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# FACING REALITY

with a new Introduction by  
**JOHN H. BRACEY**



**THE NEW SOCIETY:**  
**Where to look for it &**  
**How to bring it closer**

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# **FACING REALITY**

by C. L. R. James,  
Grace C. Lee, Pierre Chaulieu

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## I N T R O D U C T I O N

The whole world today lives in the shadow of the state power. This state power is an ever-present self-perpetuating body over and above society. It transforms the human personality into a mass of economic needs to be satisfied by decimal points of economic progress. It robs everyone of initiative and clogs the free development of society. This state power, by whatever name it is called, One-Party State or Welfare State, destroys all pretense of government by the people, of the people. All that remains is government for the people.

Against this monster, people all over the world, and particularly ordinary working people in factories, mines, fields, and offices, are rebelling every day in ways of their own invention. Sometimes their struggles are on a small personal scale. More effectively, they are the actions of groups, formal or informal, but always unofficial, organized around their work and their place of work. Always the aim is to regain control over their own conditions of life and their relations with one another. Their strivings, their struggles, their methods have few chroniclers. They themselves are constantly attempting various forms of organization, uncertain of where the struggle is going to end. Nevertheless, they are imbued with one fundamental certainty, that they have to destroy the continuously mounting bureaucratic mass or be themselves destroyed by it.

For some years after the war it seemed that the totalitarian state, by its control of every aspect of human life, had crushed forever all hopes for freedom, for liberty and socialism. Men struggled, but under the belief that the Welfare State was in reality only a half-way house to the ultimate totalitarian domination. A symbolical date was even fixed when this would be achieved all over the world, 1984.

Now, however, the Hungarian Revolution has uncovered, for the whole world to see, the goal to which the struggles against bureaucracy are moving. The Hungarian people have restored the belief of the Nineteenth Century in progress. They have restored to the revolutionary socialist movement the conviction that the future lies with the power of the working class and the great masses of the people.

It must never be forgotten that the Hungarian Revolution was successful as no other revolution in history was successful. The totalitarian state was not merely defeated. It was totally destroyed and the counter-revolution crushed. It is the totality of the success which

## INTRODUCTION

enabled the workers to do so much before the revolution was robbed of its victory by Russian tanks from outside. What then was the great achievement of the revolution?

By the total uprising of a people, the Hungarian Revolution has disclosed the political form which not only destroys the bureaucratic state power, but substitutes in its place a socialist democracy, based not on the control of people but on the mastery of things. This political form is the Workers Councils, embracing the whole of the working population from bottom to top, organized at the source of all power, the place of work, making all decisions in the shop or in the office.

## I. THE WORKERS COUNCILS

## HUNGARY

The secret of the Workers Councils is this. From the very start of the Hungarian Revolution, these shop floor organizations of the workers demonstrated such conscious mastery of the needs, processes, and inter-relations of production, that they did not have to exercise any domination over **people**. That mastery is the only basis of political power against the bureaucratic state. It is the very essence of any government which is to be based upon general consent and not on force. The administration of things by the Workers Councils established a basic coherence in society and from this coherence they derived automatically their right to govern. Workers' management of production, government from below, and government by consent have thus been shown to be one and the same thing.

The actual resort to arms has obscured the social transformation that took place from the first day of the revolution. Along with the fighting the workers took over immediate control of the country. So complete was their mastery of production that large bodies of men, dispersed over wide areas, could exercise their control with the strategy of a general deploying troops, and yet with the flexibility of a single craftsman guiding his tools. The decision to carry out a general strike was not decreed by any center. Simultaneously and spontaneously in all industrial areas of the country, the decision not to work was taken, and the strike organized itself immediately according to the objective needs of the revolutionary forces. On the initiative of the Workers Councils in each plant, it was possible to come to a general decision, immediately acceptable to all, as to who should work and who should not work, where the goods produced should go and where they should not go. No central plan was needed. The plan was within each individual factory. General strikes have played a decisive role in bringing down governments in every modern revolution, but never before has the general been initiated and controlled so completely by the particular. It was not merely unity against the common enemy which made this cohesion possible. The strike, as well as the whole course of the revolution, demonstrated how deep were its roots in the mastery over production and social processes, which is the natural and acquired power of modern workers.

## PRODUCTION FOR USE

All great revolutions have obtained arms from soldiers who joined the revolution, and by taking them from the police and the arsenals of the state. In this the Hungarian Revolution was no exception. The difference is that in Hungary, despite the fact that the whole army came over to the revolution, the Workers Councils proceeded immediately to manufacture their own arms. The decision was immediately taken that these newly-produced arms should be distributed to the striking workers in other industries who were to withdraw themselves into an army of defense. Production for use was for them not a theory but an automatic procedure from the moment they began to govern themselves.

At a certain stage the Miners' Councils decided to work in order to keep the mines from flooding. At another, they informed the Kadar government precisely how much they would produce in exchange for precise political concessions. At the same time they opened out to all a vision of the future by stating boldly and confidently that once all their political demands were realized, they would produce at a rate that would astonish the world. Thus they established that the secret of higher productivity is self-government in production.

Previous revolutions have concentrated on the seizure of political power and only afterwards faced the problems of organizing production according to new procedures and methods. The great lesson of the years 1923-1956 has been this, that degradation in production relations results in the degradation of political relations and from there to the degradation of all relations in society. The Hungarian Revolution has reversed this process. As a result of the stage reached by modern industry and its experience under the bureaucratic leadership of the Party and its Plan, the revolution from the very beginning seized power in the process of production and from there organized the political power.

The Workers Councils did not look to governments to carry out their demands. In the Hungarian Revolution the Workers Councils not only released the political prisoners, as in all revolutions. They immediately rehired them at their old plants without loss of pay. Even while they were demanding that the government abolish the system of norms and quotas, they were themselves establishing how much work should be done and by whom, in accordance with what was needed. They demanded increases in wages, but they assumed the responsibility not only for paying wages but for

increasing them by 10%. From the moment that they took the apparatus of industry under their control, they began to tear off the veils which hide the essential simplicity of the modern economy.

## GOVERNMENT BY THE PEOPLE

The parties, the administrators and the planners have claimed always that without them society will collapse into anarchy and chaos. The Workers Councils recognized the need for an official center and for a head of state. Early in the revolution, because they believed Nagy to have the confidence of the people, they proposed that he assume the national leadership. But the Councils finished once and for all with the delegation of powers to a center while the population retreats into passive obedience. Thus the Workers Councils and the Nagy government were not a dual power in the classical sense of that phrase. The Nagy government proposed to legalize the revolutionary Councils by incorporating them into the existing administration. The Workers Councils made it clear, in reply, that they were the legal administration, and that the power to legalize, incorporate, indeed dis-establish an official center, rested with them. They drew no distinction between the work of production and the work of government. They decided who should occupy government posts, who should be dismissed, which ministries should be retained, which should be dissolved.

Everyone knows that the revolution attacked without mercy the infamous Stalinist secret police. But people have not concerned themselves with the far more important judicial actions of the Workers Councils. It is traditional with revolutions to place on trial those members of the old regime whom popular opinion holds most responsible for its crimes. In the last twenty-five years, however, the trials of political enemies and vengeance against them have become inseparable in the public mind from the brutalities of the totalitarian and imperialistic states. Conscious that they represented a new social order, and never forgetting, in their own words, **why** they were fighting, the Hungarian revolutionaries renounced terror and vengeance. Characteristically they carried out their judicial functions within the framework of the plant itself. The Councils constituted themselves into courts to discuss, one by one, the directors of the plant, the trade union officials, and the party officials, to decide which should be expelled from the plant and which allowed to remain. They dissolved and destroyed the records of the personnel departments

which had become, as in plants the world over, centers of blacklisting and spying.

#### THE END OF THE POLITICAL PARTY

One of the greatest achievements of the Hungarian Revolution was to destroy once and for all the legend that the working class cannot act successfully except under the leadership of a political party. It did all that it did precisely because it was not under the leadership of a political party. If a political party had existed to lead the revolution, that political party would have led the revolution to disaster, as it has led every revolution to disaster during the last thirty years. There was leadership on all sides, but there was no party leading it. No party in the world would have dared to lead the country into a counter-attack in the face of thousands of Russian tanks. Nothing but an organization in close contact with the working class population in the factory, and which therefore knew and felt the strength of the population at every stage, could have dared to begin the battle a second time. Still later, after the military battle had been lost, no organization except Workers Councils would have dared to start a general strike and carry it on for five weeks, unquestionably the most astonishing event in the whole history of revolutionary struggles.

In these unprecedented examples of leadership the Workers Councils put an end to the foolish dreams, disasters, and despair which have attended all those who, since 1923, have placed the hope for socialism in the elite party, whether Communist or Social-Democrat. The political party, as such, whatever type it is, constitutes essentially a separation of the organizing intellectuals and workers with an instinct for leadership, from the masses as force and motive power. As long as the real centers of administration were the private capitalists in their various spheres, the apparatus of government was relatively simple. Political parties as such could represent the opposing classes and in their conflicts with one another and their bids for popular support, clarify the choices before society, and educate the population as a whole. But with the growth of large scale production, the state apparatus controls the national economy in fact, and whichever party comes to power inherits and becomes the agent of an existing apparatus.

Control over production means first and foremost control over the workers, and the modern state can function only if the decisive trade unions are incor-

porated into it, or are prepared at critical moments to submit to it. The powerful labor organizations, therefore, by their very existence, must suppress those creative energies which the reconstitution of society demands from the mass of the people. The Workers Councils in Hungary instructed the workers to put aside party affiliations and elect their delegates according to their judgment of them as workers in the plant. At the same time no worker was discriminated against either in his work or in his election to the Workers Councils because of his party affiliations. The traditional political parties take their political differences into the factories, breaking the unity of the workers according to these divisions. They make of individual workers representatives of a political line, corrupting relations between people by transforming them into relations of political rivalry. Once the powers of government were with the shop floor organizations, the objective relations of the labor process provided all the discipline required. On the basis of that objective discipline, the widest variety of views and idiosyncracies could not only be tolerated but welcomed.

So confident were the Workers Councils that the workers' mastery over production would be decisive in the solution of all important questions, that they proposed a great Party of the Revolution. This was to include all who had taken part in the revolution, the clerical and petty-bourgeois Right, former members of the Small Proprietors Party, Social-Democrats and Communists. Before these and other proposals could be worked out and tried, the Russian tanks suppressed the revolution.

Once the Hungarian people erupted spontaneously, the rest followed with an organic necessity and a completeness of self-organization that distinguishes this revolution from all previous revolutions and marks it as specifically a revolution of the middle of the Twentieth Century. So obviously were the Workers Councils the natural and logical alternative to the totalitarian state, that the traditional demand for a Constituent Assembly or Convention to create a new form of government, was not even raised. So deep is the consciousness in modern people that organization of production is the basis of society, that the whole population mobilized itself around the Workers Councils as the natural government.

It is not excluded that in their search for ways and means to organize a new state, political parties might

have been formed. But with the state founded on Workers Councils, no political parties could assume the powers, suppress the people, or make the mischief that we have seen from all of them in the last thirty years.

#### WORKERS AND INTELLIGENTSIA

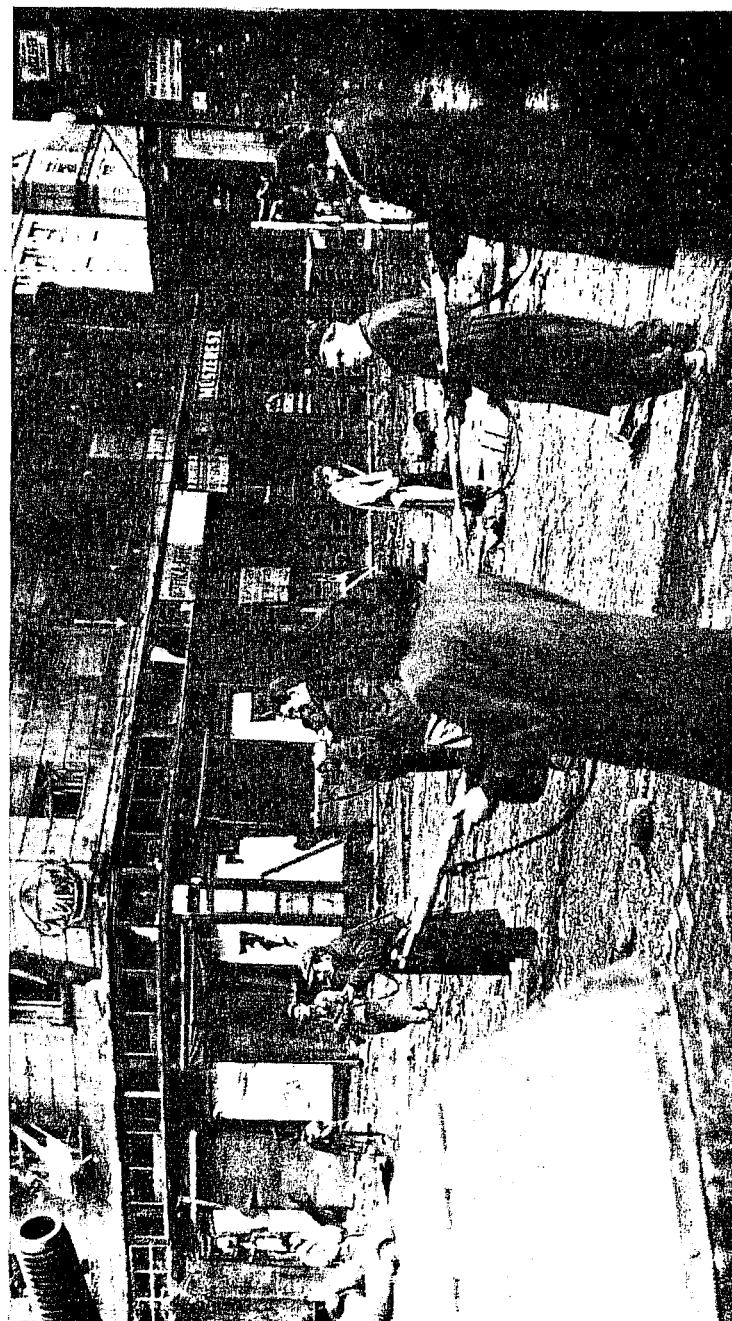
Capitalism has created and steadily deepened the gulf between workers and the intelligentsia (technicians and intellectuals). These have been incorporated by capitalism into the directing apparatus of industry and the state. There they administer and discipline the working population. The Hungarian workers, conscious that technicians are part of the labor process, gave to technicians and intellectuals their place on the Workers Councils. The majority on the Councils were fittingly production workers, who constitute the majority in the plant itself. But in these all-inclusive Workers Councils, the technician could be functionally related to the activities and attitudes of the plant community, instead of being isolated from the mass of the people, as he is on both sides of the Iron Curtain today.

In previous revolutions, particularly the Russian, it was necessary to state and restate and underline the power of the working class. The very emphasis testified to the weakness of the proletariat in the social structure of the nation. The modern world has understood, after three decades of bitter experience, that the socialist revolution is a national revolution. Recognized at home and abroad as the leader of the nation, the Hungarian workers called for the establishment of "Workers Councils in every branch of the national activity." Thus not only white collar workers in offices, but all government employees, including the police, should have their own Councils.

The Hungarian intellectuals heroically defied Stalinism. Yet even after the revolution began, all that they could demand was the democratization of the Party and the government, freedom of speech, honesty in placing the economic situation before the people, Nagy in power, etc. Within a week they had come to the conclusion that the Workers Councils should form the government of the country with Zoltan Kodaly, the composer, as president because of his great national and international reputation. It was the Hungarian workers and not they who showed the form for the new society.

#### THE FARMERS AND THE WORKERS

The Hungarian peasants showed how far society has progressed in the last 30 years. They broke up the collective farms which were in reality factories in the



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field, owned and run by the State, the Party, and the Plan. But at the same time they immediately organized themselves to establish contact with the workers and others in the towns on the basis of social need. They organized their trucks to take them food, did not wait to be paid but went back to the countryside to bring in new loads, risking their lives to do so.

So confident were they that the only power against the totalitarian state was the workers, that the peasants did not wait to see if the workers would guarantee them the land before committing themselves to the active support of the Workers Councils. What revolutionary governments have usually striven in vain to win, the confidence of the peasants, was here achieved in reverse—the peasant took all risks in order to show his confidence in the worker.

These objectively developed relations of cooperation have now passed into the subjective personality of people, their instinctive responses and the way they act. Released from the fear that art and literature must serve only politics, sensing all around them the expansion of human needs, human capacities, and cooperation, the Hungarian people created twenty-five new newspapers overnight, the older artists and the younger talents pouring out news, articles, stories, and poems, in a flood-tide of artistic energy.

#### WORKERS AND FOREIGN AFFAIRS

The Hungarian Workers Councils not only made appeals to the Russian troops to cease fire and go home. They entered into negotiations and made direct arrangements with Russian commanders to retire. At least one Council not only negotiated the removal of a garrison of Russian troops but arranged for it to be supplied with food. This was not just fraternization. It was the assumption of responsibility by the Workers Councils for foreign affairs. The simplicity with which the negotiations were carried out reflects the education which the post-war world has received in the futile bickering and cynical propagandizing of cease-fire conferences in Korea, Big Four meetings in London and Paris, and Big Two meetings in Geneva. Russian troops mutinied and deserted to fight under the command of the Hungarian Councils. When the hospital at Debrecen radioed its needs for iron lungs, the Workers Councils at Miskolc undertook to get these from West Germany and by radio organized the landing of the lung-bearing plane at the Debrecen airport. The Hungarian Revolution transcended that combination of threats, snarls, lies, hypocrisy,



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and brutality which today appear under the headlines of foreign affairs.

The Hungarian people welcomed such medical aid and supplies as they received from abroad. But, as they explained to their Czech brothers, it was not assistance or charity which they needed as much as understanding by the world that they fought not only for themselves but for Europe. To a world which is constantly being offered bribes of economic aid and promises of a higher standard of living, these words ring with a new morality. The Hungarian people were not begging for handouts from the Romanian, Serb, or Slovak workers. They wanted them to join in the common struggle for a new society.

The neutrality which the Hungarian people demanded was not the neutrality of a Switzerland. The revolution had in fact begun by a mass demonstration of solidarity with the Poles. They did not want their country to be the battleground of the struggle between America and Russia for mastery of the world, but they themselves were prepared to lay down their lives in the struggle to build a new society, side by side with the other peoples of Europe on both West and East.

The urgent appeals for arms in the final days of the military battle, the voices fading from the radio with cries for help, must be seen against this awareness by the Hungarian population that they were in the forefront of a world movement to build a new civilization, as profoundly different from American materialism as from Russian totalitarianism. Such confidence in the ideals and aims by which men live can come in the modern world only from a material foundation. The material foundation of the Hungarian workers was their natural and acquired capacity to organize production, and their experience of the centralized Plan and the whole bureaucratic organization which has reached its ultimate in the One-Party State but which is characteristic of modern society the world over.

Helpless before this new civilization, so weak in logistics but so powerful in appeal to the peoples of the world, aware that it is just below the surface in all Europe and is ready to destroy both American and Russian imperialism, the Western Powers hesitated for a moment and then turned their vast propaganda machine to one single aim, to transform the content of the Hungarian Revolution into a problem of refugees. The poor, the needy, the supplicating, the weak, and helpless. these the American Welfare State can deal with by

charity and red tape. Thus, as in the East, Russia applied herself to the systematic destruction of the Workers Councils by deportation to labor camps, the American government in the West began the break-up by organizing refugee camps. The Hungarian people have not been deceived by this characteristic American maneuver. The failure of the Hungarian Revolution they have placed squarely at the door of both the Russian and the American governments.

#### THE VICTORY WAS COMPLETE

The complete withdrawal of the Russian troops from all Hungary was on the surface a national demand. But in reality, that is, in the concrete circumstances, the whole population realized that the Russian tanks were the only force inside the country able to crush the Workers Councils. To speak of a civil war between Right and Left in Hungary once the Russian troops had left, in the classical style of national revolutions, is to misunderstand completely the stage to which the mastery of production by the workers has reached in modern society and the understanding of this by the whole population.

In the Hungarian Revolution there was no divorce between immediate objectives and ultimate aims, between instinctive action and conscious purpose. Working, thinking, fighting, bleeding Hungary, never for a moment forgot that it was incubating a new society, not only for Hungary but for all mankind. In the midst of the organization of battle, the Workers Councils organized political discussions not only of the position of the particular plant in relation to the total struggle, but of the aims which the councils should achieve. They carried on incessant political activity to root out the political and organizational remnants of the old regime and work out new politics. They knew that the danger to the Workers Councils lay, not in the middle classes outside the factory, but from the state, the Communist Party, and the trade union bureaucrats, all trying to remove the power from the shop floor. At the very beginning of the revolution, the Gero government, recognizing that the party and the unions had collapsed, called upon the party cadres in the plants to form councils and mobilize them against the revolutionary population in the streets. The workers in the streets returned to the factories, threw out the party cadres and re-elected their own Councils on the shop floor. Then they issued the announcement, "We have been elected by the workers and not by the government."

was the most fossilized and bureaucratic of all the organizations which made up the Stalinist system.

#### THE WORKERS TAKE OVER

But it was not a question merely of getting rid of Stalinists, Stalinist bureaucrats, labor bureaucrats, and their persecution of the ranks. The economic life of the country had to go on, and the Workers Councils proceeded to assume responsibility for this by completely discarding the State Plan except as a general guide, and themselves carrying out the negotiations from factory to factory. While Khrushchev turns the Russian economy upside down in a desperate search for means to make it viable, and theoretical men of good-will break their heads in the search for plan without bureaucracy, the Polish workers simply took over the plants where they had worked all their lives. That always will be the only way to organize a national economy.

It was such councils of Polish workers which organized the Poznan revolt. It was these same Workers Councils which mobilized themselves in the plants over the October 19 weekend, and stood ready with arms in hand to support Gomulka and the Central Committee of the Polish Party in their defiance of Khrushchev.

The Russians retreated. Gomulka is in power. All visitors report absence of fear among the Polish people, the lively discussions going on, and the readiness on the part of all to discuss freely with foreigners. That all this exists is due to the power which the Workers Councils exercise inside the plant. The central problem, however, remains. How is the economy, reduced to such chaos by the Party and the Plan, to be put on its feet again? Gomulka faces the insoluble problem which will lead inevitably either to the instituting of a Government of Workers Councils or once more to a plain and open domination by Russia.

With all the good-will in the world and despite the dismissal of bureaucrats, Poland remains a country run by the Party but this time without any Plan, and the Plan is inseparable from the elite party. That is how the contemporary Polish State was built, and slowly the whole bureaucratic formation is re-asserting itself. Gomulka stands half-way, with a working class in action in many spheres but above it a bureaucracy which is recovering its strength and is determined to re-assert itself, whether under Gomulka or any other leader. This is of extreme importance, for the Polish Communist Party, under the pressure of the people and the

workers, did try to reform itself. It failed, as all reforms of totalitarian states are bound to fail.

That is the Poland of Gomulka today. Back to Stalinism or forward to the revolution of the Polish workers for socialism, that is to say, the Government of Workers Councils.

There are some (and they even call themselves Marxists) who admit the creative power of the Hungarian Revolution, but prophesied for it failure and degeneration, even if it had not been crushed by Russian tanks. The road that Poland is traveling so rapidly should instruct them that it is the half-hearted attack on the Party and the Plan which produces degeneration. Their total destruction is the only guarantee of a future. Workers Councils in every department of the national activity, a Government of Workers Councils, are not ends in themselves. They are means to an end. They will result in one procedure in one country, and other procedures in other countries. They neither automatically reject, nor automatically include democratic elections on a territorial or industrial basis; or both combined; or each for a period of trial. They would be one thing in Hungary, something else in the United States, and something else again in Britain or Japan. But under all circumstances they would be the political form in which the great masses of the people would be able to bring their energies to fulfill their destiny, in accordance with their economic structure, their past history, and their consciousness of themselves.

## II. THE WHOLE WORLD

This is the fundamental political question of the day: The Government of Workers Councils, which sprang so fully and completely from the revolutionary crisis of Hungary, was it only a historical accident, peculiar to totalitarianism, or is it the road of the future for all society? Actually, in the United States, with the most advanced technology in the world, there exists more than in any other country the framework and forces for a Government of Workers Councils. The outside world has been bluffed and bamboozled by American propaganda and American movies. Politically-minded people outside the United States, scanning the American social horizon, bewail the absence of a mass socialist party and a politically-indoctrinated union movement. American intellectuals and radicals do the same. They are constantly looking for political parties, political allegiances, and political slogans of the old type. They find none because the American workers are looking for none. The struggle in America is between management, supervision, and the union bureaucrats on the one side and the shop floor organizations on the other. If any one national struggle can be pin-pointed as the one on which the future fate of the world depends, it is this struggle, and the American workers hold all the cards.

### *THE UNITED STATES*

In 1955 Walter Reuther won, and made all preparations to celebrate, one of his usual great victories—the Guaranteed Annual Wage. The press was summoned, the television cameras were in position, when suddenly a general strike of the Ford and General Motors workers exploded from coast to coast. It was a strike against Reuther and the union. The slogan of the strike in plant after plant bore the extremely modest title of “local grievances.” The great celebration of the Guaranteed Annual Wage ended with a whimper. The local managements made such terms with the workers as they could. The result of the nation-wide engagement was a draw, the battle beginning again the very next day.

Only one more example need be given here. In the U. S. Rubber Plant in Detroit during the 16 months prior to April 1956, there were on the average two wild-cat stoppages a week. The Rubber Union is powerless to stop them.

That is the abiding situation in thousands of plants all over the United States. It is no secret. Since the war over a hundred studies by industrial psychologists have appeared, seeking in vain to find some means of controlling and disciplining these workers. Pension plans, guaranteed annual wage, wage increases, sick benefits, all these the unions win, promising in return to discipline the working class, i.e., to force it to submit to the schedules of production as planned by the employers. The only result has been to discredit the union leadership and to range it definitely with management and supervision as one of the enemies of the working class.

The trade union apparatus acts as the bodyguard of capital. Conducting all negotiations with management, processing all grievances through its elaborate grievance procedure, it sits at the bargaining table in a hierarchy of posts parallel at every level with that of management. In an American plant the shop steward or the committeeman represents not the workers, but the union apparatus. He is bound by the elaborate contract governing all issues of production which the union leadership signs in return for wage increases, pension plans, etc. The committeeman is responsible to the union and to management for the carrying out of this contract. The result is that in the vast majority of issues involving actual methods of work, the workers have learned to bypass the union and utilize their own knowledge of production and of the organic weakness of management to gain their ends.

Under the conditions of modern industry, production holds no mystery for the workers. Cooperation rather than competition is in the nature of the work itself. Because of the rhythm which the worker has developed in himself and in the group with which he is working, he is able to devise and perfect a work and social schedule of his own. The workers decide the pace of the line or bring it to a stop by ways and means which it is impossible for supervision to detect. This schedule gets the work done, but it also creates free time for rest, relaxation around the plant, looking over different jobs and new machines, and visiting friends. Management knows that the workers are doing all this,

but where the workers in a plant are powerfully organized, it stays out of their way as much as possible. The situation is too delicate. Any issue, however slight, may cause an explosion.

It is freedom to organize their work as they please, combined with all sorts of details, such as smoking on the job, the condition of the rest room, not working when it is too hot, which pass under the title of "local grievances." What the phrase really signifies in the large American plants is the determination of workers to run the plants to suit themselves and not the management.

Naturally, the workers, even when solidly organized, do not have it all their own way. Management counter-attacks at every opportunity. The result is that production, the most important business of society, is at the mercy of this gigantic, disruptive, and unceasing conflict. Every year in the automobile plants there is a period when the models are changed. At this time the real chaos of American production and its root cause become patent. Plans and new machinery which have been elaborated for months in the offices are introduced. Supervision seizes the opportunity to try to restore its damaged authority. The foreman places workers where he wishes, being concerned chiefly with breaking up old groups and reorganizing the plant, not for production but for discipline. The result is disorganization, turmoil, and chaos (and production of cars that auto workers know better than to buy), until the workers, for their own comfort and ease of work, get together and restore some order into the plant.

The much-lauded know-how of American management is a myth, and the superiority of American management is due entirely to the heavy investment in capital and the order which American workers introduce into the plant to suit themselves. When the plans for new machinery are introduced into the plant, they cannot be applied at all unless the workers take them in charge and apply them in the way they think best. Production in a modern plant is based upon cooperation, not upon authority, and cooperation is essentially a problem of human relations. The strategy and tactics of the workers spring from the fact that all productivity and progress in the plant depend upon them.

#### WHAT WILDCATS SIGNIFY

The realities of life inside the American factory drive relentlessly to one overpowering conclusion. This conclusion is that management and supervision have

now become as much an anachronism as a feudal landlord or a slave driver on a cotton plantation. Management, supervision, foremen are the chief source of disorder and disruption in production. Millions of American workers know that if they were left to themselves to organize the plants in their own way, they would work out their own schedules of production, lessen their hours, raise production to undreamed of heights, enormously increase their own knowledge and capacity, and have a wonderful time in the plant. They know that they can arrange work for women in relation to their special skills and household duties, find suitable tasks for the aged or the handicapped, work hard when it is required and take it easy at other times. That is precisely what has always been understood to be socialist relations of production. American workers, like workers everywhere, are not dominated by the desire not to work. But the cooperation and the discipline that have been instilled into them by large scale machinery have been turned into bitterness and frustration by the capitalist nature of production.

For the time being, their energies and powers are for the most part used in resistance, either in the plant or by walking out on the slightest excuse—the wildcat strike. Wildcats are a constant defiance and rejection of the capitalist system and of the union bureaucracy which has tied its fortunes to capitalism. Nothing that management or the union does can stop them. Wildcats are the ever-present reminder of what the American workers think of the economic system under which they live.

Unable to control the workers, either in its own name or through the union, management in the United States has embarked on a huge program of automation. As if driven by devils, the large corporations have begun to invest billions in new equipment, frantically scrapping still useful machinery, headlining each new expansion with speeches about progress. At the same time thousands are being laid off and those still in the shop are working three and four days a week, building new models, while the just completed models are still resting unsold and rusting in dealer lots. In the auto industry the production schedules see-saw back and forth like the front lines of a battle, with management obviously in the grip of forces beyond its control.

This unending conflict with management, the constant uncertainty of life, the futility of the union, all are forcing millions of American workers, and the auto

workers in particular, to positive perspectives which bypass political parties and touch the very heart of American society:

1) That the decisions on scheduling of production as a whole, when there should be model changeovers, and whether or not there should be, whether or not new equipment should be introduced and when, these vital decisions can no longer be left to management. Only the workers can and must organize this.

2) That the only way to keep everybody at work is for everything to be produced for use and not for the market.

#### AUTOMATION AND THE TOTAL CRISIS

Already grappling with these perspectives, American workers could hardly be expected to take seriously the official view that today's economic crisis is an ordinary commercial crisis. Their whole past experience has taught them that, precipitated by the unending conflict in production between management and the workers, a new stage of technology is emerging—automation.

Automation as a stage in technology is still young. While it has existed in a few specific industries for some time, it is only in the 1950s that it has begun to dominate American industry and all forms of economic organization, even penetrating into the crafts. So gradual has been its invasion that only now is the general public beginning to suspect the revolution in all aspects of human life that automation compels.

What is coming to an end is the stage of mass production by assembly line workers. The assembly line is itself the last major barrier to automation in industry. The essence of the assembly line is that it creates a demand for manual dexterity but at the same time organizes and controls this dexterity to the highest degree by means of the belt. The essence of automation is that it replaces manual dexterity altogether by electronic controls. Electronics is now taking the place of the human being in bringing together and controlling hydraulics, pneumatics, and mechanics.

Only a few decades ago assembly line production put thousands and thousands of workers under a single roof and thus created the conditions for the new mass organization of the industrial union. In sheer self-defense the assembly line workers created the CIO to protect the human being from being completely destroyed by the machine. Without this intervention by

the workers, the assembly line under the control of capitalism continues its relentless momentum, independent of all human considerations as to the weariness of the person or his physical and other needs. But today the industrial union is as helpless in the face of automation as the assembly line method of production itself.

In general, automation started with industries dealing in liquids and chemicals, e.g., petroleum, soda pop, milk, beer, because in such industries the materials are homogeneous and can flow, and production is chiefly a process of heat, chemicals, piping, and bottling. Today the oil refinery and the electricity supply industry are the closest to being completely automated. From there automation moved to the mills because here again raw metals needed large containers and the application of heat and chemicals for their refining. The crucial stage was reached in the 1950s when automation became firmly established in the industries fabricating metals. This in the United States means the auto industry first and foremost, and it was in the auto industry that the term "automation" came into being to describe the linking of machine tools by electronic controls. The next stage of its invasion is in the fabrication of fabrics, e.g., rubber and textiles. Because these materials are flexible, they require more manual dexterity and therefore a higher technique before automation can take over.

Automation is now moving rapidly from one American industry to another, and within each industry from partial to more complete automation. Its technical basis was already being created during World War II, but the expansion of production during the war and pent-up shortages delayed its introduction on a wide scale in the immediate postwar years. Today, however, there is no barrier to automation. It is even invading such fields as tooling where it was once believed that it would be uneconomical. Already it is possible to send blueprints by teletype from one city to another, a tracing tape attached to the machine reproducing the tool according to given specifications on the blueprint.

Up to now every new stage in technology has been the basis for an expansion in the needs of manpower. After each crisis in which the old means of production were scrapped, the labor force expanded. Automation is that stage of technology which under capitalism for the first time will not create a need for more manpower regardless of the mass of products produced. Now soci-

ety faces for the first time what Karl Marx called "putting the majority of the population on the shelf." In a particular plant employing 5000, only 500 or 10% will be needed in five years to produce as much as is now produced by the 5000. The percentage will vary from industry to industry and the elimination of manpower will come sooner in some industries than in others. But what is going to happen to the 90%? Obviously no ordinary solution is possible.

When automation hit the auto industry in the 1950s, it not only hit the industry on which one out of every six jobs in the United States depends directly or indirectly. It also hit hundreds of thousands of workers whose daily life inside the shop for the last twenty years has centered around a battle with management for control over the machine. Hence while the economists and politicians of government, industry, and the union have been babbling about wages, pensions, and profits, every new machine has been greeted by auto workers and their families with fundamental questions about who should control production. Today's crisis is driving them to expand the very meaning of that control.

Up to now the whole life of the majority of the population has been geared to work. To the working man working and living have been one and the same. Now he finds that as a result of automation work is being taken away from him and he feels that he is being robbed not only of what enables him to live but of his very existence as a human being. Capitalism itself has forced the majority of the population into the position where they have no other role than that of workers. Now, with automation, capitalism is robbing the majority of the population of the only role they have been permitted.

When millions of young people have no idea whether they will ever have a job and lie in bed half the day because they don't know what to do with themselves, that is a system committing suicide. When the majority of the population has no place to work and can only look forward to more unemployment, that is the total collapse of a society.

That is the crisis which American workers foresee and seek to forestall. No worker is against automation as such. He recognizes that automation creates the possibility of such a development of the productive forces that no one anywhere need ever live in want again.

That means more to workers than it means to anyone else. But at the same time automation is forcing every worker to re-examine the very manner of his life as a human being simply in order to answer the question of how he shall exist at all.

