

Yet reality has a way of asserting itself despite our best efforts to ignore it. Thus we are presently engaged in heated debate over rock music and the implications of the rock-drug culture. This is a necessary first step toward a discussion of education. It is absurd to consider how human cultural values are best transmitted to future generations when we have no agreement as to what these values are. Some of us do not even agree that discussion of culture is a valid part of our political life. While professing to believe in the crucial position of revolutionary leadership, they deny the need to develop revolutionaries. They find the dialectical overview valid when it attacks trade-unionist parochialism which compartmentalizes the working class but wrong when the same logic is applied against compartmentalization within the revolutionary individual. This leads some to the position that the discussion of culture and art is simply windowdressing for 'serious' politics.

Such a narrow, non-Marxist conception of politics is understandable if deplorable. It comes from the impulse to avoid the shattering but necessary experience of confronting bourgeois ideology within oneself -- in its internalized form, a personal system of values and tastes.

It is impossible to understand one's vital role as a revolutionary and at the same time celebrate one's identity through the anti-human rhythms of rock or the platitudes of Dylan. Bourgeois culture conspires to produce such compartmentalization through formal education and in everyday practice. Its ultimate expression is recognized as mental illness. Sanity demands a choice.

Schools, insofar as they still function, merchandize bourgeois culture. On its deepest level the question of revolutionary culture is identical with the question of so-

cialist curriculum and pedagogy. As revolutionary artists or teachers we are situated within a decadent bourgeois culture to which we must relate. One might paraphrase Marx: it is necessary for the educator to re-educate himself. In order to develop revolutionary creativity we must become completely aware of our historical rootedness within the existing culture. We must subject bourgeois culture to an intensive process of criticism. From this point of view there will be a few bourgeois artists, sociologists, physicists who attain a special importance because of their transitional achievements; of these we might name Bartok, Durkheim, Freud and Eddington as examples.

In education the creative impulse is expressed through pedagogy, that is, the mediated process of learning. Today pedagogy is treated as the most banal of subjects, a bag of tricks to which only the educator is privy. Yet the process through which we learn, by which we have been taught, is the mold which shapes our consciousness. Pedagogy must become one of the most important subjects of the revolutionary curriculum.

In bourgeois society every lesson, no matter what its ostensible topic, is a lesson in the methodology of empiricism. The practice of pedagogy is the sanctification of the fact. From the rote learning of his earliest school days to the more glamorized university examination system, the student is drilled in empiricist metaphysical notions of the nature of factual knowledge.

In its most self-confident moments, bourgeois education flourishes in the atmosphere of the authoritarian lecture hall. The professor embellishes the bare presentation of facts with a generous seasoning of prejudice. He does not feel compelled to hide his ideology.

As bourgeois society loses its progressive thrust, the confidence of its ideologues wanes. Deception is the usual practice as the typical professor hides behind a mask of false objectivity. He expresses his own rotten values by his every act of selection, while exiling the discussion of values from the classroom to the realm of whimsical subjectivity. We see examples of this in the notion of art for art's sake, mathematics qua logic, and the supposed many-sidedness of every questions.

Those self-styled radical educators who reflect the counter-culture offer a third version of empiricist pedagogy. They recognize the ideological role of the teacher in the conventinal classroom. Their answer is to abdicate all responsibility as teachers. "Let the student discover it all for himself. The facts are there for him to find." This last view articulates the same anti-intellectualism and disdain for human values found in the music of a Frank Zappa.

Be they radical or conservative, these educators genuflect before the altar of the metaphysically exalted fact. This dehumanization of knowledge which pretends to divorce the so-called "objective fact" from human practice (in order better to teach inhuman behavior) will be abolished by the non-alienated consciousness which must come into being in order for a revolutionary movement to come to victory.

The trivially "humanist" view which contents itself

with outrage that scientific discoveries are put to vicious use will be superceded by the total humanization of all knowledge. The kind of intuitions that come to us today as startling discoveries will be commonplace. The ideas of sociologist Emile Durkheim in *Elementary Forms of Religious Life* portend such a pedagogy:

"...It is not surprising, therefore, that social time, social space, social classes and causality should be the basis of the corresponding categories (physical time, space, causality), since it is under their social forms that those different relations were first grasped with a certain clarity by the human intellect."

A poetic formulation of this same idea was given by the physicist Arthur Eddington in his study of relativity theory, *SPACE, TIME AND GRAVITATION*:

"We have found a strange footprint on the shores of the unknown. We have devised profound theories, one after another, to account for its origin. At last we have succeeded in reconstructing the creature that made the footprint. And lo! it is our own."

A humanized education will mean an instant collapse of all the boxes which now house knowledge in separate arcane specialties. Art historian Arnold Hauser and mathematician Morris Kline have already amply documented the absurdity of detaching the study of mathematics from science, science from the productive process, material and historical culture from the study of art. This is only the beginning of the new pedagogy.

The major concern of education is with the creative process itself. How can the student be helped to create new concepts? How has mankind created those concepts which come to the student readymade in the form of existing culture? Culture must be studied in historical perspective as the succession of man's actual achievements in the context of the obstacles which he has had to overcome. Thus a proper study of the development of new kinds of numbers would barely treat the axiomatic aspect of the subject. Instead the extension of the number field from positive to signed, irrational, imaginary and transfinite numbers would be understood in the actual creative process which occurred as mathematicians successively overcame the obstacle of existing logical systems. Understood in this way logic only thinly veils the dialectic. Similarly, the study of music would unveil the dialectic process of creativity itself in its most abstract form.

But just as art must constantly strive toward new form and content, effective pedagogy cannot simply replicate the past. The dynamic of art and education reflects the law of the expanding rate of social reproduction. Learning must always take place on the most advanced level. Newtonian physics should be taught from the standpoint of relativity theory. Algebra can easily be absorbed by children in the early elementary grades.

The essential task of the teacher is to construct an educational situation which poses a socially relevant problem and at the same time allows its creative solution. Caleb Gattegno has used a collection of different-sized varicolored rods to achieve such mathematical situations. Beethoven's Diabelli variations could be

(please turn to page 60)

Modernism and the Counter- Culture

By Joseph Griffin

The first part of this paper, and historical summary, has been omitted to make the paper of more manageable length — To summarize the conclusions of the first part:

Before 1848, both the historical role of the revolutionary bourgeoisie and the high degree of autonomy enjoyed by intellectuals within the class were extraordinarily favorable to intellectual activity.

After 1848, more so after 1870, the historical role of the bourgeoisie turned sharply toward reaction. At the same time, the reduction of intellectuals within this class to mere toadies of capital distorted their work more and more. These conditions are associated with the ideological decadence of the bourgeoisie after 1848 announced by Marx in his essay on the French historian and politician Guizot with the remark — “The capacities of the bourgeoisie depart.”

The insoluble philosophical problems faced by the bourgeoisie after 1848 are still in force. The tendency of bourgeois thought after that date is a

decline toward more and more abstract, schematic, and obscurantist pseudo-solutions to this same set of insurmountable problems of world-outlook growing out of society under capitalism. This is the essence of the phenomenon of decadence in literature and philosophy.

Marxist aesthetics and philosophical history have nothing in common with a mechanistic interpretation of the historical turning points sketched so far. The ideological decadence of the bourgeoisie permeates different areas of knowledge according to quite different rhythms. While stressing the general framework of disastrously worsening conditions for intellectual activity of all types by bourgeois intellectuals after 1848, it is necessary also to concede an ample margin for the subjective efforts of the individual thinker or writer to overcome these disadvantages.

Social pressures toward decadence exert their greatest determinacy in economics, the science originated by and typical of the bourgeoisie. Here serious investigation collapses, precipitously with the dissolution of the Ricardian school in the 1820's. At this point, Marx says, “sounds the death knell of scientific bourgeois economics. It was no longer a question of whether this or that theorem was true, but whether it was useful or harmful for capital, opportune or not opportune, contrary to police regulations or not. In the place of disinterested investigation there came mercenary polemics, in the place of impartial scientific research the bad conscience and the evil purpose of apologetics.”

In philosophy the sharp turn toward decadence can be associated precisely with the year 1848. After the dissolution of the Young Hegelian school in the March Revolution, there is no more dialectical bourgeois philosophy. Bourgeois philosophy goes on the defensive more and more against Marxism, whose first major public declaration dates from the same year. In bourgeois circles the field is left free for the agnostics, positivists, pragmatists, empiricists, intuitionists, existentialists, and assorted philosophical myth-makers and perverts that have spoken for the bourgeoisie in the most abstract ideological questions ever since.

The situation in literature contrasts sharply with that in economics and philosophy. In the latter two areas the high level of generalization and abstraction makes the propaganda needs of the

Dombey, tries to rule his family with the same coldness and cruelty with which he bosses his clerks in the countinghouse. He incurs the responsibility for the death of his son and the misery of his daughter. From the compulsive and obsessed Dombey we move in 1854 to Josiah Bounderby in *Hard Times*, who is a despicable hypocrite and vulgarian. Finally in 1864, in *Our Mutual Friend*, Dickens presents the sinister and corrupt society of the Podsnaps and Veneerings, political influence peddlers, and swindlers surrounded by a group of parasites.

The perspective attained by the realists allowed them to situate distortions of character correctly — as dialectical determinations of the whole, specifically as the inevitable dehumanization spreading out from capitalist social institutions. One example of Dickens' thorough comprehension of this process is found in *Bleak House* (1852-3), which describes the mutilation of an entire cross-section of society in contact with the Chancery Courts. The litigation of Jarndyce and Jarndyce, which goes on for decades, stunts the personalities of the parties involved and reduces them to zombies who haunt the courts and law offices in the hopes of one day attaining a favorable judgement. Dickens' insightful and sober portrayal of this process shows his immense human superiority to later writers dealing with similar themes, above all to Kafka, whose courts illustrate an ostensibly cosmic destiny, instead of a very mundane capitalist reality.

The work of Dickens, Balzac and the rest was predicated on their willingness to submit themselves to an extraordinarily rigorous artistic discipline — to the unprejudiced and lifelong study of human comportment in all areas of society. Their honesty in depicting what they observed often led them to contradict the opinions about society that they expressed outside of their novels. Engels mentions this phenomenon in his letter to Margaret Harkness:

“The more the opinions of the author remain hidden, the better for the work of art. The realism I allude to may crop out even in spite of the author's opinions. (...) Balzac was politically a legitimist; his great work is a constant elegy on the irretrievable decay of good society; his sympathies are all with the class doomed to extinction. But for all that his satire is never keener, his irony never bitterer than when he sets in motion the very

men and women with whom he sympathizes most deeply — the nobles. And the only men of whom he always speaks with undisguised admiration are his bitterest political antagonists, the republican heroes of the cloister of St. Merry, the men who at that time were indeed the representatives of the popular masses. That Balzac thus was compelled to go against his own class sympathies and political prejudices, that he saw the necessity of the downfall of his favorite nobles, and described them as people deserving of no better fate; and that he saw the real men of the future where, for the time being, they alone were to be found — that I consider the one of the greatest triumphs of realism, and one of the grandest features in old Balzac.”

After 1848 and even more after 1870, such successful artistic self-development becomes rarer and rarer. The bourgeois intelligentsia is tied to institutions that are becoming more and more reactionary. At the same time it is confronted by a “finished”, definitively established capitalist society. Life appears static and frozen in its forms, which are only disturbed from time to time by a brutal and inexplicable crisis. The superficially “eternal” aspect assumed by capitalist existence favors a cheap and simplistic metaphysical world-outlook, and is of course the mortal enemy of any sort of dialectical thought.

If a writer surrenders to the raw and undigested immediacy he can observe from day to day, he is morally and artistically lost. Only a small and steadily dwindling minority succeed in digging beneath the “immutable” facade of daily existence to see society as it really is — a constant process of reproduction, in which the crises that break through the surface have long been developing in latent form.

From the 1850's to the present the common denominator of surrender to petty-bourgeois immediacy is naturalism — a pale shadow of the earlier realism. Ironically this artistic impoverishment, as so often happens, was inaugurated by writers (like Flaubert and Zola) who thought they were escalating their protest against the horrors of capitalism.