The CIO is completely incapable of rising to this new situation. It originated in the period when production was being expanded by the expansion of manpower. At its best it only defended the workers from the speed of the line, leaving all decisions as to the scheduling and control of production to the capitalists. Today when capitalist control of automation is threatening the collapse of society, the CIO continues to demand a share with the capitalists in the control over the workers, leaving to the capitalists the right to schedule and control total production.

It is from the growing realization that society faces total collapse that has arisen the determination of American workers to take the control of total production away from the capitalists and into their own hands. Up to now American workers have only organized to defend themselves from the machine inside the individual factories. Now, in defense of all society, they are being driven to organize themselves to regulate total production.

Up to now the concept of who governs society has been based on the idea that different parties and groupings battle with one another over who should control the workers. But control by the workers of production schedules and of the process of production inside society means that government must originate inside the plant. Thus automation creates the conditions for abolishing all previous distinctions between political control and economic control. No longer is it possible to think only in terms of changing leaders or parties. Production as a whole can only be controlled by the producers as a whole in their shop floor organizations. Thus, far more than in any other country, the automation of industry in the United States is creating the actual conditions for a Government of Workers Councils.

#### THE AMERICAN WORKERS' WAY

The workers do not pose the perspective of their control as a conscious program. But it is inherent in all their actions and in the discussions they hold among themselves. Only people consumed with hate and fear of socialism can believe that the Hungarian workers did the things that they did on the spur of the moment;

they could act as they did only because they had for years meditated upon and discussed among themselves how they wanted production to be organized and society to be run. The Depression made everybody in the United States recognize the capitalist economy as a system functioning according to laws which were outside the control of human beings. In that sense, political economy first came into existence in the United States with the Depression. But with the disorder of automation twenty-five years later, this fatalistic view of the laws of production has been turned on its head. In its place there has grown up the conviction that it is the present organizers of production, the state and management, who cannot control production but are controlled by it. They, the workers, on the other hand, have the ability to control not only individual machines but the whole process, method, and tempo, by means of which machinery is to be developed and put into use. They have not been taught this by any political elite. They have learned it from experience. It is from there that they begin to visualize a new society.

Just as the Hungarian upheaval took all the political pundits and mourners by surprise, so the future course of American society will overwhelm them. All the dynamic energy of American society, its ruthlessness, its freedom from traditional restraints, its social audacity (which was ready to attempt Prohibition by legislation), these national characteristics are now concentrated in the American working class far more than in any other section of society. But among the workers, the American genius is united, disciplined, and organized by the very mechanism of modern production itself. All analyses and perspectives of American society as a whole (and we shall go into that later) must begin from the American working class. The most astonishing feature of it is that, undominated by any organized philosophy of life (the American historians having failed most conspicuously to create any); indifferent to theories of socialism and Communism and the blandishments of political theorists; profoundly disillusioned with unionism—it has created the basis of a philosophy of life of its own. This is that it can manage production, that to do so is its inalienable right, that the secret of a happy life is mastery over machinery and production, and that the rest can be easily managed.

American workers are not certain of their ultimate aims, nor of the end towards which they are heading. They are indifferent to Socialist Parties or Communist

Parties in the traditional sense, but under the pressure of a crisis the idea of Workers Councils or a Government of Workers Councils will not be in the slightest degree alien to them.

It is obvious that the working class nowhere is so organized as to win a continuous series of victories. According to the structure of the plant, the strength of its traditions, the relation of the industry to other industries, and various other considerations, the workers are often defeated, and on occasions even routed. They sometimes win great victories. What can be stated categorically is that the struggle is continuous and from the very organization of production, the working class, especially in large and highly organized plants, holds its own and on the whole continuously captures positions from management and supervision. Each side, whenever it thinks it has the possibility of pushing the enemy back, advances to the attack. One thing, however, is certain. The accounts of wage increases and various other arrangements which get into the press as a solution to any particular open engagement, paint no true picture of the actual situation in any plant or industry. In reality, as soon as the agreement is signed, each side goes back into the plant and the struggle begins all over again irrespective of agreements, and related solely to the particular strength of the combatants at any particular time.

There is no need to make prophecies. But in all the blindness, the violence, confusion, and despair of modern American society, it should be obvious that the same forces which produced the Workers Councils in Hungary not only exist but are infinitely more developed, infinitely more powerful in the United States of America, and for the simple reason that these forces and ideas are the product of capitalism itself.

### RUSSIA

Economic relations are relations between people: who tells whom what to do and how to do it. Property relations are relations between people and things: who owns what; land, factories, mines, ships, etc. These are basic definitions in the science of political economy as elaborated by Marx and Engels. But for many years, carried away by the promises of the Plan, the majority of Marxists have forgotten this. That is to say, they forgot who was telling whom what to do and how to do it in the plant. No one contributed to this more than Leon Trotsky, whose analysis of Russia was based upon



the extremely simple and extremely false thesis that state ownership of property equals workers' state.

This may sound like mere theorizing. In reality, it is the concentrated expression of the facts of life embracing hundreds of millions of people. What is the relation between the workers in Russia and the Planners and supervisors? This, the decisive question, is the last question that the theorists, the analysts, the leftists of all sorts, ever ask. For years they have concerned themselves, exhausted themselves, with the Party, the Plan, the statistics of production, the absence of political democracy. Now they have plunged into de-Stalinization, collective leadership (true or false), the decentralization of industry by Khrushchev, and whether the intellectuals and the youth have real freedom to speak or only moderate freedom or none at all. The Hungarian Revolution has taught them nothing. Important as all these questions are, they are subordinate to the one question which has now been posed by the events in Hungary and in Poland. Has large scale industry in Russia created a working class which possesses the mastery over production which resulted in a Government of Workers Councils in Hungary? Are workers in Russia united, disciplined, and organized by production itself in such a way that they have essentially the same attitude to management as the workers in the United States? Have workers in Russia created shop floor organizations which control production and discipline management in much the same way as American workers? That is not everything but everything begins from there. And the answer without a shadow of a doubt is yes.

Here is the proof from the mouths of the Russian rulers themselves. The state multiplies bars and barriers between the Russian people and the outside, but periodically the rulers have to speak to one another in public, and although they are the most expert practitioners in the world at double-talk, the truth about the situation in the Russian plants comes out clearly. This is Khrushchev at the Twentieth Congress of the Russian Communist Party on February 4th, 1956, reporting for the Central Committee:

It must be pointed out that there is a great deal of disorder and confusion in the system of wages and rate-fixing. Ministries and other bodies, and the trade unions have not taken up these matters in the way they should; they have neglected them. Cases of wage leveling are not uncommon. On the



France 1968: Renault

other hand, payment for the same type of work sometimes differs between various bodies, and even within a single body. Alongside the low paid workers there exists a category of workers, a small one it is true, in whose wages unjustified excesses are tolerated.

Though this is Greek to a Russian expert like Isaac Deutscher, any worker knows what that means. The planners and management plan the quotas for piece-work, which is the system that the Russians are using in large scale industry. Just as in the United States, they divide workers into different categories so as to create rivalry and antagonisms between them. But the workers make a wreck of this Plan by organizing the work in such a way that all of them in a particular plant get more or less the same wages. Thus, though the planners plan wages on a national scale, wages vary not only from region to region but from plant to plant. Why? Obviously because the strength of the workers' shop floor organization in one plant is different from that in another. Sometimes, it seems, inside a single plant, the workers in one department are so powerfully organized, that is to say, have such an understanding among themselves, that they push up the wages above the general level of the plant.

There is no need for these shop floor organizations to be formally organized. As soon as the men in a department know one another and go through the work together, they are organized. The planners and management have one Plan, and the workers have their own, and in any such conflict, though the managers post one soldier with a loaded rifle at every ten paces in the plant, they cannot make the workers do what they do not want to do. At the beginning of the industrialization of Russia, Stalin could uproot millions of backward peasants, plant them in the factories and the cities, and drive them like cattle by the most brutal methods. Today in the large modern factories that is impossible. The struggle is permanent and, as in the United States, the workers hold the winning cards.

We have stated categorically that in the United States, management, foremen, and union bureaucrats, are compelled to recognize the power of the workers on the shop floor, and wherever the workers are well organized, management and supervision have learned to leave them alone. If they attempt to force a well-organized body of workers to do this or that, the plant can be thrown into disorder and work goes to pieces.



Italy 1969: Fiat

The situation is the same in Russian industry and could not be otherwise. Khrushchev reports to the Party Congress:

#### THE TRADE UNIONS KEEP SILENT

The main thing our Trade Unions organizations, including the U. S. S. R. Central Council of Trade Unions, lack is militancy in their work, creative fervour, incisiveness, adherence to principle, and initiative in raising fundamental, vitally important questions—whether they be measures for increasing labor productivity, or, say, questions relating to wages, house construction, or catering to the every day needs of the workers or other employees. Collective agreements are concluded at every enterprise, but often enough they are not carried out, and the Trade Unions keep silent, as though everything were right and proper. In general, the Trade Unions no longer have disputes with industrial executives, there is peace and harmony between them. But one need not be afraid to spoil relations where the interests of our cause are concerned; at times a good wrangle is beneficial . . .

Nothing could be plainer. The planners, the management, and the union leaders (in Russia they are part of the state) make all sorts of plans and agreements about every single aspect of production. The workers make a mess of these. But everybody agrees to say nothing. Because all of them know that if they attempt seriously to discipline the workers, the end will be worse than the beginning. True of every country, this is particularly true in Russia where the penalties on the manager for not producing the quota for his plant have been extremely severe. It could be a matter of life or death or deportation to Siberia, and so as to be sure to get anything like reasonable production, managers have learned to come to some sort of understanding with the workers. It has long been reported from Russia that many managers protected their best workers when, for example, they broke the savage laws that Stalin decreed for those who came late. This, however, is something different. The vast apparatus of management and bureaucracy not only accepts the plan of the workers, but keeps its mouth shut.

How exactly do the workers break up the plans of the planners and institute their own plan? Khrushchev tells us:

Considerable over-fulfillment of such deliberately

low output quotas creates the illusion that all is well, and tends to divert workers, foremen and engineers from effective efforts to raise productivity. The present practice is to make output quotas correspond in effect to a definite wage level, and not to the technical and efficiency levels already achieved.

What a confession of failure! The planners and management decree that such and such must be the quota of production for the basic wage, and only after that quota is produced can extra wages be paid. The workers declare that the quota is too high, and though time study men (and soldiers with guns) stand over them, they demonstrate that they cannot do the work at the rate the planners have planned. Management realizes that it can do nothing about this, and in the end agrees that the quota should be lowered. Whereupon by degrees the workers step up production and soon 40% to 60% of the workers' wage is being made by producing what they swore was impossible in the first place. The sham and pretense, in fact, the gigantic lies that are hidden under a State Plan, like the State Plan of the Russian economy, are shown not only by all the foregoing, but by the key statement in Khrushchev's report: that whereas the machinery and technical organization of a factory is geared to a certain level of productivity and efficiency, which is what the planners have in their heads and put down on paper, the Russian managers dare not use this as a basis of production. The workers declare that whatever the planners plan, the starting point for the schedules of production is what they are prepared to do for so much money. Khrushchev, Bulganin, Suslov, all sang this same mournful hymn throughout the Congress. They will sing it many times before they are finished. For that is the nature of modern capitalist large scale production, and it will continue and intensify until a new system of economic relations is established, new relations between people and people, management of industry by the workers themselves on the job. Modern industry cannot be run in any other way.

This is not and cannot be a study of the Russian economy, but this much can be said. While the whole world occupied itself with the de-Stalinization speech by Khrushchev at this same Twentieth Congress, practically nobody paid any attention to the fact that in speech after speech at the Twentieth Congress, the Russian rulers admitted that long before Khrushchev spoke

of de-Stalinization, the workers in the plants had de-Stalinized themselves. Today, the press and the politicians are preoccupied with Khrushchev's plans for decentralization and whether or not the dismissed Molotov will be shot or not, just as in Hungary they were preoccupied with the intellectuals and students. The ferment among intellectuals and youth, the continuing conflict in the leadership, show that the crisis in Russia is deeper than it has ever been in that crisis-ridden country. And a solution does not depend on the amount of free speech that is granted to writers, students, and technicians. The crisis is far deeper than it ever was in Stalin's time because inside the plants of Russia there now exists this formidable working class, the most powerful in the world except for the American and in one respect far more dangerous to the ruling class than is the American. In Russia during the last fifty years there have been three great revolutions. The workers took the lead in each. Today, with the workers more powerful than ever before in their history, the coming Russian Revolution, like the revolution in Hungary, will begin with the establishment of a Government of Workers Councils, whatever it may call itself. That is the only democracy that state capitalist Russia will ever have and that it will have or perish, blown up by the antagonisms that can no longer be hidden.

#### GREAT BRITAIN

In Britain, as elsewhere, the Hungarian Revolution undoubtedly tore apart the pervading fear that totalitarianism is an all-powerful form of government able to mould a whole population to its will. But after the first rush of enthusiasm and hope among vast millions of people who have rejected capitalism, there has been a noticeable retreat among the political writers and social theorists. Their minds have so long been stuck in the cement of political parties, Welfare States, and other forms of government in which they, the economists, the organizers, the propagandists, the technicians, play the leading role, that they are unable to begin from the fact that the future of society is with the Government of the Workers Councils.

Britain is supposed to be the great model of Parliamentary Democracy and the Welfare State. Yet long before the Hungarian Revolution, the working class had created on the shop floor a nation-wide organization which is beyond all question the most powerful social force in the country. This is the celebrated Shop Stew-

ards Movement. Despite the great reputation which this movement enjoys among the workers of the world, its role in British industry and politics is little understood outside Britain. Even many British people have only vague ideas about Shop Stewards, except of course those who have to deal with these organizations.

It is the Shop Stewards Movement which has brought and maintains order in British industry. This cannot be better expressed than it was in the introduction to a document (*State Capitalism and World Revolution*. See Appendix.) which was published in England before the Hungarian Revolution took place.

#### THE ALL-POWERFUL SHOP STEWARDS

Twenty-five years ago in Britain because of lower levels of tooling, greater craft stratification and the reserve army of unemployed, it was still possible to enforce an effective piecework system. Its destructive consequences for labor and society were multiplied a thousandfold in the forced industrialisation of Russia and was the economic basis of the monstrous regime of Stalin. Those days are over, both in Britain and in Russia. As line production, the conveyor system, and highly divided mass production have developed in Britain, piecework has clashed more and more with the objective requirements for efficiency. The Shop Stewards, the shop committees that matured in this period, were not merely economic defense organisations of the workers. They were the only possible means of bringing some order to the chaos caused by the attempts of management to maintain individual piecework in the new mass production industries. The workers in Britain have gone a long way towards destroying the piecework system. On any particular line, or in any particular shop, a minimum is fixed, below which no one may have his wages reduced. By reducing the gap between the minimum and the maximum, the power of the rate-fixer is thereby broken and a leveling of wages takes place. Thus wages are no longer governed by individual effort but by the general level of class struggle in the shop or line concerned. The workers' name for this is "action on the job." Action on the job goes far beyond trade unionism, for it carries a formidable unity among the workers and gives them a control in every phase of production. This control, though constantly contested by management, is never entirely defeated and steadily expands its scope. To-

day the center of power moves away from the Labor Party and the unions on to the shop floor. It is from this milieu that have erupted the startlingly revolutionary demands of the Standard workers in Coventry in relation to redundancy. These demands have been watered down by the union leadership into compensation and a vague consultation. The original proposals were based on the conception that men and not capital must henceforth be the primary concern of industry. That conviction is deep in the hearts of many millions all over the world, and its objective realisation cannot be long delayed.

In the very week that this publication appeared, one of the oldest, most respected, and most reactionary papers in Britain published one of a series of articles giving the results of a special investigation into the conditions of British industry. Only direct quotation can do justice to this confirmation of the reality of modern industry. (Emphasis has not been added.)

#### THE SHOP STEWARDS DOMINATE THE UNIONS

**The truth is that the leaders are no longer their own masters. There has been an enormous shift of power within the trade union movement from the center to the factory floor.** However vigorously the leaders themselves deny this, the evidence is too strong to be contradicted. For example, since the war the vast majority of strikes have not been official but unofficial. They have been called not by union leaders but against their wishes. The most significant thing about the inter-union dock strike of 1955 was not that it rendered the ports of the country idle but that the leaders of the union representing the vast majority of dockers were opposed to it and were unable to persuade the men to return.

And for every strike on a nation-wide scale there have been hundreds confined to particular industries and particular factories about which nothing has been heard. The most glaring example is in the coal mines, where unofficial stoppages have cost us more than half the coal we are having to import every year. The occasions of the stoppages are infinitely varied.

We believe that what miners want is to manage the mines. Time will tell, but meanwhile let us hear the bourgeois investigator:

It may be that if work on a particular face cannot

be completed as planned, the men on that shift are asked to carry their tools to another face; or perhaps, as a result of prolonged and petty differences, an overseer uses strong language; in either case the men come to the surface. Occasionally there is a claim for extra money due to extraordinary physical conditions, too much water or too much dust on a particular job. But nearly always in each case it is the men on the spot asserting themselves by direct action, either in defiance of union agreements or without the consent of the union officials, which causes the stoppage.

This indiscipline in the mines is so serious and its causes so puzzling that two committees of inquiry have recently been set up, one to examine stoppages and the other absenteeism. On both committees the representatives of all the unions concerned as well as of the Coal Board are sitting.

The last sentence shows the new situation—shop floor organizations are opposed to both management and union leaders. And you will find this in every important British industry. Here is our investigator again:

But stoppages are not confined to the coal mines. In the engineering industry, lightning strikes of one kind or another are occurring almost every week. Sometimes a man has been sacked, or perhaps a man who has obeyed official union policy and defied an unofficial strike has not been sacked. The men refuse to work. In these cases it is usually the shop stewards who are asserting themselves.

The method of election of shop stewards varies from factory to factory. Sometimes the members of each separate union elect their own stewards to represent them in day-to-day negotiations with the management; sometimes shop stewards represent the members of all unions in their particular department. In either case the problem is the same.

The shop stewards are claiming that if a dispute arises suddenly they should have the right to take whatever action they think fit, irrespective of any agreements the union may have made with the industry as a whole or with the management of that particular factory. No union leader concedes this right, but when the shop stewards are sure of their following they assume it and impose bans on overtime, work to rule, or a complete stoppage, as the situation requires. And every time they do this they

have put the officials of one or more unions legally in the wrong, and so weakened their bargaining power.

A little later the writer concludes, again in black print:

**In the organization of labor in this country the struggle for power is not primarily between management and men but between the union leaders and the rank and file.**

(Sunday Times, January 13, 1957.)

This is modern capitalism, in the United States, in Russia, as well as in Britain. The British Tory majority in the House of Commons stands impotent before the Shop Stewards Movement and the leadership it exercises over the decisive forces in the labor movement. That is why it has not so far dared to enforce the industrial measures which it has proclaimed are necessary to end inflation. The Tory Government is not afraid of the union leaders. The union leaders would be willing to come to terms with the Tory Government. Both groups are immobilized in their positions by the shop stewards.

It would be a serious and totally unnecessary blunder to prophesy that the Shop Stewards Movement is an embryo Government of the Workers Councils. In moments of great social crisis, organizations can undergo rapid, almost instantaneous transformation or be replaced by entirely new organizations. Such speculations, in this context, would be irrelevant. The fundamental fact remains that British Parliamentary Democracy, the most powerful combination of Labor Party, trade union movement, and cooperative movement that the world has ever known, Welfare State, socialized medicine, and all, have produced not peace but the most highly-organized and defiant shop floor organizations in the world.

We believe that the point has been sufficiently proved, that the Government of Workers Councils which appeared so startlingly in Hungary was no historical accident but a social and political form that is rooted in the very structure of modern industry, creates the crisis in modern industry, and therefore in society as a whole. It cannot be suppressed, and its ultimate victory in one form or another is the only solution to the modern crisis. How and when this will take place in particular countries is no business of ours (we shall later have a few words to say about half a dozen isolated indivi-

duals standing at street corners, calling upon the workers to prepare for revolution). The incalculable variety of national states, their differing historical past, the specific features of their political life, the presence or absence of democratic forms, all these make it imperative that we hold firm to the one great reality that is specifically characteristic of the middle of the Twentieth Century—the unity, discipline, and organization of the working class in large scale industry. The necessity to do this can be most clearly seen in our last example, the situation in France.

#### FRANCE

At first sight industrial-political life in France seems to be dominated by the Communist Party with its hundred and forty deputies in Parliament. The French ruling class has been powerless to check the Communist Party. The Socialist Party and the Radical Party which dominated French political life in the period between the two wars, have been equally helpless before the French Communist Party. All are powerless because all are equally stained with the corruption and degradation of all aspects of life in pre-war France, which culminated in the disastrous defeat by the Germans in June 1940 and the humiliation of the Occupation.

It is the working class of France in its shop floor organizations which has already given the deathblow to this monster whose tentacles have been coiled around the French people for so long.

At the end of the war the French workers joined the Communist Party by the hundreds of thousands, expecting to find in it the party of the Russian Revolution and a Socialist United States of Europe. In the unions the French Communist Party for a time had almost complete power. French workers were to discover that the Communist Party would take the power from the French bourgeoisie only if the Russian Army was at its back. Meanwhile, the Party was ready to exploit and exhaust the workers in limited strikes and demonstrations, for the sole purpose of embarrassing the government and keeping the country in turmoil. If the workers turned from the Stalinists, they were met by the Social-Democrats, trying to line them up on the side of American capitalism, while at the same time intervening with the French industrialists to obtain quieting concessions for the workers.

Painfully, since 1947, the French working class has been struggling to rescue the nation from this bureau-

cratic stranglehold of the Communists and the Social-Democrats. In the fall of 1947 a wave of strikes swept through France initiated by the workers themselves. The Communists, who had joined the French government in line with the Russian policy of collaboration with the West, rushed to take over the leadership of these strikes. Between 1948 and 1952, in the heat of the cold war, the Communists called the workers out in one strike after another to back up such political demands as would serve Russian policy. The workers either abstained or went along apathetically. In August 1953 millions of workers again struck spontaneously, independently of the trade union leadership and in many cases in direct opposition to it. However, once the strikes began, they did not resist the Communists taking over effective control of the struggle.

It was not until the summer of 1955 that the French workers again rose in widespread spontaneous struggle. This time, however, at Nantes, Saint-Nazaire, and elsewhere, they did not simply strike or occupy factories. They passed to the attack, supporting their demands by mass street fighting, at times reaching the level of 15,000 workers battling with the police. Not only did they refuse to leave the leadership of the struggle to the trade unions. At critical moments they broke into the offices where the union officials were negotiating, threw them out, and took over the negotiations themselves. This great series of strikes revealed that by 1955 the French workers had arrived at the conclusion that they could gain their objectives only in opposition to the union bureaucracy. They could depend only on the independent organizations which they had built in their hour-to-hour, day-to-day struggles inside the plant.

From that time the Communist Party in France has begun a steady decline. Its control of the union movement has become control of the apparatus, with the workers indifferent or hostile. The final blow came with the Hungarian Revolution. Against the brazen defense of the Russian intervention by the French Communist Party, the French working class revolted by the tens of thousands. As of today, the Communist Party in France is a mere shadow of its former self. From nearly a million members it can now count on a hard core of a few thousand members. It could not get 10,000 French workers into the streets of Paris to defend the Party headquarters or even to demonstrate against the Fascists when, in the agitation around Hungary, these

attacked the Party. Nothing but the most abysmal folly of the traditional French political parties, and perhaps not even that, can drive the French working class back under the domination of the French Communist Party. The power of the working class in its independent shop floor organizations and the emptiness of modern parliamentarism are fully illustrated by the experience in France.

1. The French working class has been able to do what all the political and governmental power in France, backed by American billions, failed to do — break the stranglehold which the French Communist Party had on French life.

2. It is precisely in elections and parliamentary maneuvers that the French Communist Party retains whatever power it has in France.

This is a fitting demonstration of the actual relation of forces between the institutions contending for supremacy in our age.

### III. THE SELF-CONFESSED BANKRUPTCY OF OFFICIAL SOCIETY

It is quite untrue to say that contemporary society (whether on this side or the other side of the Iron Curtain) faces the possibility of collapse. As a way of life, as a civilization, as a culture, modern society has collapsed already. The contemporary world is divided into two large blocs whose rulers use all the discoveries of science to snarl threats and defiance at each other across the ether, and plot mutual destruction which will be counted in tens of millions. This is no longer to be compared with the life of savages. It is the life of the jungle. The ordinary citizen today can exist only by deliberately excluding from his consciousness vast areas of contemporary life which it is unbearable to contemplate. Never before in human history has the world known such elementary fear of total physical destruction, the savagery and brutality of the passions with which one half of the world regards the other, the consciousness of primeval depths just beneath the veneer of science and civilization, the alienation of individual from individual in the closely-knit modern community, the alienation of the individual from himself, the gulf separating aspiration from reality. Never has any society been so wracked by these torments on so gigantic and all-pervading a scale as the society in which we live. If we have based our concept of the future of society upon the working class in the social relations of production, it is because it is the single stable, unifying, and integrating element in a society that is otherwise riddled with insoluble antagonisms, and rudderless.

That is why we have so far written as if the only classes in society were the organizers and administrators of great industry and the working class. We include among the workers millions of clerical workers because as their work becomes more mechanized, they increasingly feel themselves to be a proletarianized section of the community. They tend to organize themselves into unions and to follow the methods of struggle which they see so effectively used by the workers. Among the workers in industry there are different layers. There are similar broad differentiations among the white collar workers in America or black-coated workers in England. There is in every population, according to

the degree of development, a certain percentage of technicians and professional middle classes: lawyers, doctors, salesmen, public relations men such as politicians and journalists. There are, even in many advanced societies, substantial numbers of farmers. In short, there is in every society that infinite variety of occupations and individuals in which empiricists love to lose themselves. Counting each grain of sand, they rack their brains to prove that there is no method of analyzing history and society which is definitive enough to be termed scientific. They deny that there can be any scientific guide to social action. Whereby they claim to have proved logically and scientifically that all we can do is to submit.

Social relations in production do not constitute society and no one has ever claimed that they did. Modern society in particular is an enormously complex organism, comprising relations of production, commercial relations, scientific investigation, the highly scientific organizations of certain aspects of industry itself (such as for instance the production and use of atomic energy). The means of communication of information and ideas play an enormous role in the routine of today's society. There is the organization of political life, the creation of literature and art at various levels. But despite all the complexity, there are clear, unmistakable, irrefutable patterns and laws which allow us to understand the general movement.

Here is one very obvious pattern of movement in modern society.

#### ONLY FORTY YEARS

Beginning in 1917, the political form of the One-Party State, in direct contradiction to the aspirations of Europe for centuries, turn by turn has embraced such diverse areas as Russia, Italy, Germany and now China. Today over a billion people live under a form of government which half a century ago was not even conceived of except in the minds of a few eccentric scribblers. The world has divided into two power blocs; one is committed to the totalitarian form of society, the other to Parliamentary Democracy. The defenders of Conservative Freedom, Free Enterprise, and Parliamentary Democracy held at their disposal the most highly industrialized areas of the world and controlled hundreds of millions of the underdeveloped peoples. In half a lifetime they have been defeated, driven out, rolled back. They have been reduced to a condition in which they say openly and without shame that the only bar-



rier to the conquest of the world by totalitarianism is the hydrogen bomb. But soon the bomb too was in the hands of the so-called modern Goths and Vandals. And as we write, the totalitarians have gone beyond them in sending Sputniks hurtling around the earth.

The pattern of defeat for the Free Enterprisers and Parliamentary Democrats grows more embracing every decade.

Yet the successes of totalitarian states are gained by such a waste of human life and effort, such a reversion to political barbarism, that the world recoils from them in horror. But the advocates of Conservative Freedom, Free Enterprise, and Parliamentary Democracy gain nothing by this. The public pronouncements of both sides are once more at the level of primitive savages in the dawn of history. What is wrong? The men on the other side of the river are evil. What to do? Get weapons larger and more destructive than the weapons of the evil men.

#### WAR AN EFFECT, NOT A CAUSE

People have been bulldozed into the belief that the real crisis of modern society is war between the ideologies. To this some have added that the discoveries of science are the cause of the world crisis. However much these ideas may be repeated, they are the utmost folly and dangerous nonsense.

The war between the ideologies began because the ideology of Free Enterprise and Parliamentary Democracy proved itself powerless to satisfy either the people in the advanced countries or those millions in the underdeveloped countries who were seeking a new life. That is the reason why the monstrous apparition of totalitarianism has appeared. Free Enterprise and Parliamentary Democracy are not on trial. They have failed. The rise of totalitarianism is the proof of their failure.

The idea that modern science has brought the world to the disastrous condition in which it finds itself is similarly without foundation.

In March 1955 Sir Winston Churchill, who specializes in making words sound like a roll of drums, delivered himself of the following on the hydrogen bomb:

There is an immense gulf between the atomic and the hydrogen bomb. The atomic bomb, with all its terrors, did not carry us outside the scope of human control or manageable events, in thought or action, in peace or war. When the chairman of the United States Congressional Committee gave out, a year ago, the first comprehensive review of the

hydrogen bomb, the entire foundation of human affairs was revolutionized, and mankind placed in a situation both measureless and laden with doom.

There in one package we have all the fallacies, foolishness, and deceitful propaganda of the two power blocs. Exactly what have any governments controlled or managed during the last fifty years? The hydrogen bomb was not in existence when they controlled and managed to kill ten million soldiers alone in World War I. The hydrogen bomb was not in existence when they controlled and managed to kill some thirty-five million people in World War II. Scientists had not invented the hydrogen bomb when these governments starved and demoralized half the population of the world during the Great Depression. The invention of these modern deadly weapons had not yet taken place when these governments controlled and managed to shock every decent instinct and moral principle by the way they cringed before Fascism and compromised with it. To say that it was the invention of the hydrogen bomb which has carried us "outside the scope of human control or manageable events" is to say that the miserable record of governments before the hydrogen bomb was controlled and managed by them. In reality they controlled nothing, they managed nothing. To say that with the invention of the hydrogen bomb "the entire foundation of human affairs was revolutionized" is merely to try to hide the truth, that "the entire foundation of human affairs" has been in process of suicidal destruction for half a century. It is the entire course of human affairs pursuing its vicious path under the leadership of official society that has led to the construction of the hydrogen bomb and of Sputnik. The hydrogen bomb and Sputnik are masses of machinery lying in a shed. They have no power in themselves. To the capitalistic fetishism of commodities they want now to add the fetishism of science. Hydrogen bombs and Sputniks are made by men in a certain type of society who have certain purposes in mind when they make them. Men make them, men carry them or launch them.

There is not and has never been any impelling necessity to invent hydrogen bombs or Sputniks, or whatever else they may invent. The whole projection of science in that direction has been dictated solely by the need to invent engines of destruction. In a different society, science could have easily been directed towards equally dramatic discoveries in human biology, the production of food supplies, individual and social psychol-

ogy, whatever rational people would have placed first on the list of their needs as civilized human beings. Official society has produced these monstrous weapons because it is the type of society which needs them.

The naive platitudes of the Eisenhowers, the worn shallowness of the Macmillans, the impudent grimaces of the Khrushchevs, and the ferocity common to all of them about these destructive inventions, are an offense to human reason, an insult to human dignity. They nevertheless are quite adequate public voices of the barbarism they represent. With what other voices could they speak?

#### CONSCIOUSNESS DEGRADED

The Americans made the atom bomb. The Russians made one. The Americans made the hydrogen bomb. The Russians followed. Now the Russians are first with Sputnik. The Americans have followed suit. Both of them will soon learn how to bring Sputniks or missiles safely to earth and to a particular spot. Russians will learn to blow up or to bring down American Sputniks. Americans will learn to blow up or bring down Russian Sputniks. Mankind may soon rise in the morning and go to bed at night in the consciousness that Sputniks loaded with bombs are going round and round us, launched by politicians and generals who, despite their disastrous failures of forty years, still suffer from the delusion that they can control and manage.

Today even physical control is beyond them. In England recently radiation escaped from an atomic pile and infected the countryside, and milk from cows became radioactive. What will be the consequences of a mistake made by these juvenile delinquent mentalities, dressed up in uniforms, hotrodding in the sky?

Ever since Sputnik appeared, the American Air Force is on a 15 minute alert. Planes loaded with bombs are ready to take off against Russia in 15 minutes. While ministers lie about it on the ground, the loaded planes fly in the air. We can be sure that the Russians too are doing the same. The mental strain on the pilots must be intolerable. If one of these boys breaks under it and goes crazy—or one of the directing officers makes a mistake—or something in the mechanism goes wrong as can always happen, one or more of these bombs will fall and explode, and the last great bacchanal will be on.

They cannot continue to play with fire in this way without ultimately producing consequences that may well be irreparable. They do not know what they are doing, and even if they do know some of the dangers,

they do not care. They are prepared to take the chance. Today our rulers turn all progress into misery. In jet planes, radio, and television we have more means of communication than we ever had before. But do we get to know each other better? No. Half the world is sealed off from the other half. Each side corrupts the very ether with its lies about the other. Now with Sputnik, man has shown the capacity to organize the most extraordinary mechanical instruments. But this triumph, which should make every human being thrill with joy and hope, results in loss of liberty, more taxation, vulgar boasting, envious sneers, bitterness, meeting of Communist heads in Moscow, meeting of heads of NATO in Paris, and universal fear. For the Russians too are afraid.

The damage is not merely the diversion of wealth and labor to immoral purposes. The damage is not merely destruction that will result tomorrow when, either by design or by chance, they loose off at one another. No one knows the damage that is being done to our physical existence by radioactivity resulting from their experiments and tests. The weight of scientific experiment grows steadily against this suicidal roulette, played by Russians and Americans alike. Our men of state continue to handle these potential destroyers of the human race as if they were toy balloons. They continue to dare each other with bombs and missiles like little boys blowing soap bubbles.

We must not shrink from facing steadily the depravity which is now in charge of human affairs. It was clear that as time went on Hitler and Stalin had lost all sense of reality, and pursued their paths, ready to bring down Germany and Russia in ruin rather than stop, if indeed they were capable of doing so. Modern civilization is a unity. A similar vertigo now dominates our public men. The lust for power and destruction has become a thing in itself. Political parties, press and pulpit, are all in league to exclude from authority all who do not first strip off all reason and decency, daub themselves with the national colors, drink deep of the cup of blood, and take the oath never to weaken until the enemy is destroyed, even though that enemy is half the human race. Aneurin Bevan, after voicing for years the dismay of millions, no sooner sniffs the fetid aroma of power than he shrills with the frenzy of the newly converted.

Incantation rules, not reason.

There was no reason whatever to launch the first

atom bombs which killed a quarter of a million human beings in a few seconds—the Japanese were already suing for peace. There was no reason to build the first hydrogen bomb without first calling a world conference of the nations, great and small, and placing before it all the dangers involved. Rulers of states can no longer think in any sane, constructive way. Forty years of continuous violence and bloody destruction organized by the state have taken their toll. A whole generation of men of state have been reared and matured in violence and blood. Their state can be run only by men who think in those terms. The state insists that to think in terms of the salvation, instead of the destruction, of the human race is treason. Perhaps the greatest damage that has yet been done is the eating away of our consciousness of ourselves as civilized human beings. It is already incalculable and cannot but increase. Not only does mankind suffer the unknown consequences of living in perpetual fear. We on this side of the Curtain, and ordinary people on the other side as well, all of us know that this insane competition, this continuous trafficking in the annihilation of millions of people is not only suicidal. We know that it is immoral. We know that it is wrong, that even wild beasts in the jungle do not behave in this way. Khrushchev shouts from the Kremlin that if he is provoked, he will lay waste, annihilate, half the continent of Europe. General Norstad in Paris replies that he will lay waste the other half. A thousand newspapers in fifty languages print these threats. Official society is not in decline. As civilization, as culture, as reason, as morals, it is already dead. The need to prepare for universal destruction, to scream the threat, to be unhappy unless balancing on the brink, this is no longer politics, defense or attack. These are the deep inner compulsions of a society that has outlived itself, swept along by mechanical forces it cannot control, dreading and yet half-hoping that one climactic clash may give the opportunity to start afresh.

The final degradation for the ordinary man and woman is the sense of impotence, the impotence of vast millions of human beings who see themselves daily endangered and ultimately threatened with destruction by the work of their own hands. We try to accustom ourselves to it. We cannot do it. We may bury the fear and the shame deep in our consciousness. But they are there, corrupting us. As for our children, it is no wonder that in country after country more and more of them live for the thrills of the moment, with a savage and

justified contempt for what their elders try to teach them. What price we shall have to pay for allowing ourselves to be driven so far back beyond the very premises of a human existence it is impossible to forecast. But the road back is not straight and narrow, as a crowd of petty would-be Christs seek to persuade us. It is broad and it is open. Nothing but the conscious, deliberate, and pitiless repudiation and rejection of all responsible for this dehumanization of a world can hope to lighten and relieve the burden of expiation which this generation will have to bear.

No, it is not war and it is not science which threaten us with destruction. It is the bankruptcy of society which was upon us long before atomic energy, hydrogen bombs, or Sputniks.

#### A FALLEN WORLD

A columnist like Joseph Alsop writes that nobody believes a single word of the pronouncements on summit talks made by the political leaders of the West. It is absolutely true. But he then goes on to say that anything like a real talk at the summit, i.e., between Russia and the United States, would create terror among the governments of the West: they would be afraid that the two big ones might make a deal at their expense. Walter Lippmann writes:

There is good reason to think that both sides prefer the existing division of Germany and of Europe to any settlement that has thus far been proposed.

That is the truth, though not all of it. Why?

The Western governments are afraid that a reunited Germany, with the British and American and Russian troops withdrawn, would hold the balance of power and use it to make Germany dominant in Europe. The Soviet government is afraid that if ever it withdrew from Eastern Germany the whole satellite empire would blow up and be replaced not by neutralist governments but by implacably anti-Russian governments.

What does Lippmann see as a way out?

The chances are that this deadlock will not be resolved by the initiative of the great powers, but rather by political developments in both halves of Europe. In the Eastern half there is always some prospect of a revolt of the Hungarian type. In the Western half there is the likelihood that within a few years, within the term of this Administration, there will be new governments in Western Europe,

and that in these governments the existing opposition parties will play a leading part. If and when that happens, it will be very important that we should not have alienated them and thus find ourselves on the outside looking in.

He makes one mistake here. The present oppositions will do nothing when they come to power. New governments will be governments of Workers Councils; there are not and cannot be any other type of new government. But we should note and remember the cynicism, the meanness, and the blind stupidity of this pundit of democracy, so beloved and respected on both sides of the water. Cynicism because Lippmann does not pretend to believe in the "Peace! We are for Peace. They are for War," which the Eisenhowers, Dulleses, and Macmillans continue to ladle out. Cynicism because Lippmann knows that the leaders of the Free World are powerless to produce any policy to avert the threatening disaster and is content to leave them where they are. Cynicism, however, can sometimes have a little pride. Lippmann has none. He does not advocate a revolution in Eastern Germany. He does not advocate the coming to power of opposition governments in Europe. But he skulks around on the outskirts warning the leaders of the Free World to be sure not to be left outside looking in. But the crown of this disgusting exhibition is not even stated, so much does this little rat believe that the hole in which he lives is the whole world. Other people may make revolutions. Other countries may have opposition parties and opposition policies which may come to power. But such things do not happen in the United States. States may come and states may go but the good firm of Jackass and Elephant will go on forever. So the monkey bred in captivity believes the world to consist of the circus and his cage.

All the talk about peace, the plans for peace, the limited peace, the neutral zone, mutual inspection, open skies, closed space, all are so much stupidity and futility, or plain lies, and in any case unworthy of anything but the most unmitigated contempt. For if tomorrow the twelve leading men of state were translated into the twelve apostles, and signed twelve agreements covering the land, the sea, and the air and what is above and what is below, and wrote ten commandments which they all took the oath of the body and the blood to obey, it would mean nothing. For not so substantial an event as a proletarian revolution in Eastern Germany but a straightforward democratic election to power of Com-

munists in a second province of India would immediately transform the holy men into frightened attackers and defenders and the last state would be worse than the first.

No agreement can keep the people quiet, not even an agreement to do so. An agreement presupposes some variant of the status quo but the status quo is not only horizontal, it is vertical. It involves not only governments and governments but governments and peoples, their own peoples as well as the peoples of other governments. Thus Messrs. Bevan and Gaitskell propose to take the first small step to binding Germany hand and foot on the altar of peace as Isaac was bound by Jacob. Doubtless these two Social-Democratic watchdogs of the purest breed believe that if they can persuade the two imperialist powers to agree on this (the conference being carefully prepared), the German people will have to accept it. Who more experienced than Social-Democrats in shoving down the throat of masses of people the bolus that is good for them? That the German people in the West and in the East may make common cause with Czechs, Hungarians, and Poles, without benefit of conference either at the summit or at the base, that in any case this imposition upon them can split the German nation and create still more foundations of instability, all that is entirely beyond the vision of these scissors-and-paste reorganizers of a fallen world.

But all this is opposition Punch and Judy. Lost to all sense and reason as the politicians of official society seem to be, none has yet reached the ultimate insanity of believing that the status quo is anything more than a shifting quicksand which may engulf some strategic area at any moment and compel God knows what readjustments. Their choice is between ways to destruction. The boast of Dulles that he chooses the brink is so much wind. There is nothing else to choose.

#### OUT OF THEIR OWN MOUTHS

Our rulers have to try to deceive us. They do not deceive themselves. Nothing shows so clearly the dregs to which our civilization has been reduced as the openly confessed bankruptcy of its rulers.

#### RUSSIA

Russia spent vast wealth, energy, and blood upon the building up of Stalin as the legitimate heir of Marx, Engels, and Lenin. Stalinism was inculcated into a whole nation as the infallible guide by which it could develop and regulate its material life and its ideas. Without a

moment's notice, the rulers of Russia flipped this national catechism into limbo.

In writing, we here are quite naturally more concerned to reach people who live in Western civilization. And in any case, by normal civilized standards there should be no need to point out the self-confessed bankruptcy of the Russian state. For decades now the Russian state has found it necessary to cut off its total population of many tens of millions from all forms of information or expression of opinion except what it decreed. The information which it manufactures has been manipulated, turned and twisted, subtracted from or added to, reversed, stood on its head, put on its feet again, placed sideways, without the slightest regard for consistency, logic, or simple common sense. Never has it shown the slightest respect for the intelligence of the population, any concern for the fact that it could remember today what it was told yesterday.

The Russian state has ended by denouncing nearly all its founders as traitors, spies in the pay of imperialism, and men seeking to betray their country from the meanest motives. It carried out a series of public trials in which it flouted common sense and the elementary laws of evidence in a manner and on a scale which has no parallel in history. It conducted purges of its leaders in every branch of political and social life, and those who carried out these purges were in their turn purged, so that in time all that remained was a cloud of lies enshrouding accusers and accused.

The Russian state sent millions of its citizens into concentration camps, where the cruelties and brutalities exceeded anything that the civilized world had known for centuries, with the single exception of Fascist concentration camps during World War II. Its labor code sought to discipline workers in factories as if they were prisoners at hard labor. Its secret police became a gigantic economic and military state within the state. It dismissed, murdered, and manipulated its supporters abroad with a cynical disregard for its professed aims and purposes.

The Russian state has enslaved tens of millions of people of the oppressed nationalities, not in the remote parts of the world, but in the heart of Europe. These nationalities it has subjected to its will and exploited, politically, economically, and militarily, in a manner which no previous imperialism, except Hitlerite Fascism, has ever dared to do. And this in the middle of the Twentieth Century.



Nixon



John Mitchell



H. R. Haldeman



John Ehrlichman



John Dean



Gordon Liddy

### The Watergate Six

There is no need to continue with this catalogue. Brazenly denied for decades in the face of evidence piled as high as mountains, most of the crimes of Stalinism have been admitted as facts by the very men who helped to perpetrate them. Over these crimes with their millions of victims, they have pasted labels such as "cult of the individual," "violations of socialist legality," and similar high-sounding names, and seem to believe that they have thereby settled the account. They are mistaken. The revolt in East Germany in 1953, in Poland and Hungary in 1956, and the rapid and complete collapse of the state power in East Germany and Hungary in particular; the crudeness with which the Russian regime sought to de-Stalinize itself, all this and the ferment throughout the Communist world show that Russian totalitarianism has not only feet but a head of clay, is a totally unworkable system of society, and is doomed to perish before the wrath of the people.

The power of totalitarianism is due to one thing and one thing only—totalitarianism itself. Stalin could and now Khrushchev can set the most abrupt and bewildering goals and changes in economic and diplomatic relations and thus appear to catch up with and surpass all rivals. But it is this very immunity from the criticism of rivals and of the people that leaves them helpless before the criticism of events and lures them on to the most fantastic stupidities. Stalin's are now common property. We shall not have to wait too long for Khrushchev's. His successor will enlighten us.

The most significant fact about the impact of this monstrous growth on Western Civilization is never or very rarely mentioned. History will record and, we hope, with a shame that will never let humanity forget it, history will record that the vast majority of intellectuals, politicians, liberals, socialists, and humanists accepted Russian totalitarianism at its own valuation. They believed that the Russian people and the subjugated Poles, Hungarians, Romanians, Czechoslovakians, etc., would accept the cruelties, brutalities, and inhumanities forever. They more than half suspected that by "1984" all states in the world would have followed the Russian model. They believed in other words that after five thousands years of civilization, humanity was destined to end up like performing animals, obedient to the whip of a trainer.

Even the gross and stupid falsifications of the Moscow trials were accepted in many quarters, to the extent that Mr. Winston Churchill in his history of



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IS UNDER ATTACK.**

the war was able to write of the masterful manner in which Vishinsky conducted them.

The trials have now been acknowledged for the frauds that they were. The Plan has been exposed in Poland and Hungary. It is now obvious to all except Stalinists and some learned economists that if any modern state was able to crush the working class and lower its wages by half, the state would be able to increase its production of heavy industry and build planes and missiles, until in time the whole society blew up owing to the economic and social tensions and disorder.

It was not merely Russian statistics of production and military power that drove Western Civilization to believe the Russian state had at last discovered the means of turning men into commodities, pure and simple. The cause of this degradation of thought, this brutalization of belief, lay not in Russia at all. The Russian propaganda was swallowed because of the situation at home. If so many in Western Europe and the United States accepted the Russian way as the way of the future, if they cringed before it, if they were even fascinated by it, it was because they no longer had any belief in the future of Free Enterprise, or Parliamentary Democracy, or the milk-and-water Socialism of the Labor Parties, exhausted before they had arrived at maturity. Millions, including the most highly-educated and well-informed intellectuals, were filled with such loathing, such uncontrollable disgust for the pretenses and hypocrisies and rottenness of the democratic regime, that they plunged head foremost into Stalinism. They were ready to drown all knowledge, all intelligence and integrity in that slime and grime, muck and blood, if that was the only way to demonstrate their rejection of Parliamentary Democracy.

The shock of de-Stalinization, the splendor of the Hungarian Revolution have brought some of them to their senses. But for them there is no return to official society. Behind the dreary bleatings of the politicians, official society states quite plainly that it has nothing to offer to anybody.

#### GREAT BRITAIN

Great Britain is the country which is supposed to have emerged from the upheavals of the last decades with the greatest social and moral stability. We are told that it combines the Welfare State with traditional values. It holds up its Parliamentary Democracy as a model to the whole world. No one genuflects more rap-

turously before the British monarchy than Life and Time, the publications of Henry Luce, and the New York Times. All this is mere self-delusion when it is not deliberate hypocrisy. The British people do not themselves believe it.

On June 25, 1957, the Times Literary Supplement, a publication of the same publishing company which produces the London Times, analyzed the state of mind of the ordinary citizen in the United States, in Russia, and in England. We reprint certain sections of the analysis because today official society is best convicted out of the mouths of its own spokesmen.

A time of strained and breaking loyalties all over the world—in politics, nationalities, religions, moralities and families—is certainly a time of troubles. Such a time has come upon us all, for the first time in history. That secular religion which once seemed the hope of half the world—Communism—has equally become a prey to conflicts of loyalty, nationalism and morality. In Russia, as in America, India and Britain; in the Jewry of the diaspora and of Israel alike, as among dwellers in Arabia, the old faiths cannot hold the young, materialism rules the roost and societies bid fair to come apart at the seams. Worse, they begin to seem unpatchable; yet no one knows, no one can foretell, what kind of society will emerge as typical of the continental groupings (if not “the World State” itself) towards which our familiar nation-states are being hustled.

We can ignore the last phrases that no one knows or can foretell what kind of society will emerge. The society that will emerge is a society of Workers Councils in every department of the national activity and a Government of Workers Councils. But that apart, did any Marxist revolutionary ever pen a more devastating picture of chaos, decay, and social dissolution?

The ordinary citizen has no belief in official society, whether he lives in Moscow, Washington, or London. On the surface he votes, he works, he salutes the flag (or he does not salute it), he listens to the politicians, but in the privacy of his own mind and heart, all this parade of politics and patriotism means nothing to him. This these serious spokesmen of official society know, and they know that the root cause of it is the modern octopus state, whether totalitarian or welfare.

Our real problem today is rather “the millions in modern mass society who are without loyalty,” who

are apathetic or anaesthetic. This is a useful pointer; for on both sides of the Curtain — and rapidly developing in Asia and Africa—modern urban, industrial (or industrializing) society renders its citizens ever more rootless in their local habitations, ever more mobile, ever more atomistic. They do not feel their society. They do not seem parts of it. Yet, simultaneously, the powers-that-be . . . for brevity's sake, those of the State—assume more and more control over details of the citizen's life, over the range of his decisions for his life, and over the environment within which he must live it out.

It is perhaps platitudinous by now, but none the less true, that inasmuch as a citizen feels he cannot exert any influence on circumstances shaping his life—inasmuch as he feels himself the sport of uncontrollable and unseen powers—he will “cash in his chips” or, as French *argot* has it, he will replace his spoon on the counter. He will effectively die towards his society. He will contract out of it, and out of his responsibilities.

The free intelligence turns in revolt from this parasite of bureaucratic administration, tyranny, and hypocrisy.

The citizenry — and particularly, primarily, the thinking *elite*—will suffer a kind of schizophrenia: on the one hand their social instincts will still be urgent, but unsatisfiable; on the other hand, as a human-natural defense mechanism, they will decry and debunk any form of social activity, for that would identify them with the powers-that-be and imply acquiescence in the various forms of deployment of those powers. Thus “a sort of traitor” arises; not very many real, political, or military traitors, but rather a vast number of non-citizens—citizens of nothing, attaching no positive value whatever to their society and its administrative State, having no emotive affection for it, living as atoms in it, fulfilling the barest minimum of obligations to “get by,” and generally betraying an “I couldn't care less” mood.

That is the society in which we live, more precisely in which we die. Tomorrow, as the dozens of rival Sputniks spin around the earth, men, women, and children will wake and sleep in a world which will have become the very valley of the shadow of death.

Once we close our ears to the slogans and the shout-

ing, then the decay of human personality, the decline of human respect for itself, for its past, for any future is enough to bring nostalgia for the monastery. Millions in despair turn back to religion, that is to say return to savagery, for when modern men who have abjured religion take refuge in it, then they are even worse than the savage. The savage knew no better. The man of today is denying centuries of human development.

Let us look once again at the supposedly stable society of Britain. There are among the British people many who have preserved a genuinely religious cast of mind, and some of them denounce the use of the hydrogen bomb under any circumstances, driven to this by their whole Puritan past (and helped no doubt by Britain's vulnerable position). These people, moral, serious, sincere, hope for some sort of general disarmament. To them, another British newspaper, the Manchester Guardian, for a century famous for principled journalism, replies as follows:

There is about one chance in ten of that. The far higher probability is that it would lead within a few years to the extension of Mr. Khrushchev's kind of socialism to all Western Europe and the British Isles. We should be powerless to resist, except by passive means. The immediate consequence (unless the West European countries contrived to retain an American strategic guarantee, backed by American bombs, while Britain withdrew) would be the likelihood that the recent Soviet diplomatic thaw would be reversed. One country after another, beginning with Western Germany, would come under Soviet pressure. Britain at first might be immune, but her turn would come. Mr. Khrushchev, after all, believes that the forces of history are on his side. The transition from capitalism to socialism is inevitable. “The emergence of socialism,” as he told the party congress last year, “from within the bounds of a single country and its transformation into a world system is the main feature of our era.” Russia's business, as her leaders see it, is to help the process along by whatever means may be expedient. Harsh threats are not expedient at present, for they have proved to build up Western resistance. But the objective of Russian policy is unchanged. It is a Communist world, under Moscow's leadership.

There are, nevertheless, many Christians and non-



Christians who believe that we ought to renounce the bomb. They hold that its use could not be justified in any conceivable circumstances. Are they, then, prepared to face the agony of living under a Communist system?

Are they? The Manchester Guardian is not unready.

It may be that the system, by the time it reached here, would be modified. It may also be that, as Poland's delicate treading of the razor's edge might ultimately prove, an evolution towards a milder system is possible within the Communist State. But the process must be anguishing. Merely to think of Britain as a "controlled democracy" calls for an effort of imagination which is hard to make.

They can make the effort easily enough for other countries.

For people in France or the Low Countries it is easier, because they have had the experience of living under an imposed regime. They know what it means to have among them secret police, with powers of arbitrary arrest, deportation, and execution. And, since it will be said that in Russia the police powers are being made less arbitrary, it should be remembered that leniency is least where the seeds of resistance are strongest; that has been shown in Eastern Germany and Hungary. We should have to be ready to face in Britain the corrupting influences already seen in Eastern Europe—the use, for example, of children to inform against their parents and, where parents are accused or under pressure to "confess," the use of their children as hostages. The system the Russian leaders have devised for their own country is one thing; the system as it evolves through imposition on other countries is another. Resistance in Britain by individuals and organisations (churches, political parties, and the press) could prove magnificent. But the conflict, inevitably, would bring bitter pain.

The real problem, you see, is the children.

Such is the degradation, publicly announced, to which official society has sunk in Britain. Charles II, three hundred years ago, was ready to sell British power and influence to the French king. But he did it for value received, for money, and he had the decency to do it secretly. This spinelessness, the sinking at the heart and bowing at the knees, comes not from the enemy without, but from the enemy within. If the Manchester

Guardian appears to be a degree below the Times, it is because the public for whom and to whom it speaks prefers reality with less of the traditional trappings. Never have modern Englishmen sunk so low. Yet these are the same people who a few years ago astonished the world by their bravery, fortitude, and calmness under a hail of bombs. And that is now exactly their level. They can stand up under bombs thrown, or throw back bombs. Perspective beyond that they have none. They have abdicated from leadership. They hold their positions by tradition, police, and army. They are going nowhere, and none know it more than they.

This, the attitude of British liberalism to Stalinism, is not in any way peculiar to Britain. **The whole of Europe is permeated through and through with this readiness to capitulate to Stalinism.** On the surface it can be explained thus: must we first submit to military occupation by the Russian army and rule by the Communist Parties? Must we then be liberated by an American invasion? After that, what will be left? But that is merely rationalization. Men have always been ready to fight, to die, and to endure for a way of life which satisfied or promised to satisfy their material, intellectual, and moral needs. Western Civilization no longer commands that loyalty. And if even Europe survives the liberation, then what? Only the United States mouthing its obscene rituals about Free Enterprise and Democracy.

### THE UNITED STATES

When Americans look at themselves in the context of world society do they take any different view of themselves? The European face of the United States is the daily Paris edition of the New York Herald Tribune which is read all over Europe and the Near East. On the editorial page of the issue of November 6, 1957, we can see the arresting title, "America's Non-Generation." Describing the present generation of Americans under 30, it but repeats the view of the London Times.

There is, then, a certain justice in regarding the young generation as a non-generation, a collection of people who, for all their apparent command of themselves, for all their sophistication, for all their "maturity," know nothing, stand for nothing, believe in nothing.

What is this but a picture of social death? American sociologists have registered and documented the decline of the dynamic individualism which built the

United States into "The Organization Man," dressed in his gray flannel suit.

Yet it would be a mistake to portray the self-confessed bankruptcy of the bourgeoisie in the United States by its pronouncements in publications corresponding to the Times Literary Supplement on Loyalties and the Manchester Guardian on the invading Stalinist society. The same consciousness of failure, the same self-analysis which is taking place in Europe in political and literary terms is taking place in the United States, in characteristically American fashion, before the whole population. Despite the distortions, it is films and television that mirror the crisis of American bourgeois society.

Blackboard Jungle put on the screen for the first time the jungle which is American education and relations between teacher and pupil. Rebel Without a Cause portrayed the violent rebellion of American youth against their society and their inability to find in the political and social institutions of the country any positive movement for regeneration. Executive Suite, The Man in the Gray Flannel Suit, and Sweet Smell of Success show the former ideal of the nation, the successful business man, rejecting the code and sinking into spiritual death or perversion.

Yet the most remarkable characteristic of these exposures is that the exposers have no values to substitute for those which they deride. The more talented the artist, the more revealing is the bankruptcy.

The hero demagogue of A Face in the Crowd is a television idol, supported, either naively or for dishonest purposes, by every section of American society portrayed in the film. The life of the intellectual is treated with scarcely disguised contempt. The film catches perfectly the attempt of official society in the United States to organize in advance every social stimulus and response so as to drown out any independent initiative of thought, feeling, or activity. In the end, the film itself is an example of the same methods and the same results which it attempts to denounce.

As in the quotations from the Times Literary Supplement and the Manchester Guardian, so in the film: the working class does not appear. In each case, therefore, the result is the same—an indictment of bourgeois civilization by a self-confessed bankrupt bourgeoisie. Europeans do not seem to understand that the American public has developed an extraordinary awareness and sensibility in regard to these, its popular arts. It is

familiar with the problems posed and recognizes instantly the social types through which these are presented. What the American audience does is to reject, often with good-humored if not contemptuous cynicism, the synthetic conclusion. Beginning from the problems and the types of people placed before it, it works out for itself the answers which producers and directors have evaded—the inevitability of defeat.

#### FRANCE

To conclude this picture of defeat and death, we could perhaps not do better than to show what official society looks like to the vast majority of the peoples from underdeveloped countries, some three-quarters of the world's population. In September of 1957 representatives of the French-African colonies held a conference at Bamako in French West Africa. They were most of them men occupying high official posts in the French colonial system. They desired internal self-government but they did not propose to break with France — they advocated, instead, a French-African community. Many of them were bitter anti-Communists. Yet one speech shook to the marrow the French politicians and journalists who were present. The speaker, M. Ouezzin Coulibaly, Vice-President of the Council of Government of the High Volta, led the discussion on the education of African youth. What example did the state of France offer to the youth of Africa? None. Instead he asked the youth of Africa to take warning against the spectacle which France presented. In the course of a few minutes M. Coulibaly told the African people why they could look for example neither to France, to Russia, the United States, nor to the French political parties, whether bourgeois, Communist, or Socialist. Here is the speech:

#### THE CONSEQUENCES OF THE U. S. A. vs. U. S. S. R.

Finally, in the education of the youth, of our youth which considers itself African, we have to put our young people on guard against political satellitism. I touched on the subject earlier. The political satellitism of France does not cease to scandalize all those people who wish France well and want to believe that there still remains something of a France which was once great and powerful, that there is still some will and energy which will try to mobilize the people of France around some hopes and aspirations for France as an independent nation. It remains only a hope. And while we are hoping,

we are forced to admit that the centers of gravity of world politics have shifted toward countries that are now new centers of power: the Russians, the Chinese, the Indians and before long, the Germans once again. As a result of this, politics in France is sunk in corruption. We have to ask ourselves if Frenchmen perceive the ridiculous position in which they are. The normal order of things is reversed. The internal policy of France, based upon the needs of the nation, no longer dictates its foreign policy. Instead, the internal policy has to adapt itself to foreign policy and this foreign policy is dictated by the two international power blocs, Russia and the United States. But we, the political representatives of Africa, who refuse to let our judgment sink into paralysis, we have to ask ourselves if the French Parliament is anything more than two delegations of Russian and American citizens on French soil, whose business is to defend interests which are absolutely alien to the country. No decision can be taken on any question of French internal politics unless the external consequences of the decision are first taken into consideration. Demands and programs are judged not by what they propose, but by what the consequences abroad are likely to be. France is no more than a dummy, behind which Russia and the United States without any pretense, fight out a merciless duel. In any discussion, no one pays attention to what the speaker is saying, you seek instead to divine to which foreign ideology he belongs.

M. Dalmas has stigmatized this national degradation in the following terms.

"Our political life is completely alienated. Any real sense of what is happening in the country vanished before the need to interpret events according to the strategy of the world conflict. We are powerless to do anything else, since the slightest gesture at once becomes a part of one or the other of the two enormous cog-wheels and has no existence of its own. The obsession with international conflict transforms us into a passive chessboard on which the game is played by players who belong elsewhere. We find out about the strokes they bring off only when we feel them on our backs."

#### THE DEPRAVITY OF THE BOURGEOISIE

So it is that the pro-American French bourgeois practices the diplomacy of the cringing small-time

thief. Arrogantly they demand that they must have a place among "the great." Snarling, they defend a prestige which is only paper, and they are happy to snigger at "those idiots of Americans." But at the same time they humbly extend to the Americans a begging hand and get into a terrible state when it is spurned by John Foster Dulles; the while the economy of France moulders in a false security of charity from abroad.

It is clear that we cannot look for inspiring political perspectives from a class that is exhausted. For decades now we hear from the representatives of the classical Right Wing of French politics only a mixture of insolence and feebleness. They collaborated with Germany when the power was with the Germans. They followed Petain when they could play the double game with danger, they joined de Gaulle when the "noble" resistance movement triumphed in the drawing rooms.

#### THE BETRAYAL OF THE OLD PARTIES

As for the extreme Left, the Communists, they subscribe to the dogma that the revolution is impossible without the Russian army. No longer are they defenders of the U. S. S. R. as the bastion of the world revolution, encircled by the capitalist world. It is for them the only hope, the only force capable of imposing the happy tomorrows of which they sing.

This paralysis of French political life is above all serious on the Left. For it is the Left which attracts the youth. It is perhaps the first time in history that the two great traditional parties of the masses of the people, the Socialists and the Communists, have thus "deviated." Their chief concern is no longer to resolve the economic problems of a given society in accordance with their principles. The sole aim of each is to find a place for itself as troops within a power bloc whose boundaries extend far beyond them and which has no meaning except in the perspective of war.

This is what the colonial people see when they look at Western Civilization. It is to this that the United States and Russia between them have driven the vast majority of the world's people.

There is no need to continue with this distressful catalogue. What we have to ask ourselves is: why? We have already answered this question in terms of the

fundamental relations of production. But that is not enough. We must attempt now to view society as a whole, and seek within all its complexities and ramifications some guiding thread which will bring some order into what appears to be a universal chaos, to make some sense of what appears to be the apotheosis of senselessness. The bourgeoisie knows what is happening. Of that there is no doubt. But it does not know why. If it did, it would no longer be bourgeois. Because we are concerned with the totality of existence, the answer must be in terms of a total view, that is to say, a philosophy of life.

#### IV. END OF A PHILOSOPHY

There is no mystery in what is happening to our society. Men live their lives according to a philosophy of life. They always have. They always will. They may not be conscious of it. But when Roman Catholics and Protestants believed that it was their duty to convert, or, failing that, to exterminate each other, ideas were part of a total philosophy of life. Today Catholics and atheists can live peaceably side by side in the same house and are more concerned with whether their neighbors are Fascist or Communist, with which political party they belong to, than which Church they attend. Obviously the view of what constitutes the fundamentals of existence has changed. People do not need to be philosophers to have a philosophy of life.

Philosophers seek to formulate in precise and comprehensive terms the ideas of their age, or propagate new ideas, in whole or in part. All this would appear to be elementary. It has to be stated, however, because today the great stream of European philosophy has various evil-smelling stagnant pools or little streams that babble as aimlessly and far less usefully than Tennyson's brook. One of the stagnant schools has discovered that the organic constitution of the human mind is gloom, anxiety, dread, suffering, and all varieties of misery. The other begins from the premise that all previous philosophies misconceived language, and they have set out to make language more precise. For them a sentence which states "The future of humanity is in peril," has no meaning. This they demonstrate by devoting twenty pages to the word "the," forty pages to the word "future," and so on. A popular tradition has it that at the end of the great age of Catholicism the theologians debated with passion how many angels could dance on the point of a needle. Today they do not seem so absurd in the light of the number of professors who can dance on the needle of a point. In this way, inquiring youth is corrupted and shepherded into passivity before the crimes and evils of the day.

These learned obscurantists and wasters of paper are of value in that they signify the end of a whole stage in the intellectual history of mankind. Philosophy as such has come to an end.

From Plato to Hegel, European philosophers were

always struggling to make a total harmonious unity of societies riddled by class struggles. They were attempting the impossible, organizing in the mind what could only be organized in society. But contrary to these modern marionettes, they usually cleared away much that had become old and rotten and at least formulated the new. But the time for that is past. The development of science and industry has brought men face to face with the need to make reasonable their daily existence, not to seek in philosophical systems for the harmony that eludes them in life. Over a hundred years ago in one of his greatest passages, Marx saw that religious and philosophical systems had had their day, and men would soon face the realities of social life as phenomena created by human beings, to be organized by human beings in concrete life, and not in the escapism of abstract thought or the mystic symbolism of religious ceremonial. This intellectual clarification had been achieved not by intellectuals but by bourgeois society itself. So in the Communist Manifesto Marx pointed out that in good time men would face the world as it was and therefore have no need of a philosophy to resolve its contradictions. The socialist proletariat would reorganize society.

Conservation of the old modes of production in unaltered form was, on the contrary, the first condition of existence for all earlier industrial classes. Constant revolutionizing of production, uninterrupted disturbance of all social conditions, everlasting uncertainty and agitation distinguish the bourgeois epoch from all earlier ones. All fixed, fast-frozen relations, with their train of ancient and venerable prejudices and opinions, are swept away, all new-formed ones become antiquated before they can ossify. All that is solid melts into air, all that is holy is profaned, and man is at last compelled to face with sober senses, his real conditions of life, and his relations with his kind.

Philosophy must become proletarian—this stinging formulation is the source of jeers and sneers or polite smirks by the philosophically educated. It is nevertheless one of the great truths of our time. Immense numbers of the educated, now compelled at last to face with sober senses the real conditions of life and their real relations with their kind, fly off in all directions, philosophies of anxiety, dizzy gyrations on the meaning of the word "meaning," rediscovering original sin, diving into the depths of the human personality armed with

torchlights made by Freud and Jung, accumulating statistics in the spirit of Mr. Gallup and labeling it sociology.

Though confused and deafened by the clamor above, it is the working class in every country more than any other class which faces very soberly the conditions of life as they are today and knows that the future of human experience lies in the reorganization of these conditions and not in dread, depth psychology, or the ineradicable sense of sin. For the same reason, language is today more than ever adequate for the expression of human needs. This is not because language is more highly developed, but because human needs have become more simplified. With modern means of communication, there is not an urgent social problem today which is beyond the rapid comprehension of the vast majority of mankind. Since the Greek city-state, it is the first time in history that this is possible. There is no mystery in what is happening to our society. If so many find it easier to accept the total destruction of human society rather than see that a new society is all around them, a society based on cooperative labor, it is not merely because of greed, desire to retain privilege, original sin. It is because, arising out of these material privileges and re-enforcing them is a habit of mind, a way of viewing the world, a philosophy of life still so powerful because by means of it man has conquered nature. It has governed the world for over four hundred years and now it has come to an end.

Beginning in the Sixteenth Century, mankind liberated itself from the static closed conceptions of the universe which had characterized the medieval epoch. The study of science and the revolutionizing of production which had grown up within feudal society opened up the perspective of conquering nature and subjecting it to human control. Copernicus, Galileo, Descartes, Michelangelo, Leonardo da Vinci, Columbus, and Shakespeare are some of the symbols of the new age. For us today, the most significant is Descartes.

To a society advancing in science and industry, Descartes gave a philosophy that expressed and released the readiness to adventure in every realm, including the realm of ideas. His philosophy was imbued with the conviction that every discovery contributed to the liberation of humanity. It inculcated freedom from national prejudice for all thinking men. This philosophy bore its name on its face—rationalism. "I think, therefore I am," said Descartes, and the world rejoiced at the per-

spective of the expansion of individual personality and human powers through the liberation of the intellect. This resting of self-certainty on man's own thought, and man's thought alone, was a revolutionary defiance of the medieval dogma which had derived certainty of self from God or the Church. Rationalism encouraged and developed an elite, the organizers of ideas, the organizers of industry, the discoverers in science. At that stage of human development they were needed. They cultivated the individual personality. It followed that they looked upon the masses of men as passive unthinking servants of the active organizing elite. Rationalism saw each human being as an individual, the natural leaders being the most able, the most energetic, the most far-seeing individuals. Its political form, as developed by Locke, if only as an ideal, was democracy, the transference of free individual competition into politics. It was invaluable in the conquest of nature, and under its banner reaction was driven steadily back and the modern world was created.

Today the tasks envisaged by Descartes, the great men of the Sixteenth Century and their followers in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth, are accomplished. The pressing need of society is no longer to conquer nature. The great and pressing need is to control, order, and reduce to human usefulness the mass of wealth and knowledge which has accumulated over the last four centuries. In human, in social terms, the problem of mankind has gone beyond the association of men in a natural environment to achieve control over nature. Today mankind is sharply divided into two camps within the social environment of production, the elite and the mass. But the trained, educated elite no longer represents the liberation of mankind. Its primary function is to suppress the social community which has developed inside the process of production. The elite must suppress the new social community because this community is today ready to control, order, and reduce to human usefulness the mass of accumulated wealth and knowledge. This antagonistic relation between an administrative elite calculating and administering the needs of others, and people in a social community determining their own needs, this new world, our world, is a world which Descartes never knew or guessed at. As an actual liberating philosophy of life, rationalism is dead. It is rationalism which no longer commands the allegiance of men.

Yet on both sides of the Iron Curtain, it is ration-

alism which still rules. Stalinist totalitarianism is merely the material expression of the elite philosophy of rationalism carried to its ultimate conclusion. Its philosophy of the Party is the philosophy of the organized elite. Its philosophy of the Plan is the philosophy of the organizing intellect. It is the attempt to take what was living, creative, dynamic, adventurous in the early days of science and industry and make it into a blueprint to regulate the infinitely complex life of modern society. Its conception of the masses of the people is that they are the means by whose labor and sacrifice are to be achieved ends which only the elite can visualize clearly. Hence the blindness, the moral degradation, the dehumanization which overtakes those who today practice the philosophy of rationalism. Two philosophies, the philosophy of man's mastery over men and the philosophy of man's mastery over things, have met face to face.