Naturalism is the cult of the alienated particular. Having lost all sense of the direction of the social

bourgeoisie immediately evident, so that virtually no margin for deviation is present. Literature, however, is the Artistic portrayal of the lives and destinies of individual human figures, with the great events of history usually present only in the background. The "ideological" content of such works is not expressly stated, but is contained in a novel, for example, only implicitly, as the method used by the author.

The method used may be contradicted by specifically political declarations in a novel, or it may agree with them. It is clear that the method is of primary importance.

The most advanced aesthetic achievement of the bourgeoisie is the realist novel of the nineteenth century — an expression of the fullest development of which the class was capable in literature, and therefore roughly parallel to the economics of Ricardo, the music of Beethoven, or the philosophy of Hegel. Realism is the substantial degree of artistically adequate expression of society found in the work of Goethe, Dickens, Balzac, Tolstoi, Manzoni — although it is also possible to distinguish powerful tendencies towards realism in such earlier writers as Dante, Shakespeare, Fielding, and Sir Walter Scott. Engels, in a letter to Margaret Harkness written in April, 1888, discusses some of the aspects of Balzac's immense cycle of novels, the Human Comedy, a tremendous documentation of all levels of societal existence under the Bourbon restoration and the bourgeois monarchy of Louis Philippe, which made both Marx and himself see in Balzac the finest representative of bourgeois realism:

Balzac, whom I consider a far greater master of realism than all the Zolas, past, present and future, in the Human Comedy gives us a most wonderfully realistic history of French society, describing in chronicle fashion, almost year by year from 1816 to 1848 the progressive inroads of the rising bourgeoisie upon the society of nobles, that reconstituted itself after 1815 and that set up as far as it could the standard of old French refinement. He describes how the remnants of this to him model society gradually succumbed before the intrusion of the vulgar moneyed upstart, or were corrupted by him; how the grande dame whose conjugal infidelities were but a mode of asserting herself in perfect accord with the way she had been

disposed of in marriage, gave way to the bourgeois woman, who cockolded her husband for cash or cashmere; and around this central picture he groups a complete history of French society from which, even in economic details (for instance the rearrangement of real and personal property after the revolution) I have learned more than from all the professed historians, economists, and statisticians of the period put together."

Balzac, Dickens, and Stendhal all began their artistic activity before 1848, during a period in which bourgeois society was still passing through profound upheavals in the process of its consolidation. Their position in history, combined with their scrupulous aesthetic honesty, made it possible for them to develop a sure instinct for the changes investing the whole of bourgeois society — a type of practical artistic equivalent of a dialectical outlook, capable of great efficacy within certain definite limits.

From this quasi-dialectical instinct flows remarkable ability to situate social institutions, strata of society and the lives and fates of individual human beings as the determined particulars of the process of social reproduction. Since they as artists occupied some version of the holistic viewpoint, they were furthermore able to select from the massive raw material furnished by the life of their times the most significant particulars in relation to their narratives. This is the point of Engels's famous formulation, "Typical characters in typical situations." This perspective in composition enjoyed by the great bourgeois realists is the main point at which they are to be distinguished from the lesser writers that followed them.

Two examples will illustrate the importance of perspective. Realists, as Engels notes, always show how the typical personalities produced in society change as part of the historical process. Changing portrayals of the business man in the work of Dickens are a case in point. The novels of the late 1830's, *Pickwick Papers* and *Oliver Twist*, depict the businessman as a kindly and charitable person of pleasant disposition. Mr. Pickwick, the fun-loving retired businessman, or Mr. Brownlow, the nice gentleman who adopts *Oliver Twist* have just this sort of sympathetic personality. The major change in Dickens's attitude occurs in 1846-1848, with *Dombey and Son*. The central figure, Mr.

amalgam as a whole, the naturalist can only catalogue arbitrarily chosen details. When it comes to assigning relative importance, he is witless. This fatal loss of perspective appears in Zola as the monographic approach — the formally-complete descriptive account of theatre, market, race track, or mine essentially for its own sake as a slice of life, with the narrative receding out of sight.

The intimate methodological link between Zola or Stephen Crane and the technicolor delirium of the modernist novel emerges most clearly in the artistic career of James Joyce. The old-style naturalism of *Dubliners*, still devoted to cataloguing the ugliness and banality of everyday life, gives way in *Ulysses* and *Finnegan's Wake* to the still more fragmented and capricious cataloguing of fleeting associations, scraps of memory, momentary feelings — the gibberish of the petty-bourgeois preconscious between sleep and waking. Despite obvious stylistic differences, the only thing that has really changed is the level at which the alienated particular is seized — and this level is much more immediate than in Zola.

In most cases the patient delving into social relations upon which the older realism was based gives way to the opportunist search for a gimmick — some way to entice the reader in the absence of any real artistic depth. The quest for the gimmick is most blatant among certain authors of the short story — de Maupassant, O. Henry, Ambrose Bierce, and Jack London all attempt this short cut. The entire interest in such stories is concentrated on the ironic conclusion, the trick ending, that undercuts or nullifies everything that went before, robs it of the sense it had and gives it an absolutely different sense, or, usually no sense at all. An example is *The Necklace*. This technique, which reeks of agnosticism, amounts to a crass appeal to the fetishism of the petty-bourgeois reader. This reader nourished a superstitious fear for what to him appears as the irresistible, anonymous forces of capitalist society. O. Henry and de Maupassant orient toward the morbid fascination of such a wretched mentality with unexpected turns in personal fortune.

Stories based on nostalgia cater to the petty-bourgeois's sense that the past was better than the present — a valid generalization in the light of the historical fate of his class. The petty-bourgeois loves nostalgia, suspecting that the only totally safe moments he possesses are the ones embalmed in his memory.

Other writers employ the gimmick-method in different ways. Much of the novelistic production of decaying capitalist society — science fiction, pornography, mystery novels, etc. — is based on the most transparent gimmicks.

Beyond this, it is possible to distinguish several distinct models of pro-capitalist method.

The first general model is the direct glorification of capitalist society, corresponding to the flat, nude philistinism, the patriotism and local pride of the Babbitt. Marx summarizes the method of such crass apologetics in his remarks on the English economist James Mill — the crony of Betham, and father of the On-Libertarian: "Where economic relations — and therefore also the categories that express them — include contrasts and contradictions, and are in fact the unity of contradictions, James Mill stresses the moment of unity of contrasts into the immediate identity of these contrasts."

The explosive problems of capitalism are thus denied, or at least explained away as something ephemeral which will soon yield to peace and normalcy: "You never had it so good" or "Prosperity is just around the corner."

The literature corresponding to the method of James Mill is widespread, but artistically worthless: best sellers, stories in women's magazines tending to idealize the life of the professional classes, Readers Digest Condensed Books, etc., etc.

In the post-1914 period of imperialist decay especially, observers of average intelligence are driven beyond such gross distortions towards a radical critique of capitalist life. The frequent result is an image of capitalism with the signs changed: the romantic negation of capitalist society. Marx says of such an approach: "Bourgeois thought has never been able to overcome its antithesis to the romantic conception, which will therefore accompany it as a legitimate antithesis until its happy end."

This romantic critique of capitalism does not attempt to deny the by now all-too-palpable defects of capitalist life, but begins precisely by recognizing the inhumanity, violence, and stupidity that pervade society. But instead of showing how these evils flow from capitalist institutions, romantic thought, according to its metaphysical

bent, hypostatizes them as the eternal qualities of the human condition — man's fate. Of course political activity aimed at changing this mythified human nature is an absurdity.

Malthus's economics exhibit a similar method — starting from certain difficulties of capitalist circulation and ending up with a justifying ideology for a stratum of parasites. Schopenhauer, however, was the first philosophical hawker of this bargain-basement ontology.

The frequently savage attacks on bourgeois civilization that lace the works of Gide, Proust, Joyce, Lawrence, Sartre, Kafka, share this method. Starting as these authors do from the moral and ethical preoccupations of the petty-bourgeois intellectual, they are far removed from any insights into economic reproduction or the political techniques by which the bourgeoisie perpetuates its class rule. At most they know what the bourgeoisie itself announces about these matters.

Romantic revolt is marked from the very beginning by strong elements of surrender to the ruling class. These rebels avoid even an intellectual assault on the foundations of bourgeois hegemony, usually operating with cultural criticism alone.

Camus's novel *The Stranger* is a convenient summary of the popular modernist ideology actually of course a variety of religion. The protagonist, the minor clerk Meursault, is a laconic and asocial being who experiences permanent aloneness as a cosmic destiny, rather than as a socially determined condition. Surrounded by hypocrites and criminals, he finds his contacts with others meaningless, and treats his own life as a matter of complete indifference. No moral choice has any significance for a humanity crushed by absurdity and death. On the one hand a subjectivity without real content that is haunted by its vast range of abstract possibilities, on the other the annihilating power of fate and time — this is the familiar subject-object contradiction of modern fiction and philosophy.

Meursault's subjective and sensual impressionism corresponds to the daily experience of millions of alienated victims of capitalism. Camus shows his own alienation by writing as if reality were in fact the way it appears at first glance to such a mind.

The minor characters in *The Stranger* — a pimp,

an old eccentric who beats his dog, the robot lady — are a small hint of the fascination of the literary modernist with social pathology. Because of their loathing for the hypocritical ethics of the bourgeoisie, modernist authors are driven to seek a model for revolt in criminal and deviant behavior.

Showing substantial agreement with Bernardine Dorn's remarks on this topic in late 1969, modernists fondly imagine that the ethical choices of humanity are either Richard Nixon or Charles Manson. Like Bernardine, the modernists prefer the latter. It is forgotten that the *Babbitt* and the bohemian are only the extreme poles of philistinism, the respectable petty-bourgeois and the frenzied one.

The bourgeois realists never ignored pathological behavior. From Moliere to Dickens the eccentric, the thief, the lunatic, the prostitute, the grave-robber increase the reader's comprehension of class society by indicating the human cost of keeping it going. The modernist, because he lacks a feeling for the social whole, and cannot imagine a norm of actually human conduct, is utterly incapable of an heuristic treatment of antisocial behavior.

This same absence of perspective dilutes many novels that attempt social criticism by describing the sufferings of the young as they are assimilated into capitalist institutions. The adolescent problems of Holden Caulfield or Alexander Portnoy are a case in point. These novels aim at satirizing the falseness and dishonesty of education, sexuality, and the family. But the poverty of conception of Salinger and Roth (especially the latter) is such that they depict their two young anti-heroes as mutilated philistines from the very beginning. Portnoy and Holden can therefore adapt to the really brutal aspects of capitalist life with very little friction, while finding their serious hangups in the most trifling and peripheral cultural quirks. Capitalist institutions thus escape serious indictment.

The form of romantic anticapitalism discussed so far has had wide influence since the war among university intellectuals, professionals, students, and bohemians. As we enter a period of more violent class struggle, however, this philosophy no longer suits the needs of the bourgeoisie in one critical area — this is its quietism, its distaste for action. Schopenhauer, for example, derided political

activity of any kind because of its built-in fruitlessness. The philosophy useful to the bourgeoisie during the period of relative stabilization must now be replaced by a doctrine of militant reaction, of fascism.

The work of Friedrich Nietzsche summarizes the past and future methodological basis for fascism. While older romantic anticapitalism sees in wars, depressions, and misery the eternal curses of mankind, it was left to Nietzsche to celebrate them as its blessings. His remarkable powers of abstraction allowed to him to anticipate in a series of myths several decades in advance the depths of bestiality to which segments of the petty-bourgeoisie would be driven in the crucible imperialist crisis.

The "transformation of all values," the cosmic-biological revolution proclaimed by Nietzsche amounts to basically this: a glob of human refuse cast off from society during a crisis recognizes itself as the lords of the earth, the supermen, the germ of the new society of the future. This identification takes place by virtue of their unique cultural characteristics. The supermen then undertake a campaign of terrorism against their culturally-inferior neighbors. They are armed of course with a devastatingly radical cultural critique of "straight" capitalism, but save their main ammunition for socialists, who they see as more serious threats to their cherished cultural uniqueness. This revolution against the masses, against socialism as a cultural poison is the

conceptual reflection of fascism. The weathermen and LeRoi Jones have filled in the blanks according to their parochial needs, as have Meir Kahane and Joseph Colombo.

Nietzsche's hyper-revolutionary rhetoric and ultra-radical posturing make his romantic anticapitalism the most lethal of all. The bourgeoisie as a whole, which still prefers the pap of the philosophers of latent crisis, like Charles Reich this past year, will embark on a renewal of Nietzsche — in appropriate 1970's guise — as soon as the Rockefellers and Fords have opted for blackshirts and jackboots.

The career of LeRoi Jones continues a glorious tradition of literary modernism which goes from Gabriele D'Annunzio, the poet and novelist who led the expedition to Fuime that roughly corresponded in the growth of Mussolini's movement to the Reggio Calabria situation today through Charles Maurras, the poet who led the antisemitic, protofascist Action Francaise, to Ezra Pound, the poet who became a propagandist of Italian fascism.

Now the emergence of Jones as a protofascist leader continues the line of writers who, in addition to having given a precious contribution to the ideological preparation of fascism in their works, have also contributed themselves directly to such movements. Jones's development underlines once more the ease with which the literary modernism of theatres and cafes and the counter-culture of bohemian bookshops and coffee-houses becomes fascism in the streets.

(continued from page 54)

considered as another sort of learning situation.

Even under socialist society it will still be necessary for the teacher to mediate society for the student, to select and prepare educational material, but neither the theory nor the practice of pedagogy will remain his sole prerogative. The development of the learning situation will become a shared responsibility

between teacher and student. Its possibilities will be consciously explored. Students themselves will take on the role of teacher to their peers and their juniors.

The social act of organizing and communicating knowledge forces real understanding and at the same time makes pedagogy self-conscious. Only as learning becomes a self-conscious process can it become truly socialist learning — the preconscious made conscious.

into social practice, would lead to a reproduction of society on a qualitatively higher level. Therefore an art that stands still, that merely skillfully reproduces old concepts, is a decadent art since it does not meet the requirement of the human race for an augmented power of understanding. Progress is demanded of art as much as it is demanded of science. There is no artistic truth beyond this task any more than there is in science. Einstein in his essay "What is the Theory of Relativity" verges on the boundaries of this notion, saying that "the development of physics has shown that at any given moment, out of all conceivable construction, a single one has always proved itself decidedly superior to all the rest." However, he does not draw the conclusion from this observation that scientific knowledge is relative to existing productive relations but returns instead to Leibnitz' notion of a "pre-established harmony" between theoretical principles and phenomena. For a Marxist that harmony is not "pre-established" but created self-consciously through an awareness of the historical task to which the "bridge between phenomena and their theoretical principles" is oriented. It requires the acceptance of scientific knowledge as appropriately false positive knowledge in place of immutable scientific laws existing beyond the domain of human behavior.

The self-conscious production of creativity, the preconscious processes made deliberate, is placed on a scientific basis when its approximation of truth is demonstrated by opening up new areas of socially creative practice. The significance of ideational progress, as manifested in art and science, lies in its implicit command over social forces, its implications with regard to social practice. Therein lies the relationship of culture to political practice, not in any directly instrumental use. The question to pose in determining this relationship is what concrete forms of social practice, what kind of man would be produced in the world-view implicit in a particular form of cultural expression were put into practice? While this world-view will include ideational representations of existing social practice, to assume that cultural expression does no more than reflect this aspect of reality is to ignore its self-reflexive nature, what is often an unconscious capacity to make judgement. The work of Beethoven in general as has been demonstrated through the example of the "Diabelli Variations" represents not a mere reflection of early 19th century reality, since no such "mere reflection" exists, but an objective reality known only subjectively by Beethoven and expressed characteristically by an irony mediated through the formal aspects of composition. The conception of objectivity severed from such a process of judgement is one which can have no place in a Marxian theory of scientific knowledge in which man is the measure.

It is vitally necessary, with regard to our own identity, to locate the modernity question positively by locating it in relation to the evolutionary development of man. Once the rigid objective determinism theory has been thrown out one can also dismiss the fallacious but prevalent conception among Marxists that there can be no ideational progress in a period of social decadence. Marx himself would seem to suggest that this is not the case in his discussion of Greek art and society at the end of his "Critique of Political Economy," where he points out the discrepancy between the high level of art and the social

backwardness of Greek society. Through the self-reflexive process of judgment, in art through a highly critical appraisal of reality through selection, breakthroughs in conceptual power can occur which have implicit in them the potential to synthesize new concepts, both ideationally and in social practice. Such creativity is dialectical when it succeeds in creating a crisis within existing consciousness-in-general by creating apparently insoluble paradoxes and in some form containing within it the "germ of a new world-outlook" which offers the possibility of coherence as an alternative for the chaos of inconsistency which it has provoked. Great art has always created a crisis in the existing state of consciousness. However, most modern art cannot fall into that category. The Dadaists and Surrealists and their grotesque little reproductions running around today, such as Frank Zappa, in unveiling the unintelligibility of the world did not display great genius. The crisis of unintelligibility had already been vividly created for them by bourgeois society with its fragmentation and idiocy of life, a crisis thoroughly lived out by every member of bourgeois society. Who isn't aware of the meaninglessness of such an existence? What is required is to provoke a crisis in the consciousness of that unintelligibility and a world-view which leads to the creation of concepts which have the potential to liberate men from such a monstrous social existence. Are there modern thinkers who have been able to do this or do we dismiss the modern period since approximately 1848 as one of total social and ideational stagnation.

Since it seems unnecessary on this occasion to praise the most important contribution of modern thought, namely Marxism, perhaps we can pass immediately to figures who might otherwise be regarded as hopeless bourgeois ideologues.

Let's consider Godel's contribution which was made within the field of formal mathematics. By demonstrating the impossibility of consistency even within the very large class of deductive systems he made it possible to conclude that no closed system could be free of internal contradiction. Such a demonstration of what knowledge was not was the necessary first step towards a positive conception of knowledge, as any dialectician would concede. While Godel himself has not been able to follow through the consequences of his own discovery, only having very gingerly stepped outside the limits of his own discipline and onto the plateau of Platonic realism, his discovery is one which can and should be assimilated into a Marxist world-view.

Schoenberg's thorough subjection to doubt of musical laws which for several centuries had been regarded as immutable was historically necessary in order to shake the foundation of music to achieve greater freedom for the composer in the formation of new concepts. Unfortunately, the exploration of this new freedom did not lead to a theory of music in any way comparable to Einstein's theory of relativity. The banality of the twelve-tone system as a theory compared to the rich array of complicated musical problems which we must credit Schoenberg himself for having uncovered in his compositions antedating the system is a striking discrepancy. Selectively ignoring his own discoveries, Schoenberg created an ideology which has been waved about by academic composers since who want to get on the bandwagon of what they are deluded into believing is modernity. Although the crisis provoked by Schoenberg in assuming the relativity of musical concepts

Toward a Dialectics of Art II

By Christine Berl

It is a fallacy to believe that experience in itself is a determinant of consciousness. The notion that human identity is a response to "objective" conditions in no way mediated through the individual's consciousness of his response is a lapse into the worst sort of behaviorist theory—astounding, but nonetheless a prevalent notion held by Marxists. Rather, it is the activity that occurs in between the starting point of experience and the concepts produced by concept-forming processes that properly speaking is the determinant of our identity. This creative activity made self-conscious is education. Put another way, we can only know ourselves objectively as we know ourselves subjectively. Thus the relativity of objective existence to subjective judgement is as true in the determination of identity as it is of all scientific truth in general.

Placing creativity on a scientific basis for the first time in history is to be considered within the realm of a possibility now that education, as defined above, is being undertaken within a revolutionary organization. Such self-conscious practical-critical activity takes creativity out of the shadowy realm of naive insight and places it within the historically-oriented consciousness of species' being. However, the obstacles to the location of creativity within species' consciousness under conditions of capitalist social relations demands that we consciously formulate the way in which this type of consciousness is formed. To do this it is necessary to distinguish between our identity as determined by scientific social practice. Gramsci in "The Study of Philosophy" presents the alternatives when he asks "is it preferable to 'think' without having critical awareness, in a disjointed and irregular way, in other words to 'participate' in a conception of the world 'imposed' mechanically by external environment, that is, by one of the many social groups in which everyone is automatically

involved from the time he enters the conscious world... or is it preferable to work out one's own conception of the world consciously and critically and so out of this work of one's own brain to choose one's own sphere of activity, to participate actively in making the history of the world, and not simply to accept passively and without care the imprint of one's own personality from outside?" The fact that the working out of "one's own conception of the world consciously and critically" can now be conducted upon the foundation of an institution involved in the transformation of social practice provides that basis for the notion of creativity as an aspect of scientific inquiry. A new conception of creativity, in practice as well as in art, can be put forth now on the basis of new social forces coming into being, of a class-for-itself institution representing a new, higher form of society in an abbreviated form, one which subsumes the entirety of the division of labor in the process of social reproduction. On the basis of this concentrated form of self-subsisting species' being it can be put forth now, not as the imaginatively deprived conceive, only after the emergence of a socialist state. It not only can be put forth now, it must be put forward now if we are to determine the realization of that socialist state. If creativity in general is explored in this paper through a comparison of artistic and scientific creativity it is relevant to the question of creative practice within a revolutionary organization to the extent that both art and political practice suffer from the cult of spontaneity.

Creativity arises from the fact that certain kinds of concepts are required by society if it is to reproduce itself on an expanded scale. The self-conscious process that leads to the formation of these concepts constitutes the creative process placed on a scientific basis. This is the meaning of progress in art: conceptual innovation which makes new discoveries about man which, if extended

which until then had been held to be absolute could not be met by a simple-minded set of rules based on axiomatic deduction, his iconoclasm, not to be confused with anarchy, opened up the possibility of philosophical conceptions unique in the history of music. Nevertheless, he is chided by CP hack Sidney Finkelstein in his anachronistic book "Composer and Nation" for having lost touch with the masses and is promptly deposited by him into the category of "philosophical loneliness," a judgement that goes further toward demonstrating Mr. Finkelstein's philosophical loneliness. Schoenberg's exploration of this new freedom through which he had hoped to arrive at a new classicism, a preoccupation which he shares with other important modern thinkers, was considered of sufficient historical importance by that other philosophically lonely thinker, Thomas Mann, to make it the subject of his novel "Doctor Faustus." It is not perhaps reckless to suggest that a theory of atonality has been historically necessary since the first quarter of a century but has not yet been produced. What has been produced are various musical ideologies all of which rest on pluralist notions of reality, as pluralist even as claiming that every composition has its own theory.

A new conception of Self and Freedom was required in the late nineteenth century and Rimbaud provided it by creating a crisis in the prevailing consciousness of the limits of human power. It was the Faustian theme made specific to the period of the commune. The notion of extended being overflowed in the lyrical brilliance of this extraordinary poet. Understanding in an intuitive way the material interdependency of human existence he could write, "It is wrong to say I think. One should say: I am thought. . . . For, I is another. If brass wakes up a trumpet, it isn't to blame. To me this is evident: I give a stroke of the bow: the symphony begins to stir in the depths or comes bursting onto the stage." The same thought had been expressed similarly by Feuerbach in the "Preface" to the *Essence of Christianity* in which he says, "I have many things outside myself, which I cannot convey either in my pocket or my head, but which nevertheless I look upon as belonging to me." Rimbaud, however, was not merely content to be a "natural philosopher in the domain of mind" but was searching for a way to translate poetic being into action, his own poetic being into the poetic being of all men. Like Shelley, for whom poetry was "a sword of lightning, ever unsheathed, which consumes the scabbard that would contain it," Rimbaud wanted poetry to be used at all times as a powerful way of creating change. For this a new man was required, a Prometheus unbound. The poet's identity as a thief of fire, Rimbaud extended to all men, writing that the "poet will define the amount of unknown arising in his time in the universal soul; he will give more than the formula of his thought, more than the annotation of his march toward Progress! Enormity become norm, absorbed by every one, he will truly be the multiplier of progress! This future, as you see, will be materialistic, As a matter of fact it will still be Greek poetry in a way. this eternal art will have its functions since poets are citizens. Poetry will no longer rhythm action: it will go ahead." Thus with Rimbaud, poetry became a science in the Marxian sense; its task was to lead man towards a conscious mastery over his existence.