Fascism, Corporate State, One-Party State, Welfare State, Totalitarianism, all of these are ways in which rationalism attempts to adapt itself to the modern community. Thereby it not only obstructs the new society. It destroys all the achievements of rationalism itself. The free development of the individual personality, the right of the meanest intelligence to wander through the strangest seas of thought, alone if need be, this freedom has been established as a universal principle, however limited it might be by the actual conditions of existence at any particular place or time. It is now an ineradicable part of the human personality. The new society, the community of cooperative labor, can function adequately only if this freedom can expand to its fullest degree. Today rationalism destroys it, not only for the mass, but for the elite itself. So Hitler and Stalin become the sole individuals in their countries entitled to any personality at all. Political parties in parliamentary democracies become machines in which the individual must either conform or be ruthlessly eliminated. Human associations no longer are guided by leadership, they pay homage to "the leader." That is why "on both sides of the Curtain—and rapidly developing in Asia and Africa—modern urban, industrial (or industrializing) society renders its citizens ever more rootless in their local habitations, ever more mobile, ever more atomistic. They do not feel their society. They do not seem parts of it." But a society of Workers Councils in every department of the national life, and a Government of Workers Councils? Ah! That, if you please,

will mean—the destruction of culture. As if for fifty years official society has not been systematically destroying culture in its most precious castle—the mind of man. Sometimes some scrap of reality appears for a brief moment among the perpetual stupidity, lies, hypocrisy and self-delusion which the daily Press mechanically places before even its most pretentious customers. Thus the London Times for April 18th, 1957, suddenly informs its readers:

It is, for example, being widely said that the political and industrial conflicts in contemporary Britain arise from the fact that two fundamentally opposite moralities, a bourgeois morality and a collective morality, are flourishing side by side and that their respective adherents find it increasingly hard to discover a common basis for discussion.

It is a peculiar idea that both these societies are "flourishing." Let that pass.

There they are, the two societies. But we read on and it turns out that the bourgeois morality is—Christianity. "Conservative Freedom Pays;" a Prime Minister in the House of Commons, twisting and cheating like a racing tout in the dock, when asked if American planes loaded with hydrogen bombs are flying over England; employers straining like greyhounds on the leash for a government signal to have the showdown with the workers; professors sitting up late over Jung to find reasons why royalty is part of the collective unconscious (British), this is capitalistic society? No such thing. It is Christianity, and the Archbishop of Canterbury is its prophet.

## V. NEW SOCIETY: NEW PEOPLE

Yet it is in aging, creaking, conservative Britain that there flourishes as solid, as cohesive and as powerful a national concentration of the new society as exists anywhere on the face of the globe. It is composed of millions of men, with ideals and loyalties of their own. Here is one of the rare descriptions of them, as profound and brilliant a description of British life as has appeared for years. From it newspaper editors, book publishers, and directors of radio stations would recoil as if stung (as indeed they would be). But millions of workers would recognize it at once, and it is the kind of information that the masses of people everywhere need and never get. It is an account of shop stewards, not only as a social force, but as human beings.

It would be impossible concretely and in detail to show, in the space of a few pages, how the growth in power of the shop committees, in turn enabled the most advanced socialist to begin to see the growing up of a new way of life and organization (I think that is what *State Capitalism and World Revolution* means by human relations). But one concrete example is in the very center of the clash of classes, at the negotiating committees between the shop stewards and the managements. It can be a shattering and highly formative experience, to observe, week in and week out, that there are two different ways of life on either side of that table, and that the overwhelming preponderance of all the classic human virtues is on the side of the shop stewards. In an average works committee meeting, the managing director is in the chair at the head of the table. On one side of the table will be the convenor of the shop stewards, and five or six other stewards elected to represent the Shop Stewards Committee and through them every worker in the plant. On the other side will be say the works manager, production manager, a chief of the planning department, and deputy of the works manager, the head of the drawing office, and the sales manager. An amazing dialectical revolution takes place.

## THE SHOP STEWARD IS FREE

The shop stewards, workers to a man, all of them, fitters, turners, production line workers, are no longer employees; they are no longer under the orders of the managers or even the managing director; they are the equals of the managing director. But the managerial side of the negotiations, they the managers, are the employees. The shop stewards are free and equal men, deriving their authority from the workers they represent. The managers are mere employers hired and fired by the managing director. The policy of the manager's side is set by the free discussion and free vote by the Shop Stewards Committee. It is usual that there is, as there is always, a majority and a minority, in the shop stewards' debates; always a spokesman of the minority is included in the negotiations to see that the majority, in negotiating with management, is not unfair to the minority. No minority in a Shop Stewards Committee ever feels oppressed, there is free discussion, and democratic decision. The management knows there are divisions always on the workers' side, and always try to use that knowledge. But never, in all the negotiations with employers at which I have assisted, or which I ever heard of, has the workers' side ever shown the employers anything but a completely united front.

These are loyalties of the new age. These are indeed the classic human virtues.

## MANAGEMENT IS TIED AND BOUND

On the employers' side, there is the unanimity of bankruptcy, because with them they have a boss who alone ultimately tells them what to do. If the advice of a works manager and his policy over weeks or months is accepted by the managing director, the boss, and it turns out wrong, he is sacked. Every individual manager is always under this strain. But the shop steward negotiators are free men, who are never penalized in this way. There are no bosses, no sackings in the Shop Stewards Committee. The average shop steward glories in the battle in the negotiations, he gives of his best always; there is no boss breathing down his neck. It is a matter of common knowledge that the shop stewards in negotiations are ruthless, never to be satisfied, and can always drive wedges into the artificial monolithism of the management. If a works

manager is a reasonable man, you praise him to the director, and make him suspect. If he is a harsh disciplinarian, you accuse him of provoking strikes. All these things are difficult to detail; but the total result is that the shop stewards' method of organisation, with everything that it involves, proves itself in every way superior to the way of the management's. The shop steward who thinks, who is a revolutionary, values highly the system which has made him what he is.

## "THEY GLORY IN THE STRUGGLE"

These are new men, new types of human beings. It is in them that are to be found all the traditional virtues of the English nation, not in decay as they are in official society, but in full flower because these men have perspective. Note particularly that they glory in the struggle. They are not demoralized or defeated or despairing persons. Wages is the least of their problems. They are animated by broad far-reaching social purposes. They are leaders but they are rooted deep among those they lead. As is inevitable, they have in them many of the national prejudices, but this is due to the grip on education and mass publication of the decaying official society. They are getting rid of these hangovers and replacing them by virtues and qualities their ancestors never knew. Careful study of the national communities of advanced Western civilization will show that despite wide variations, all are based on the same fundamental relations of the classes that exist in England today.

In the working classes of the world, in production relations and personal relations, there are being posed, and foundations laid, for solution of gigantic problems which have baffled the world for centuries. We can only touch briefly on one of them—the place of women in society.

## WOMEN AND EQUALITY

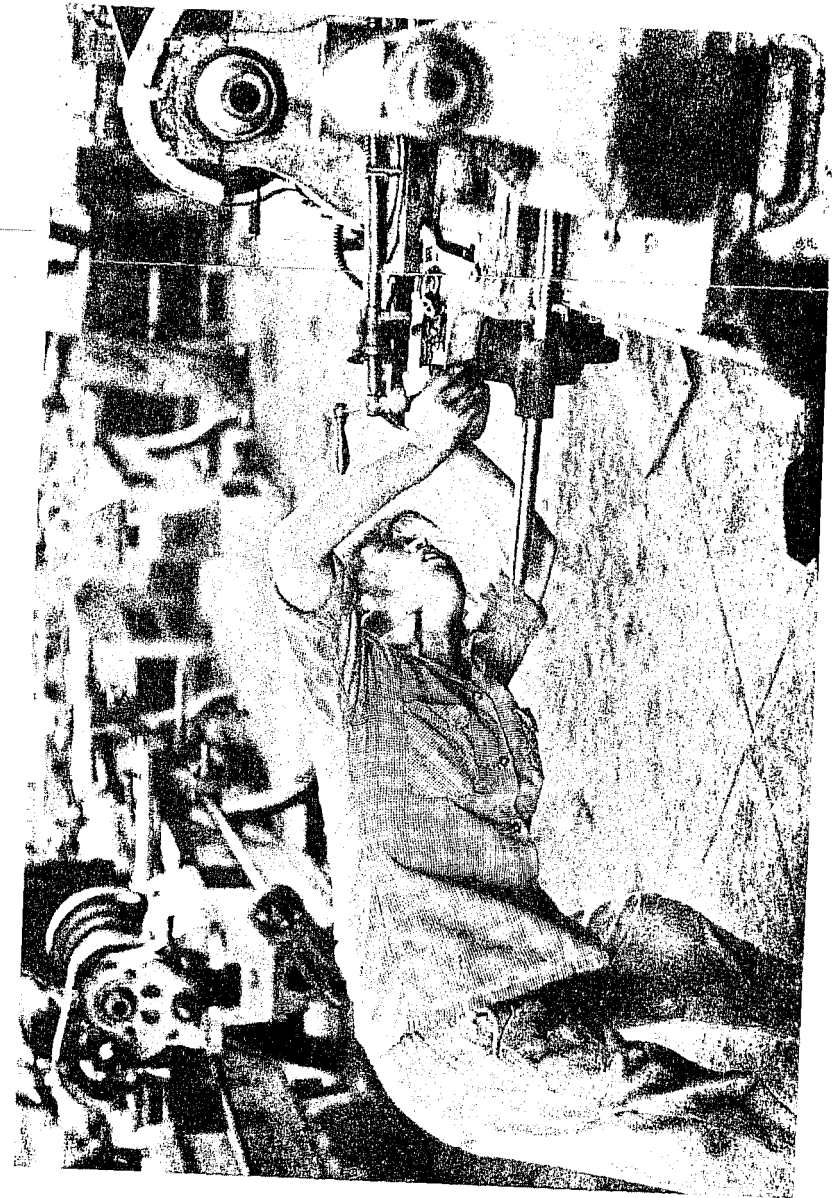
Capitalist society has by slow and grudging degrees given equality to women. But it is the same abstract type of equality that an individual welder or maintenance man has with another individual who employs 10,000 men. Both are able to cast a vote and are therefore equal. Just as Parliamentary Democracy ignores, and in fact increases, the real inequality of different classes of men in capitalist society, so women found that equality before the law rid them of certain oppressive and offensive feudal limitations, only to bring



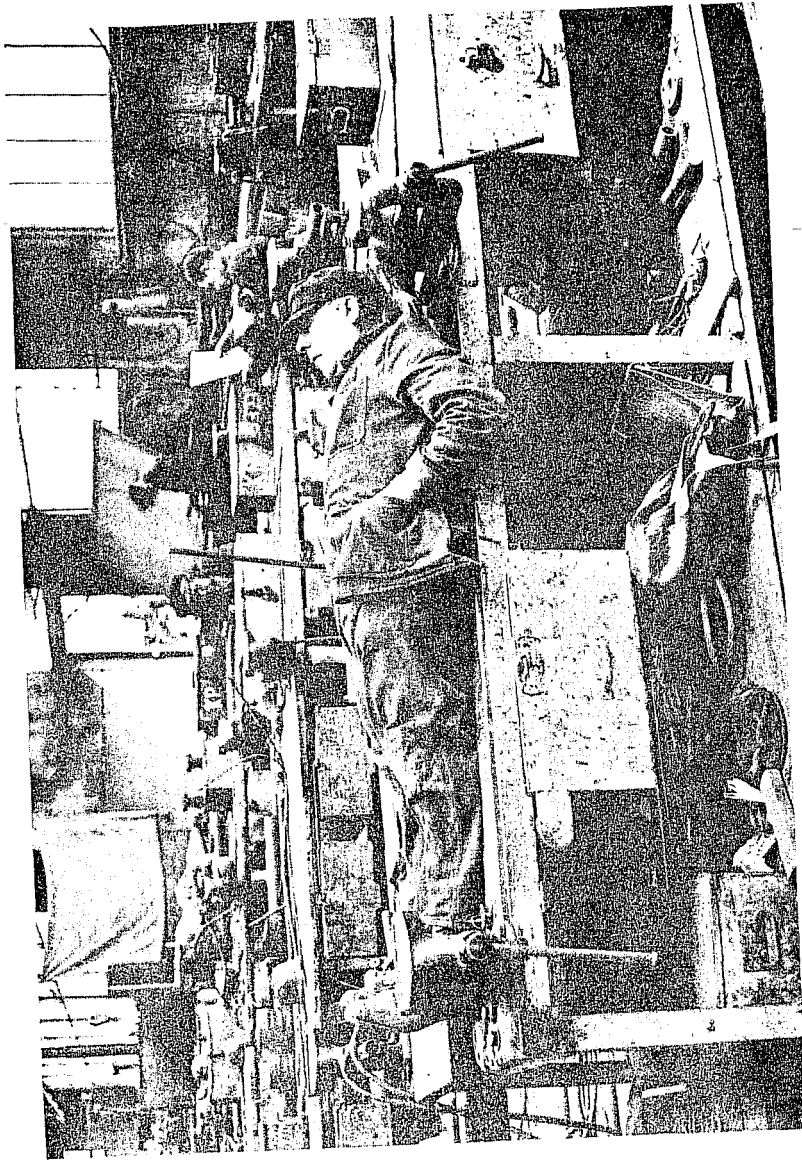
before them more starkly the handicaps of child-bearing and child-rearing in a competitive society, re-enforced by the accumulated prejudices of centuries of class society. It is in the United States, where women are abstractly most free, that there is taking place a colossal struggle for the establishment of truly human relations between men and women. Among the professional classes, as part of the general reactionary trend, most women at marriage give up the unequal contest and compromise with their most dearly-cherished aspirations for equality. The result is the mounting divorce statistics and, where divorce does not take place, an antagonism in sex and personal relations. For years this aspect of American society was regarded with astonishment and often with distaste, not only by men, but by women, in other countries. But the modern economy draws into cooperative labor or related activities all sections of the population, including women. Official society itself can no longer defend the shams and vulgarity and cruelty of bourgeois morality. The result is that women everywhere are beginning to recognize that the hitherto notorious sex war in American life is in reality one of the advanced positions of the new society seeking to make official abstractions into human reality.

But as usual, though the middle classes often pose in advance the fundamental questions of the day, they cannot solve them. The United States more than any other country produces a number of exceptional women, career women, usually viragoes who by use of their intellectual and other gifts transform themselves as far as is humanly possible into feminine counterparts of men and believe that thereby they have solved the "woman question." Others have only to go and do likewise. This is no more than rationalist individualism in skirts.

The real battle for new relations between the sexes is being fought above all in the American working class. During the war millions of women went into industry and many have remained there. They have no money for the elaborate home organization of the successful career woman. They retain the desire themselves to make a home and rear a family. But they have no intention of once more becoming an adjunct to the male wage-earner so that he can adequately fulfill the needs of capitalist production. In the age-long struggles of human beings to remould their world nearer to their heart's desire, rarely have such heroic efforts, such



China: Lathe operator



Germany: Auto Worker

courage, such resource, such ingenuity been shown as in the efforts of American working women to live a complete life, a life corresponding to the technical achievements and social relations of their highly-developed society. As long as official society lasts, they cannot win a complete victory, but positions have been gained and if some have been lost, many have been held. This, one of the greatest social struggles of our time, goes unrecorded! What have Congress, or the New York Times, or Alistair Cooke to do with all this?

The working class in every country lives its own life, makes its own experiences, seeking always to create forms and realize values which may originate directly from its organic opposition to official society, but are shaped by its experiences in cooperative labor. Nowhere is this more marked than in the United States where the raucous rowdiness of Republicans and Democrats obscures and drowns out the mass search for a way of life; not a new way but simply a way, the famous "American Way" being strictly an export commodity. Quite often, the reaction is for the time being merely negative, but none the less indicative of the future. In the American plant the shop steward, or shop committeeman, although elected, is a functionary of the union, whose main business is to see that the company's contract is carried out. Millions of American workers will not accept any position of authority in the plant, neither as committeeman nor foreman, nor lead girl. In the United States, so jealously democratic and egalitarian in its social practices, these workers shun like the plague any position which, as they have seen so often, will transform them into bureaucratic tools of the capitalist mechanism. They sometimes go farther and deliberately elect or propel to these unhealthy positions, persons whom they recognize as being naturally inclined to them. For militant Negro workers this poses a specially difficult problem. As workers they share the revulsion of their fellows to being drawn out of the rank and file shop floor organizations. As Negroes they are dedicated to seeing that Negroes are represented in every layer of American society, particularly in the plant. To accept or not to accept. Often the decision is difficult. Such is but one example of the social dramas, individualism and collectivism fused, that are being posed and worked out by trial and error in that pulsing mass of working class humanity that seeks no escape from the real conditions of life in existentialism

(France) or psychoanalysis (the United States) or playing with words and meanings (Great Britain).

#### THE BARBARISM OF OUR TIMES

There is no mystery about what is taking place in our society. Our age is the most barbarous, the most cruel, the most sadistic, the most callous history has ever known precisely because of the civilization, culture, and high aspirations of the great masses of the people. Nothing but the most unlicensed, unrestrained, carefully cultivated brutality can keep them down. These are not slaves of Imperial Rome or peasants in ancient Assyria. A modern working man, whether he is in the plant or mine with his co-workers, lives by the ideas of universal secondary education, religious toleration, care of children and of the aged, freedom of speech and assembly, mastery of technical processes and self-government in industry, world peace—elevated conceptions which would stun into awed silence the most gifted minds of Western Civilization from Plato and Aristotle to Kant and Hegel. There is no more dramatic moment in the history of philosophy than that in which the young Hegel, after describing the disorder and torment inflicted on society by capitalist production, came face to face with the fact that only the proletariat could resolve it. Leaving the page forever unfinished, he turned to idealism. Marx completed it for him. At the other end of the scale it was the ineffable Joseph Stalin who decreed that the more socialism was established in Russia, the fiercer would become the class struggle. Thereby in his own cabalistic manner, he declared the need either for an oppression which would grow along with the economic development—or the Government of Workers Councils. Official society seeks to excuse itself for the horrors and abominations perpetrated by Hitler and Stalin. The mud and blood are on their own hands and faces. The triumphs of Western Civilization are common to all its members and common to all of them are its disasters and its decline. There is not a single national concentration of power and privilege in official society which would not mutilate and torture its own population in the Hitler-Stalin manner if it needed to, and could. Repeatedly we see in the Press that a hydrogen bomb would kill so many million people and render uninhabitable for some period undefined so many hundred square miles. This in defense of “our liberties” and “our high standard of living.” It is a criminal self-deception to presume that any home popu-

lation is safe from these defenders of the law, order, family, morals, religion, culture, and property of official society against the new.

#### THE NEW NATIONS

The world proletariat, with those of Russia and the United States at the head, constitutes a minority even in the advanced countries. In these countries its concentration and cohesion are sufficient to make it the guiding force and motive power of the new society. But the vast majority of the world's population lives in the underdeveloped countries of Asia, Africa, and Latin America. The abiding impudence of imperialism continues to see them as objects of profit and of use; at the present time as prospective allies of one or the other power bloc. The truth is that vast millions of these people are new human beings, ready for the new society in that they have uncompromisingly, often violently, rejected the status of national humiliation and social misery in which they were kept by official society.

The Russian Revolution shattered the structure of official Europe. The Chinese Revolution shattered the structure of official Asia. The revolution in Ghana has forever destroyed the structure which official society had imposed upon tropical Africa. This should be a truism, yet it is impossible to approach any sphere of even contemporary history without using bulldozers and gas masks to clear the barriers and survive the fumes with which it is surrounded by the propaganda corps of official society. Ireland won, it was not given its freedom. Gandhi introduced a new dimension into the technique of mass struggle for national independence and perhaps for more. His political genius, one of the greatest of our times, is obscured by the inflation of Lord Mountbatten. The latest, and perhaps the most dangerous, addition to official mythology is that the new state of Ghana was given its independence by the British Government as the conclusion to a period of careful training and preparation—dangerous because large areas in Africa are still fighting for their freedom.

#### THE GOLD COAST REVOLUTION

The truth, which is undergoing a systematic obliteration, is quite different. Nkrumah reached the Gold Coast in November 1947, uncertain whether he would be allowed to land or not. In one of the most remarkable episodes in revolutionary history he singlehandedly outlined a program, based on the ideas of Marx, Lenin, and Gandhi, for expelling British Imperialism from the

Gold Coast. Under his guidance, in little over two years, the people of the Gold Coast brought the economy and social life of the Gold Coast to a standstill in a general strike over the whole country whose slogan was: Self-Government Now. The British Government jailed the leaders and sought to crush the movement. But when an election showed that the revolutionary spirit of the population was determined and could only be suppressed by wholesale massacre, it decided that such a massacre would, among other dangers and possibilities, certainly drive India out of the Commonwealth. It therefore retreated, putting the best possible face on the matter, and giving as gracefully as it could what it had already lost.

We rectify this falsification, not to discredit British Imperialism—that, it does today more efficiently than it does anything else. We wish to draw attention to one of the great social forces of the day, the spirit of renaissance which now animates the vast millions everywhere in the globe, and the creative handling of modern political techniques by their leaders. The creation of the Republic of India, the brushing aside of Nizams, Maharajas, Gaekwars, and Nawabs (feudal relics maintained solely by British power), the organization of the provincial regions, the setting up of parliament, the consolidation of the Congress Party and the universal suffrage in a vast population largely illiterate, and all with a minimum of violence and disturbance, this is one of the greatest political achievements of our own or any other age. Similarly it is organization of the Convention People's Party of Ghana which is the outstanding political achievement so far carried out in tropical Africa since the beginning of its direct subordination to European Imperialism. That it is not an accident is proved by the fact that it is paralleled by the Rassemblement Democratique Africain (Democratic Movement of Africans), a party organized by Africans in the French colonies. If less dynamic than the Convention People's Party, it exceeds it in scope, being the leading party in several colonies, comprising many millions of French West Africans spread over many tens of thousands of square miles. Compared to these purely African creations, French Imperialism masquerading as Pygmalion, determined to make Frenchmen out of Africans, and the British Colonial Office, with its perpetual checkers game of shifting black and white in Executive Councils, would be comic spectacles if they did not enforce their foolishness with machine guns and planes. Both in the

spirit of their populations and the manner in which they utilize for new purposes and in new ways the older political forms now outmoded in the West, the undeveloped countries are part of the new society, not of the old. In a few years there will not be a colony left in the world except those areas which Russia and the United States are colonizing in their different ways.

#### 600,000,000 CHINESE

We cannot here go into any details of the expulsion of imperialism from China. It is customary to say that the Chiang-Kai-Shek regime fell apart from its own rotteness, and the Chinese Communists had only to take over. This is true but only in the last stages.

In the years 1929-1939 Chiang-Kai-Shek exhausted the resources of his regime in the greatest effort it ever made—the effort to crush the Chinese Communists. Cut off from contact with Moscow, Mao-Tse-Tung and his fellow revolutionists built a party and an army in strict relation to their objective environment and the need of self-preservation. Their resistance to the attempt of Chiang-Kai-Shek to exterminate them is one of the great epics of revolutionary struggle. They were sustained by peasant support of the most heroic bravery and endurance. The Long March of 6000 miles from the South to the North of China takes its place among the greatest actions in history and is unsurpassed in the military history of the Twentieth Century.

Stalinism had little to do with this. It is now common knowledge that Stalin opposed the seizure of power by the Chinese Communists. If China has gone the way of Stalinist totalitarianism, it is because faced with the implacable hostility of United States Imperialism and even more poverty-stricken than the Russia of the October Revolution, it has had no choice but to follow the pattern of its Russian ally. But China will not need forty years to begin the process of detotalitarianization. The dictum of Stalin holds good. The more "socialism," the fiercer the class struggle. The shocks which the Russian empire is experiencing already, the still more violent upheavals which await it, will be felt no more powerfully than in China. It is true to say that the genuine mass revolution, the Twentieth Century uprising of the people, has not yet taken place in China and history has decreed that when it does take place, it will take place against the totalitarian regime.

The people of China made their first modern attempt at self-realization in 1925-27. Stalinism ruined it. They

supported the party and army of Mao-Tse-Tung. But they themselves have not yet come independently upon the stage as the Russian people did in 1905 and then in 1917. They will. The whole history of the Twentieth Century shows that they will. The idea that a party and a bureaucracy can shape the destinies of a people of 600 millions with a great historical past, by means of plans and secret police, breed them, arrange their lives, and build factories as Texas ranchers breed cattle or Egyptian Pharaohs bred slaves and built pyramids, that is a characteristic stupidity of the Twentieth Century official mind. All its own past history teaches it to see the hundreds of millions of Chinese people as pure masses, the object of politics, disciplined by some superior force, themselves, the Kuomintang and now the Chinese Communists. They bewail the anachronistic illusions of Chiang-Kai-Shek. Their own are infinitely greater, and when Twentieth Century humanity comes out into the streets of China and raises its voice, many eardrums hitherto impenetrable, may at last be pierced.

#### THE IMPERIALIST IMPOTENCE

But despite their numbers, their revolutionary spirit, and their demonstrated political capacity, the hopes and prospects of these newly-independent nations are blighted, not by the power, but by the weaknesses of the advanced nations. From the earliest days new nations have depended upon the older, more settled communities for economic aid and political and philosophical ideas. Despite all the trumpeting in the Press, the plain fact is that capitalism today, neither in Russia nor the United States, can produce sufficient surplus capital to assist the underdeveloped nations in building modern economies. Only a socialist economy without the overhead burdens and incompetence of official society, and the immense increase in the productivity of labor which it will rapidly develop, can produce the surplus wealth necessary for the development of world economy as a whole. Still worse, the political and ethical practices and ideas of both the Communist World and the Free World, if taken over by these new nations, would be equivalent to the injection of syphilis into a young man who has reached his maturity, in order to prepare him to assume all his responsibilities. The new nations know this and, even where they pay lip service to free institutions and Parliamentary Democracy, are actually living through a period of waiting to see which of the two rival blocs will emerge triumphant. They

believe that their ultimate fate is bound up with the fate of the world.

This is true, but not in the commonly accepted sense. There is an America which is not Dulles, the Pentagon, and the Southern Negro-haters; a Russia which is not Khrushchev (or whoever may be ruling when this is read), and the Secret Police. If we have not written about, for example, Germany, it is because we here aim to indicate only broad lines of development with chosen concrete instances. The German proletariat is one of the greatest social forces in the world, with a theoretical and practical tradition behind it, in ideas, politics, and labor second to none in the history of Western civilization. That it was not allowed itself to settle accounts with Hitlerism is one of the twin crimes of Russia and the United States. Similarly in Japan, but for the American military occupation wearing the ceremonial robes of the emasculated Emperor, the Japanese proletariat would have made Japan into a modern community. It is here, and not in the decadent official society of Europe and the United States or totalitarian tyranny in China, that the new nations have to educate themselves. It is on this new basis that they will have to develop their perspectives. The imperialist mentality of official society sees them always as poor relations, charitable receptacles for economic aid, for technical assistance, for ideas. It is false, false as every other idea by which official society lives and which it spreads in the world. The underdeveloped countries need to be helped, but they have their own powerful contributions to make to the new society. Already they have assisted it by the great blows they have given to official society. Today by their persistent neutralism they impede, if they cannot prevent, the drive to global suicide.

But there is more. Many of these countries have ancient cultures of their own, with social values, formerly despised, which now often show surprising affinity with the latest discoveries of modern science and the practical creativeness of the advanced proletariat. Further, their lack of economic development is not wholly negative. It enables them to begin, without being burdened by the centuries of accumulated rubbish in advanced countries, most of which is fit only for demolition squads but is preserved by privilege and sheer inertia. On this virgin terrain beginnings of world-historical significance can be made in economic, social,

and ideological life. But most of all, they have the revolutionary spirit of their peoples and the political genius which always accompanies it. They cannot solve their problems except in a global context. But to the extent that they envisage their own future as part of a new world-order, every step that they take to solve their own needs can at the same time serve as inspiration and example to the advanced proletarians hacking their way through the jungle of official society. Such a mutual relation between advanced and underdeveloped countries is beyond the conceited ossification of official mentality. Only its removal will allow the dammed-down currents to flow, and to flow both ways.

#### REQUIRED: INFORMATION

What is the relation of the middle classes to the people of the new society? Some of them whose clerical employment approximates to that of the proletariat see themselves as essentially proletarians and follow the proletarian road. All are to one degree or another shaped in character and outlook by the cooperative character of modern life. What they lack is what they think they more than all others possess. It is information of the new world a-building which the middle classes and the peoples of the underdeveloped countries lack. It is understandable in the case of the people in distant Asia and Africa. But in countries like the United States, Britain, and France, the middle classes are as ignorant of the social structure, aims, and purposes of the industrial proletariat, as they are of the inhabitants of the moon. Every day their ancestral prejudices and links to the bourgeois order receive loosening shock after loosening shock. They have to accommodate themselves to the rejection of their claim to inherent superiority by colonial peoples, to the incompetence and dishonesty of their political leaders, and to the apparently unending demands of the proletariat. Even in the United States, where their financial position for the time being is still easy, the old gods of the national mythology are tumbling down and there is nothing to take their place. Some of the publicists whose special function is to keep the middle classes away from the proletariat like to paint horrible pictures of socialism as a prison for the educated on the Stalinist model. They do not get very far with that. Time and again in recent history the middle classes have shown that they are ready to follow any powerful lead which will take them out of the morass of official society. Dominated by rationalist

ideas, the middle classes, even when sympathetic to labor, judge the proletariat by the fanfaronades and sycophancy of its official leaders. In generations to come, men will marvel at the almost pathological inability of educated society in the middle of the Twentieth Century to recognize the new society which surrounded it on all sides. Yet so universal a phenomenon must have some deep connection with the essential character of the two societies.

#### THE ARTIST AND THE NEW SOCIETY

In previous periods of transition, the new society always announced itself in innumerable ways, not least in the literature and art of the day. The greatest names in Western art and literature, Dante, Shakespeare, Rousseau, Goethe, Herman Melville, Tolstoy, Giotto, Michelangelo, and Rembrandt, to name only a few, were all men of the transition from one age to another, and we may be sure that the people of their day understood them. But whereas for a century the finest minds in the arts have devoted themselves to destroying the intellectual and moral foundations of bourgeois society, they have been incapable of putting into the concentrated, illuminating, and exhilarating forms of art, either the general contours or the individual personalities of the new society. Even in the hectic period of the Nineteen Thirties, writers and artists either portrayed the wasteland of official society or explored new realms of technique. You will search in vain the writings of even pro-Communist writers like Koestler and Malraux for any glimmer of understanding that socialism, or Communism in the sense in which Marx used the word, was first of all a society of a new mode of labor, of new social relations of production, of Workers Councils in every branch of the national activity. For all of them the new society was the society of the Party and the Plan.

Today the cry rises for writers to be "committed," which is only another way of saying that they must attach themselves to one of the great bureaucratic social and political machines: these cannot bear even to contemplate any activity anywhere which does not subscribe to their plans and formulae. As if a man like Dostoevsky, politically a reactionary of the most extreme kind, was not committed, as few have been committed, to the task of showing men what they were and how they lived, so that in the end they understood themselves better than before.

If the middle classes are not helped by modern art to understand the new society, if the Hungarian Revolution had to create without the stimulus and explosive clarification of art, it is because of the very unprecedented character of the new society. All previous social transitions were from one class society to another. The present transition is from class society to a society without classes. And that is no simple matter. Marx was not throwing in a phrase when he said that then the real history of humanity would begin.

The idea of a classless society is a drug that official society takes whenever it is feeling particularly low. In the United States it uses the concept as a stimulus—they are supposed to have it. In older parts of the world it is a tranquillizer — the thing is impossible—Utopia. In the Communist countries it is periodically injected into the population to deaden the pain and to summon up more energy for the Plan. Yet it is precisely here that there is a bridge which the artistic life of official society cannot cross and wastes itself in frustration and despair. Capitalist society has carried to a dead end the traditional division between art, culture, learning, on the one hand, and the mass of the people on the other. This has previously characterized all societies. Yet in previous centuries the Greek dramatists, the Spanish dramatists, the Elizabethan dramatists, the builders of cathedrals, and the painters and sculptors who decorated them, were still close enough to the people to include them in all that they did. But today the artists are so removed from the people that their talents can express themselves only in pure negativity.

But the proletariat also cannot create an art in its own image. A society based on Workers Councils in every branch of the national activity is not a proletarian society. It is an entirely new dimension in human living, and its art also will assume new dimensions. The great gap between the actualities of life and the human need for order and completeness which could only be satisfied in the abstractions of philosophy, art, and religion will disappear. It will disappear because for the first time men, all men, will understand that their future will be shaped by themselves, is in their own hands. Man will become the undisputed center of his universe. Great art always has been and will always be the work of individual men. But they shape their work in accordance with new frames of reference, which their work in

turn helps to define. The new frames of reference are, so far, beyond the comprehension of men trained in the bourgeois-rationalist tradition. The proletariat trains, and can train, no one in its own social traditions, traditions which are not even established except as they are passed from generation to generation for strictly practical purposes. Even the greatest artists of our century, Chaplin, D. W. Griffith, and the early Eisenstein, men who worked for the populace and were recognized and welcomed by it, were confined to ridicule of official society and the reaffirmation of old values. But the film, jazz, and comic strip, where the common people welcomed what seemed to be arts of their own, were rapidly corrupted by official society as it corrupts everything it touches.

In official society the popular arts, television in particular, are already exhausted. Ed Murrow has declared his weariness of its limitations. No one has denounced it with more withering ferocity than Milton Berle. Thus the new, as well as the old organizations of official society, for example, television and monarchy, begin to fall apart, not only from the pressure without, but from the revolt of royalty itself, uncrowned as well as crowned.

So it is that at this stage of our society art is either the contemporary abortions which rasp the nerves and stimulate without satisfying; or it is a retreat to the accepted classics which are only half-understood because they are being used as a bomb shelter, whereas they were originally explosives. There is no help for it. We have to do without and are so much the poorer, incomplete human beings, less fit for life, either social or individual. It is not merely the reorganization of production and political relations which will give their stamp to the new society and complete the individualities of new people. The democracy of Ancient Greece made the greatest step forward that has ever been made in literature when it invented the tragic drama. The reorganization now of society on classless lines by the proletariat will release immense energies in an uninhibited environment. It is a miserable, cringing mentality, confined to the "higher standard of living for our people," striving to hold on to what it has and to keep people where they are, which does not understand that the only way out is to give people new visions of themselves, so that they will find new ways to express them and to create new ties, new bonds, and new understanding between those who are now so divided.

## VI. THE MARXIST ORGANIZATION 1903-1958

What then must we do? And first who are the we?

We are the various groups in every country who have seen that the totalitarian state and the Welfare State are both varieties of state capitalism. We know that nothing but the reorganization of society from the ground up can check the accelerating disintegration.

Before the Spanish Civil War and World War II, many of us either belonged or subscribed loosely to various brands of Trotskyism or other Marxist politics. Now since the end of World War II, a whole new generation of socialists has arisen. Taught by events, we have to one degree or another understood that nationalization of production does not alter the basic framework of capitalist society, we have understood the menace of the State Plan, we have seen the Party for the prison that it is. Some of us reached a remarkable degree of theoretical understanding. But such understanding remained abstract, as it was bound to be: it is the movement of masses which turns theory into life.

Now throughout the world, new life and hope have been awakened by the events in Russia, in Poland, and the revolution in Hungary. But beclouding the new perspective is the fact that during the past thirty years the record of these Marxist organizations has been one of unrelieved failure. The work that has been done has been prodigious. The determined attempt to make and maintain contact with the workers, the publication of pamphlets, theoretical journals, weekly papers, and political resolutions; the agonized scrutiny and rescruity of Marxist classics, the national conferences, the international conferences—it would occupy an international commission for ten years to be able to give any intelligible account of the magnitude of the efforts. The results have been pitiful. Tens of thousands of devoted fighters for socialism have exhausted themselves and ended their struggles in disillusionment, often in bitterness, and not infrequently in the most savage hatred of all that they had for decades given their lives to.

Yet despite the infinite variety of the circumstances, the struggles, and the failures, the whole tragic experience can be summed up today with extreme simplicity.

**They all considered their organizations and themselves as the nucleus of the party, the one and only party, the vanguard party which was destined in time to lead the struggle for socialism.**

This is what ruined them. And the rejection, the conscious, vigilant, implacable rejection of this conception is the indispensable basis of the great work for socialism which is crying to be done and which can be done only by us.

### LENINISM TODAY

Let us define our terms with absolute precision. We are those intellectuals and workers who have been able to see the historical process as a whole. The workers in particular are those workers who, while continuing to be workers and having no other wish in life to be anything but workers, see trade unionism and parliamentary politics merely as a means to an end, the end being the establishment of the socialist society.

However much these intellectuals and workers might differ on doctrinal points, they have been in general governed by the great experience of the Russian Revolution and the writings and example of Lenin. The work of Lenin is one of the great political triumphs of mankind and the first stage in the emancipation not of any particular class but of human society in general. The work of no Marxist, not even of Marx himself, is of such importance for us today. But the study of Leninism and our own experiences should confirm us in what the Hungarian Revolution has unmistakably shown: the specific organizational theory of Leninism, the theory of the Vanguard Party, must now be rejected root and branch.

It was a particular theory, designed to suit a specific stage of development of society and a specific stage of working class development. That stage of society is now past. The theory, and the practice that went with it, are now an anachronism, and, if persisted in, lead to one form or another of the counter-revolution. The first thing we must do is to purge ourselves of it.

### THE THEORY OF MARXIST ORGANIZATIONS: 1903

What was Lenin's theory? Here it is in the clearest and most unambiguous statement of that great master of political exposition. It comes from his *What Is To Be Done?* written in 1903.

In order to be fully prepared for his task the working class revolutionary must also become a professional revolutionary . . . We do not recognize our



duty to assist every capable worker to become a professional agitator, organizer, propagandist, literature distributor, etc., etc. In this respect we waste our strength in a positively shameful manner; we lack the ability to husband that which should be tended and reared with special care. Look at the Germans; they have had a hundred times more forces than we have. But they understand perfectly well that the "average" does not too frequently promote really capable agitators, etc., from the ranks. Hence they immediately try to place every capable working man in such conditions as will enable him to develop and apply his abilities to the utmost: he is made a professional agitator, he is encouraged to widen the field of his activity, to spread it from one factory to the whole of his trade, from one locality to the whole country. He acquires experience and dexterity in his profession, his outlook becomes wider, his knowledge increases, he observes the prominent political leaders from other localities and other parties, he strives to rise to their level and combine within himself the knowledge of working class environment and freshness of socialist convictions with professional skill, without which the proletariat cannot carry on a stubborn struggle with the excellently trained enemy. Only in this way can men of the stamp of Bebel and Auer be promoted from the ranks of the working class.

No one can misunderstand that. The whole theory is that of training a corps of elite workers. If the theory was carried to extremes in Russia, it was because, as Lenin writes almost immediately after: ". . . what takes place very largely automatically in a politically free country must in Russia be done deliberately and systematically by our organizations." It was the police state of Tsarist Russia (and afterwards the perils surrounding the revolution) which forced this conception into narrow channels.

When we have detachments of specially trained working class revolutionaries who have gone through long years of preparation (and of course, revolutionaries "of all arms"), no political police in the world will be able to contend against them, for these detachments of men absolutely devoted and loyal to the revolution will themselves enjoy the absolute confidence and devotion of the broad masses of the workers.

The rigidity of the Leninist organization in Russia was due to the police nature of the Tsarist state. His ideal was the German Social-Democracy, and it was an ideal of specially selected, specially trained revolutionary socialists, agitators, revolutionaries.

Now, half a century after, what do we see? The trained professional agitator, the revolutionary socialist type of Lenin's day is today the basis of the bureaucratic machines of the unions, the political parties, and the governments. Society has moved on since that time and these elite types have now become the greatest obstacles to that release of popular energy and creative power which has always been the most powerful motive force in the creation of a new society. Propaganda of the so-called "Free World" against totalitarianism has obscured the fact that this particular social and political type is not necessarily a Communist. According to the political climate of the country he lives in, he may be a Communist or a rabid anti-Communist. In the United States or in Britain, you will find him on every rung of the ladder of the union or the Labor Party. Often selfless and devoted, he is not infrequently engaged in a desperate struggle against a union or political bureaucracy. But his only perspective is that of substituting a more democratic, more capable, more honest set of bureaucrats. On whichever side of the Iron Curtain he is, he is the mortal enemy of the shop floor organization, of Workers Councils in every branch of the national activity, and of a Government of Workers Councils as the essence and content of a new society. Whether he is Communist or anti-Communist, for him the working class is incapable of acting successfully without a trained and dedicated leadership. Here is the Marxist dialectic in its most profound content. The social type, the specific personality which formed the spearhead of the workers' movement and socialism at the beginning of the century is today the solid core of the bureaucratic reaction in every section of the working class movement.

Today the working class has no need of these proletarian Jesuits. It has arrived at a stage where absolute freedom of organization, complete democracy, is not an aspiration, but the very context, the warp and woof of its daily existence. Administration as such has become alien to it. It is this, rooted in the developing structure of capitalism itself, which has gradually transformed the union and labor party administration

from an instrument of the working class into a thing-in-itself, and inevitably, therefore, into an instrument of reaction. In the quarter of a century following the decline of the Russian Revolution, the organizations of intellectuals and advanced workers signally failed to do what their predecessors did in the generation preceding the Russian Revolution. And this is because they have been trying to do what no longer needed to be done and what therefore could not be done.

What then is the role of the Marxist organization today?

### THE MARXIST ORGANIZATION TODAY

First of all, the Marxist organization has no need whatever to justify to anybody its existence and its activities. In every country, in all periods of modern capitalism, workers and intellectuals have felt the need to organize themselves in order to advance the cause of socialism. They continue to do so at the present time, and they will continue to do it as long as class society exists.

#### SOCIALIST CONSCIOUSNESS AND ORGANIZATION

The Marxist organization is Marxist only to the extent that it takes as its point of departure this fundamental idea which has been demonstrated by the whole history of modern society: that the proletariat is neither "trade unionist" nor socialist only by instinct. On the contrary, the proletariat, by the very circumstances of its existence in modern society, develops forms of life, of action, of consciousness, of human relations, which are socialist, which constitute socialism, the one and only socialism. Socialism is nothing other than the self-organization of the proletariat carried to its ultimate limit. The proletariat of today tends to develop this self-organization in its day-to-day existence. The development of the proletariat under capitalism leads it towards socialist consciousness, and if it didn't lead to there, all talk about socialism would be idle chatter and nothing else.

This can be plainly seen on the historical scale. The Commune in 1871, the Russian Revolution of 1905, the Russian Revolution of 1917, the Spanish Revolution, the Hungarian Revolution, these are only the most dramatic stages of the struggle of the proletariat to organize itself independently, and to reconstruct the totality of social relations. They are the stages of a dialectical progression, dialectical because the achieve-

ments of each period are absorbed and surpassed in the period following.

The idea that the independent organizations of the masses must replace the bureaucratic bourgeois apparatus of the state was first realized by the Commune. It was pushed to further limits by the Soviets of 1905 and 1917. The immense merit of Marx and Lenin was not that they invented this idea, which they would not have been able to do in any case. It was that they were able to recognize the importance of the actual steps taken by the workers, to elaborate the idea and to defend it against reactionary ideologists. The idea of workers' management of factories, first advanced by the Russian Factory Committees of 1917, was re-invented by the workers of Catalonia in 1936-1937 and has now been brilliantly reaffirmed by the Workers Councils of Hungary in 1956. Our task is to recognize its fundamental importance, to elaborate it and to defend it. The recognition of this socialist creativeness among workers must not be confined to great historical occasions. Today it is far more important to recognize it in the sphere of day-to-day activity. We have already pointed out that in the factories workers develop methods and forms of cooperation, of mutual help and solidarity, of organization, which already anticipate socialist relations. Here also the task of a revolutionary organization is, first, to recognize these forms, to explain the significance of them, and to let itself be guided by them in what it is doing and in what it is saying.

The idea that the emancipation of the workers will be the work of the workers themselves is the literal and the total truth. It is not enough to say that the working class alone has the necessary force to realize its emancipation, as if the working class were the steam of an engine with intellectuals as mechanics and engine drivers. The reality is that it is the working class alone which is able to produce the organization, the forms, and ideas which this emancipation demands.

#### THE BLINDNESS AND FAILURE OF "THE VANGUARD"

It is absolutely imperative to put an end to the legend of "the vanguard" which has dominated the revolutionary movement for so many decades with such catastrophic results. No one denies that, as in every group of human beings, differentiations exist within the proletariat itself, in regard to clarity of ideas and attitudes, continuity in action, militancy, etc. But today the idea is inherent in the traditional organizations and in the majority of all present-day groups that there must

be a body of sharply differentiated individuals who must separate themselves from the working class and so form a permanent organization which is more conscious, more militant, more coherent in its actions than the great mass of the workers. This is pure and simple delirium. The people who consider themselves as "the vanguard" are not in general more conscious than the "backward" working class, except from one point of view which is extremely narrow and limited and which in the end, on account of its limitations, becomes a negative element. These self-styled leaders are conscious on the purely "political" level, in that they know (generally very badly) the history of the workers' movement and the elements of Marxism reduced to their most simple formulae; they are interested in international politics; they know the names of the chief ministers of such and such a country, and the number of deputies of such and such a party. But they are in general **unconscious** of what constitutes the most profound realities of capitalist society, the realities of production. Often even when they come from the working class and remain in the factories, they undergo a curious optical inversion in that they can no longer see what takes place in the factory, being totally occupied in carrying out a political line which they bring from outside. Their usual aim, irrespective of anything else, is to make the workers adopt the line and slogans of the political organization to which they, men of "the vanguard," belong.

Even when they do not undergo this perversion, they are sometimes unconsciously led to consider that the elements who are the most exploited and "the most backward" among the workers have little to contribute to the struggle and nothing to contribute to the ideas of socialism. This is their greatest error and its falsity is shown by the whole past history of workers' struggles and what is going on under their very noses today.

#### WHO ARE THE BACKWARD ONES?

But the final judgment on the concept of "the vanguard" considered from its point of view is contained in the history of workers' revolutions, those revolutions which should have been the supreme justification of "the vanguard" and which should have proved its necessity and placed the seal on its historic role. Instead, this history is a merciless condemnation of "the vanguard." On every occasion "the vanguard" has found itself far behind in relation to the action and ideas of

the masses in the revolution; on every occasion, instead of showing the road, they have dragged lamentably in the rear, trying with great difficulty to adapt themselves to events; on every occasion it is the most exploited elements, the most "backward," the most humble, who have been the most audacious, the most creative, the ones who have carried the movement forward without faltering as far as it was able to go, and sometimes further. Such was the considered judgment of Lenin in 1917.

A vanguard is a vanguard only in special circumstances and in relation to certain very narrow purposes. It has no advantage in itself. There is not, and cannot be, any permanent selection of a group of individuals able to direct the working class. In ordinary times the only chosen body of leaders who can lead the workers is the one which helps to keep them under the yoke of capitalist exploitation. What else is the daily function of Stalinists and other union bureaucrats? And periods of great social crisis are periods of great social crisis precisely because workers are no longer listening to leaders but are acting independently in independent organizations.

Not only is the Marxist organization not a "body of leaders." The problem of leadership is a false problem. Men have always had and will always have leaders. A member of the Marxist organization can be and often is the leader of many thousands of men. But during and after the struggle for socialism, there is no other leadership than the workers organized in Workers Councils.

#### BOLSHEVISM AND STALINISM

Every nail in this coffin must be driven firmly home. The old type of Marxist organization had certain beliefs about itself. It believed that it represented the general interests of the proletariat to the degree that these general interests are opposed to the particular interests of special categories of workers. It believed that it represented the international point of view as opposed to national particularism. It believed that it represented the "maximum" program and the ultimate, total objectives of the workers' struggles to the degree that these are in opposition to the "minimum" demands of the day-to-day struggles. All these beliefs led to the conclusion that the organization was the true **subject**; that is to say, the motivating force of history. And if the organization was the **subject** of history, the pro-

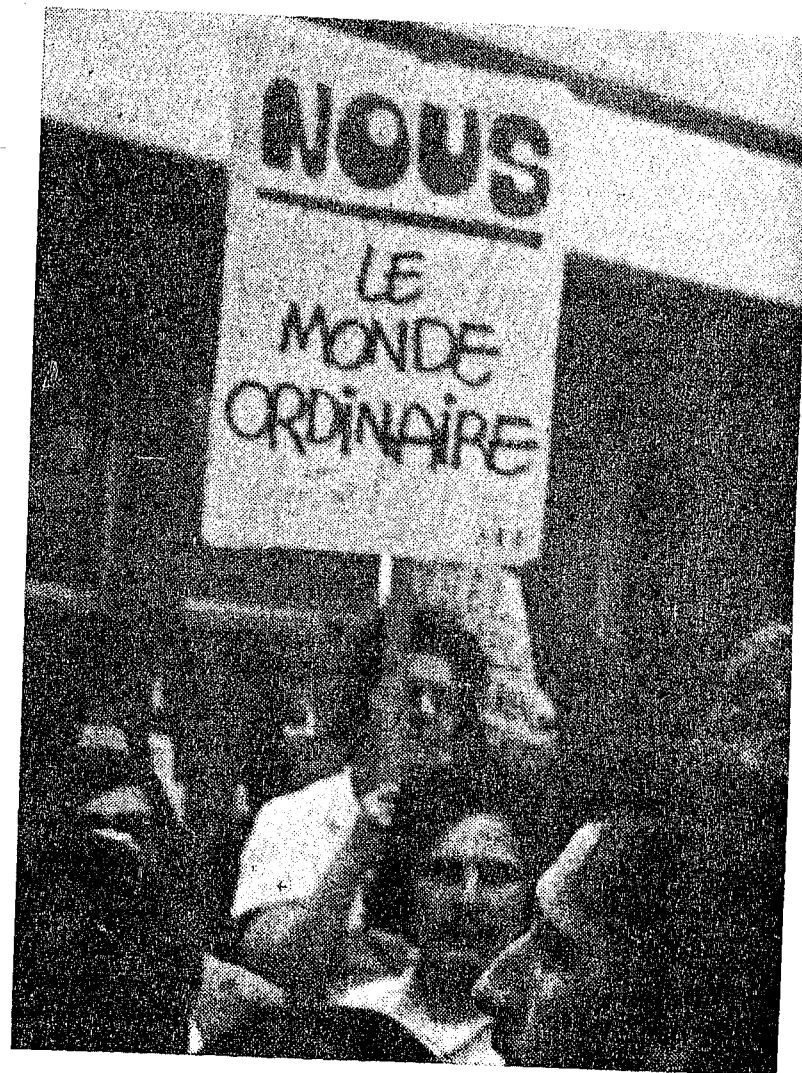
letariat was the **object**. In this conception the organization, in philosophical terms, was the Universal. This conception of the organization is inherent in the extreme views that Lenin expounded in *What Is To Be Done?* He repudiated them later, but not with the force and thoroughness which were needed to prevent them from doing infinite mischief. In the hands of Stalinism, which had no use for the great theoretical strides forward Lenin had made in his *Notebooks* during the war and *State and Revolution*, these views became the chief theoretical weapon of the counter-revolution. There is no excuse whatever for Trotsky, in 1938, saying that scientific socialism is only the conscious expression of the elementary and instinctive drive of the proletariat to reconstruct society on Communist foundations. The relation between theory and revolutionary organization on one side, and the action and organization of the proletariat on the other, cannot be a relation between the conscious and the instinctive. The Bolshevik Party of Lenin was the greatest political party the modern world has known. In its heroic days it was incontestably the party of the proletariat and there is no greater testimony to this than the fact that before it could enslave the Russian proletariat, Stalinism had to destroy the party almost to a man, discredit, disgrace, and vilify its leaders, rewrite the history of the Revolution, and suppress or reinterpret its historical documents. But even this party in the last analysis was a type of parliament with representatives of the workers divided into debating factions, increasingly removed from the actual conditions of social and particularly proletarian life. Today a party on that model in an advanced country can be nothing else but an instrument of oppression, tyranny, and failure.

Who has not learned this after the Hungarian Revolution should cease his criticism of Stalinism, union bureaucrats, and parliamentary labor leaders, for he belongs with them and their function of safeguarding official society from Workers Councils in every branch of the national activity.

#### REQUIRED: INFORMATION OF THE NEW SOCIETY

The first duty of the organization is to place at the disposal of the working class all possible means, material and intellectual, of expressing itself, its own conditions of life, and its own aims.

Material means, because bourgeois society is organically organized so as to inhibit, repress, and when



Quebec 1972 General Strike: "We the ordinary people"

necessary, persecute and destroy all attempts by workers even to express an independently proletarian attitude to society. The labor bureaucrats, Stalinist or democratic, do this not only as a direct result of the very structure of society, but because any such independent expression immediately calls into question their own leadership, and obviously can have no other purpose. All objectively reactionary tendencies in bourgeois society reach their ultimate expression in Stalinism, where they assume their most finished and conscious form. It is in Stalinism, therefore, that they can be most fruitfully studied. The shifts and turns of Stalinist policy can be traced easily enough to the needs of the Kremlin, on whose power Stalinism depends to get into power ultimately. But the method used is one of deliberately confusing and corrupting the intelligence and the will of the workers so that in the end they learn to leave everything to the Party and its slogans.

However powerful the independent efforts at self-realization in individual factories or units of production, they remain isolated from factory to factory, from nation to nation. Any attempt to form organizations or even to acquire independent material means of expression is at once set upon by political representatives of the various bureaucracies within the working class itself, incorporated or suppressed by the power of the machine, and very often of official society itself. Workers are at their very best in collective action in the circumstances of their daily activity or crises arising from it. The individual talent for gathering, coordinating, and publishing information on independent activities of national and international scope is inhibited and stifled objectively and subjectively by every organized social force in official society. Only in a Marxist organization can such workers find the possibility of developing their talents without fear of being prostituted to bureaucratic ends. Only the Marxist organization can have the means, the forces, and the independence to keep the workers aware of what is taking place in their world-wide, universal, but uncoordinated (except at critical moments) efforts to create the new society. Finally, only the Marxist organization recognizes this daily activity as socialism.

#### REQUIRED: INFORMATION OF OFFICIAL SOCIETY

The Marxist organization has another task, that of providing information about official society. Official society falsifies all information intended for the great



Northern Ireland

mass of the people, first because it is in its very nature to do so. Any elite must of necessity consciously falsify the information it gives to the mass. But the falsity of the information handed out by both the public and private bodies of official society is false for a deeper reason. Official society does not know and has no means of knowing or even of understanding the actual facts of its own existence. A French Prime Minister asserts that the cost of the war in Algeria is 1,000 million francs a year. An ex-Prime Minister contradicts him flatly and declares that the cost is 2,000 million francs a year. The boasted forum of democracy, question time in the House of Commons, sees the Opposition inquiring from the Prime Minister whether planes loaded with hydrogen bombs are flying over Britain and the Prime Minister unable to give a straight answer on this matter which literally involves the life or death of millions of people. It is only since de-Stalinization that people have come to know what was always obvious to any student of Stalin's writings and speeches—his incredible, his stupendous ignorance of the most elementary economic matters at home, and politics and war abroad. The Press Conferences of the President of the United States have become not only an embarrassment but a burden to American reporters who have to make not only sense, but even sentences of his ramblings and stutterings.

If tomorrow it was discovered that the President had died long ago and someone resembling him had been substituted to win power for the party, most Americans would shrug their shoulders, so great is the cynicism and distrust of all official pronouncements among the people. It cannot change as long as society is organized as it is.

The first necessity of democracy is accurate information. In fact, it is not too much to say that in present-day society the main task of any government is to collect information and so organize it and present it to the people that they are able to make their decisions and their choices. Without this, all talk of democracy is a farce. As it is, the governments of official society do not know the economic facts of society because the most important of these facts, the attitudes, capacities, willingness, or otherwise, of workers, is deliberately concealed from them and they have no way of penetrating the wall of defense which workers build around themselves. The Government of Sir Anthony Eden did not know its own military capabilities. After nearly 75

years of British occupation of Egypt, it did not know what the response of the people of Egypt would be to a British invasion. Khrushchev did not know what was brewing in Hungary and Poland until it was too late. The American Government has consistently misunderstood and misjudged the scientific attainments of Russia. The catalogue is endless. The Governments cannot inform the people even if they wanted to, because they do not themselves know.

Colossal as is this task of informing the workers, the Marxist organization must undertake it because nobody else can. Despite the poverty of its resources at the start, it has the immense advantage of having the great knowledge and experience of the proletariat at its disposal, and particularly on fundamental economic and social matters this is the most authentic source of information in any country. By diligent attention and study it can learn to sift out the truth from the din by which official society seeks to deafen the people and twist them to its own ends.

#### THE INDEPENDENCE OF THE ORGANIZATION

The Marxist organization, however, is no mere reporter of facts about the socialist activity of the proletariat, or detector and publicist of the systematic falsifications of official society.

It has and must of necessity have an independent view of its own. First of all, there are no facts in the abstract. All facts, and the selection of facts, must necessarily be governed by a view of society. The inestimable strength of the Marxist organization today is that in every situation, in every crisis, national or international, it sees not only the decadence and disorder of official society but also, intertwined, the elements of the socialist solution. This knowledge is the origin of its very existence as an organization and it can be effective and grow only by using it. The struggle to reach this understanding and insight, the complete acceptance of socialist power and socialist ideas as originating and flowering primarily in the working class itself, the immense energy, determination, and training which will be needed to maintain this assault against one of the most powerful strongholds of official society, this can only be fully achieved by resolutely putting forward the point of view of the organization whenever the occasion requires it, in large matters or in small. Later in this document we shall go into elaborate detail, based on experience, of the possibilities, difficul-

ties and dangers of such a course in practical terms. But the independent views of the Marxist organization, consisting of a fusion of workers and intellectuals, are an integral part of the new society. This society has, and will always have varying levels of comprehension, perspective and policy. This does not mean what it would mean in the familiar bourgeois or Stalinist ideology, that the organization takes the lead over the less literate, less vocal mass. It means the opposite, that the organization makes known its independent views and fights for them as a contribution to that democratic interchange and confrontation of opinion which is the very life-blood of socialist society.

#### THE CONTINUITY OF MARXIST THEORY

The Marxist organization has the responsibility for preserving and extending the theory of Marxism. The preservation of the theory of Marxism is not, and never has been, purely a study of books and texts. Every new step forward of the proletariat illuminates not only the future but the past. Thus only the closest contact with the contemporary experiences of the proletariat and of society as a whole can give a profounder understanding of what was achieved, both in practice and theory and, far more important today, what is to be discarded.

It is here that a task of heavy responsibility and enormous scope opens before the Marxist organization. Much that was pure theory in the early days of Marxism has now become common knowledge among the vast masses of people. The intensive development of capitalism, the maturity of the proletariat, the immense advances of science in the last generation, all this leaves some of the most cherished formulae of Marx and Lenin far behind. Careful as they were in their forecasts of socialism, they were limited by the economic development of their day and the mechanistic conceptions of the time. Such a formula as Marx wrote in the *Critique of the Gotha Program*, limiting consumption to bourgeois relations, even though the relations of production were socialized, has no relevance today where, in the advanced countries, the workers are, even under capitalism, striving to establish a socialist equality. The conception of Marx and Lenin of a period transitional to socialism is equally without meaning today in the advanced countries. To continue to hold up these as guides to the future is reactionary and can come only from those who look for socialism everywhere except in the only place where it can be found, in the

daily activities of the working class, even under capitalism itself. There is no period of transition to socialism after the establishment of Workers Councils in every branch of the national activity and the Government of Workers Councils. Once those are established, the only transition can be to the degenerated Workers State, the profoundly degenerated Workers State, the immeasurably degenerated Workers State, and so on. To employ the verbal acrobatics by which Trotsky sought to disguise his support (critical, more critical, most critical) of Stalinism. The period of transition to socialism is the present period. This is particularly true of economic relations. All the problems that the Bolsheviks grappled with, after power had been achieved, have been posed under state capitalism, before the taking of power.

#### THE ANACHRONISMS OF MARXISM

The Marxist organization alone is capable of getting rid of the anachronisms in Marxism. It is absolutely impossible to overestimate the enormous energies and creative power that have been generated in the great masses of the world's population today. Only the dead weight of official society holds it down. It is not the business of the Marxist organization to invent what Marx scornfully called recipes for the cookshops of the future. It is sufficient to watch carefully what the workers are actually doing, and what they are aiming at, and to draw the conclusions. Particularly the Marxist organization must denounce with merciless contempt those theorists who demand in advance guaranteed and insured perspectives and particulars about the content and forms of parties, states, and all other forms of organization in the socialist society. No new society was ever formed in this way. It is as if a drowning man with the water already in his mouth demanded a certificate of navigation before allowing a boat's crew to save him.

#### THE INSUPERABLE PROBLEMS.

The supposedly insuperable problem of planning the complex life of modern society is seen in its true perspective when we realize that modern calculating machines, properly charged, can rapidly give an answer to the consequences of certain procedures and thus supply a single factory, a whole industry, or a whole population with the material on which to make its decisions. The super-planners of today, arrogating to themselves enormous powers of deciding and enforcing the rela-

tion between production goods and consumption goods, will become the accounting functionaries of tomorrow, reduced to the modest role of giving information. The great conflict between East and West which threatens humanity with destruction is a conflict originating in official society, maintained by official society, and will end only with the end of official society. The end of official society in any part of the world will rapidly bring its end in the other. For each of these is necessary to the other and they draw reciprocal sustenance from their mutual crimes and threats. Witness the united terror of Moscow, Washington, and Berlin at the thought of a revolution in Eastern Germany. To show this and to expose the social and human solutions to the artificial problems of official society is the task of the Marxist organization. Let those for whom these socialist solutions are Utopia continue to cower and wallow in their realism.

#### THE REALISM OF SOCIALISM

Yet the Marxist organization in performing the necessary task of visualizing the content of socialism subordinates itself neither to a statistical conception of society, nor speculations to reassure the timorous. It already has the immense experience of the last forty years on which to draw, the discoveries and achievements of modern science are available, and above all it knows that the future lies with the development of things becoming subordinate to the development of man. It is sufficient that all the old handicaps and barriers to a truly human existence are gone and only official society stands in the way. The true analysis of the future is to show that the most expansive aspirations of the past are now possible. Such is the already existing community of labor and the achievements of science that the fusion of manual and intellectual labor has become a necessity, for society as a whole as well as for the individual personality. The Marxist organization can demonstrate that the mass of men can progress only if their creative instincts and inheritance are fully applied to the practical tasks of every day. Even the earlier formula of Marx that the future development of man rested upon the shortening of the working day no longer applies. The great problem of the leisure of socialist man which the abstract theoreticians have now added to their other burdens is a hangover from an earlier age. The herculean struggle for the shorter

working day, the mathematical division between time for work and time for self-development is a capitalistic product pure and simple. When man uses his creative faculties to the full in his work, that distinction ceases to be an antagonism and becomes a simple scheduling of various forms of social activity. Complete universal education for all, mastery of all the processes of production, freedom to carry on political discussions in the place and during the time of work, readiness to work hard when it is required and to relax and be social whenever possible, these are now the concrete, practical needs and demands of workers. What are these but the embodiment in life of the formula of the mature Marx when he wrote that modern industry would collapse unless it replaces "the detail-worker of today, crippled by life-long repetition of one and the same trivial operation, and thus reduced to the mere fragment of a man, by the fully developed individual, fit for a variety of labors, ready to face any change of production, and to whom the different social functions he performs, are but so many modes of giving free scope to his own natural and acquired powers."

The Marxist organization in the middle of the Twentieth Century, standing on the shoulders of its predecessors, has this immeasurable advantage over them, that it has before its eyes, concretely and in the flesh, the dehumanized gangsterism of official society and the men and manners to replace it.

#### MARXISM AND CULTURE

The organization has the task of bringing to the proletariat those elements of traditional and contemporary culture which are needed for that full and total expansion of human living which is now realistically possible and needs only the socialist society to come into being. In every department of human life today, anthropology, medicine, architecture, biology, chemistry, and education, in all its manifold aspects, discoveries and understanding of far-reaching importance have been already made. A few bold pioneers even sometimes try to put some of these into practice. In every case they find and frequently declare (most often in guarded language) that it is impossible for mankind to make use of the knowledge which is already in its hands as long as the present structure of society continues. This information is needed by the proletariat above all other classes in society and it can be given to the proletariat only by the Marxist organization or



intellectuals and scientists working in close collaboration with it. The valuable elements in all fields of contemporary culture can be preserved and made available only in the light of a new totality, a new vision of the world, and of humanized relations throughout the length and breadth of society. To do this, if only ideologically, demands an assimilation of this culture in the light of both the experiences and activities of the proletariat. All those who do not proceed from this basis end up as whining or utopian snipers at capitalist culture, even when they do not actually defend it.

#### THE PROSTITUTION OF EDUCATION

The utter futility of believing that it is possible to improve official society except upon the basis of new relations resting upon the proletariat and the great masses of the people, the mental paralysis which inevitably overtakes all who try to do this, is proved by the frenzied and unspeakably disgusting activity which is now taking place in the West under the lying slogan of education. The patient work of generations of educators, all pointing to the conclusion that the isolation of children and youth from the practical aspects of social life distorts both mind and body, the search for roads to integrate from the very start intellectual and social life, all this is now placed on the shelf. Instead, billions of dollars are now to be spent in a vast indoctrination and injection of the youth of Western civilization with the scientific virus. It has no relevance whatever to education, but is in reality a military operation having no other purpose than to catch up and overtake the enemy in the production of weapons of destruction, for which very purpose the Russians instituted their program. Thus these two enemies grow more like each other every day. Only the Marxist organization basing itself on the proletariat can attempt a synthesis and transcend the essentially bourgeois antagonism between humanism and technology.

#### OUR UNSHAKABLE FOUNDATIONS

If the development of society has posed before us the crisis of contemporary society as essentially problems of human relations, if the Marxist organization itself will remove from living Marxism what is now dead, the organization never forgets its own essential foundations. We shall conclude, therefore, with a brief statement of the main lines of Marxism, whose essential truth is not weakened but confirmed every day.

Capital, contrary to previous societies, can live only by accumulation. Marx discerned in capital accumulation two laws, twin sides of the same movement, the law of concentration and centralization of capital and the law of the socialization of labor. There is no one (except a well-educated Marxist) who cannot today see these laws in full operation. From commercial capital, the capital of trade, capital concentrated into units of individual industrial capital which created the world market. These developed into vast combines and cartels until today the national capital of any country is in one form or another state capital. But the process of concentration still continues. The national state capitals reach out towards the formation of continental units. The present conflict is essentially a conflict between the two most gigantic concentrations of capital in the world today, the United States and Russia, for the complete domination of all world capital. To achieve this they force into their orbit by force, fraud, or cajolment, all national units. Lenin found the exact phrase for them in 1918 when he forecast the coming of "vast state capitalist trusts and syndicates" contending for world mastery. His old definition of imperialism as surplus capital seeking higher profits in colonial countries is now dead, and is used only by Stalinists seeking to exclude imperialist Russia from their denunciations of imperialism. Today it is not mere profits of investment that are at stake. The territory and the manpower, the very traditions as well as the material production of the various countries of the world, advanced as well as backward, are needed. What is taking place, therefore, is that capital, which always had men in its grip, has been accumulated to such an extent, intensively and extensively, that it now operates by complete mastery of men. The vast state capitalist trusts and syndicates hurl themselves against each other to be shattered, only to reorganize themselves in unstable combinations, vainly seeking that complete centralization which it is the nature of capital to forever seek and never achieve. Lenin did not deny the theoretical possibility of world capital being totally centralized but, as he said, a great deal would happen before then. It is happening.

Even judging the system from its own point of view it is already exhausted. Having drawn the whole world into its orbit, it is incapable of supplying the undeveloped countries with the capital needed to develop them.

Thus, as with so many other great issues long debated in Marxism, the theoretical problem of whether capitalism would collapse from lack of markets or lack of productive power is solved in life for all to see.

But side by side with the chaotic movement to concentration goes the socialization of the labor force. There is no need to elaborate this. In Marx's words, the labor force is constantly growing in numbers, is united, disciplined, and organized by the very mechanism of capitalist production itself. Sooner or later it would have to rid mankind of the increasing misery imposed upon it by capital. In social terms this means displacing the human beings who refuse to abandon their privileged positions as agents and directors of capital. Human personality, social and political institutions, international diplomacy, human grandeur and human weakness, all, in their infinite and from one point of view ungraspable and unpredictable variety, are to be seen within the context of this view of modern development. The alternative is the doctrine of Hebrew nomads on original sin, with the hope of redemption by summit talks.

Today there are no longer any mysteries in the conditions of social existence nor in that science of human affairs whose right name is political economy. In his famous chapter of *Capital*, the last but one of the first volume, Marx stated, so that a child could understand, that the new society would grow and flourish (one would flourish) inside the old. The crisis now is between two societies. All the pontifications, calculations, projects, discoveries, alternative courses of action of economists about the rise of prices, inflation, balance of payments, productivity of labor, are just so much mystification and nonsense, necessary only to preserve the illusion that the rulers are in control and directing affairs. While these solemn Druids and medicine men sing their various litanies about the great problem of inflation and deflation in England, it is perfectly obvious that in a highly-organized country, with a disciplined community, like Britain, the curse of inflation is not an economic problem at all but a political one. Any government which had and deserved the complete confidence of the people as a whole would have little difficulty in bringing the inflation to an end. Official society cannot produce such a government. It has been calculated that if the British workers were freed in the factories, mines, and offices to organize production in

the way that they and only they know, productivity could be increased by fifty per cent. Official society cannot afford such freedom. This is the true maturity of human society, the golden age and the promised land, that modern men are at last in a position to manage all their material affairs so that they can now devote themselves to the development of themselves as human beings and not to the development of capital. Ideas will now play their proper part in the lives of men. Today when all the bull frogs rival each other in their loathsome croakings about increasing the standard of living, we can best sum up the past and the future in the following propositions which formed a landmark in our struggle towards understanding.

(a) All development takes place as a result of **self-movement**, not organization or direction by external forces.

(b) Self-movement springs from and is the overcoming of antagonisms **within** an organism, not the struggle against external foes.

(c) It is not the world of nature that confronts man as an alien power to be overcome. It is the alien power that he has himself created.