Rimbaud's impatience for progress led him to an increasing level of abstraction of language, an abstraction which

grew out of an impatience to experience more within a shorter period of time, an impatience not to be satisfied until he had experienced a simultaneity of being. It was a consciousness appropriate to a revolutionary period in which centuries are suddenly speeded up. His formal iconoclasm was absolutely necessary to this search for heightened being, the awareness of his own richness outside himself in the simultaneity of the multiple being of species' existence. This is clear in his last prose poems in which the acceleration of experience is conveyed through perceptual elision, very similar to the harmonic elision in late Beethoven. Both had moved toward abstraction through a concern with the paradox of objective versus subjective time.

Having talked about some of the positive aspects of modernity we now sadly have to turn to the trash, since the trash is far more popular than any discoveries talked about so far. Almost all music produced since WWII has been one form or another of ideology, a highly particularist world-outlook that interpreted reality from a limited perspective. If the academic serial composers have given us a caricature of mind by employing the conceptual banalities that set theory provides, jazz has given us a caricature of passion, of Feuerbach's notion of sensuous being. Jazz represents a false consciousness of the problem of how to become human. It is the worst sort of sentimental romanticism, an inundation of feeling severed from any self-conscious reflection of what part those feelings play in a whole being which in music can only be thought out through a rigorous grappling with formal problems solved creatively. Oh so human, this alienated sensuality, so redeeming that religious feeling of Coltrane, the pathos of the inarticulate, the heat of the inchoate. As though we didn't have enough of this alienated being under capitalist society. Great art has never been merely a compensation for a deprivation of some one aspect of whole being, but has contained within it the seeds of whole being. This is what is meant by a classical art, as Hegel clearly lays the basis for in his *Phenomenology*. And yet we have the Coltrane mystique. This we are supposed to accept as lyricism, when we have ample evidence of what lyricism can be in its classical composition as provided for us in the work of composers such as Mozart, Beethoven and Brahms, and in a unique way by Rimbaud who was able to contain lyricism within the most scathing satire? We are supposed to forget this historical perspective and sink ourselves in the moans of jazz. The first task of the artist today who is modern in a positive sense, is to destroy this sickly romanticism for which Marx himself, along with every other important modern thinker had only contempt and to move towards a new classicism which at this point only Marxism can provide the basis for. Hegelian dialectics has already been completely assimilated by Beethoven; the modern artist has to thoroughly assimilate the meaning of dialectics as the method of Marxian anthropology. For as Marxists we demand progress in art, not nostalgia, not sentimental drivel.

The best critique of the fetish of improvisation in jazz and some Rock today is Shelley's description of creativity as the skimming off of ideas at boiling point in order to reflect on them and discard the trash. The way improvisation takes place in Rock and jazz as a substitution for this whole creative process displays certain signs of a most undesirable exhibitionism. Instead of struggling with conceptions over a period of years, as all great artists

have done, only making public the finest distillation of this process as only that worthy of contributing to humanity, improvisation viewed in this manner as a social act is really saying "Let me go through a catharsis in front of you, let me purge myself, let me spew out every association that comes to my head and furthermore let me subject you to this over as protracted length of time as possible. Please don't ask me to reconcile improvisation with a thought-out, coherent musical world-view because I can't do it." But of course there have been composers who could. Beethoven for example. An entirely different kind of self-revelation is present in his music in the form of an abstraction of the creative process which includes an abstraction of the process of improvisation. The clue to this self-revelation, the revelation of how creative discovery occurs, is usually in an extended harmonic language allowed a certain vagrancy until the point at which it would threaten the coherence of the whole in which it is located. Improvisation is thus written into the music in the form of harmonic exploration but is subjected, through elements of formal composition, to a rigorous process of critical judgement.

This brings us back to the question of abstraction touched on earlier which must be dealt with in discussing modern thought. Creative abstraction, despite the evidence in its favor as a potentially creative force, is confused by many Marxists, Lukacs included, with empty formalism and so has been thrown out from consideration as a basis of art in favor of some sort of realism, socialist or otherwise. In fact, it is frequently given as a reason to reject modern art, although it is tolerated in the realm of science and mathematics. But why should it be accepted in that domain and not in art? Would any Marxist suggest that art is concerned with a different reality than science? Lukacs, great denouncer of modernity, is forced to praise Schoenberg, Stravinsky, Bartok and Berg for continuing to use forms such as the opera, ballet, cantatas, essentially for continuing to associate music with realism. What he would be reluctant to do but would have to do if his realism were applied in a thorough-going way would be to attack abstraction in Beethoven, in fact in all purely instrumental music. He misses the point that truthful art is not necessarily realistic as socialist realism demonstrates by its paucity and the purely instrumental music of Beethoven, in fact in all purely instrumental music. He misses the point that truthful art is not necessarily realistic as socialist realism demonstrates by its paucity and the purely instrumental music of Beethoven by its richness. What is seriously wrong with Schoenberg escapes him, namely the mishandling of creative abstraction which could not be remedied by merely attaching formalism onto realism, as a study of Schoenberg's dramatic works will show.

To explore the relationship between abstraction and reality further, and the distinction between creative abstraction and a formalism based on axiomatic deduction it is directly relevant to quote from Einstein's essay "Geometry and Experience." "How can it be," he asks, "that mathematics, being after all a product of human thought which is independent of experience, is so admirably appropriate to the objects of reality? Is human reason, then, without experience, merely by taking thought, able to fathom the properties of real things? . . . (the axiomatic viewpoint) purges mathematics of all extraneous elements, and thus dispels the mystic obscurity which formerly surrounded the basis for mathematics. But such an ex-

purgated exposition of mathematics makes it also evident that mathematics as such cannot predicate anything about objects of our intuition or real objects. . . . Yet on the other hand it is certain that mathematics generally, and particularly geometry, owes its existence to the need which was felt of learning something about the behavior of real objects. The very word geometry, which, of course, means earth-measuring, proves this. . . . It is clear that the system of concepts of axiomatic geometry alone cannot make any assertions as to the behavior of real objects of this kind. . . . To be able to make such assertions, geometry must be stripped of its merely logical-formal character by the coordination of real objects of experience with the empty conceptual schemata of axiomatic geometry. . . . Geometry thus completed is evidently a natural science; we may in fact regard it as the most ancient branch of physics. . . . We will call this completed geometry 'practical geometry,' and shall distinguish it from 'purely axiomatic geometry'. . . . I attach special importance to the view of geometry which I have just set forth, because without it I should have been unable to formulate the theory of relativity."

The new freedom of conceptualization afforded by early twentieth century exploration of abstraction in art, as well as in mathematics and science, need not have led to empty formalism but did so in the historical context of the fragmentation of knowledge inherent in bourgeois society. To ignore, under the guise of the "sociological approach," this exploration in favor of a revival of 19th century realism displays signs of historical amnesia. Schoenberg's claim that his music was a historical necessity is not entirely false. The problem of freedom that his music posed, not his solution, was historically necessary and remain to be developed creatively. The twentieth century thinkers mentioned earlier, as well as others, in science and art represent the preliminary explorations of a revolution that has yet to be accomplished concretely. It is no coincidence that the shaking of the foundations of artistic and scientific thought occur in the same period in which a socialist revolution is urgently needed to shake the foundations of society on a world scale. The insight displayed by many modern thinkers occurred despite their historical disorientation, their alienation from their own creativity. These insights remain to be placed on a scientific basis by revolutionaries who can see in them their present historical specificity, who can uncover in these insights the latency of socialist concepts. In their original context they too represented an attempt to go beyond the prevailing ideology to a closer approximation of a historically appropriate consciousness.

There still exists a gulf between ideas that have the potential to extend the conceptual boundaries of mankind and their social realization, a gulf which it is the revolutionary's task to bridge by finding the creative use for these ideas demanded by present historical needs. Most creative discoveries have led an aborted existence, in the realm of potentiality rather than realization. It must be realized that no creative contribution is ever complete but remains a process. It is therefore impossible to locate creativity in any one place, including in a specific work which at best can represent an artist's understanding of the process at a given moment. The creative process always remains to be completed through the development of society in whose development lies its only real existence. The relativity of a creative contribution is also its greatness.

Toward a Dialectics of Art III

By Christine Berl

Counter culture today appears on the horizon as a phenomenon of *deja vu*. In fact, it is the ghost of a ghost, the first ghost, of the French Revolution, having appeared in the guise of the rhetorical hero of decadent Romanticism in the period of reaction following the failure of the 1848 revolution. Unlike the Promethean hero that had inspired the leaders of the French Revolution, these new anti-heroes passively mocked the bourgeois way of life. Goethe called them the 'sentimental people' who when put to the test always fail and show themselves to be petty and bad. The task of carrying on the revolutionary tradition was beyond the incoherent ravings of these "heroes" who, lacking the real force that comes from a trained mind, stimulated in themselves instead doubts and problems that they were not able to master, and who flung themselves headlong into dangers in which they perished. Many youth of this kind were eventually drawn into politics at the end of the nineteenth century in the service of the most reactionary nationalism, and their contribution to the Fascist youth movement in the twentieth century has already been documented. The widespread anti-intellectuality even among intellectuals, which has its counterpart in student layers of our own society today, manifested itself then most acutely in the swamp of cultural eclecticism that was so characteristic of the Second Empire in France. Then, as now, serious art met with little approval and a concern among artists with ideas that might have universal significance was regarded as pretentious, as today it is regarded as a sign of elitism.

Marx in the "18th Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte" qualifies Hegel's observation that cultural phenomena in history repeat themselves by adding that such phenomena occur the first time as tragedy, and the second as farce. He writes that "the tradition of all the dead generations weighs like a nightmare on the brain of the living. And just when they seem engaged in revolutionizing themselves and things, in creating some thing that has never yet existed, precisely in such periods of revolutionary crisis they anxiously conjure up the spirits of the past to their service and borrow from them names, battle cries and costumes in order to present the new scene of world history in this time-honored disguise and this borrowed language." But differentiates between the conjuring up of the dead in order to perform one's task of the present, giving as an example the heroes of the French Revolution who performed the task of setting up modern bourgeois society in Roman costume and phrases, from the conjuring up of the glories of the dead in order to serve the forces of reaction, as Louis-Bonaparte did behind the death mask of Napoleon. In the former the ghosts served to glorify the required task at hand, as Marx points out in the example of the English Revolution that clothed itself in the phrases and illusions of power found in the Old Testament. He humorously remarks that as soon as the revolution was an accom-

plished fact, Locke was permitted to supplant Habakkuk. In the references to the French Revolution that occurred after 1848, the parody of the old was clearly an escape from the task of real revolution confronting the society.

Today counter culture, terrified by the perils of an impending revolution, like the mad Englishman cited by Marx yearns to return to the "fleshpots of Egypt." In New York City, heart of the world-capitalist system and headquarters for world financial interests, the communitarian wakes up in the morning and prepares for another day on the farm. "And all this is expected of me," he sighs, "me, a free-enterprising American -- to make my own candles and soap, sew my sandals and weave my own clothes." Out of this ambiance emerges the languid babbling of Bob Dylan and the other folk charlatans who reassure the communitarians that indeed they do not live in an industrial society but are still back cutting firewood safe and sound in New Harmony (Example: Dylan's recent song "Copper Kettle").