(d) The end towards which mankind is inexorably developing by the constant overcoming of internal antagonisms is **not** the enjoyment, ownership, or use of goods, but self-realization, creativity based upon the incorporation into the individual personality of the whole previous development of humanity. Freedom is creative universality, **not** utility.

This is the philosophy of the Marxist organization, the dialectical method, a methodological guide but no more. The organization will not seek to propagate it nor to convince men of it but to use it so as the more quickly and clearly to recognize how it is concretely expressed in the lives and struggles of the people.

## VII. WHAT TO DO AND HOW TO DO IT

It is agreed that the socialist society exists. Then we have to record the facts of its existence.

We begin at this apparently most primitive level. Experience has taught millions of workers that the most colossal task that faces them is to take action on the job for "local grievances." The whole bureaucratic apparatus of official society, the official state, labor parties, and labor unions function automatically to inhibit, prevent, and suppress just this. We too have learned that the same apparently all-embracing apparatus, not only in deed but in thought, creates obstacles, and every second of the day never ceases to attack, to infiltrate, to demoralize, to corrupt, to ridicule, to destroy any attempt to present systematically the conception of the new society as we have outlined it. The only course therefore is to present what we have learned in concrete terms, approaching it from every angle, nailing down the individual concrete fact by looking at it in terms of the Universal, falling back on theory to uncover the so often unexpected significance of what may appear to be casual incidents or episodes, pointing out the unbelievable insidiousness with which the bureaucratic environment, in matters large as well as small, obtrudes and inserts itself into the minds even of those whose main purpose in life is to reject it. All this and whatever may appear to be related, we shall now try to do. We have behind us not only decades of negative experience. We can draw on some positive and extended attempts in various countries to work out the new at various levels of thought and action. Experiences in various countries were made in common, with constant exchange of trial and error. The infinite variety of national peculiarities helped to distinguish the incidental from the fundamental. We have had successes and have studied carefully their implications. As with all departures from established practice, the moves forward are, and in fact must be, explorations into unknown territory. But we have laid a foundation and it is this that we now try to communicate.

Let us begin with what is apparently a casual, elementary anecdote.

In one department of a certain plant in the United States, there is a worker who is physically incapable of carrying out his duties. But he is a man with a wife and children, and his condition is due to the previous strain of his work in the plant. The workers in that department have organized their work so that for nearly ten years he has had practically nothing to do. They have defied all efforts of the foreman and supervision to discharge him, threatening to throw the whole plant into disorder if any steps are taken to dismiss the invalid. That is the socialist society. Careful observation will show that such enormous problems as work for the old, the handicapped, the young, of both sexes, can be easily and competently handled without any bureaucratic apparatus whatever, by the good sense of workers as long as they have the power to arrange their labor as they wish. Workers tell such episodes by the dozen. No bourgeois nor trade union journal ever prints any.

In another plant in the United States the company tried by a maneuver to prevent a Negro driver being given the job of dispatcher to which his seniority entitled him. The Negro workers in the plant called a meeting and gave the company a certain deadline to upgrade this worker to the job which was his by right. Before their united determination the company capitulated. Thus these workers had struck a blow against common injustice, racial discrimination, and the disorder in production which management creates. That is the socialist society. It hasn't to be organized in the future. It exists. It is organized. It has to get rid of what is stifling it, what is preventing it from expanding to the full, what is preventing it from tackling not only the immediate problem of production, but also the more general problems of society. But it exists.

In a British airport the security officers salute their superiors in accordance with the semi-military discipline that prevails in this type of public service. One of their representatives, on going to discuss union matters with management, refused to salute, claiming that in this relation he and the representative of management met as equals. The representative of management, quite obviously a man of semi-feudal mentality, demanded the right to be saluted. The whole section of workers went out on strike immediately, and in the end, management capitulated. That is the socialist society.

Workers refer to these struggles as attempts to cor-

rect "local grievances" and to "improve working conditions." Yet to the terror of management and the perpetual astonishment of people who are not familiar with the working class, workers are ready to bring production to a stop and endure the greatest privations for weeks and months over what seems to the ordinary observer to be trifles. To workers it is precisely the power to carry all these ideas and wishes of theirs to completeness which constitutes the new society.

#### SOCIALIST DISCIPLINE

The new society exercises its own discipline. Workers are not homogeneous and often some worker refuses to go out on strike with his fellows or to play his part in one of the innumerable daily clashes with management. The majority of workers are quite aware that, though these dissidents take a great stand on their individual rights, none of them has ever been known to refuse the benefits of money and conditions which the actions of his fellows may win. In the United States the workers will mercilessly badger this type of worker all day. They will report his activities to colleagues of other departments. They will construct and even write lampoons which are circulated all over the plant. In Britain the method of correction is the opposite. The British workers send the dissident to Coventry—they will not speak to him at all. In each case the workers are substituting their own discipline, the discipline of socialist relations of production, for the capitalistic discipline of dismissal.

The same type of discipline is applied to workers who do not do what their fellow workers consider to be a fair share of the work. All industrial psychologists know that under conditions of capitalist production workers have two standards of production. One they apply to the demands of management. At any particular time this consists of a quantity of work governed by the amount of money they want to make and the energy they wish to expend, on the one hand, and keeping management in its place on the other. But there is another standard, a standard of their own, what under the particular conditions they want to do, what they consider necessary to their self-respect and security, and they do not lightly tolerate any persistent and irresponsible departure from this. This determination to control their own labor by common agreement and to discipline those who depart from the cooperation that modern production demands, what is it but socialism?

True, it is frustrated at every turn by the existing capital-labor relation, but it is nothing that has to be created in the future by the Party or the Plan. It exists and fights, not only to exist but to expand its sphere of action.

#### OVERTIME

To the observer outside the plant the question of overtime is far removed from socialism. Yet it is around overtime that can be seen as clearly as anywhere else, the socialist and all other attitudes to social labor, posed in opposition to each other. Management, whether democratic or totalitarian, considers that it is its prerogative to decide when and where and by whom overtime is to be worked, irrespective of the wishes or needs of workers. There is a small minority consisting of Trotskyists, anarchists, radicals, and ex-radicals, who have what they consider to be the revolutionary attitude towards overtime. They claim that any overtime work is a departure from the great principle of the 8-hour day and is therefore a crime. These are the ones who, we may be sure, under what they call socialism, would be ready to impose the most brutal conditions of overtime. According to them, once the property is nationalized, overtime is in the interest of society as a whole (these radicals having been substituted for the capitalists as the managers and policemen of production). At the other extreme is another minority, usually consisting of skilled workers and lead men who are eager for all the overtime they can get.

The great majority of the workers have nothing in common with any of these. They carry on what at first glance is an utterly bewildering series of struggles, sometimes **for**, sometimes **against** overtime. What the average group of workers wants in regard to overtime is that they should control the amount of overtime, how and when it should take place and who should do it. Thus, at times the struggle is against overtime, at others it is for the right to work overtime, in what appears to be a chaotic capriciousness. But one principle underlies all these struggles. It is the fundamental principle that workers themselves are to control overtime and therefore keep their grip on the length of the working day. Control by workers over the amount of extra work that should be done, when it is to be done, how it is to be done, who will do it, just simply this constitutes socialist relations of production, and many millions of workers all over the world are engaged in a constant struggle to establish this. Sometimes they succeed, if

only partially, or for a certain length of time. That precisely is socialism and there is no other kind of socialism.

#### THE SCHEDULES OF PRODUCTION

In most modern plants workers want to control who are hired and when, and to control who will be dismissed and when, and under what circumstances. But this really involves knowledge of what work the plant proposes to do. While the unions and general public are primarily concerned with wages, what every worker in every plant wants to know in advance and to control are the schedules of production. But this management is adamant in keeping from them.

Walter Reuther once threw out the slogan "Open the Books." This did not mean to the workers that the companies should make their profits known. These profits have to be registered with the government and can be inspected at a moment's notice. To open the books meant to the workers: Tell us in advance the schedules of production which you propose to carry out. When workers say they wish to see the schedules of production, they mean they wish to say what they think about them. So fierce was the response to the slogan of both management and workers, from their opposite points of view, that Reuther rapidly withdrew it.

In modern industry ten or twenty thousand men who have to carry out the enormously complicated processes of modern production are excluded from any comprehensive and precise knowledge of what they have to do. Not in the interests of production, but in defense of its own position, management has to treat them like children. This the workers reject as men. The intolerable exclusion from what concerns them so closely, periodically breaks out in prolonged strikes over differences of two or three pennies per hour. Two forces here are in conflict: one mode of production based on the capital-labor relation, the relation of a drill sergeant and privates; and the other, in the words of Marx, "production by freely associated men . . . consciously regulated by them in accordance with a settled plan." These opposing forces are not ideas or theoretical constructions or hypotheses. They exist. The clash between them is constantly shaking every bone and stretching every nerve in contemporary society. There are two societies in conflict. The one is a capitalist society. The other is a socialist society. It is the refusal to recognize

this which accounts for the mountains of nonsense which are daily produced on the subject of automation.

#### AUTOMATION

While official society and the labor bureaucracies are excelling themselves in creating dust, noise, confusion, and fear over automation, the socialist society has already put forward its own most comprehensive plans for dealing with automation.

Workers of Standards in Coventry, England, have said the fundamental words about automation.

- a) If management wishes to introduce automation into any plant, it must consult the workers in the plant at the very first inception of the idea. Workers are not opposed to automation. Far from that. They welcome it. But they insist that it is their business more than anybody else's.
- b) When automation is introduced, there is no necessity to dismiss anyone.

It is here that not merely two methods of production but two conceptions of society as a whole are in conflict. Workers are not units of production. They are men with homes which, sometimes, they have bought or are in the process of buying. They have families and children who are going to school, with the friends and associations that distinguish the lives of human beings from animals in the forest. They refuse to concede to management the right to break up their lives according to the supposed needs of production. The Coventry workers claimed that they could reorganize the work so that no one needed to be dismissed. They went further and announced a principle that made several newspaper editors declare that the end of the world had come. They stated that there were times when they had to work very hard and times when they could take it easy because there was no need to work so hard.

Amid the chorus of denunciations and yells at the unreasonableness, the insanity of these workers, no one took care to note that the necessity to work hard at times was not denied. It was specifically admitted. But it was based on the principle that the workers would themselves decide.

This was the workers' answer to the great problem of automation. We take the liberty of making only one addition that was inherent in the whole: it would be necessary at times to send workers away from one plant to another. But who should go, and when, and under

what conditions, these things nobody could know and arrange satisfactorily except the workers themselves.

Most of this appeared in the press in garbled form. But it was among the Standard workers themselves, in their private conversations, that what they proposed and, still more, what they thought, could be heard at its simplest and most direct. This is the socialist society, as complete an overturn of capitalist production as the most daring theoretical mind could conceive. But wild as this program seemed to official society and labor bureaucracies and parliamentarians, it would win the immediate support of the vast majority of workers in every country in the world. This is socialism, not in the heads of intellectuals and advanced workers, not in the future, not to be achieved after sacrifice of a generation of human beings, but here all around us, based on generations of experience and burning with the desire to establish itself.

What happened is characteristic. Faced with what amounted to the destruction of their society, union leaders, newspaper editors, bishops, and parliamentarians rushed in and organized a compromise. The workers were promised two or three weeks' severance pay as compensation. The Coventry workers had to retreat. But they have added another story to the socialist structure that they are building, in practice and in theory. Two weeks' pay. That is the capitalist answer to automation. Nearly two hundred years after the social catastrophes and cruelties of the early industrial revolution, capitalism registers its progress—two weeks' pay, a week for each century.

Automation has already brought an unbelievable disorder into the social life of millions of American workers. Unemployment pay does not satisfy. Workers want some order in their lives. Automation shows that capitalism today, as two hundred years ago, is incapable of order. But today workers not only know that they can handle these problems, but that nobody else can. These were not the problems posed in the days of Lenin. The Marxist organization must begin from here.

#### FIRST FUNDAMENTAL TASK

Here we pause for a moment to look again at our first simple statement: To recognize the socialist society and to record the facts of its existence. Workers do not record. The great Shop Stewards Movement, the most powerful social force in Great Britain today, keeps practically no records. You will search the mil-

lions of volumes in the great libraries of Britain and you will find no single volume which attempts to make any serious examination of what this movement is, what it does, and how it does it. Yet it is certain that such records exist, in the secret files of industrialists who have to deal with this movement and understand it as far as they are able. As far as they are able. For it is impossible for them, and their bureaucratic colleagues, to understand that the day-to-day struggles of the workers constitute the socialist society and the basic struggle for socialism. The proposals of the workers in Standards of how to deal with automation did not come from study or theory or boards of inquiry or parliamentary committees or Royal or Presidential Commissions. To those who made the proposals they were the natural, normal, in fact unavoidable conclusions, flowing naturally from their daily lives. Management and labor bureaucrats cannot understand this because its ultimate conclusion, and one that is not in any way remote, is the elimination of these parasites as an integral necessity in modern life. It is to be noted that the vast majority of workers, contrary to theoretical socialists, have little concern with the wages or social privileges of management, supervisors and such. They are interested in the free interchange of tasks in the plant, the levelling, or rather equalization of wages through which their essentially cooperative labor can be performed without undue friction. They are not interested in the perquisites of management. Their main concern with management is that it should confine its function to doing what they, the workers, want done.

No one should underestimate the will and the energy that will be needed to say, not once but again and again with the Coventry workers, that a body of workers in a plant constitutes the only social organization capable of dealing with automation in a reasonable social and human way. To record it, to publicize it in every conceivable shape and form, to place it before workers who have not heard of it, to encourage it, this is the concrete task. Workers are ready to listen. Even when they appear skeptical, perseverance will often show that they have long thought of this but are acutely aware of the difficulties in the way and push these forward because they wish them to be examined and discussed. It is in these confrontations that Marxism and Marxists acquire life and movement, and get closer to social reality.

## THE MIDDLE CLASSES

A new society invading the old never establishes itself in production alone or in one class, in this case the working class. The pattern of production permeates the whole society. The middle classes, the worker with the black coat, the white collar, or the frilly blouse, shaped by their own conditions of production, have shown themselves all over the world increasingly ready to follow the example of the workers, thus proving how deeply ingrained in the new society is the activity that the workers carry on. The most striking example, of course, is in the Hungarian Revolution. At the same time that the Hungarian workers in the plant were forming their Workers Councils, the employees formed their own councils in every branch of the national activity, in all government offices, in the Department of Foreign Affairs, in banks, in the information services of press and radio, everywhere.

Social upheavals bring out what already exists in society, even though only in embryonic form, or as aspiration. But they exist. It is the task of the Marxist organization to find them.

In Paris at the General Life Insurance Company, an Employees Council was formed two years ago in conscious opposition to both management and the trade unions. We print here complete the program and policy that it has worked out to guide it, and which it published and distributed before other insurance companies. It is the socialist society in action.

The majority of the employees of the General Insurance Co., 87 rue de Richelieu, Paris, are no longer willing to entrust the defense of their interests to the trade unions of any kind.

It was as a result of the strike of November 1955 that we decided to defend our interests ourselves.

## WHAT HAVE WE DONE?

1. We publish every month a newspaper of the firm, The Employees Bulletin, whose columns are open to all of us who have not been able to express what we thought in the trade union papers. Before being published, each article is discussed among us so that it can best represent the opinion of all.

2. We are organized, our Council has a legal status but WE ARE NOT A TRADE UNION WHERE EVERYTHING IS DECIDED FROM THE TOP:

—Every employee of the firm is a member by

right of the Employees Council whether or not he pays dues.

—No question can be resolved without the agreement of the interested worker or workers in an office or of all employees, according to whether it concerns a single employee, an office or all the employees.

—All meetings are public and all employees express themselves freely.

—We all work together, the Council has no functionaries, the meetings take place outside of working hours.

3. Every person in a responsible position is designated on the basis of the confidence of the employees and is revocable at any time.

—The General Assembly of the Council, comprising all the employees, decides important questions.

—The Executive Committee, consisting of 38 delegates from the different offices, each representing a group of employees doing the same work, decides practical questions.

4. In order to obtain recognition by the firm, the Employees Council must elect employees' delegates. But the unions are well protected by the law; they are the only ones allowed to present the list. It is only if their lists do not receive ½ of the ballots that the elections are voided and on the second round all candidates can present themselves.

Today the unions have launched the worst allegations against the Council: Poujadists, splitters, fascists, stooges of the company, etc. They have to break up this spontaneous regroupment of employees or it will prove that it is possible to do without the unions because the employees are capable of organizing themselves so that the bureaucratic and political apparatus of the unions is useless.

## WHY HAVE WE DONE WHAT WE HAVE?

THIS IS WHAT THE EMPLOYEES COUNCIL OF THE GENERAL LIFE INSURANCE COMPANY THINKS:

**The Employees:**

Every employee of a firm participates in a collective task. Each has his duties and his equal rights. But nobody is getting equal pay.

Look at your pay envelopes and consider. The management and the union have signed agreements.

—which differentiate the pay according to the classification of employment (110 categories in the classification of July 1954).

—which constantly increase the differentiation and the differences in pay (agreement of July 1954, April and November 1955).

Inside the firm the union delegates often practice a policy of favoritism which increases this differentiation. The result is that in every firm the employees are divided.

The management and the unions are the divisive elements.

#### **The Seniors:**

This division due to the hierarchy in pay is even more marked in relation to the Seniors.

Either they do the same work as the other employees, or their work is simply supervision.

How then is this hierarchy in any way justified?

#### **The Unions:**

They negotiate with management salary agreements which allow us some crumbs from the increasing profits. Outside of this one point, management has complete authority; it does what it pleases in regard to our work.

Check for yourselves how the official delegates defend supervision in your firm.

#### **Work:**

In the large majority of cases, what work we do depends not on our real capacities but on the goodwill of management.

The work which we have to do tires us more and more as rationalization and mechanization increase. Our work is organized by management in such a way that it does not permit us to apply even 10% of our real capacities.

The F. O. and the C. F. T. C. unions participate in the commission on productivity.

The C. G. T. union in 1945 called on the employees to make every effort to increase production.

We don't want our work to become ever more painful and stupid. Unlike management and the unions, we think we are able to understand what our work consists of and to organize it.

#### MANAGEMENT AND THE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

They use every means (seniors, unions) to increase their intake. They live by only one principle: the absolute authority of management in the firm.

This authority brings in its wake waste, injustice, inefficiency, fatigue, tension, discouragement.

But if we place in the hands of the unions the task of counteracting this authority, we find that in general the unions serve this authority rather than fight it.

#### WHAT WE CAN ALL DO

In your firms your problems are the same as ours. You can depend only upon yourselves.

You are not what the unions and management say you are: incompetents who have to be led.

You are the most numerous, on you the functioning of the firm depends, you are capable of organizing yourselves, while allowing to each the possibility of controlling and administering the organization common to all: You are those for whom solidarity is not an empty word.

#### HELP US

In every firm you can form an Employees Council which will unify against management all the employees now divided and dominated by the unions. If this is not immediately possible, form a group to publish a bulletin of your firm to prepare the way for forming a council.

Whatever the possibilities are, make contact with us. We will tell you our experience and give you material aid.

Our Employees Council will survive only if other Councils are formed in other companies. Our Councils could not have been created if we had not recognized our capacities.

Cooperate with us. It is for us all that we struggle.

March 13, 1956,

The Employees Councils of  
General Life Insurance Co.

Is it not clear that these French men and women, working in offices, are an integral part of the same new social formation as the Hungarian workers who made the revolution, the British shop stewards, and those Russian workers against whom Khrushchev and Shepilov thunder in vain? That statement of what they are doing and why is socialism, theory and practice. To



write this program they had to draw to a head their bitter experiences with all types of Socialist, Communist, and Trotskyist bureaucrats.

But aren't there great areas of life outside of production and administration? There are. And as Marx, impatient with these babblers, once replied to them, "Who denies it?" The Marxist organization which understands that its function is to learn and not to teach, will find (after great efforts) that outside of production as well as in it, the new society every day, every hour, establishes itself with a massiveness, a solidity, and an infinite variety, which challenges the official structure of society at every turn.

#### SOCIALIST ORGANIZATION

Organization is the cry. What about organization? Modern industry, we are told, demands organization of a kind different from these shop floor organizations. The Marxist organization will have only to look to find the miracles of organization which modern workers have learned in modern industry and which have become second nature to them. Accounts of these are so few that we quote again from the document which described the shop stewards. It deals with the Central Committee of the Textile Machine Industry in Lancashire.

This is a meeting of shop stewards from all factories in manufacturing spinning machinery, largely one large cartel. It meets whenever a factory committee thinks it necessary, but usually once a month in a small public house in a back street in the centre of Manchester. Now this committee is quite typical of all such committees, which exist in hundreds of different shapes and sizes corresponding with the conditions in the factories and industries for which they cater.

There are only a few informal rules, which can be and are changed to suit the convenience of stewards attending. There are only very shadowy officers and functions, and its decisions are not binding on any individual factory which can accept or reject them. Votes are very rarely taken; when they are, one factory, no matter what the size, counts as one vote. Sometimes as many as twenty factories have been represented, sometimes only say half a dozen. Any shop steward may attend, although the committee of a factory will delegate one or two

stewards to present any special views it wishes to have discussed.

This Central Committee always met on a Sunday. Stewards would arrive from all the little Lancashire towns from midday onwards. The landlord allotted the big assembly room for . . . deliberations. From midday until 2 p.m. all drink beer and exchange conversation about anything and everything. Sandwiches and pies are brought from the pub for lunch. At 2 p.m. on Sundays the pubs have to stop serving beer, although everyone takes the precaution of ordering an extra pint at 2 p.m. to help their throats in the coming session. So at 2 o'clock the chairman opens the meeting. The agenda is made up on the spot. The Secretary reads any correspondence. The minutes of the last meeting are approved. There is a minimum of business. The whole time until 7 o'clock is taken up with resolutions and discussions. At 7 o'clock the meeting closes, when it is opening time. Thereafter there is informal continuation of discussion in groups, very often political debate until 10 o'clock when the pub closes, when everybody goes home having had an enjoyable day.

The task of the small organization earlier stated as being merely to record the facts of the existing socialist society, now begins to appear for the gigantic and utterly unprecedented undertaking that it is. But it is primarily a concrete task. It can not only record, it can counterpose the existing formations of the new socialist society against the clumsy, tyrannical, bureaucratic monstrosities which claim that modern society can only live if governed by them.

Finally the strangest feature of so many of these new organizations is that they have no official existence:

It is noteworthy that this Central Committee of Textile Machine Shop Stewards has no recognized existence. It is completely outside any union machinery or jurisdiction, and the employers do not and will not negotiate with it. It is an informal meeting of the delegates from factories; yet it is the power which faces twenty boards of directors, and which will tomorrow, with the greatest of ease abolish them . . . The same thing is so for nearly all such committees. It is also of note that in the constitution of the Confederation of Shipbuilding

and Engineering Unions, in which nearly all the unions concerned are confederated, there is no provision for such Central Committees, and shop stewards and committees are not mentioned. But it is a matter of fact that whenever any serious questions arise locally, i.e. on a District Committee basis, the District Committees invariably call unofficial advisory meetings of all shop stewards and committees concerned. Real policy is decided at these meetings; they also carry it out, and once called in session for serious emergencies, they invariably meet very frequently, at least once a week.

But can one reasonably compare these workers sitting in a pub with the machinery of management, before which the whole world bows down, in Detroit, in Paris, in Moscow, as well as in Lancashire? That is exactly what the writer goes on to do:

Now (Communists and Trotskyites) will point to the factory managements with their hierarchy of superintendents and foremen and managers, and the co-ordinating boards, and the hundreds of executives trained in all these things, and they will ask . . . how (the) public-house meeting is going to replace all that . . . But the cold hard fact is that committee was and is the leading committee of an organisation which with the expenditure of not 1% of the time, with no full time highly paid and trained managers, organised the entire labor force of those factories down to the last apprentice . . . Here, in 1947, with the bourgeoisie "organising" their own factories, the separate Shop Stewards Committees examined every plan of the managements, and where changes of plan affected the whole industry, the problems were dealt with by the Central Committee, which arrived at agreed decisions. **Within 24 hours every worker in the industry knew all about it**, every Shop Stewards Committee was considering the application of the agreed line, every management was requested to meet its committee right away, where the stewards would make known how far they **would agree, or the extent of refusal**, etc. Of course, there was strife, permanent struggle between committees and management. But the extent of management "organisation" in greater or lesser degree also depended on the attitude of the workers. At the level of the machine, what the worker thought right; at the level of foreman, the

shop steward; at the level of management of a factory, the Shop Stewards Committee; and at the level of the whole industry, the Central Committee. Of the two parallel organising functions, the one of the workers was and is **incomparably more vigorous and in every respect superior**.

#### HOW DOCKERS ORGANIZE

The new society is to be found in the most unexpected places. The whole world knows that during the last ten years a few thousand London dockers have repeatedly fought pitched battles against their employers, union bureaucrats, the government, and the official Press, radio, and publicists, and repeatedly defeated them. A great university has organized a research project to find out what spirit it is that moves in them. After years of investigation the researchers report their findings with the sad conclusion that they are not much wiser about the dockers than when they began. On one occasion when the dockers had once more paralyzed the ports of the nation, the reporter of a great newspaper sought to find the organizer. He finally located the object of his search sitting in a small back room, without secretary, without typewriter, without telephone. To the university researcher and newspaper reporter dockers remain a mystery, and to them they will always be a mystery, because the dockers have broken out of the bureaucratic routine of bourgeois disorder and are blasting new roads of social organization. This is the secret of their strength and there is no other secret.

Perhaps the most conscious and finished opposition to the parliamentary procedure and accepted routine of traditional organizations which exists anywhere today is to be found among the dockers.

A few hundred dockers hold a meeting on the docks to decide some course of policy. The first thing they do is to inform the police to keep away and not to show themselves further than a certain street or streets. The police, they know, are the greatest source of disorder. They create a mood of hostility among the men by their mere presence; if a disturbance does break out the police wish to arrest the culprits, which at once divides the dockers into conflicting groups. The dockers keep their own order. "Pipe down there, lad" from two or three of the older ones is usually sufficient to suppress any too unruly heckler. Those who start fights are quickly disciplined without any arrests.

A dockers' meeting can break every rule of parlia-

mentary procedure. At any stage of a meeting the chairman or the orator who has the rostrum can be ignored while the meeting breaks up into two or three separate meetings. A speaker who has won the attention of a group is pushed forward and encouraged to go up to the rostrum and take over from the speaker there. The dockers do not like votes, because voting results in organized opposite camps. They sense the general sentiment and act on that. The vote is always taken only in one set of circumstances: when there is a discussion on whether to return to work or not. Then, although opinions may differ, the vote to go back or not go back is usually unanimous—for the sake of internal solidarity and also for the purpose of warning the authorities not to cultivate illusions about splitting the ranks.

Their method of selecting delegates is equally opposed to parliamentary procedure. Whom to send? "What about Tom here?" "O.K., Tom." "And Jim?" "O.K. Jim, and Jack here will make three." On the surface it looks haphazard. But the man who has said Tom to begin with has had good reason for beginning with him. Jim is chosen to supplement Tom. And Jack completes a trio. There may be hundreds or even thousands of men present. Few have had anything to say about the selection. Distinctive with them is the fact that a second delegation may consist of three entirely different people.

Their method of dealing with Communists is exemplary. They will choose a Communist as a delegate, and when the meeting is over some of them may even sit in the pub listening to his exposition of Communist doctrine. But if they have reason to suspect, in the course of negotiations, that he is concerned more with the Communist line than the dockers' interests, he is likely to be dropped. They will hear of a strike in a single motor plant in Coventry, and after one of their quite informal meetings will write three or four lines in pencil on a piece of paper torn out of a notebook, expressing solidarity. They dispatch it by someone who is convenient. When the news gets known, not only the particular firm but all other motor firms in Coventry tremble. For at such times the dockers do not trouble themselves about niceties of distinction, and inasmuch as to them one auto firm in Coventry is pretty much the same as another, they are ready to stop handling not one make but all cars that come in from Coventry.

This is not to say that all dockers meetings and

procedures are carried on in exactly this way. But what matters is this. Like so many other tens upon tens of millions of workers, they have repeatedly been cheated and had their wishes thwarted by bureaucrats, Chairman, Secretary, and Committee members sitting at tables, on platforms, with speakers to motion, seconders, amendments, proposals rejected because not permissible according to regulations, or according to May's or Roberts' Rules of Order, the whole apparatus of tried and tested routine by which the will of the rank and file is thwarted. The result is that they act in conscious opposition to these procedures. It is often in this way, by conscious rejection of the old, that the new develops and is cherished and spread because of the enormous new power it generates.

With the dockers, as with all such highly advanced outposts of the new society, the new is often very much entangled with the old, sometimes in superficially reactionary forms. The solidarity may have roots in national and religious origins which cut the particular grouping off from the general current of the society in which they live and thus strengthen their sense of hostility to its shabby practices. Side by side with the boldest creativeness may go a clinging to reactionary forms and ideas. It takes all sorts to make a world, and particularly a new world. But the dockers have achieved a social effectiveness and a striking power which so far has expressed itself only in successful battles against enormous forces. When these forces have finally fallen apart, the energies and powers which have so far been displayed chiefly in resistance will be free for creation in industry, in politics, in social life. But already they mean far more for the new society than the accumulated wisdom of all the Party Conferences in Britain plus the editorial staffs of all the newspapers plus the councils of all the universities.

#### RACE RELATIONS—TWO ROADS

It is obvious that if there are two societies in conflict, then each will be deeply affected by the other. The Marxist organization will have to learn to distinguish stages of the existence of the new society. Here is a perfect example of the manner in which the societies are entangled. It deals with the Negro question in the United States.

In one of the most widely known of American automobile plants, the administration from the top executives to the lowliest members of the clerical staff is

white. For these people democracy means the right to vote; whom they employ and where they employ them is their own business. The plant itself, however, employs a number of Negroes. Therefore you will find on the union executive board of a dozen people three or four Negroes, including the Vice-President. But you will find on examination that this is a compromise. The union leaders, organizers of elections, know that they must have some Negroes in the leadership, and certain set jobs, such as the Recording Secretary, are regularly allotted to a Negro on the union election list. Where the pressure from below is very great they will sometimes, as in the present case, place a Negro on the list as Vice-President. This is a typically bureaucratic solution of an urgent problem. It will surprise the American union bureaucrats, who denounce British colonialism with such unctiousness, to know that the method they use is exactly the same as that practiced through many decades by the British imperialists in thwarting the aspirations of colonial peoples.

Go, however, to the shop floor. There you will find the free democracy that is the natural expression of cooperative labor. In the shop floor organizations the thousands of workers in the plant make no distinction between whites and Negroes. They are concerned solely with organizing their work and their struggles with management as effectively as possible. The men who can do this best are the leaders, be they white or Negro.

That, however, does not exhaust even this summary sketch. Many of these white workers, after collaborating most democratically and intimately with Negro workers in the plant, as soon as they leave the plant step right back into the attitude of separation between themselves and Negroes which has been taught them for three hundred years by official society and which they see being practiced by management in its own offices, not in the South but in the North. Some overcome it. Many do not. All are deeply affected by the contradiction.

A complication such as this is repeated in an infinite variety of forms in all spheres of society. It invades the most intimate recesses of human personality. We shall return to it again in some of its more subtle relationships. It is enough for the time being to understand that the new society exists, that it is engaged on all fronts in a struggle to establish itself completely and that the struggle most often is taking place in the hearts of workers.

Our task then is to recognize the new society, align ourselves with it, and record the facts of its existence. The next question is exactly how.

#### INDEPENDENT EDITORIAL COMMITTEES

If the mind of the Marxist organization is clear about what it has to do, then all problems are soluble by trial and error. But some of us have digested, as far as we could, the experiences of the last thirty years. Some of us have not only participated in these experiences but have made experiences of our own, seeking to discover a practice corresponding to the theory that we developed. We can therefore give with a certain confidence the essential elements of the structure, the forms, and the procedures of such an organization. These, of course, will be diversified by the circumstances of national life, the starting point and personnel of the small organization. The concrete results in every concrete case at a particular stage will necessarily determine the steps which are to follow. Despite this inevitable and in every respect advantageous variety the general outline is clear.

The keystone of the arch is independent editorial committees, "independent" signifying that these committees are independent of the organization.

We may take the average Marxist organization to consist of anything from a dozen to three or four dozen people who are bound together by their adherence to the political ideas outlined in this document. The group will be composed in more or less equal degree of workers in the plant, clerical workers, and intellectuals. An independent editorial committee consists of any group of people, organized for the purpose of preparing material for publication. They may be drawn together by a member of the organization or by someone who is not a member of the organization. What distinguishes them is that they are not necessarily members of the organization and are not necessarily candidates for membership. As Marx, working backwards, finally began his exposition of the intricacies of capitalist society from the examination of the single commodity, so it is the all-sided examination of the independent editorial committee which will show the road for the Marxist organization.

Experience has shown that a single worker, a member of a Marxist organization, can gather around him a dozen workers, men and women, who meet regularly for the sole purpose of writing, discussing, and editing

articles for immediate publication; and immediate publication means not a theoretical journal but a weekly or a fortnightly paper.

The break with the old type of Marxist journal is complete. The old type of journal consisted, and, where persisting, still consists of articles written by intellectuals and advanced workers, telling the workers what to think, what to do, how to make "the revolution," and, the ultimate summit of understanding and wisdom, to join the small organization. The journal contemplated here will do not the opposite but something entirely different. It exists so that workers and other ordinary people will tell each other and people like themselves what they are thinking, what they are doing, and what they want to do. In the course of so doing, the intellectuals and advanced workers, both inside and outside the organization, will have their opportunity to learn. There is no other way.

The immediate consequences of such a program are immense, and inasmuch as the whole future of the small organization, internally and externally, is wrapped up here (and much else besides) we shall list them systematically. We shall start on the lowest level and step by step mount to where logic and experience shall lead us. In the end we shall find that we have covered in strictly practical terms not merely the life of the organization, but also in practical terms, the whole of the theory of socialism that we have outlined earlier.

#### 1. WHAT IS TO GO INTO SUCH A PAPER?

What those in the editorial committees wish to go in will go into the paper. It will vary from country to country. We have the direct experience of two countries to go by and tentative experiences from others which are enough to tell us all that is needed. In the United States such editorial committees consisting of workers have consistently written about: conditions in the shop; the union bureaucracy and why American workers have not formed Shop Stewards Committees on the British model. They raise the question of children and how to bring them up so as to save them from slipping into the physical violence and psychological disturbances which menace the children of every class of society in the United States. (We may note that the same problem must occupy parents in Russia.) Finally the Negro question torments all Americans, black and white.

In France, dominating all other issues is the ques-

tion of the union bureaucracy and the Communist Party. Whereas in the United States problems of revolutionary theory and history are always seen in the strictest relation to a practical situation or problem, in France the workers are interested in them for their own sake.

We have expressly excluded the terms "workers" from the phrase "independent editorial committee." The conception of workers in the plants, or of any one class dominating the whole of society and imposing its will upon all others, was a product of a certain stage of industrial and social development. Today this conception is, in the minds of workers, professional and clerical middle classes, and farmers alike, charged with all the crimes and horrors of Stalinist totalitarianism. The Hungarian workers knew too much about oppression to wish to oppress anybody. The Hungarian nation as a whole, except for the fanatics of the Party and the Plan and their underlings, recognized that the working class was the natural leader of the nation. Experience has shown that the problems, the difficulties, the aspirations of the professional and clerical middle classes take a natural place in such a paper and are read and commented upon with acute interest by the workers in the plants.