The delusions appealed to in the folk cult also appear as part of the ecology movement, in the form of a deep suspicion of all artificial improvements made upon nature through technology. In reality it is the capitalist system that loots nature without making any provision for the reinvestment necessary to avoid the destruction of man's basis of existence and to provide for the needs of an expanded reproduction. This is because the motive for capitalist production is not the satisfaction of social consumption needs, but rather the production of profit. In fact, in order to produce a more productive humanity today a society would continually lower the social costs of production by increasing productivity through the immediate application of developing technology. That is the reality of the situation. In those terms, the return-to-nature cult that is so much a part of the folk revival and manifests itself in that form in the backward peace movement and the hunting-and-gathering existence of the Yippies must be clearly understood at this point to mean a return to a state that is less than human. Thus this particular manifestation of counter culture can today claim for itself the privilege of historical backwardness which the utopians in America already in the 1820's and 1840's had the privilege of claiming for themselves.

However, there is a more sinister aspect to the situation. There is currently facing us a different kind of austerity from the one self-imposed by lunatics who are living out some wild historical fantasy. That is the austerity facing the working class as a result of the current world monetary crisis. While Dylan whines about the pleasure of a log cabin, his soul-brother in the ecology movement is begging for restricted consumption and curbing of technological growth as an answer to the ecology crisis which, if taken seriously, would pollute and starve us all out of existence. Si-

dition for acceptance as a professional composer. The premises in both systems was that truth was to be found "intrinsically" in the examination of a particular to the exclusion of its relationship to the rest of society. Not surprisingly then, the mathematical economists turned economics into a non-human science, while the serialists produced a non-human music.

What both the serialists and the mathematical economists have in common is the assumption that reality can be reduced to a form of mechanical equilibrium of the sort that explains the stability of a physical object where equal forces pull in opposite directions. From a demonstration of equilibrium of this particular 'fact' the mathematical economist goes on to develop this notion as the politically hegemonic explanation of capitalist so-called stability in which the myth of "built-in stabilizers" plays an important part, conveniently ignoring of course all empirical evidence to the contrary, such as breakdown crises which history so sympathetically supplies. Similarly in a period of obvious social crisis, the serialist composer is busily constructing his version of the economists's pseudo-scientific 'model'. An example of such music is Milton Babbitt's composition for synthexizer, an electronically synthesized, but unfortunately not artistically synthesized composition by the leading spokesman of the Princetonian school. Some might say that this is an art expressing the alienation of modern man. I would suggest that it is an alienated art, and thus one which is incapable of making a self-conscious statement on alienation. It cannot do this because it cannot step outside of itself and its own alienation and thereby include itself in a statement on alienation in general.

For the serialists, logical positivism was a very useful way for people who found themselves uncomfortably forced to play the role of a composer rather than a stockbroker to ignore that "metaphysical" question that has haunted all great artists: how to reconcile the formal aspects of composition with a statement on man. What neither mathematical economists nor serialism can take into account in their theory of knowledge is the crucial factor of reality, namely change. That this factor is one of the prime concerns of the German Critical Philosophers is not incidental to the empiricists' violent rejection of this philosophy. What destroys the mathematic economics as a viable theory of reality is that disequilibrium is a fundamental feature of capitalism and not an "infinitesimal" fact to be relegated to a footnote. What finishes serialism as either the basis for an explanation of music in general or a theory for producing new music is also the factor of disequilibrium. Great music, such as Beethoven, has always been a process-statement that reflected upon the nature of change and has been self-conscious to the extent that it mirrors the flux of reality in such a way as to include the artist's changing consciousness of that reality. Musical events occur, change in their surroundings and are themselves destroyed by the changes they create, as I will demonstrate at a later point with respect to the "Diabelli Variations". The logical-positivist composers, in ignoring this aspect of music, have delivered the final death blow to any possibility of musical creation, just as the formal mathematicians with their axiomatic viewpoint have destroyed the possibility of creativity in mathematics.

In order, then, to lay the basis for a non-bourgeois art, it is necessary to replace the formal mathematical conceptions which have permeated the social activity of producing music as well as all other aspects of social life. It is necessary to attack the concepts imposed upon the present social processes by the present bourgeois forms of social organization and the ideology appropriate to the perpetuation of bourgeois social practice with concepts empowered by a different form of social relations leading to the production of a socialist consciousness. However, as Marx points out in his third thesis on Feuerbach, this must be done self-consciously, or in his words, "the educator himself must be educated." He goes on to say that "the coincidence of the changing of circumstances and of human activity or self-changing can only be comprehended and rationally understood as revolutionary practice." An artist who wishes to find an alternative to an art that is actually a subtle expression of bourgeois ideology must have a profound understanding of the difference between bourgeois and socialist consciousness and how to go about producing the latter in a society thoroughly permeated with the former. This demanding task is urgently required of both the artist and the revolutionary leader.

BOURGEOIS IDEOLOGY OF THE LEFT

Unfortunately, because of the polluted air of scientific empiricism, breathed in by self-proclaimed Marxists as well as other people, to refer to Hegel's contribution to the dialectical method, namely his recognition of the indeterminacy and the relative falseness of the particular viewed in itself, is regarded by many on the Left to be a deliberate obfuscation and a petty-bourgeois flight from the more sober classical materialism that they along with Mao are submerged in. Impatiently brushing aside total saturation with scientific empiricism by accepting the various fragmented social groupings on the Left, such as students, blacks, women, as being tantamount to a working class organization. Like the scientific empiricists they believe that you merely add up the parts to get the whole.

Another way of explaining this particularist world-view is to use the analogy of language, as Gramsci does in the following: "If it is true that any language contains the elements of a conception of the world and of a culture, it will also be true that the greater or lesser complexity of a person's conception of the world can be judged from his language. A person who only speaks a dialect or who understands the national language in varying degrees necessarily enjoys a more or less restricted and provincial, fossilised and anachronistic perception of the world in comparison with the great currents of thought which dominate world history. His interests will be restricted, more or less corporative and economic, and not universal."

In this manner we can regard the various kinds of music that are sold today under the name of Acid Rock, Soul, Folk, Protest, Black Nationalist jazz etc. as nothing more than dialects, all of which have a highly particularist and thus alienated perception of the world. They cannot locate their identity positively with respect to their contribution to shaping history because they have no understanding of the class forces which shape history. It is no coincidence that these musical dialects are quickly adopted by equally parochialist political groups such

ilarly, in the recent spectacle of 'Earth Week', people jubilantly welcomed a return to a more archaic mode of transportation as they "walked for health" rather than demanding the immediate construction of cheap mass transportation to supplant automobiles and to be paid for by taxing the speculative income of capitalists who are the cause of the problem. The Nazis, who were not without a certain ironical talent of their own, took the ideology that dominated their society the way a return to nature dominates ours, namely the German mystique surrounding work, and showed what its logical outcome would be under capitalism in a state of crisis: over the entrance to one of their concentration camps they placed the motto "Arbeit macht Freiheit." In the coming depression the Bob Dylan cult will afford us the opportunity of creating a "happening" appropriate to our own historical situation, as we gather thousands of unemployed workers to hear him sing their favorite song, the one with the refrain "And never more will you toil."

What Marx said about the revolution of the nineteenth century applies even more urgently to our own time: "The social revolution of the nineteenth century cannot draw its poetry from the past, but only from the future. It cannot begin with itself before it has stripped off all superstition in regard to the past. Earlier revolutions required recollections of past world history in order to drug themselves concerning their own content. In order to arrive at its own content, the revolution of the nineteenth century must let the dead bury their dead. There the phrase went beyond the content; here the content goes beyond the phrase."

In 1821 Shelley wrote "In Defense of Poetry" as a rebuttal to a critic who advanced the point of view that "a poet in our times is a semi-barbarian in a civilized community," the future dimensions of which he probably didn't realize at the time. Shelley, however, was quick to understand the significance of such a statement for the future of poetry and man, and in his "Defense of Poetry" reasserted the poet as a force of light and as such one of the "unacknowledged legislators of the world." By the end of the nineteenth century the alienated sensuality and concomitant incoherence of the decadent Romantics degenerated further into a cult of irrationality, unleashing its full fury in the barbarism of the twentieth century. Today we can study the cultural prototype of this phenomenon in the Rock cult.

However, before proceeding with this matter, it is necessary to take a scenic side tour without which the phenomenon that we are discussing cannot be fully understood. In order to understand why the cult of irrationality appears to be an appropriate response, we must first understand what other ideology exists in our society that has completely discredited rationality. It is necessary to understand how the possibility of any certainty of human knowledge was discredited by the currently hegemonic academic school of thought of scientific empiricism.

The essential predicament facing man with regard to knowledge about the world is that different "facts" regarded in and of themselves appear to be contradictory when compared with each other. To overcome their hysteria in the face of this problem of human knowledge and

its consequent loss of power for the individual confronting it, the scientific empiricists declared "meaningless" any attempt to compare one set of facts with any other set of facts which threatened to expose this inherent contradiction which existed as long as "facts" were presumed to have an existence in themselves. Throwing out this fundamental problem crucial not only for an abstract understanding of the limits of human knowledge but for the basis of an understanding of human identity, i.e. man's control over his world, the scientific empiricists acclaimed themselves as the "modest" philosophers, a euphemism for what anyone else would have identified as a simple-minded solution for a difficult problem. While most of society suffered a historical reality that was desperately in need not only of explanation but of explanation that would lead to a qualitative change in the condition of human existence, the so-called rational people threw up their hands in "modest" despair at having any solution to this "metaphysical" problem that was an eminently material reality for most other people, and "modestly" set about inquiring into some limited domain of what they thought were verifiable "facts." The only problem was that those "facts" didn't really exist in themselves, as Hegel could have pointed out to them, but rather represented a judgment abstracted from a process whose probability for truth decreased in proportion to its severance from that process taken as whole. These were the very polite barbarians in business suits who systematically set about destroying the basis of real knowledge, an opportunity uniquely afforded them by their almost total social isolation.

In the period following the second World War, the same period that produced the school of mathematical economics, a type of composition emerged out of the ruins of music codified by Arnold Schoenberg and bequest by Webern, namely serial composition. As yet another manifestation of the prevailing hegemony of the so-called scientific empiricism, this school of composition bore certain resemblances to the contribution of another duo, von Neumann and Morgenstern in the field of economics, who tried to prove that the law of value was to be located in the formal correspondence of the price and utility of commodities. The headquarters for both of these schools as no doubt for their equivalents in other areas of knowledge as well, are to be found at Princeton University. In contrast to the Law of Value developed by Marx in the "Feuerbach" section of the "German Ideology," these mathematical economists believed that a particular object could have an intrinsic value in itself which was translated into its price, instead of locating intrinsic value in the relationship between the whole society and the entirety of the material conditions required to continue the existence of the entire society on an expanded scale. What was left out of consideration by the mathematical economists was a consideration of the effect that subtracting or adding the particular part would have on the reproductive power of the whole. This important aspect of human knowledge had been relegated by the scientific empiricists to the rubbish heap of "meaningless questions" identified by them as the realm of inquiry only of concern of "metaphysicians." Similarly the serialists almost went so far as to make concern with some formal musical problem totally devoid of human relevance a cor-

as the Black Cultural Nationalists or the SWP, which represents the sum total of all parochialist social groupings within the conceivable imagination. A music expressing the parochialist outlook of national self-determination will be the musical expression of a false and alienated consciousness from the standpoint of humanity because it does not take positively into account the nations that are not their own. For example, the protest music that has come out of Latin America so far has lacked this self-consciousness and at best has been a reiteration of similar sentiments expressed by other countries in the Third World. The fact that a plurality of nations are all expressing the sentiment of national self-determination does not make it international. Furthermore, it is based on the false notion of the Menshevik theory of stages, in this case the idea that each nation must inevitably pass through its bourgeois stage before reaching socialism. Thus when a musician of Uruguay talks about the meaning of revolutionary art in the following terms, saying "the artist must have a fighting attitude and must be prepared to accept the risks and consequences of his work. All countries must speak in their own language. New forms are good if they integrate with the idiom of the people..." he is resorting to a cultural expression of the popular front. The role that Palacio assigns to the artist is the same role that the SWP and CP assign to the revolutionary: that of tailing after the present consciousness of the masses.

What we have been discussing until now is music whose basis of existence is ideology, specifically bourgeois ideology. It was Feuerbach's great contribution to unmask the nature of ideology in general by unmasking it specifically in religious practice. Not unlike the cultural manifestations we have been discussing, religion represented symbolically the social relations that appeared to man as being appropriate to his survival as a species. As Freud pointed out later, it was a necessary delusion. While it is false as an explanation of reality as a whole, it is believed to the extent that it intersects with reality at certain points. So that Rock, which is a caricature of the demonic, a caricature in fact of Nietzsche's earlier caricature of Promethean man, seems to be the appropriate expression of a revolutionary force, having taken in isolation merely the destructive aspect of a creative force and turned it, in its own inimically puerile fashion, into a neurotic distortion. Why its irrationality appeals particularly to students and so-called intellectuals has already been explained with reference to academic rationality.

What is so fascinating to observe in the Left today even among so-called Marxists is the phenomenon of schizophrenia. People who very soberly engage in socialist political practice can seemingly without any difficulty undergo a sudden transformation of personality and engage in a cultural manifestation of the most hysterical form of religion. Rock is a nominalist music of the first order, hysterically reiterating the triad, its pseudo-tonality, as a substitution for the tonal process that was an appropriate expression of the 18th and 19th centuries. This vulgar nominalism, in addition to its Dionysian cult of irrationality, are what make it eminently bourgeois. Despite this evidence that Rock is an expression of alienated bourgeois existence, many leftists will continue to wail "But I like it, I like Dylan too. Don't you like the Stones?" and will vigorously resist anyone who threatens to take away his right to this fana-

tical religious belief, suggesting that your failure to join him stems from artistic and intellectual elitism.

One of the familiar shrieks of pain to emanate from one attacked in this manner, such as the phenomenon of a Zappa fan, is to claim that one form of Rock is a satire on another, as though this music of miniscule human self-consciousness is capable of satirizing any social phenomenon today let alone its musical brother. Here it is again useful to return to Marx' "Eighteenth Brumaire" since the distinction between genuine and phony satire is the same as the distinction made by him between recollections of the past in order to go beyond the present and recollections of the past in order to add those nightmares to the copious collection of our own. Great satire looks to a way out of the present; phony satire doesn't comprehend the dilemma of the present. Viewed this way, one can't help but make the further point that Zappa's form of satire, really just an eclectic collection of past nightmares, is not really that different from the world outlook of the SWP, as the May 9-14, 1971 Solidarity shows. Phonies like Zappa also make a fetish of improvisation, of 'creative discovery,' usually of the kind that a small child or house pet makes when he first discovers the existence of a keyboard in the living room.

THE PROBLEM OF CREATIVITY IN MUSIC

The phenomenon of improvisation as it presents itself in the work of some jazz musicians is another matter, one for serious discussion. The positive aspect of jazz improvisation lies not in its genre, which is anyway eclectic, but in its representation of the creative process. It locates itself in the heart of the problem confronting the artist by creating in the presence of others where under the strain of the situation he sometimes may have breakthroughs to formal problems that he could not have achieved in a more relative isolation, although it must be understood that physical isolation at certain points does not mean that the composer or any other creative intellect is not in contact with the needs of his society. Under the former conditions creativity usually occurs in spurts, amid stretches of impasse which the person listening to the improvisation will view sympathetically to the extent that he sees its significance in relation to the creative spurts forward, providing of course that he has already seen evidence of such creativity. If this is not the case, and it usually is not, he would do better to walk out instead of getting drunk while waiting until two in the morning for the musician to possibly have his breakthrough. But under more favorable circumstances the listener sees the improvisation as symbolic of the creative ability that is in himself extended symbolically in the transformation of musical material. The poetry inherent in such improvisation is its transitory nature, where moments of brilliant inspiration are as fleeting as the human circumstances that gave rise to them.

What is lacking in this kind of musical practice is the element of time within which to reflect self-consciously on the dialectical problem confronting the artist: how do the particulars within the composition contribute positively to the larger process-statement about society? This is no task for people lacking a trained musical mind, although it should be pointed out that the training does not necessarily take place in the conservatory as it is presently constituted. The fact is that great musical compositions of the past have always included the positive features of jazz improvisation outlined above and then superseded them in the working out of a more polished

statement. To all but the average conservatory-trained performer it should be immediately obvious that there are long stretches of improvisation in Beethoven which are written into the composition, as most apparently in the first movement of the "Tempest." This was one of the features of his music that startled those whose consciousness was still in the previous age when a composer's identity was not that of a dominating intellectual but that of a servant of the aristocracy, a situation from which Mozart suffered particularly acutely. What was startling was the idea that a composition that included a documentation of the composer struggling with the problems of composition could be considered by the composer himself to be of interest to his listener. The assertion of the composer's will in this manner was the musical expression of the Promethean hero. Thus in Beethoven we have the first self-conscious artist, not unlike Hegel's prototype of the philosopher in Phenomenology, whose musical statement on man included a statement on the nature of his own identity as a composer. Lukacs points out a similar feature in literature, comparing the naive enthusiasm of the 18th century realists who created the modern novel without thinking much about form, and which gave way to what he speaks of as 'a forced reflection on the problematical character of this reality and the artistic forms adequate to it.' The fact that Beethoven proceeded in this manner not only very seriously but at times by means of ironical rhetorical devices closely associated with rhetorical devices in poetry and sometimes even with raucous humor is what permits us to speak of satire in his music.

Let's take the example of the DIABELLI VARIATIONS, written in 1823. It is based on the somewhat banal theme, not unlike a popular song today, or a contemporary of Beethoven. In Variation V there is a satire on the pre-revolutionary aesthetic of balance based on literal symmetry. Dutifully composing in this manner, at the end of the variation however Beethoven forgets himself and impatiently speeds up the rate of harmonic change, just as suddenly slipping back into the earlier symmetry in the last few beats as if to deny that any such outburst has occurred. In variation XIII, taking a rhythmical pattern associated with the final cadence of a piece written in the classical period, Beethoven makes it the basis for virtually an entire variation. Thus he is perpetually ending this variation. This variation has certain harmonic peculiarities which are also treated humorously. While most of the variations are in the key of C major, this one plunges into the key of A minor and then stops short. Throughout the variation the listener is kept wondering what he will do next in this regard. The variation starts out as though it will stay in the key of A minor, but as it unfolds the meaning of the opening becomes increasingly ambiguous. At the end of the first part he reaches the dominant as if to say, "Aha, you thought it was in the key of A minor but now we're in G major so maybe the piece started out just like all the others in C major." Having established these doubts in the listener with regard to his perception, before giving him time to recover Beethoven plunges back into the key of A minor and perpetrates the same joke again. In the second section he does the same thing with Bb major. Variation XVI is a somewhat raucous "take-off" in addition to other things on the banality of the original theme. This aspect of satire, for Beethoven only the most obvious, is the only kind known

to Frank Zappa whose lack of compositional ability prevents him from realizing even this limited kind of satire musically. Imagine to yourself the first three measures of this variation repeated over and over again for the duration of an entire evening and you have some idea of what a Zappa concert is like. The written out improvisation that occurs so often in Beethoven is all the more remarkable when it appears in a variation whose underlying harmonic structure has already been made familiar by the theme and nineteen subsequent variations. Yet this is achieved in variation XX where, instead of submitting the listener to hours of real time in which only a few events occur, Beethoven collapses real time into a few moments, thus simultaneously abstracting the process of improvisation and reflecting on that process by resolving the contradictions that certain harmonic leaps impose on the variation as a whole. The haunting and somewhat elusive quality of this variation is the clue to this process of condensation that occurs.

It is clear that the social turmoil during Beethoven's time is reflected in an abstract, not a literal way in his music, a point which having mastered should enable us to throw over all the bunk of the subject of Beethoven as a revolutionary composer that parades under the name of Marxism. The cramming of many musical events within a short time span was the musical idealization of the paradox demonstrated socially that few events can occur over a long stretch of time and many compressed into a relatively short time-span. The latter was the reality of a revolutionary period. That is the meaning of the strange harmonic leaps in Beethoven's late work; they are the product of elisions, i.e., harmonies left out, in order to accelerate the rate of harmonic change.

RELATION OF ART AND REVOLUTION

It is art of this caliber, not popular culture, that should be of concern to the revolutionary. Popular culture is hegemonic in periods of the most utter philistinism and vulgarity, a level of existence which it is the revolutionary leader's task to destroy. The artist does not pander to this consciousness any more than the revolutionary does. All forms of parochialism including cultural "dialects" of militant national self-determination, or black cultural nationalism are inimical to a revolutionary movement. Just as under conditions of vast social upheaval, such as the mass strike, the ideas of a relatively tiny handful of intellectuals (which up to that point had appeared esoteric and even irrelevant) suddenly are comprehended and begin to draw larger numbers of the population into the process, so too the artistic expression of those ideas begins to reach layers of the population to whom under conditions of capitalist hegemony these artistic expressions would have been inaccessible. This was the case during the period of the French Revolution, as Shelley points out in his "Defense of Poetry." Poets and philosophers who would have in a reactionary period manifested the greatest philistinism, under the stress of a massive upheaval which promised to change the productive forces on the largest scale possible were driven to express the revolutionary spirit of their time. The socialist revolution will hopefully sweep away the artistic trash which has accumulated since the 19th century and the present widespread popular mongoloidism that even anti-intellectual Marxists opportunistically accept.

In a period of rapid social decay like our own there is a tendency for art to sympathize with that decay. A genuine artist, like the revolutionary, speaks a language which is needed by his contemporaries but which they are prevented from understanding by the quality of their social existence. But the fact that they cannot at present understand him does not mean that he doesn't continue to speak that language, despite the fact that this language is regarded by most people in their present state as irrelevant. Only in this way will both the artist and revolutionary be able to offer a positive alternative to the philistinism with which he and everyone else is surrounded. Ceasing to tail after popular consciousness, he will be ready for the time when a drastic change in social life brings about its equally drastic change in consciousness and an understanding of ideas which in the present remain to be fully realized.

The idea of a group of revolutionary cadre deliberately fostering the production of workers' songs and poems, to deliberately create a popular art, was incomprehensible to Rosa Luxemburg. As Nettl points out in his biography, art for her as a genre of its own. "It had above all to reflect the realities of its time, at most foreshadow the immediate future but never extrapolate into the distance; what made art timeless was not vision but quality."

THE PROBLEM CONFRONTING MODERN ART

The problematical character of modern art is already noted by Marx in his observation that capitalist production is hostile to certain aspects of spiritual production, such as art and poetry. This hostility has advanced to a point today where it is almost impossible to produce anything in this sphere at all. The contradiction facing the modern artist is concisely stated by Lukacs in his essay "Correspondence between Schiller and Goethe." Either a system of artistic laws can be derived from a study of past forms for the purpose of expressing the specific character of modern life, e.g. Bartok's string quartets in relation to Beethoven's; or a study of the past leads to the creation of timeless laws which lead to the creation of a classical art which must out of self-preservation exclude any reality that is hostile to such expression.

The dangers of the former are that making the reality which is hostile to art the subject matter of art destroys the forms needed to give this reality coherence. The dangers of the latter are that in the interest of art reality must be held at a distance, as the central concerns of bourgeois society are inimical to classical beauty and simplicity. Most schools of modern art have followed the course of the first to its most pathetic conclusions, a most eloquent testimony having been made perhaps by John Cage in his composition called "Silence" which consists of absolutely no music at all. It seems clear that an artist who is concerned with a relentless expression of his society today is particularly caught up in this contradiction. He cannot ignore reality to the extent demanded by classicism. However, history has shown that if modern bourgeois reality is going to be hostile to art, art will have to be hostile to certain kinds of reality. However, to refuse to deal with the kind of animal reality that Rock deals with does not make a carefully selected reality any less real. The artist who today is concerned with the horrors of contemporary reality has

to continually guard against the dissolution of artistic coherence. Schiller, who of course chose classicism, warns of this predicament. "The modern concerns himself laboriously and anxiously with incidental events and secondary conditions, and by attempting to approximate reality as closely as possible he burdens himself with idle and insignificant things and thus runs the risk of losing the deeper truth wherein everything really poetical resides. He would like very much to copy a real situation but does not reflect that a poetic description, precisely because it is absolutely true, can never coincide with reality."