Still remaining on the most elementary level, we are able to say that a dozen people by means of editorial committees, each of which can easily contain three or four workers or black-coated workers, can be a channel of communication between the paper and tens of thousands of workers and clerical employees. Half a dozen such committees can over a period give such an account of the new society in its conflict with the old as represents the most authentic picture of the contemporary state of the nation.

#### 2. WHO WILL READ SUCH A PAPER?

A single worker, member of a small organization, working with small informal editorial committees consisting of people who were not members of the organization, has been able in the course of a few months to gain 150 subscribers to such a paper from one plant alone. Each issue was read by at least five people. One particular publication which dealt specifically with the situation in a particular plant was read by at least 5000 workers. As happens so often with small organizations launching out into this new and untried field, carrying with them as they do the heavy burden of the past, the venture was not followed up. We are reliably

informed that in the excitement which followed the publication of this particular issue of the periodical, it would have been possible to get at least 1000 subscribers.

### 3. BUT WHAT ABOUT THE CLASS STRUGGLE?

Isn't it the function of any socialist paper to act as a weapon in the class struggle, to aid the workers in their struggles with the employers and the government? Here are the ghosts of thirty years rising up to gather a few more thousand victims to add to the pile of corpses already claimed by that sad period. Today, now that we have purged ourselves of it, we can look back and record the colossal impertinence, the delirium which infected so many heads in those days in their determination to instruct, organize, and lead sometimes tens of millions of workers by telling them what to believe, what to do, what to think. The workers they have in their minds do not exist and never existed anywhere except in their own minds.

In April 1957 a Court of Inquiry presented to Parliament an account of a continuing crisis between management and workers at Briggs Motor Bodies Limited, Dagenham, England, owned by the Ford Motor Company. This is what the report said.

From February 1, 1954 to May 13, 1955, there had been 289 unofficial stoppages.

For this the Shop Stewards were almost entirely responsible.

Between March 31 and August 31, 1956, a period of five months, these Shop Stewards, by the sale of lottery tickets, raised a sum of L16,000 (\$50,000). They gave out in prizes L9000 (\$27,000). The rest, some L7,000 (\$21,000), they used for expenses and subsistence, for meetings that they called, for printing their strike leaflets and other material and for assisting strikes in other plants. They did all this, ignoring the union officials, sometimes in opposition to them, and sometimes in defiance of them. There were Communists among them but the report was categorical that the Communists were not the prime cause of the trouble.

What is it that small groups or for that matter large groups of intellectuals and advanced workers have to teach workers like these? The question would be beneath contempt were it not for the tragic fact that ten millions of words and ten thousand lines have been wasted in the attempt to do just this.

The paper of the Marxist organization can be a weapon in the daily class struggle but only when the

workers of the editorial committees want it to be so. Experience has shown that there are times when workers, anxious for immediate publication and popularization of a particular slogan or directive, will demand of a paper that it do this. There are times when they wish complete, accurate, and strictly businesslike reports of the conditions of their labor or of a strike situation which they cannot get in the official Press or their union publication. At such times they will use any paper, however small, which they know is sympathetic to them. What is ridiculous and stultifying is the long list of demands, the rushing in with slogans and advice as to what they ought to do. This workers do not want and pay no attention to. The particular issue of the periodical which had so striking a success did not contain a single slogan, a single directive of what to do. There was a condition affecting many thousands of workers in a plant, "local grievances." Fifteen workers got together and drafted the statement, it was printed, and that was enough.

The independent editing committee is not a social form. It is not a preparation for the future. It is a convenient symbol for getting together groups of people. They are independent. They are to edit. The actual formations can be infinitely varied. In one of the most important factories of Europe, there is a factory group which publishes a factory newspaper. The editor, a man of remarkable journalistic talent, is a regular contributor to a theoretical review. If and when, as is proposed, a paper of the kind proposed here is launched, this grouping will be an independent editing committee of the paper, without in the slightest degree affecting its other activities. It should be noted, however, that this group is the most militant and consistent of those shop floor organizations which lead mass struggles and the day-to-day warfare against the union bureaucracy. In fact, it was originally formed for that purpose and that continues to be its primary interest.

These relations on the whole constitute a model, but only one model. There are and will be others. The pitfall is to believe and to act as if these or other formations are embryonic soviets, Workers Councils, parties of the future, and such-like fantasies. No groups of individuals can anticipate the social formations of the future. These gestate, no one knows how long, but compensate by being full-grown at birth. The mass organizations of today are distinguished as much by anything as by this: they do not worry about their future.

4. BUT WHAT ABOUT SOCIALISM? WHAT ABOUT THEORY?  
WHAT ABOUT THE REVOLUTION?

And finally,

WHAT ABOUT THE ORGANIZATION?

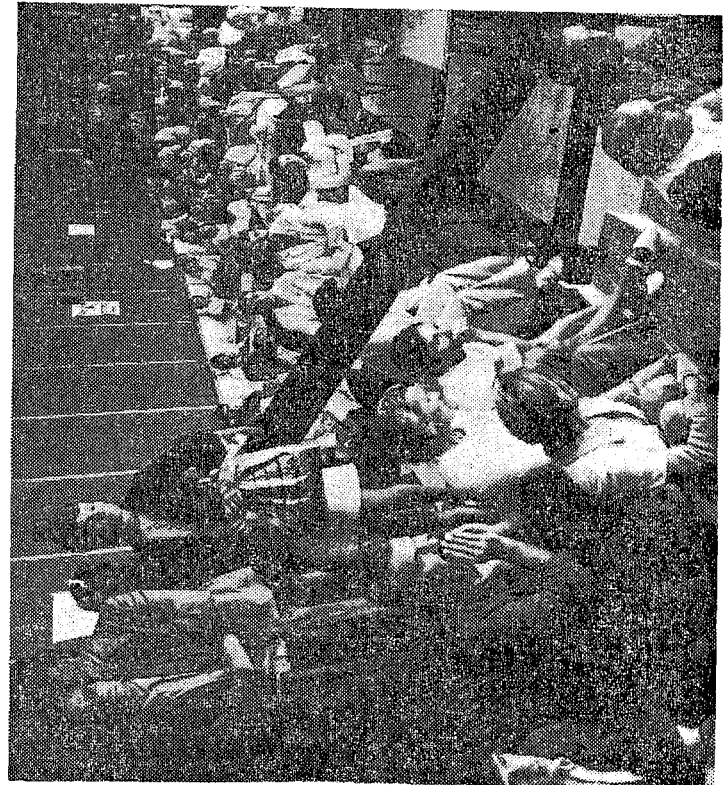
The old mentality, the old habits, the old pre-occupations, the psychology of leadership, these die hard, even among those who have fought hard to abjure them.

It is characteristic of the Marxist organizations that, while they have examined every political organization in sight, in its origins, its past, its present, and its future, we have never seen any attempt by any single one of them to examine the bleak record of the Marxist organization itself. Yet, if ever a social or political formation needed self-examination, this does. Fortunately despite the wide variation in details from country to country, the basic pattern of development is the same.

The Marxist organization in the past aimed at success, as all human organizations do and will always do, and will fail unless they do. But it is the word "success" that has to be defined. For thirty years the small organization knew what it meant by success: success was growing membership and influence, organized influence, in the unions, labor parties, and other mass organizations of the working class. Above all, it sought membership, and by membership it meant people trained and educated and completely devoted to the particular doctrines, the particular organizational practices, the particular leadership of each particular group. It was always, quite literally, preparing the elite corps which was in time to lead the workers and keep on leading them until at some distant time the bourgeoisie was overthrown.

The Marxist group today usually has some members who hold positions of great importance in the labor and union world. It is anxious to gain new members, but new members are a by-product of its success. Its success at the present period and in the present stage of its existence centers around two inseparable processes: 1) the manner in which it multiplies its independent editorial committees; and 2) the way in which the circulation of its paper increases.

The possibilities are endless. Experience has shown the influence it can exercise in the daily class struggle, initiating directly through its own membership great actions involving hundreds of thousands of workers in key industries. But the organization of today will go the way of its forerunners if it does not understand that its future does not depend on the constant recruit-

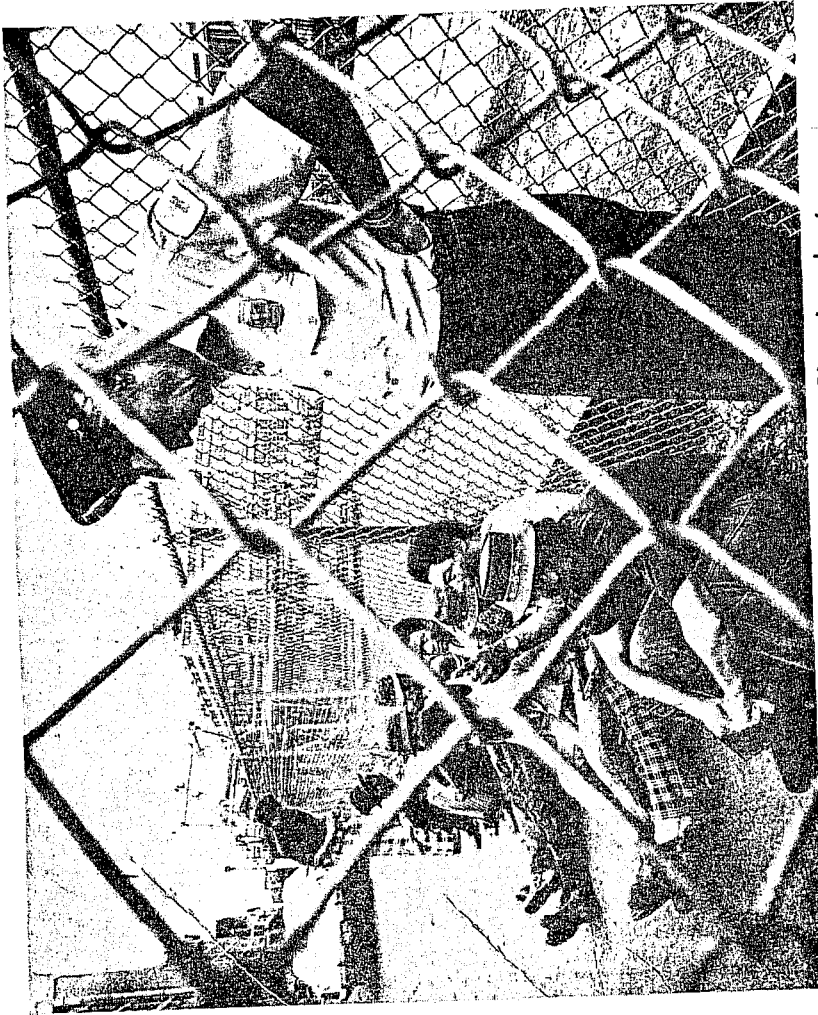


France 1973: Workers managing Lip watch factory

ing and training and disciplining of professional or semi-professional revolutionaries in the Leninist manner.

Its task is to recognize and record. It can do this only by plunging into the great mass of the people and meeting the new society that is there. It must live by this; there is no other way it can live. But the Marxist organization is a historical product. The concrete organizations of today, and it is these we are dealing with and not abstractions, are composed of people who have inherited the traditions and in some cases were actual members of the small organizations which sought to lead the workers. The Leninist theory and practice have sunk deep into the political consciousness of the world. This is the great stumbling block, the burden not on the backs but in the minds of those very ones who have, by hard theoretical examination of the past, by trial and error, broken out of the prison of trying to build organizations of professional revolutionaries. It is not lack of money, nor lack of contacts, nor lack of ideas, nor lack of knowledge which inhibits and cramps and immobilizes the Marxist organization today. It is a habit of mind and a way of life. The vanguard organization substituted political theory and an internal political life for the human responses and sensitivities of its members to ordinary people. It has now become very difficult for them to go back into the stream of the community.

The organization which attempts to break out into the masses to meet the new society that is there will find that it is singularly ill-equipped for this task, and that this is true particularly among those who have the most theoretical knowledge and experience. They are the guardians of the principles and ideas which any organization must have if it is to build. But these ideas have most often been worked out and tested among trained people. Now, with the perspective of going to the general public, the ideas have to stand the test of the ordinary working man or member of the general public. There is never any difficulty about making contact with these people. But with them, if the ideas do not meet with their approval or hold their interest, their rejection is immediate and definitive. They do not stay to argue through loyalty or devotion to the organization. They simply go away and stay away. The test of the ideas, therefore, is extremely severe, even ruthless. From this test the trained Marxists shrink back in fear and take refuge in theoretical articles and his-



United States 1973: Sit-in at Chrysler plant



torical or philosophical disquisitions. Even when they decide to make the attempt, they cannot give all that they have to it. The world outside is an unknown quantity, fear of which inhibits and restricts. They are terror-stricken lest, in going all the way to meet the untheoretical editorial committees, they will weaken or soil or lose altogether the political principles by which they have lived and whose values they are aware of. Inbued from the earliest days of their political life with the concept of theoretical purity and exclusiveness (direct result of the theory of the Vanguard Party), they cannot find the energy to take their theory into the outside world and allow it to become flesh and blood. There are even organizations which have broken theoretically with the past by efforts remarkable for their consistency and great brilliance. They realize what the next step must be. But they are unable to make it and sit for years interminably discussing the preparation for that step.

It is the past, the past of thirty years, the past from which these organizations have come, that past experience without which they could not have arrived at the theoretical understanding of today, it is that past which they must see in all its horrible concreteness before they are fully armed to finish with it forever.

The Marxist organization has developed certain characteristics which are peculiar to it and are still deeply imbedded in it. When, after years of work, it recognizes that its hopes have failed, it does not dissolve. It turns further inward, depending on an ever-decreasing and hardening core. It continues to carry out its tasks on a routine level. What it is doing has become a way of life. There are in many countries such organizations which are doing what they have been doing for thirty years and will continue to do it until the end of time without ever expecting to get any further than they are. They follow a pattern.

a) They become preoccupied with problems of organization, relationships inside the organization, the human and material resources they control.

b) They develop the most profound historical reasons for their existence, which they combine with the most subjective analyses of their own personal needs and interests. Thus they attempt to justify their useless existence to themselves and their circle of contacts.

c) They tend to seek association with former bitter political enemies of the same political type as they are.

whose ideas and methods of thought and action are similar and familiar to them. They pull out of old drawers cherished political distinctions, polish them up and, claiming that these hold and have always held the key to the future, trot them out on all conceivable occasions to keep their political pots boiling. Their mode of existence has its basis in some petty publication which they know is going nowhere but which they keep alive to give the impression that they are still actively engaged in revolutionary work. On this basis they are always ready for what they call a discussion. This is not mere history. There are, in every European country in particular but not only in Europe, hundreds and even thousands of such people. An investigator for the London Times recently reported on a long list and he merely touched the borders. Some of them have ensconced themselves in the mass Labor parties where they live peacefully, still preaching Marxism. They are not only ruins. They corrupt and ruin the potentialities of hundreds of young people every year, and the spectacle of this futility keeps many others from Marxism.

The attempt to break out of it will be made. As with all such attempts, from the beginning, not of Marxism but of history itself, there will be failures, setbacks, some of them serious. But whereas those who are really free of the past can always find new strength in such successes as they have had and after careful thought renew their efforts, that past which is so recent can and does overcome others, pushing them back into the same routine which we have seen so often. In the middle of the Twentieth Century a spectre is haunting Marxism, keeping it within what is already a graveyard, and when it attempts to come out into the open, ready at the slightest sign of faltering, to show it the way back.

We have to refer to those who give up the struggle. The result is often personal deterioration, sometimes ferocious forms of distorted personality. They have given their lives, their fortunes, and their sacred honor to the Marxist organization, have seen their hopes and efforts turn to dust, and turn into implacable enemies of Marxism and Marxists. The worker in the plant usually finds shelter among his fellows. In Britain, workers and intellectuals alike may find refuge in the Labor Party. In the United States, where there is no mass workers' political organization to go to, deterioration is more severe. Those who do not find a place

in the union bureaucracy very often find their way into the government, not infrequently placing their knowledge at the disposal of Un-American Committees and even the F. B. I. But whether they stay in or go out, whatever they do, they are on the whole united by their attitudes to certain fundamental aspects of Marxism. Socialism they consider either to be a myth (the outsiders) or so far in the distance that it is nothing any organization could do anything about (the insiders). The revolution was either a stupid outburst by a mass of ignorant workers (the outsiders) or in any case bound to fail and continue to fail until some trained leadership is organized (the insiders). The Marxist theory of society does not apply any more, either because it was never a correct picture of society (the outsiders) or has not been studied correctly or seriously enough (the insiders). There are infinite variations and combinations of all these, but in all cases they amount to a total of disarray, disorder, and conscious confusion before the concepts of theory, the revolution, and socialism.

The Marxist organization may have decided to leave behind it these dead and dying remnants of a past age and make a popular paper the next stage of its existence. But it may be tempted to believe that because its basis is the independent editorial committee of politically untrained people, because it can recognize that the new society, socialism, exists over vast areas of the world and is striding forward every day, it may believe that for these reasons questions of theory, of socialism can be pushed aside, if only temporarily. This, however, is merely another variety of the vanguard, the elite on the one hand and the unconscious but backward mass on the other. The elite in this case lowers itself to the level of the unconscious, even though socialistic mass. To think this is to cripple the new organization before it has begun. It is to dig beneath its feet a pit deeper than any in which its forerunners lie buried. It is sawing off the branch on which it sits. To say that the task of the Marxist organization today is to recognize that the new society exists and to record the facts of its existence is not a question of popularizing difficult truths. What it means is that there is no longer any distinction between theory and practice.

#### THEORY AND PRACTICE

Today there is no difference between theory and practice. The vanguard fanatics of every stripe, and

they are as many as the stripes of a zebra, will no doubt view with Olympian scorn the proposal that the Marxist organization recognize as its specific function in this period the publication of a paper of the kind we have outlined. Ten years ago, in one of the landmarks of the long struggle to the present position, one group of its sponsors wrote as follows:

It is precisely the character of our age and the maturity of humanity that obliterates the opposition between theory and practice, between the intellectual occupations of the "educated" and the masses.

Three years later we developed this as follows:

All previous distinctions, politics and economics, war and peace, agitation and propaganda, party and mass, the individual and society, national, civil and imperialist war, single country and one world, immediate needs and ultimate solutions—all these it is impossible to keep separate any longer. Total planning is inseparable from permanent crisis, the world struggle for the minds of men from the world tendency to the complete mechanization of men.

State capitalism is in itself the total contradiction, absolute antagonism. In it are concentrated all the contradictions of revolution and counter-revolution. The proletariat, never so revolutionary as it is today, is over half the world in the stranglehold of Stalinism, the form of the counter-revolution in our day, the absolute opposite of the proletarian revolution.

It is the totality of these contradictions that today compels philosophy, a total conception.

Our project for a certain type of paper is not a brainwave. It is the result of a total philosophical conception and of pooling together trial and error in many countries. The theoretical question is therefore for us a practical question, and this practical question involves a specific re-examination and revaluation not merely of our own past but of history itself. Here is the first practical example.

Many of those who are always so ready to give lectures and write long books about the Russian Revolution have doubtless found that in general the great masses of the workers were only abstractly interested. The reason lies not in the ignorance of the workers but in the ignorance of the teachers, their ignorance of

the history that is past and the history that is present. The first national conference of Russian trade unions took place in the months between the March Revolution and the seizure of power by the Bolsheviks in October. But even before the unions had held the conference, the workers in the big plants all over Russia had formed factory committees, a form of shop floor organization. These factory committees supported the Bolsheviks devotedly in their struggle for power, but they had ideas of their own. Even before the seizure of power by the Bolsheviks, the factory committees had called a national conference and their aim was to take over completely the management of industry. They were before their time. They and their claims to manage industry were almost immediately suppressed by the Bolsheviks who preferred that power over production should be in the hands of unions. Thus, in the first great proletarian revolution in the world, shop floor organizations clashed violently with trade unions and were suppressed only after a bitter struggle. For well over thirty years this amazing anticipation of the future was ignored by Marxists. Only recently has it come to the notice of a few who recognize its significance for today.

What exactly happened, what were the consequences, and above all, why did it happen? What was the relation of the factory committees to the unions and to the Soviets? These are theoretical and historical questions of the most profound importance. **But it is precisely questions of this type that occupy the minds of tens of millions of workers, not only in Europe but in the supposedly politically backward working class of the United States.** American and other workers are not waiting for the revolution to solve this problem. They are faced with it now, every day. This is the problem the shop stewards have partially solved, tomorrow perhaps to tackle it in a new way. The Hungarian workers solved it triumphantly and built on it a government which commanded the allegiance of the whole nation. What is the difference between this theory and this practice? None at all.

This is the theory that workers want. Experience has shown that they reject slogans and instructions of what to do. They know what to do. What they want are historical experiences which apply to their own problems and aims, not to abstractions like "the revolution." They do not listen to people who try to train them for the revolution. Workers are not trained to do

historical research, the nature of their work does not permit them to do this. That is precisely what socialism will permit to those who wish it and then such history, particularly of mass movements, will be written as will make the theoreticians hide their heads in shame. This is not a passing brick. There is not a single book in English dealing with the factory committees in Russia. In one study, and very brief it is, of Russian Trade Unions, there are a few paragraphs on this nationwide resolution of the immature Russian proletariat of 1917 to take into its own hands the management of industry. From this book you cannot learn the simplest things, as for example whether these factory committees of Russia 1917 were elected on a factory-wide scale with slates representing the factory as a whole (American style) or whether they were elected department by department (as is the custom in England), if the slates were presented by political parties, etc. These are the things workers want to know. These are the things serious students of theory want to know. Here is an opportunity for some of these devoted Marxists to make themselves useful for once—the Russians (way back in 1927) published a study called *Oktyabrskaya Revolyutsiyai Fabzavkomy*, the October Revolution and the Factory Committees. There are thousands upon thousands of workers and theoretically-minded intellectuals in every country who today have the experience and the need to understand an account of what happened and why. It raises every single fundamental problem of the Russian Revolution and the contemporary day-to-day struggle for socialism. This is theory and practice.

Another example, even more striking. Djilas, the Yugoslav, has intrigued all the political pundits with his analysis of Communism. His world-shaking discovery is that all previous classes who seized and held power were in an economic position to maintain it. The workers, however, he more than implies, lack this strategic hold on the economy and therefore cannot rule. Such is the degradation of thought in our day that this is seriously discussed as a contribution to Marxism. All over the world there are workers who have never read a line of Marx but would dismiss Djilas with hearty laughter. They are the Marxists of our day. It is precisely the economic maturity of the workers, their ability to run the economy, their mastery of the needs, processes, and inter-relations of production, it is precisely this that constitutes the economic basis of the new society. This existence in actuality of the new soci-

ety now, of the new economic form now, is what this book is based upon. The alternative is to believe with Djilas, in violation of all past history, in violation of what is in front of our eyes in Poland, Hungary, and Russia itself, that a new economic system can be established by the Party and the Plan.

Theory is the distillation of history and it is only by understanding the present that one is able to understand the past. With the working class and society at the stage where they are at present, all the great historical events and ideas of the past need to be rewritten. We require therefore to begin with:

a) A brief, easy-to-read **History of the Russian Revolution** which will trace the history of the workers in the Revolution from the first clash between factory committees and trade unions to the present day, now that Khrushchev, Bulganin, and Suslow have revealed where the Russian workers have reached. It was impossible to write this history for our own time before de-Stalinization, the Twentieth Congress, and the revolutions in Poland and Hungary.

b) Today, taught by the events of our own times, we look back at the great events of the revolutionary past of the workers and the masses of the people with new eyes. Near the end of the French Revolution the workers and the common people made a desperate attempt to establish their own power, not against French aristocrats and priests but against those who had hitherto led the revolution. Today, not yesterday but today, we need an account of the struggle of these people, led by the Enrages (the wild ones) as the educated of those days called them. We need, and French Marxists must supply, **A History of the Enrages**. Two groups of people in society will understand it best, the common people of today and the secret police. It is not easy to find more penetrating accounts of the workers and common people in the French Revolution than in the reports of the secret police.

c) Exactly the same thing happened in the English Revolution. For us today it is the struggles of the Levellers against Cromwell that matters. British Marxists must provide a brief **History of the Levellers**.

d) Precisely the same situation, only to a far more intensive degree, showed itself in the American Civil War. Here, the Negro people in the United States have done splendid work, but today, for us, a new **History of the Negroes in the Civil War** is required.

Experience has shown that workers in every country with their own instinct for what they need to solve their own problems as they see them, not only welcome studies such as these but when they are brought to their notice, ask repeatedly for them. To the disgrace of the Marxist movement there are many bourgeois intellectuals who in recent years have been doing just such studies, though most often in an academic manner. Over and over again they have shown their readiness to work with an organization or group of people who they sense are serious in wishing to convey historical information to the great body of the people. The principle of the independent editorial committees applies to them as to the workers. There is no need for them to join anything, to become members, to be trained for the revolution.

e) The most crying scandal and disgrace to the Marxist movement is what has been done, or to be precise, has not been done in regard to the Workers Councils in Hungary. These Councils published a series of leaflets, pamphlets, demands, constitutional proposals, manifestos, documents of all kinds. Together they constitute the most precious collection of material for the understanding of the new society that exists anywhere. In the short time allotted to them the Hungarian workers accomplished an incredible range of tasks. These documents are the record of what they did, and of even greater importance, what they intended to do. A similar body of documents exists for Poland. Here is socialist literature such as has never existed, could not before. Collected and translated with the minimum of editing, it would be read by workers and understood as no other collection was ever read and understood. It was written by workers in the plant, what they proposed to do about production, about the police, the army and government, about foreign policy. No writings of Marx or Lenin will give so complete a picture and convey the form and content, the life and breath of the socialist society as such a collection. It still remains to be done. Is there a more convincing example of the total unfitness for their most obvious tasks which has now overtaken the Marxist organizations? Instead of doing this they read Sartre's collection of documents written by Hungarian intellectuals and then set off to lead the French workers.

There is no need here to continue with the list. There will be other lists. But the lesson is plain. These are practical tasks for the Marxist organizations to per-

form. These are tasks which only they can perform. This is what the workers need from us. And this is what we need, to bring Marxist theory up to date and to fit ourselves for the task of listening to workers, to sensitize ourselves to catch the true significance and the overtones of their statements of their problems, their aims and aspirations. What is the difference today between theory and practice, between theory for the intellectuals and theory for the masses? There is none. As we have said earlier, in every department of modern intellectual and scientific life immense discoveries have been made which tear to bits the assumptions by which our society lives and point the way to a new society. Many workers know one or the other of these discoveries very well. The workers wish to know as much of this as they can and need to know. As some of us have written in the document of 1950 previously referred to: ". . . the whole development of the objective situation, demands the fully liberated historical creativeness of the masses, their sense and reason, a new and higher organization of labor, new social ties, associated humanity. That is the solution to the problems of production and to the problems of philosophy. Philosophy must become proletarian."

We repeat: in all these scientific discoveries what is lacking is an integrating principle, some comprehensive **universal** which will relate them to each other and to society and open out all their possibilities. This integration will not come at one time, nor will it be the work of any one man or any group of men. But this much is certain, that it can come only from men who have grasped the role of the great masses of the people in the new society and understand that the people are today ready to initiate the vast changes in society which the Hungarian workers initiated. The Marxist organizations and the intellectuals in particular must understand that it is their task to make all this knowledge available to the people in such terms as they can understand. This is not popularization. It has been proved that the most difficult of social, political, artistic, and philosophical conceptions can be presented to the people with simplicity and without vulgarization. But to do this demands mastery of the subject and understanding of the people, of the terms of their own experiences. It is the second of these which is so hard to come by. We have indicated the road.

#### THE PAPER AND THE PEOPLE

One more task remains. The Marxist organization has its own political ideas, and very clear-cut ideas they are. The great masses of the people have some of these ideas but in their own form. To very many of these ideas, however, they are in varying degrees opposed. That is precisely why they must have the opportunity to say what they think in their own way. This, which causes such consternation to certain Marxists and drives others to a frenzy of exhortation, is for us a condition of social existence, a contradiction that has constantly to be overcome. The organizations living in the past know nothing of this. We on our part welcome it and we propose now to show in what way this permanent condition becomes the source of life and progress. We shall analyze this contradiction in:

- a) Voting or not voting for such parties as the Democratic Party in the United States, the Communist Party in France, and the Labor Party in Great Britain.
- b) The Negro Question in the United States.
- c) The Hungarian Revolution as it affected workers:
  - (1) in the United States,
  - (2) in Britain,
  - (3) in France.

These are varied enough. They show contradiction (often sharp antagonism) between what one would assume to be a Marxist policy and the attitude of great masses of workers. They allow us to open up the question of policy in the paper.

#### POLICY AND THE PEOPLE

##### I. VOTING

Voting or not voting for such parties as the Democratic Party in the United States, the Communist Party in France, and the Labor Party in Great Britain: how many heads in Marxist organizations have prematurely gone gray, how many eyes have grown dim, in the frantic efforts to answer these questions satisfactorily?

##### THE LABOR PARTY IN BRITAIN

Let us begin with the one in which most are agreed, voting for the Labor Party in England. Lenin taught that you voted for the Labor Party in order to put the labor leaders in power so as to expose their cowardly and capitalistic character, whereupon the workers

would turn to another party. This was and is the crux of the matter. In 1958 it is clear that the workers do not see the future in terms of another party. They think in terms of entirely new social and political formations. Of all the fantastic absurdities into which the Marxist organizations were led by this preparing of themselves to be the leaders in the struggle for socialism, the prize must go to Trotsky himself. In 1934 he actually proposed and engineered a scheme (for that is what it was) by which a few dozen Trotskyites in every country would go into the Social-Democratic Parties, carry on an intensive agitation there for a brief period, by this means split off a few thousand advanced workers, and thus create the party which would lead the revolution. For Russians in 1903-1917 to practice politics, in the more exclusive sense of that word, signified an immense social advance. Trotsky faithfully transferred the theory born of these circumstances to other parts of the world where politics meant a social activity already viewed with suspicion, if not outworn. That is the only reasonable explanation, and it is a charitable one, for this apotheosis of the foolishness inherent in small organizations dressing up as big ones.

Once we get rid of these fantasies, we can begin the practice of recording the facts, and the facts of the workers' movement towards the new society defy the efforts of the Marxist organizations to enclose them in their little programs. In 1945 in England the shop stewards decided that the Labor Party should be given the power with a large majority. They carried out a magnificent campaign of their own, seeing to it that all whom they were in contact with directly or indirectly, inside and outside the plant, should vote. In so doing they were taking the lead of a general sentiment in the country. The Labor Party was returned by a large majority.

By 1956 the situation had changed. The workers, disillusioned, voted apathetically. Many did not vote at all. The Marxist organization would have been performing its function if it had observed and clearly expressed this movement of the working class. Shouting slogans as to whether the workers should or should not vote, or should or should not get out the vote, on the part of small organizations, and worse still, debating the matter, is typical of the old practices. Lenin advocated that revolutionaries take advantage of parliamentary elections because they offered a platform to expose the crimes of bourgeois society. Who believes

today that this is necessary? The parliamentary election today in 1958 is not what it was in 1917 or even 1927. It has declined in the political estimation of all concerned in the old countries. It has its uses and the working class is always prepared to use elections, trade unions, labor parties, or whatever instrument there is to hand. But the actual election is today merely a testing ground and a sort of Gallup Poll for far more serious engagements, retreats, and mobilizations, to settle the fundamental problems of society. Under these circumstances the preoccupation with voting or not voting, or whether the Marxist organization is committing a theoretical crime by advocating a vote for the Labor Party, is not only absurd. It shows how the small organization, beginning from a revolutionary standpoint but one which is 50 years old, gets itself into the toils of reaction. For this preoccupation with voting or not voting is no more than a capitulation to Parliamentary Democracy, precisely the arena to which the bourgeoisie and the labor bureaucracy seek to confine the working class. In Britain the Marxist does not only vote for the Labor Party. He may even be a member of it. But his action, positive or negative, is not a principled question.

To this day the Marxist organizations have no conception of the fact that the British working class, for example, sees the vote merely as part of its total struggle for the new society. Its apathy in regard to voting in 1956 was merely the negative aspect of its determination to transfer its efforts to the industrial plane. Starting from 1954 it has been attacking the government and the employers on wages and working conditions. It is common knowledge that its wages (for what they are) are in advance of the government cost of living index (for what that is). They have been strengthening their independent organizations in relation to the union leadership, and have forced this leadership into a militancy foreign to it, a militancy which has led it into a position of actual defiance of the government. Thus today when the Tory government has a substantial majority, it is helpless before the working class. The situation in the country is more tense than it has been for thirty years and both sides are angling for position in a showdown which seems imminent. Repeatedly millions of workers have made clear, and the union leaders have had to repeat, that the organized labor movement has its own policy in regard to inflation, and it will not cooperate with the government. The

government says that, having won the 1956 election, it has the right to demand that its policies, aimed at curing a great social evil, should be followed, and in this, on the basis of Parliamentary Democracy, it is absolutely correct. Meanwhile, Mr. Gaitskell of the Right wins over Mr. Aneurin Bevan of the Left to the policy of building the New Jerusalem by buying shares in private corporations. It is as remote from the reality of the struggle for socialism as the nationalization, the denationalization, and the renationalization of steel is to the steel workers.

#### A NEW LANGUAGE

The reality is that a great number of people in Britain, having grasped that the Labor Party will ameliorate evils but proposes nothing new, are now challenging the old society on the most convenient issue—wages.

That is the truth about the crisis in Britain but it is not the whole truth. What all these people call the "collective mentality" is what labor political leaders, union leaders, and journalists speak and write. The truly new, the conceptions which constitute a socialist society, are as unexpressed in Britain today as they were unexpressed in Hungary on October 22nd, the day before the revolution began. So powerfully established is the new society that those who represent it now even talk a different language from the rulers. But what the great masses of the people themselves think about all this, that people have to guess at. It is published nowhere. Bourgeois researchers do indeed try to find out and publish the results in summaries of interviews, statistics, and percentages. These publications are useless. These people do not even know the questions to ask, they do not understand the answers they get. To do this requires a training and a philosophy of political life that they have not got. No one could elicit by a questionnaire from workers that the election apathy of 1956 was merely the counterpart of a mobilization for the industrial defiance of 1957. If (for discussion's sake) anyone did know that, would he have taken upon himself the responsibility of deciding whether it was wise or unwise, whether he should support it or oppose it? The futility of the question shows the futility of these preoccupations. And it shows positively the folly of Marxist organizations in their sweating as to whether to vote for the Labor Party or not, whether to campaign

for the Labor Party actively or not, whether to work inside the Labor Party or not.

The task of the Marxist organization is to give the workers and the other oppressed classes a medium whereby, even on a small scale to begin with, there is a genuine presentation of the stage they are going through. It is to give them the opportunity to coordinate their experiences and thoughts, which are sometimes quite contradictory. This is done not primarily in order to help the small organization. The task is to facilitate the masses of the people in arriving at the decision of what they want to do. Information is what the people require, and information is the function of the Marxist intellectual and the advanced worker in this period of society. Once this is seen, advice and instruction sink into insignificance. We have shown already that agitational slogans, i.e., we must do this, or we must do that, will find a place in the paper of a Marxist organization as a direct result of a request by a body of workers. In the 1945 election agitation to come out and vote would certainly have played a large part in the pre-election issues of such a paper. In 1956 it would not have done so. At times workers are particularly anxious for a certain Labor candidate or candidates to win an election, at other times for a certain Tory candidate or candidates to be defeated. The paper will vary its policy accordingly. In time it will arrive at the conclusion that for it the question is an empirical question. Workers have no difficulty in distrusting the Labor Party and union leaders, relying on their shop steward organizations, and still voting for the Labor Party. Nearly all the shop stewards are members of the Labor Party. The Marxist organizations will do well to take their electoral tone from the particular bodies of workers they serve and let it go at that.