Some very great artists during the 19th century and since have rejected classicism without rejecting artistic coherence, among whom were Balzac and Goethe himself in *Wilhelm Meister* and *Faust*. Both Balzac and Goethe were aware of the great dangers in doing so. Goethe referred to *Faust* as "this barbarous composition" by virtue of its autonomy of parts and fragmentation of the whole, revealing the conflict he felt between the aesthetic demands of the work and the demands of modern reality. In the twentieth century those few artists that have not accepted the total dissolution of form which characterizes this century those who were genuinely concerned with the relation of form to content such as Berg and Bartok (as opposed to the glib formalists previously discussed), have always proceeded uneasily between the two, only at moments bringing the two together.

The few serious artists of the twentieth century, and there have only been a few and usually not closely associated with any of the theoretically bankrupt schools, in order to be fairly evaluated must be regarded as the victims of this contradiction and thus caught in an art which at some future time may be regarded as having been transitional. They should be spoken of the way Luxemburg speaks of Dostoyevsky and Tolstoy. "Dostoyevsky, especially in his later writings, is an outspoken reactionary, a religious mystic and hater of socialists. His depictions of Russian revolutionaries are malicious caricatures. Tolstoy's mystic doctrines reflect reactionary tendencies, if no more. But the writings of both have, nevertheless, an inspiring, arousing, and liberating effect upon us. And this is because their starting points are not reactionary, their thoughts and emotions are not governed by the desire to hold on to the status quo, nor are they motivated by social hatred, narrow-mindedness, or caste egotism. On the contrary theirs is the warmest love for mankind and the deepest response to social injustice. And thus the reactionary Dostoyevsky becomes the artistic agent of the 'insulted and injured,' as one of his works is called. Only the conclusions drawn by him and Tolstoy, each in his own way, only the way out of the social labyrinth which they believe they have found, leads them into the bypaths of mysticism and asceticism. But with the true artist, the social formula that he recommends is a matter of secondary importance; the source of his art, its animating spirit, is decisive."

TOWARDS A NEW ART

The dialectical handling of the problem must locate the reality of modern existence positively with respect to a final statement on the meaning of this existence. A Feuerbach suggests, it is necessary to start with man's sensuous being, in music the feeling of existence, as the beginning of artistic expression if we are to avoid the

severance of feeling and thought that Hegel warned of in Phenomenology. In his "Preliminary Theses" Feuerbach writes, "The resolute consciousness become flesh and blood, that makes the human the divine and the finite infinite, is the source of a new poetry and art which will surpass all previously created in energy, depth, and brilliance. . . Suffering is the source of poetry. Only a person who experiences the loss of a finite essence as an infinite loss has the power of lyrical brilliance. Only the painful fascination of the memory of what IS NO MORE is the first artist, the first idealist in man. . . The philosophy /he could have said art/ that drives the finite from the infinite, the specific from the undetermined, never attains a true position in regard to the finite and specific." And in that same work he says "Only out of the negation of thought, out of being determined by the object, out of passion, out of the source of all pleasure and want is produced true, objective thought, and true, objective philosophy. Perception gives essence which is immediately identical with existence, while thought gives essence mediated from existence by differentiation, by separation. Therefore, only where existence is united with essence, where perception is united with thought, where passivity is united with activity, where the anti-scholastic sanguinary principle of French sensualism and materialism is united with the scholastic phlegm of German metaphysics—only there can there be life and truth."

The chief defect of all music of the twentieth century up to now, including my own, is that it has suffered reality passively. Music being a highly emotional art, it is easy for the composer to allow himself to be inundated with the sensuous impressions of the world. Like Feuerbach, "who wants sensuous objects really distinguished from the objects of thought," practice for the musician "is understood and established only in its 'dirty Jew' appearance. He therefore does not comprehend the significance of 'revolutionary,' of 'practical-critical activity.'"

Such art however is not fully conscious. The distortions found in artists such as Berg and Max Beckmann, both of whom were associated in some sense with German Expressionism, are the effect of a reality suffered passively. At just those moments in their art which call for illumination on the cause of this suffering, at just those moments they become rhetorical. Under the most demoralizing circumstances their response has been one of blind moral outrage and pathos. Thus Beckmann can up to a point movingly depict the horrors of fascism during his hiding in Amsterdam during the Second World War, and lacking an understanding of why fascism occurred, can end up in the U.S. after the war spouting liberal rhetoric to art students without making the connection between that rhetoric and the monster that he had compulsively painted over and over.

Bartok is an interesting case in that he more than other artists seems to have understood that his art was transitional. Unlike Stravinsky who tacitly reproduced the current ideology depending on what "period" he was in, Bartok's music was metaphysical in that it sought to transcend its formal limitations in order to make a true statement on its time. Not unlike Beethoven he comments through the process of composition on the difficulty of writing music. He does this by first trying to pose difficult concepts within a form inappropriate to them,

namely the folk melodies (the only aspect of his music accessible to CP critics), showing in the course of the composition that the form is unsuitable, and then discards the old forms at a point when his audience should understand why they had to be discarded. Here is a musical case, then, of a composer who fairly consciously forces his content to go beyond the phrase. Only in this sense in Bartok's music to be regarded as didactic. Perhaps this kind of approach could be the basis of a more self-consciously transitional art. As Marx states in 18th Brumaire, "a beginner who has learned a new language always translates it back into his mother tongue, but he has assimilated the spirit of the new language and can freely express himself in it only when he finds his way in it without recalling the old and forgets his native tongue in the use of the new."

As the new culture develops with the development of social relations, the old language can be gradually discarded and a new one emerge which is a more consistently coherent expression of recently assimilated concepts. Gramsci speaks of this transitional process in the following way: "What exists at each new turn is a varying combination of the old and the new, creating a momentary equilibrium of cultural relationships corresponding to the equilibrium in social relationships. Only after the creation of the State does the cultural problem pose itself in all its complexity and tend towards a concrete solution. In every case, the attitude preceding the state can only be critical-polemical; never dogmatic, it must be romantic in attitude but with a romanticism that consciously aspires towards its own classical composition."

The art that will emerge as a result of a self-conscious change in social practice will shed light on the art of darkness that preceded it. It will begin with the feeling of existence, for it cannot be classical at the outset. But it will not be a human existence conceived in a sensually alienated way but a feeling of human existence for itself. A feeling of existence that emerges from an understanding of what man must do if he is to self-consciously reproduce his existence on a higher level and an understanding of what kind of consciousness is appropriate to this task. Like Don Juan, he will understand that his own richness is to be found in the multitude of others, which is a case for expanded reproduction and an increase in the population so as to produce a multitude of activities, contrary to prevailing zero population growth advocates. Only when artistic anthropology, which defines self-conscious evolutionary reproduction as the sole premise for human knowledge, only then will the previously mysterious "preconscious" processes, in art known as inspiration, be put on a scientific basis. When an artist comprehends this necessary course of social development then the immediacy of particular experience will be positively understood, not suffered in an alienated way, not ignored in favor of some schematic future reality or, in the case of Socialist Realism, non-reality. For an artist to create THROUGH the darkness of matter in order to emerge with an art of light, at this particular historical point, he must be engaged in revolutionary practice. For the source of poetry today is the challenge to become truly human for the first time in history.

educator has no control. This differs from the dialectical view which sees the individual's relation to things as necessarily being mediated through society. It is society that shapes nature into special objects for individual consumption such as intelligence-heightening toys, books, films, tools, etc. — those objects by which the child or adult internalizes his society's technology and culture. Thus, Rousseau's conception and those of many of his intellectual descendants two centuries later such as Jensen is that I.Q. is an individual product rather than a social one.

With Immanuel Kant there is already an abstract realization of the dependence of the development of the individual on the development of society, as opposed to Rousseau's notion that sees society as antagonistic to the individual. Furthermore, there is the realization with Kant that children are not merely trained for present conditions but rather, optimally, for improved future society. Finally, Kant realizes the pernicious effects the family and the state usually exert as mediating forces between individual needs and social needs.

Kant, certainly the summit of rationalist thinking on the subject of education, falls short on two points (which are essentially one): he does not know what makes the whole process move, that is to say, he sees social development but has no conception of the self-expanding use-value upon which it is based; similarly, he realizes that individuals make discoveries crucial to social development but has no notion how these individual discoveries can be consciously encouraged. Not being able to understand social productivity and individual creativity concretely, he certainly cannot understand it as self-conscious practice as Marx does.

The inability to comprehend process, whether of society or individual, is a characteristic feature of bourgeois science, with its sharp distinctions between the synchronic and diachronic and its mechanical attempts to characterize diachronic processes by means of a (quite static) linear ordering of synchronic descriptions. For example, sociology (according to Durkheim, one of the best of such scientists) must, for reasons of "objectivity," deal only with the unchanging, specifically, the artifacts of a stable society. But the real object of sociology is society, which changes continually — at least the most interesting ones do. Thus, Durkheim, by condemning

sociology to study of the stable object of a stable object — or rather, the dead form of a dead form — in effect condemns sociology to necrophilia. Process, change, history, the essence of man's nature — escapes such rules. Durkheim's method leaves sociology in the position of a scientist who would like to study the movements of live horses but by the rules of the game is only allowed to study the small mounds they leave behind them in the fields. This fallacy — the inability to coherently describe social change — afflicts all the bourgeois social sciences to varying degrees. In its lowest form it manifests itself as a J.H. Hexter for whom the practice of history has sunk to the level of mere story-telling.

Dewey's Rejection of Dialectics

The rejection of dialectics as a permissible conceptualization of the changes produced by the interactions of individual, society, and nature on each other and the development of these interactions in historical time is in effect a rejection of any possibility of characterizing those interactions as they really are. A further consequence of the rejection of dialectics is that the very process of change that is education is also aborted. Thus, as anti-dialectician the bourgeois educator cannot conceive of concept-formation as destruction of the old concepts in contradiction to each other — to be replaced by a new, higher-order concept. For this reason he is unable to understand what creativity is — and equivalently — real knowledge.

Dewey, for example, considers new concepts as simply new meanings. What meanings are Dewey does not bother to say, except discursively, the way theologians once defined God. Meanings do everything for Dewey: they charge a man's activities like an electric battery. . .they supply content to existing social life. . .they provide something to keep a man uplifted when the rest of his education is simply tool-making or animal husbandry. . .they give certain jobs a special status called social meaning. Indeed, culture itself is defined by Dewey as quantity and quality of meanings. He sums it all up by defining education as:

. . .a process of renewal of the meanings of experience through a process of transmission, partly incident to the ordinary companionship or intercourse of adults and

The Past Stalks the Present

By Richard Rose

Every advanced society must set aside a certain proportion of its expanding social surplus for also expanding requirements in terms of numbers of the population being educated and the quality of that education for the population as a whole. As Kant realized, the best education is that which prepares the youth sector of the population not just for today's mode of existence but, most importantly, for tomorrow's. Since tomorrow's knowledge and detailed techniques cannot be known today, the focus of the teachers must be on bringing students to the frontiers of today's knowledge and social practice using a method in which the student self-consciously develops his creative powers and awareness of the interrelation between his or her individual knowledge and creativity and the needs of human society as a whole. On this there might be little immediate disagreement between some bourgeois and marxist educators. The differences manifest themselves only when one comes to examine what the generalizations mean when worked out in detail.

The fundamental distinction between the bourgeois curriculum and the Marxist-critical one is in the respective conceptualizations of the real interrelationships among individual, society, and nature. Because of the inability of bourgeois thinkers to correctly conceive these interrelationships, the most devastating unresolved contradictions lie at the basis of the systems of these thinkers and therefore also underlie the extraordinary incoherence of bourgeois knowledge which is reflected in the fragmented school and college curriculum.

One of the familiar symptoms of this is the academy's highest product, the Ph.D. ignoramus. This gentleman knows nothing but his specialty and is therefore unable to break outside it to new knowledge that would transform what he already knows. Hence he knows nothing. It is in this social context, incidentally, that the fear arises on the

part of many socialists that they must flee with their public self as far as possible from earlier developed specializations.

From Rousseau to Kant to Durkheim

One can see the paradoxes which arise from the inability to understand the relationship between the individual and the social already quite clearly in the educational thought of Rousseau, who can only conceive of two possibilities: either the individual exists for himself only or for others only. Rousseau and all subsequent bourgeois thinkers are unable to conceive of that unity of individual and social being which is the essence of Marx's notion of the class-for-itself.

Marx's notion is grounded in the realization that man is the unique species that deliberately evolves through purposeful changes in the mode of production by which he reproduces his own existence as a species. So conceived, the value of the individual is his positive contribution to that evolution through his activity in society's division of labor. Unable to see the unity of individual and species existence, a contradiction inherent in bourgeois society, Rousseau opts for an education which prepares for individual being-in-itself, i.e. individual self-determination. Rousseau abhors specialized education inasmuch as for him it seems to condemn the individual to a state of being-for-others.

From this follows his various quixotic attempts to imagine a world peopled by many little Robinson Crusoe types such as Emile. Society for Rousseau, as for Freud later, is seen as a destructive force which continually constrains the individual's liberty, political or sexual. Consistent with Rousseau's notions of individual self-determination is his belief that the relation of the child to things, external nature, is predominately a direct relation over which the

youth, partly deliberately instituted to effect social continuity.

Which loosely translated out of Deweyese means: education is a set of religious rites to keep the present social machine well-greased.

Dewey's unhappy treatment of the problem of concept formation is equalled by his treatment of curriculum. Like Durkheim, Dewey realizes the central importance of social science. He wishes to put man at the center of the curriculum in the schools, acknowledging Hegel's genuine advance beyond Rousseau insofar as Hegel saw the absurdity of treating historical institutions as artificial frauds. Dewey also realizes that education itself is a social process and that furthermore a given pedagogy implies a particular social ideal. But what is the notion Dewey has of society, which will presumably direct his conceptions of the social process of education and the centrality of man in the curriculum? In effect, Dewey is a retrogression from Durkheim. For Dewey, "A society exists where men have shared beliefs, knowledge, aims." Durkheim's clear understanding of society as a force standing over against the individual is completely obscured by Dewey's formulation which could include as easily a social class, nation-state, sewing circle — or none of these. Dewey's conception of society, in spite of his vague obeissances in Hegel's direction, is that society is simply an aggregate constructed out of like-minded individuals, i.e. a sum of its like-featured parts. Society having no effective existence of its own, it would therefore follow that changing "social conditions" would simply involve educating one person, and then another, and another and so forth — all on a one-to-one basis.

Skinner and his Critics

A major opponent of Dewey's notions of concept formation and curricular preoccupations is B.F. Skinner, who actually merely carries Dewey's individualist notions of learning and action to a radical conclusion — reactionary radical. The controlled particular responses of organisms to stimuli are all that interests him — the rest is contemptuously relegated to the philosopher. Indeed, Skinner's notion of education is that it is simply a patterned and determined set of responses of a special sort, namely verbal responses. Education for Skinner is thus confined to formal, nominal behavior.

Perhaps the best way to view Skinner is as an obviously talented teacher who has merely been given the wrong set of pupils. The following quote will perhaps make clear where Skinner's real skills lie:

...we have learned how to maintain any given level of activity for daily periods limited only by the physical exhaustion of the organism and from day to day without substantial change throughout its life.

Skinner obviously would have made a good Krupp foreman, or in a pinch, a fine circus trainer. He should be given an immediate federal grant to try his educational ideas out on paramecia and other species with similarly primitive nervous systems, who might be modestly challenged by his learning theory (which is obviously more suited to their capacities).

Fundamentally, what Skinner is proud of is his discovery of a form of learning for which the species makes very little difference. As he puts it:

Comparable results have been obtained with pigeons, cats, dogs, monkeys, human children. . .and human psychotic subjects.

But what man shares with the protozoa has nothing to do with man's human nature, which is the concern of real education. Kant said education is the process by which man becomes man; Skinner in effect reverses this to say: education is the process by which I will endeavor to turn the child into a pigeon or protozoon. These flea circus, these Kruppwerke antics Skinner would like to have generalized throughout the school system! Like rock music fanatics who would like to overcome their nostalgic distance from the animal world by rejoining it, Skinner would like to remake the humanspecies in the image of that lowest species that twists and turns at the behest of his reinforcement schedules.

Paul Goodman, on the other hand, opposes Skinner but for the wrong reasons. Goodman rejects Skinner principally on anti-authoritarian, i.e. anarchist grounds. Goodman thinks people are over-educated, that there should be subsidies so that more people can go back to the farm, schools should be decentralized, and the educational system itself be diminished rather than expanded. In short, Goodman's criticism of Skinner is that of a historical reactionary who would set man's social

assert that the products of one's actions are one's own; that freedom — or at least the struggle for it — is a human necessity.

Indeed, in contrast with Marx's notion of revolutionary practice as that for the species as a whole (by the class, the proletariat, that represents the interests of the species), Kampf's notion is closer to the anarcho-syndicalism of Sorel:

The meaning of life is in action — whether the acts be physical or mental. Fulfilled action frees us; it makes us independent. . . Though we have no clear answers or directives for action, we must make the attempt. For only in the attempt will our analysis unfold, our activity become consciously meaningful.

Thus the devastating paradoxes of bourgeois educational thought — whether with respect to curriculum or learning technique — arise from the fact that the bourgeois world outlook cannot conceive reality as a whole nor can it adequately conceive of the interrelationships of individual, society, and nature. In particular, it cannot conceive of Marx's law of value as the revolutionary historic practice of the human species. Unable to conceive of knowledge as validated by the practical activity of the species, the bourgeois thinker cuddles up within his own little half-acre of imagined self-determination. Yet the truth lies in understanding the significance the part or individual plays in the whole, a problem which presents itself in the immediate form of resolving those incoherences — the parts of reality which apparently are each true in themselves but which taken together are in devastating antagonism. A resolution can only come about by leaping beyond former boundaries (those conceptions solidified in common sense or formal reason) to discover a higher unity, one which destroys the former mutually contradictory notions at the same time incorporating them into a higher being. This new being is not simply a mechanical linking of fortuitously collocated, still unchanged entities.

Marxist Pedagogy: 'Dialectical-forcing'

All human knowledge and creativity may be described as aspects of this process, that of dialectics. Without it those new discoveries of higher coherence will not be forthcoming — discoveries upon which human society as revolutionary species-being is absolutely dependent. Given the overriding importance then

of this creative capacity in the individual and for the species, the principal teaching method of the working-class-for-itself must be that of dialectical forcing, that is, presenting to the student those incoherences whose continued existence confronts the student with the most immediate and disturbing threats to his presently constituted conceptual world, his identity. In discovering the new concept for himself, in himself destroying his own relatively-false prior conceptions, the student will really have changed himself, will really understand the new concept, rather than the bastard substitute so often confused for such a condition, namely when a student responds by some kind of verbal ritual carried on in the most superficial portions of his mind, not having touched the underlying contradictions which remain unchanged at an even deeper, more controlling level. (It is no coincidence that the best marxist writings are polemical. That is the literary form of the dialectical-forcing process.)

As part of the dialectical-forcing process it is also crucial for the teacher to develop a self-consciousness in the student as to the teaching method being employed as well as the motivation for the curriculum being such as it is (in terms of the individual's own existence). Our Greek comrades, in this vein, teach primitive accumulation to their ex-peasant countrymen by connecting it to the Agricultural Bank which ruined them. Teaching by a dialectical-forcing method facilitates such a self-conscious process in that the student comes to understand what creativity is — by experiencing such creativity himself and being led to self-consciousness about it so that he can among other things transmit such knowledge to others, i.e. become a cadre.

In this respect, since those to be educated right now by the left are not relatively unformed children but rather radical youth and adults who have already had an extensive education — or rather, miseducation at the hands of the schools, newspapers, television, etc. — the focus must necessarily be a critical one. That is the student, the potential cadre's, mind may be safely presumed to be cluttered up with the most appalling jumble of dislocated facts, superstitions, self-doubts, etc. Given a chance, the developing social movement of which he is a part, will provide him with the indispensable confidence he will need to acquire those fundamental marxist critical ideas which will then enable him to put his own chaotic conceptual house in order, while he at the same time

(Please turn to page 42)

evolution back several centuries, as opposed to Skinner as a biological reactionary who would set the phylogenetic clock back some hundreds of millions of years.

The principal opposing answer in academic circles to the behaviorists is the cognivists, of whom Jerome Bruner is a well-known example. Bruner in certain respects comes close to the Marxist conception of learning in that he favors intuitive learning as opposed to formalist learning (the latter based on endless definitions, memorizing of proofs, etc.). His notion of creativity is a rather shallow one, however, like that of so many theorists on the subject who see creativity as some kind of novel permutation in the ordering of previous experience. In the creative act, Bruner explains, once-separated concepts become connected by some kind of links akin to Dewey's meanings.

In contrast, Hegel and Marx's notion — the dialectical notion — is that concepts are not merely linked to each other but indeed the old concepts are destroyed as such and their content reborn in a new higher-order concept. For the dialectical educator, real learning takes place only when there is a creative leap in the student's mind in which he somehow produces an equivalent of the concept originally produced by its discoverer. This must necessarily involve an upheaval of the old concepts. The bridge built by Newtonian physics no more demonstrates Newtonian physics' peaceful coexistence with Einsteinian physics than the savage who presumes the sun to be a chariot emerging from the sea (and regulates his existence accordingly) holds a conceptual framework in peaceful coexistence with Copernicus's.

LeRoi Jones, the Educator-

Bruner and his cognitivist colleagues may be viewed as Kantian holdouts awash in a sea infested with Skinnerian sharks. One such Skinnerian denizen is the black proto-fascist scab-herder LeRoi Jones. As a reward for his various ingratiating services to major Newark capitalists such as the officers of the Prudential Life Insurance Co., Jones was awarded 80,000 dollars by Nixon's O.E.O. — ostensibly to develop an innovative educational program. A description of classroom life in this "innovative" program was published recently in the pro-Jones *New York Times*: the children all repeat back in unison

exactly what the teacher has chanted to them from the front of the room, sometimes in English, sometimes in what is claimed to be Swahili. The children are instructed to call the several female teachers not by their actual names but "mammy." One such mammy when interviewed by the *Times* reporter explained that rote learning was necessary because black children were different and that was the only way they could learn. . .

One can only come to the conclusion that the teaching techniques of black nationalist Leroy Jones and his colleagues are unfit for human beings of any race and that he and Skinner should crawl into a cage together with some laboratory rats and talk over their common experiences. The worst aspect of the whole Jones situation from the point of view of working class morality, however, is that Jones has found strike-breaking support from the pro-nationalist Socialist Workers Party, while the C.P. supports his fellow stooge, Mayor Kenneth Gibson, who appointed the union-busting majority on Newark's Board of Education in the first place. The class treachery socialist have fallen prey to in supporting local control is made manifest by a shockingly candid essay by Paul Sweezy in Annette Rubinstein's anthology of pro-community control writings. Sweezy advises leftists to ally with capitalists such as Rockefeller and those around the Ford Foundation because, says Sweezy, having no financial interests in the ghettos (!) these capitalists are progressive on the subject of education, whereas the local bourgeoisie (members of the teachers' unions!) are not. Given the quality of their involvement in community control, it is not surprising that neither the SWP nor CP have produced any serious discussion papers on questions of curriculum and teaching methods.

Modern Moralists

With the exception of the Labor Committees, the only detailed work on these questions that has been done recently in the U.S. left has come from groups of radical rather than socialist intent, e.g. New University Conference. The difficulty here is that the radicals essentially turn the clock back to Rousseau insofar as they function as individual moralists. For example, Kampf's comments on draft-card burning:

. . .this seemingly mad act of rejecting an illegitimate and immoral authority was really an attempt to relate thought to action; to

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