#### THE COMMUNIST PARTY IN FRANCE

For some of us this freedom to decide empirically will be relief from the recurrent burdens of many years. It will drive certain others to distraction. What, they will ask, is the organization to do when faced with elections in a country like France? There the Communist Party at one time looked as if it might become the government through parliamentary means and is still the largest force in the French legislature. Isn't it the duty of the organization at election time to advocate voting for the workers' parties which will form a socialist-communist government? Don't the workers demand

it by their support of the Communist Party at the polls?

In fact, these debates, including the advisability or necessity of raising a slogan for a government of socialists and communists, are the low water mark of sterility. There is no necessity for the Marxist organization to take any fixed position on this question at all, and this has been so for over twenty years. In 1936 the small organizations tore themselves to pieces over whether or not to vote or to advocate voting for the Popular Front. The workers for the most part voted the Popular Front into power. But at the same time they invaded the factories and created what Leon Blum has described in the most unequivocal terms as a revolutionary situation. This action fell like a thunderbolt on government, bourgeoisie, Communist Party, Socialist Party alike. It is quite obvious that in the pre-election period the great body of the people were thinking thoughts quite other than those with which year after year they had approached other elections. The Marxist organizations would have been much more usefully employed in learning than in teaching.

As we have shown, in 1947 the Communist Party wielded a powerful influence in the working class (particularly in the union movement) and other sections of the population; its Press was the most widely read in France and it won a great success in the elections. In 1957 its influence in the working class had undergone a catastrophic decline, the number of its publications had decreased, the circulation of its daily paper had sunk from first place to far below that of three or four other daily papers, but its election successes in 1957 were greater than those of 1947.

This is no place to go into analyses of twenty years of French political life, but this much is clear — the working people of France do not confuse voting in elections with their struggle for a new society. They have broken out of the circle of ideas in which bourgeois society struggles to confine them, the belief that voting for a party is the be-all and end-all of democracy. They have put voting in its place and see it as only one, and a subordinate one, of their total social movement and exploration. It is this total movement that matters to the Marxist organization, as much of it as a small organization can grasp and reproduce.

The process by which great masses of workers arrive at a decision to make a totally unexpected but drastic change of direction in their politics remains one of the great mysteries of social psychology and politics.

But it is not the result of a sudden inspiration. It is a process, it has a beginning, a middle, and an end. Without Press, radio, or any visible means of communication, workers communicate it to one another. Of all modern political figures, Lenin had an almost psychic gift for divining these movements. From the slenderest data he could reconstruct the whole. His intuitive sympathy with the masses of the Russian people was fortified and assumed logical form because he had a philosophy of society, saw the movements of the masses as governed by certain laws of social motion. He could say in 1917, pointing to the Soviets before the October revolution: You are looking for socialism everywhere and cannot see it here, all around us. At the other extreme are the reports of the secret police, who do not want to teach the masses anything but look and listen carefully with trained eyes and ears for the signs of new developments. The Marxist organization can learn from both. Its function is to report the movement towards the new society. Not only does it make itself ridiculous by pontificating about whom the workers should vote for. It does not know, it cannot possibly know what government best corresponds to the needs of socialism at the particular moment. In the strikes of 1955, as we have seen, striking workers in the large scale industries formed their own organizations against both employers and Communist leaders and yet, as far as we can gather, voted for the Communist Party in the elections which followed. They doubtless had very good reasons for doing so. In the face of this the violent debates and conflicts in the small organizations as to whether it was correct Marxism to advocate the slogan of "A government of Communists and Socialists" is seen for the folly that it was. It does not matter.

#### THE UNITED STATES

In the United States voting for the Democratic Party presents the dilemma of the Marxist organization in a more serious form. The Democratic Party is a bourgeois party. The Marxist organization cannot under any circumstances vote for an avowedly bourgeois party, that is to say, take responsibility for it or imply that by voting for it some fundamental social problem is likely to be solved. If we remember that the paper of the Marxist organization is based upon definite political principles and aims at presenting the new society, there will be no doubt in the minds of its readers on this. Its independent editorial committees, faithful con-



tributors to and supporters of the paper, are not given to being disturbed by the fact that the editorial policy of a paper differs from what they do or what they wish to write in the paper. It has been noticed in many countries that hundreds of thousands, even millions of workers, read a particular paper every day for years and never subscribe to its politics.

The paper of the Marxist organization in the United States has to record where the new society is and where it is going. It will record that many millions of workers are unrelentingly depriving management of its functions and frequently discuss the advantages and disadvantages of their taking over the plants. But it will record also why so many of these workers continue to vote for the Democratic Party. It will find various levels of approach, from the utmost cynicism to a shrewd and carefully calculated estimate of the advantages to be gained along with an overall skepticism about the ability or the will of either the Republican or the Democratic Party to change the realities of life in the United States.

There is absolutely no necessity on the part of the paper of a Marxist organization to carry on any protracted debate with the correspondents of its paper as to why it is unprincipled or unsocialistic or wrong for them to vote for a bourgeois party like the Democratic Party. Those voters who discipline management in the plant and then vote for the Democratic Party; the paper which holds a position of not voting for either of the bourgeois parties; these two together constitute the new society in its various approaches. There is absolutely no reason why an independent editorial committee should not, along with its other contributions, state in the paper why it believes people should vote for the Democratic Party. There is every reason why it should. The small Marxist organizations must above all maintain a sense of proportion, recognize that they are not small editions of large political parties. They must keep clearly in mind what is important to them and what is not.

In the stage of political awareness in which we live a group of workers can tell a conscious enemy of official society after the first sentence he utters, often before he says a word. They do not object to association and even close association with such people. They recognize their value and go to great lengths (often too great lengths) to give these people every opportunity to convey to them what they know. What they object to, in

every country, and in the United States in particular, is the ingrained habit of Marxists to approach them with a set of principles and policies to which they are supposed to subscribe. They not only value the Marxist's knowledge and education. They respect his principles, weigh them and judge them and measure their own against them. They hold the ideas in mind as an ideal construction. Today may not be the day, but perhaps tomorrow will be. Meanwhile they are prepared to live and let live. That is the working class, and its general attitude is infinitely superior to that of the old Marxist organization. It is not deceived by elections and keeps them in their place. The Marxist organization will do well to follow suit. The decisive step forward to be made here is that the paper becomes the vehicle not for shouting at the workers what they ought to do, but a means of communication of how and why they vote (or do not vote).

## II. THE NEGROES IN THE UNITED STATES

Undoubtedly there is opposition in politics and opinion between a Marxist organization and a body of contributors, readers, and supporters of the kind we envisage. Every country has many national political issues peculiar to it, some of them rooted deep in the national historical development. As the nation grows to maturity, what ought to be done, what is right, becomes quite clear, especially to a Marxist. How it ought to be done or more precisely, how it will be done, is what the Marxist cannot possibly know. The evil, the peculiarity, is and has been so much a part of the nation that even among the progressive classes an abstract consciousness of what is right is overshadowed and sometimes lost by what, after many generations, seems to be part of the natural order of things. Such a question above all questions is the Negro question in the United States.

Marxism has a few triumphs and many unpardonable blunders to its account on the Negro question in the United States. This does not include the calculated deceptions of the Communist Party which have nothing to do with Marxism and everything to do with the Kremlin line. But altogether apart from this the record is one which should induce in the Marxist an attitude of respect for the Negro people and their political ideas, seasoned with a strong dose of humility. Great changes in recent American society, the greatest of which has been the organization of the C.I.O., have been the motive force creating new attitudes to race relations among whites and Negroes alike. But it is the Negroes who

have broken all precedents in the way they have used the opportunities thus created. In the course of the last twenty years they have formed the March on Washington Committee which extorted Executive Order 8802 from the Roosevelt Government. This was the order which gave Negroes an invaluable weapon in the struggle to establish their right to a position in the plants. Negro soldiers, in every area of war, and sometimes on the battlefield itself, fought bloody engagements against white fellow soldiers, officers, generals, and all, to establish their rights as equal American citizens. The Marxists had proved by analyses of texts and of society that integration of white and Negro soldiers in the armed forces was impossible except by the revolution led by the trained vanguard. The Negroes did not so much refuse to accept it as ignore it, and that battle they won, not completely (all bourgeois rights are abstractions, never fully realized in practice), but sufficiently to provide a basis for further struggle.

The Negroes in the North and West, by their ceaseless agitation and their votes, are now a wedge jammed in between the Northern Democrats and the Southern. At any moment this wedge can split that party into two and thereby compel the total reorganization of American politics. They have cracked the alliance between the right wing of the Republicans and the Southern wing of the Democratic Party. By patient strategy and immense labor, they have taken the lead in the movement which resulted in the declaration of the Supreme Court that racial segregation is illegal. Now the people of Montgomery, by organizing a bus boycott which for a year was maintained at a level of over 99 per cent, have struck a resounding blow at racial discrimination all over the United States and written a new chapter of world-wide significance in the history of struggle against irrational prejudices. The full consequences of this will be increasingly seen in the years to come, and not only in the United States—people take time to digest such revolutionary action.

The American Negroes did not wait for the Vanguard Party to organize a corps of trained revolutionaries, including Negroes, to achieve their emancipation. They have gone their own way, and in intellectual matters (for example, the study of Negro History) as well as in practical, they have in the past twenty-five years created a body of political achievement, both in striking at discrimination and influencing American civilization as a whole, which makes them one of the au-

thentic outposts of the new society. Perhaps the most striking example of this are the Negro workers in industrial plants. Sensitized by their whole lives against racial discrimination, and having to be alert in the plant to prevent themselves being discriminated against, they begin by being a militant formation to protect themselves. They soon end by being in the very forefront of all actions against management. Many Marxists enjoy themselves analyzing the Negro bourgeoisie and the Negro petty-bourgeoisie and its reactionary characteristics. The procedure is without sense, being derived from books. The American bourgeoisie will reap the full reward for its centuries of exclusion of the Negro people from official society. Invitations to the White House and spectacular appointments here and there will not alter the results of the centuries of Negro segregation, persecution, and humiliation. When the Negro masses move, out of the White House, the State Department, the Embassy in Liberia, or wherever they may be, the Negro middle classes will come running behind them.

Yet the fact remains that the Negro question in the United States is a complex of enormous difficulties with traps and pitfalls on every side. For the purpose of illustrating the lines along which the paper of the Marxist organization has to face its tasks (that is all we can do), we select two important issues, confined to relations among white and Negro workers, the largest sections of the population affected.

1) Many white workers who collaborate in the most democratic fashion in the plants continue to show strong prejudice against association with Negroes outside the plant.

2) Many Negroes make race relations a test of all other relations. Thus in politics they vote always for the party which in their view offers the best opportunity of winning some new position for Negroes; in the plant they face white fellow workers with issues, not strictly industrial, which force the white worker to declare himself on the racial question; and, most important for our purposes, in relation to Marxist organizations, they judge them by a jealous and often deliberately critical attitude to their position on Negro issues.

In the face of this (and more) the Marxist organizations have failed monumentally. The abstractness, the fear of offending one race and then the other, the enunciation of high principles, the opportunism, the

capitulation to the prejudices of official society and to the prejudices of particular workers or groups of workers, the blunders, stupidities, and confusion the Marxist organizations have been guilty of on this question are by themselves sufficient to condemn them on all other questions. In the United States who fails on the Negro question is weak on all. "Black and White, Unite and Fight" is unimpeachable in principle and undoubtedly has an excellent sound. But it is often misleading and sometimes even offensive in the face of the infinitely varied, tumultuous, passionate, and often murderous reality of race relations in the United States.

What then is the paper of the Marxist organization to do? We shall list a series of statements. They cannot be argued here but, taken together, they give the orientation by means of which the Marxist organization can drag itself out of the mess and avoid the disasters which have beset the path of every such organization on this inescapable question in the United States.

1) Negro aggressiveness on the race question has every right in the paper, more right than any other point of view on the race question. It is here that the Marxist organization has to show firmness, not in defense of its own abstract principles, but in its determination that the Negro worker shall say what he wants to say and how he wants to say it. This alone will make a paper in the United States unique.

2) The chief arguments against this policy are a) that it will alienate white workers who are the majority of the American workers; b) that it will encourage Negro nationalism and even chauvinism. Both arguments are at the very best abstract and reactionary.

i) We are dealing here with a paper, a concrete paper of so many pages, appearing periodically, recording the new society. **Inside such a paper** Negro aggressiveness takes its proper place as one of the forces helping to create the new society. If a white worker or group of white workers after reading and contributing to the paper as a whole finds that articles or letters expressing Negro aggressiveness on racial questions make the whole paper offensive to him, that means that it is he who is putting his prejudices on the race question before the interests of the class as a whole. **He must be reasoned with, argued with, and if necessary fought to a finish.**

ii) How is he to be reasoned with, argued with, and if necessary fought to a finish?

First by making it clear that his ideas, his reasons, his fears, his prejudices also have every right in the paper. Every white worker who is in daily contact with Negroes knows of their aggressiveness on the race question. It is no secret to him. Further, apart from the fundamental conflict with management, few questions occupy him so much. Whether he speaks about it or not, it is a hard knot in his consciousness, as it is in the consciousness of every American today, a growing torment which the American cannot rid himself of. A frank and free discussion in public of the various difficulties as they arise is the surest way to prepare for that closer unity which comes from common participation in great actions.

iii) We have said little about the actual editorial functions of the paper of a small organization. This is no place to do so. The answer in any case lies in trial and error. We rest on the assumption that merely to attempt to produce a paper of this kind demands a very high degree of political consciousness. The paper recognizes and records. But like every paper it has its positive functions. This is one case in which it enters firmly into the discussion, pointing out that Negro aggressiveness on the racial question is one of the most powerful forces making for the new society as a whole in the United States, not merely on race relations. We have listed some of them above. Here is another. It is the Negro people and Negro workers in particular who have brought home to white workers the importance of the colonial question, in Africa, but also in the Far East.

iv) The paper should actively campaign for Negroes in the South to struggle for their right to vote and actually to vote. Where the rulers of society for generations have used every device to debar Negroes from voting, then it is a Marxist duty to encourage them in every way to win and to exercise that right. If Negroes outside of the South vote, now for the Democratic Party and now for the Republican, they have excellent reasons for doing so, and their

general activity shows that large numbers of them see voting and the struggle for Supreme Court decisions merely as one aspect of a totality. They have no illusions. The Marxist organization retains and expresses its own view. But it understands that it is far more important, within the context of its own political principles, of which the paper taken as a whole is an expression, within the context of its own publications, meetings, and other activities in its own name, within the context of its translations and publications of the great revolutionary classics and other literature, that the Negroes make public their own attitudes and reasons for their vote.

Such in general is the function of the paper of a Marxist organization in the United States on the Negro question. It will educate, and it will educate above all white workers in their understanding of the Negro question and into a realization of their own responsibilities in ridding American society of the cancer of racial discrimination and racial consciousness. The Marxist organization will have to fight for its own position, but its position will not be wearisome repetition of "Black and White, Unite and Fight." It will be a resolute determination to bring all aspects of the question into the open, within the context of the recognition that the new society exists and that it carries within itself much of the sores and diseases of the old. On this, as on many similar questions in other countries, the Marxist organization may have to carry on what for long periods may seem a losing battle. It will have to stand firm. The working class fights out its battles within itself and arrives at greater understanding by stages. But whatever its difficulties, if the paper and the organization are expressing the new society as a whole, the violent passions of the Negro question can never overwhelm it.

### III. THE HUNGARIAN REVOLUTION AND THE PAPER

It will be seen already that the simplicity of the formula that we have to recognize and to record is profoundly deceptive. So far no group or individual has recognized and recorded the decrees, political statements, and other publications of the Hungarian Workers Councils, in order and separated from everything else. Thus the most authentic, the most complete, and the most concrete body of socialist theory and practice in

existence is not available to students of Marxism and workers alike. To be able to recognize and to record can result only from a political revolution in the theory and practice of the Marxist organization.

This is most needed where the Marxist organization thinks it is strongest and on safe ground—the revolution itself. The Hungarian Revolution seems easy enough to record. We have shown that this is not so—the most important thing about it is as yet unrecorded. But recognition and recording involves careful consideration of the audience. Independent editorial committees in France, Britain, and the United States cannot record the Hungarian Revolution. This is one of the functions which rest squarely on the intellectuals and advanced workers of the Marxist organization. But this is the lesser half.

#### FRANCE

The Hungarian Revolution in France meant above everything else a new stage in the attitude of the great body of French workers to the French Communist Party. For many it meant the final disillusionment with the Communist Party. To take one key center — the great Renault factory. Within the General Confederation of Labor unit in Renault, a minority which was fighting the Communists for control has been spurred into activity and won a certain consideration from the mass of the workers. The Communists themselves, in the hopeless position of having to defend the massacre of the workers in Hungary, relaxed their grip in order that their followers may more easily retain contact with the mass.

But the great mass of the workers, in particular the younger generation, pay less and less attention to these two groups of leaders competing for control of the union. To them the Stalinist-anti-Stalinist issue has become a scholastic one. They now have to find their own way. They are French workers, with a long revolutionary tradition and an instinct for revolutionary politics and revolutionary theory, so much of which has originated from their own past history.

At the same time groups of French intellectuals, some of them many hundreds in number, have joined together for the study of the history of Workers Councils, of the colonial question, the role of the state in the revolution, the role of the intellectuals in the revolution, and so on and so forth.

We do not propose here to say what must be the

form and content of the paper of a Marxist organization in France. But it is clear that if the organization involves itself in the theoretical discussions of revolution which have flourished among French intellectuals for so many years, it will be undistinguishable in the eyes of the workers and the people in general from what is going on all around them. It does not in the least matter what are the differences of political position it develops; it will still be part and parcel of that arena from which the mass of the workers in Renault have already turned aside.

The French workers, since the Hungarian Revolution, have gone a long way towards grasping the fact that there is no longer any difference between revolutionary theory and practice. Only a paper which shows by its very form that it has turned its back on interminable theoretical discussions about revolution and is actually practicing its theory, drawing its theory from the activity of the workers in their shop floor organizations, and addressing its theory directly to them, only such a paper will mean anything to the French workers. In this the actual relations between the Communist Party in Hungary and Poland and the workers of those countries will play a central part.

Much preliminary work and actual efforts have been carried out. All that remains now is to take the step. And nothing but a paper boldly based on and addressing itself to the workers will pull the revolutionary intellectuals away from their theoretical discussions and pre-occupations with how to convert the Communist Party (or its left-wing) to Marxism. The French workers will move, and when they do, will leave the Communist Party hanging in the air. But whatever the future, it is the attitude not of the French intellectuals but of the French workers to the Communist Party which will determine the future of French politics, and it is therefore this which will determine the form and content of the paper of a Marxist organization.

#### BRITAIN

Profoundly different is the situation in Britain. There the Hungarian Revolution was taken over by the bourgeoisie and transformed into a refugee orgy. The confusion in the small and negligible Communist Party was derided in the Press. The labor leaders excelled themselves in high-sounding phrases about the heroism of the Hungarian workers and the virtues of Social-Democracy as opposed to Communism. The intellectuals re-

joined at the proof that the totalitarian state could not mould a nation to its will. There, theoretically, they stopped. So deeply imbedded is the Welfare State mentality that the British socialist movement rapidly plunged back into its preoccupation with elections, nationalization and denationalization, coexistence with Russia, etc., etc.

As far as it had been possible to inquire and estimate the British workers reacted quite differently. There was a widespread acceptance of the fact that the next stage for socialism is a Government of Workers Councils. With them it is not a theoretical question at all. They have behind them over twenty years of the uninterrupted growth and expansion of the Shop Stewards Movement, in one form or another, in every important branch of industry. The divorce between their thinking and the thinking of their leaders on the Hungarian Revolution is complete.

It is obvious therefore that the task of the paper of the Marxist organization in Britain will be immensely different from that in France. Britain is the original home of the organized shop floor organization in times of social peace—some such social formation always appears in times of revolution. To the British workers the Government of Workers Councils is merely the final step in a long development which they themselves more than any other body of workers have lived through. But these ideas find no expression whatever in any section of the capitalist or labor Press. Like the Central Committee of the Textile Machine Industry's shop stewards they have no official existence. In Britain today the revolutionary tradition receives no concrete expression, particularly because since 1945 the British bourgeoisie is in retreat and goes to unbelievable lengths to avert any direct clash with the working class. But the form taken by the Hungarian Revolution and its close relation with the shop steward form, and the silence of all commentators on this, creates a situation where the field is wide open for the specific function of the Marxist organization.

#### THE UNITED STATES

The effects of the Hungarian Revolution on the working class in the United States could not possibly have been anticipated by any Marxist, showing the difficulties which lie behind the phrase: recognizing and recording. The decisive feature of the Hungarian Revolution was the creation of the Workers Councils and

their assumption of all the functions of government. This seemed to be the least of the concerns of American workers. The American working people of all classes reacted with an almost universal disillusionment with the American Government and distrust of its foreign policy. After all the billions of dollars for foreign aid, foreign alliances, and the millions of words about the power of Russia and the need to contain Russia, the impotence or unwillingness of the United States to do anything to help Hungary wrecked any confidence the workers may have had in what the government was doing abroad.

American workers of Polish and other Eastern European origin saw the revolt in national terms, as freedom from the foreign enemy.

The reaction of the Negro workers was distinctive. In September 1955 a Negro youth from Chicago, Emmett Till, was murdered in the southern state of Mississippi in a manner that shocked the whole of the United States. But the murderers, known to all in the country, were found "not guilty" as usual by the white jury. From that time there has been taking place an emigration of Negroes from the state to the industrial North and Middle West at the rate of many thousands a month, one estimate going as high as 30,000 in certain months. These tens of thousands of Negroes find that, despite all the talk of the fabulous prosperity of the United States, continuous unemployment exists and has existed for years in towns like Detroit, Pittsburgh, and Cleveland. When faced with the prospect of thousands of Hungarian refugees being welcomed in the United States, the Negro workers raised the bitter cry: What about the refugees from the South? Not only was the question legitimate. It had behind it memories centuries old, not the least of which was the welcome during and after the war of German prisoners of war into public places from which Negroes continued to be excluded.

Amid this variety of responses, the question of the Workers Councils received little attention from the workers and it proved almost impossible to make them see it for what it was and to understand why Marxists attached so much importance to it. American workers have no fear whatever of totalitarianism. They are cheerfully confident that they can take care of any who try to impose upon them a totalitarian regime and no one who knows them has any doubt of this.

The above are of necessity approximations, but they represent a reasonably accurate picture of what faced

the Marxist organizations in their attempt to convey the significance of the Hungarian Revolution to American workers. To complete the confusion it was the bourgeois Press which seemed to be preoccupied with the Workers Councils.

#### THE PAPER AND THE ORGANIZATION

Our summation has to be, and has no need to be otherwise than brief. The paper of the Marxist organization has to recognize and record. It had to recognize and record the Hungarian Revolution. But it had also to recognize and record, and record very fully, the responses of the American workers in their editorial committees. It had to go further. Its primary business was to bring out into the open what the American workers were thinking, in their own terms. That is what it has to grapple with, the concrete realities before it, to see that each side, the paper and the people, thoroughly understands the position of the other. That itself is progress, progress for the readers of the paper and progress for the Marxists. It is difficult, but it is impossible only if the Marxist organization persists in screaming its own views at its public, and considers them backward because they do not accept them. It is perhaps not going too far to say that a) the paper of a Marxist organization would give as much space to the reactions of workers as it would to the Revolution itself; b) the presentation of the Hungarian Revolution would differ widely from country to country.

After some years of screaming, the voice of the Marxist organization gets hoarse, its members diminish and those who remain sink into self-examination. Their fatigue is not physical. It is a political inertia. Contradiction, even antagonism, is the source of all life and movement. It is from the confrontation of fundamental ideas with the reactions of workers that new ideas emerge and new energy is created, in the small organization and in the workers themselves. This is one of the most fundamental processes of cognition.

What happens to the Marxist organization, intent only on recruits for the revolution, is that the refusal of workers to accept its ideas, their opposition, their hesitation, or their questions, paralyzes it. It stands immobilized, not knowing which way to turn. Often it has made great efforts to reach the workers. But the deeper it has come into contact with them, the more baffled it has become. When an event like the Hungarian Revolution takes place, every meeting with work-

ers who are thinking their own thoughts is a great effort. The old political life was very easy. Contact was usually confined to advanced workers, or workers you were in the process of advancing. You continued to write and speak more or less the way you always had. Experience has shown and will show that an independent editorial committee creates an entirely new situation. It is prepared to speak and to publish its own mind because it is aware that what it is saying represents the opinion of many thousands of others.

To publish such a paper as we outline demands, besides deep theoretical understanding, technical knowledge, journalistic skill, a sense of values, flexibility and firmness, combined to an exceptional degree. Some of these can to some extent be studied in isolation, but today their full application and development can only be achieved in what we have shown are the vast implications contained in the formula: to recognize the existence and record the facts of the new society.

## CONCLUSION

The Marxist organization organizes itself to produce a paper which will recognize the existence of the new society and record the facts of its existence. We have outlined the practical method with which this must be approached. It is not everything, but it is enough. Let us now, in conclusion, examine this simple affirmation of recognizing and recording, in the light of Marxism, so as to place the paper historically. We must know what we represent, what we symbolize. The Press, in other words, means of communication, is a gauge and touchstone of the struggle for socialism.

Lenin centered his struggle for the Russian Revolution around the Press. The Press was to be the organizer of the revolutionary people around the elite party. Because Tsarism suppressed all political life, the Bolshevik Press was essentially political, though political in the widest sense of that word. It campaigned for land to the peasants, the eight-hour day for the workers, and for the democratic republic. When the second Russian Revolution broke out, however, the people, to the astonishment of the whole world, created the Soviets, a body based on factories, peasants, and soldiers, but essentially political.

When the Russian Revolution declined and Stalinism reigned in Russia and in the Communist Parties everywhere, Trotsky, Lenin's close collaborator, attempted to rebuild an international movement of the Leninist type. He failed for one reason only: the workers of the world no longer needed vanguard or elite parties. Yet despite his serious error in attempting to reproduce the politics suitable to one period in another, Trotsky had a far better understanding than his misguided followers of the principles which should govern a workers' paper. Criticizing the weekly paper of all the Trotskyist organizations, he wrote words which are of the utmost value today. He said:

The paper is very well done from the journalistic point of view; but it is a paper for workers and not a workers' paper . . .

As it is, the paper is divided among various writ-

ers, each of whom is very good, but collectively they do not permit the workers to penetrate to the pages of the Appeal. Each of them speaks for the workers (and speaks very well) but nobody will hear the workers. In spite of its literary brilliance, to a certain degree the paper becomes a victim of journalistic routine. You do not hear at all how the workers live, fight, clash with the police or drink whiskey. It is very dangerous for the paper as a revolutionary instrument of the party. The task is not to make a paper through the joint forces of a skilled editorial board but to encourage the workers to speak for themselves.

A radical and courageous change is necessary as a condition of success . . .

Of course it is not only a question of the paper, but of the whole course of policy . . .

The difference is summed up in two conceptions: a paper for the workers or a workers' paper. But the formula itself, though it clarifies, does not solve. One has to define the term: workers, and to define workers in the sense of theory as a guide to action requires a definition of society and its direction. That is why we began with the Hungarian Revolution. To the end of his life Trotsky thought about workers in terms of the stage of society in 1917. He could not grasp that the development of capitalism into state capitalism and the corresponding development in the working class had created an entirely new category of workers. These did not wish to substitute for a totalitarian party or Welfare State party a democratic party. They sought to substitute themselves as a body for all parties whatsoever. That is the history of mass movements from 1933 onwards. To his dying day Trotsky believed that workers had to be led by the politically advanced. As late as 1937 he could write:

I have remarked hundreds of times that the worker who remains unnoticed in the "normal" conditions of party life reveals remarkable qualities in a change of situation when general formulas and fluent pens are not sufficient, where acquaintance with the life of workers and practical capacities are necessary. Under such conditions a gifted worker reveals a sureness of himself and reveals also his general political capabilities.

Predominance in the organization of intellectuals

is inevitable in the first period of the development of the organization. It is at the same time a big handicap to the political education of the more gifted workers . . . It is absolutely necessary at the next convention to introduce in the local and central committees as many workers as possible. To a worker, activity in the leading party body is at the same time a high political school . . .

He was always looking for workers to train them for the revolution. He wrote again:

We cannot devote enough or equal forces to all the factories. Our local organization can choose for its activity in the next period one, two or three factories in its area and concentrate all its forces upon these factories. If we have in one of them two or three workers we can create a special help commission of five non-workers with the purpose of enlarging our influence in these factories.

He had been brought up in the tradition of seeking influence for the elite party in the factories and he never got rid of it. The modern worker does not wish anybody or any party to have influence in the factories. He can manage his own affairs in the factories. He has had enough of these seekers of influence. One of the first things that the Hungarian Workers Councils decreed was that all political parties as such should be excluded from the factories. When the great upheaval came, they did not form Soviets for politics and factory committees for industry as the Russian workers had done in faraway 1917. The Workers Council was production unit, political unit, military unit, and governing unit, all in one. Trotsky's idea of the silent worker in a political committee of an elite organization coming to life only when something practical had to be done is as ancient a figure as a knight in armor. And the modern worker does not find himself in a workers' paper because the Marxists do not know that he exists and are not looking for him.

Thus the paper as we envisage it is what a Marxist paper always should be, a workers' paper and not a paper for the workers. But workers change and papers must change. They must perform functions that are not being performed by any other force or group in society. That is the guarantee of their success.

Every international organization of the proletariat (and of the bourgeoisie as well) is the result not of what takes place in the minds of political people, but of



changes in the very structure of society. That is why the revolutionary paper of today does not have to preach and advocate revolution in the terms of barricades, capture of government buildings, etc. In 1917 this was the necessary first step, the struggle for socialism coming afterwards. Today the process is completely reversed. All the problems, particularly in production, that Lenin faced after the seizure of power are now being vigorously fought out in every developed country before the seizure of power. Workers today are building the socialist society, often under the commonplace name of "local grievances." They are struggling to make the place of work a human habitation where the first consideration is not capital but men, men not as units of production but as human beings. This conception is the beginning (and very nearly the end) of socialism.

That in many, or at least a few, of these countries the new society will come fully into existence only after the violent destruction of the remnants of the old, remains as true today as it has always been. But that in 1958 does not occupy the place in the Marxist Press that it did in 1917. After two world wars, the Russian Revolution, the Great Depression, Fascism, and the Chinese Revolution, the violent seizure of power is not the main preoccupation of workers and peoples. They play the parliamentary political game for what they can get out of it. But they know that when the moment comes they can overthrow any power, government or otherwise, which seeks to enslave them.

The real problem of the mass of people today is not the overthrow of the old order (who any more believes in it?). It is the fear of what will happen afterwards, whether the inevitable result will be the One-Party totalitarian state. It is not merely that the people of the West see the bureaucratic monster behind the Iron Curtain. They see all the premises of it at home, and that is why workers in all countries steadily lay the foundation of all possible safeguards against it, in their shop floor organizations, in their reaching out to the technicians and the clerical and professional middle classes, in their contempt for the traditional parties and unions whose meetings they don't attend. There is in action in the world today, on a world-wide scale, a revolutionary mobilization far more formidable than anything Lenin ever knew. The people are moving forward, and as they move forward are consolidating their positions. Because this vast revolution does not take the traditional form, it goes almost entirely unrecognized

and therefore unrecorded. Fascism saw it and tried to destroy it but only succeeded in bringing it nearer.

Periodically the secret terror and impotent despair of the ruling classes breaks out as in de-Stalinization, the Eden expedition to Suez, and the frenzied efforts to make the world believe that some attempt is being made to rid humanity of the physical and spiritual burden of modern armaments. Always the result is to leave the situation worse than it was before. When in this or that country the people feel that the moment has come, they will act. The paper of the Marxist organization will do well, here as elsewhere, to be instructed by the people.

What the people need is information of where they are, what they are doing, what they have done in the past. They are the ones to say precisely what they want and when. In the past the intellectuals served the bourgeoisie. When they saw the decline of bourgeois society they thought it was their turn to lead the people. These illusions we must strip off and cast behind us. Even in the fully-established socialist society, those with intellectual gifts and inclinations have an indispensable function to perform, to master the material in any given social sphere and so present it to the people that it is easy for them to decide what they want to do. Information: that is what the people want, information about themselves and their own affairs, and not so much about the crimes and blunders of official society; no one has to look too far for those any more. As far as can be seen at the present, this is the ultimate function of government in the modern world. But that, in the Marxist phrase, is the music of the future.

What, it may legitimately be asked, is the future of the Marxist organization? Its future is no more predictable than the future of society itself. Despite the anachronism of the traditional workers' party, it is not in the least excluded, for example, that the first great upheaval in the United States may take the form of a many-millioned mass workers' party aiming at political power in the traditional sense, while at the same time Workers Councils appear in every branch of the national life. A direct revolutionary seizure of power or civil war may break out in France, provoked by the French bourgeoisie in the same trapped, desperate mood that provoked the Suez adventure. Such events have been and always will be utterly unpredictable. But despite the unpredictable and innumerable variety of forms of development that the Marxist organizations

and their papers may take, those will be closest to these events and will best serve them who have trained themselves to recognize that the new society exists and to record the facts of its existence.

## APPENDIX

The ideas and perspectives in *Facing Reality* are the result of 17 years of theoretical study, cooperative effort, and an intensive political experience inside and outside of small political organizations. We can only indicate here some of the landmarks in that development. Some of the material, particularly that written before 1947, appeared only in mimeographed form and is not readily available. The most complete file of material can be found in *Socialisme ou Barbarie*, a French quarterly published in Paris since 1948.

The editors of *Socialisme ou Barbarie*, a group of a few dozen intellectuals and workers, have governed all their activities by the conception that the main enemy of society today is the bureaucracies of modern capitalism. Since 1948 they have documented and analyzed each stage of the workers' struggle against the bureaucracy. No. 13, the issue of January-March 1954, is devoted to an analysis of the East German Revolt of June 1953 and a detailed account of the French strikes which erupted in August 1953 among the postal workers, the railroad workers, the Renault auto workers, and the insurance office workers. The editors show how these two explosions marked the first turning point in the post-war relations between the workers and their oppressors.

No. 18, the issue of January-March 1956, is devoted to an account and analysis of the world-wide workers' struggle in 1955, of the French workers in Nantes and St. Nazaire, the British dockers, and the American auto workers. As the editors pointed out, these struggles showed that the workers were acting not only independently but in defiance of the union apparatus. The article, "The Workers Confront the Bureaucracy," in this issue reads like a preview of Poznan.

Believing that the content of socialism is in what workers are already trying to work out in their daily struggles, the intellectuals of the *Socialisme ou Barbarie* group have encouraged and assisted the workers in the group to report every detail of their lives in the plant. Notable among the articles by workers published in the

magazine are "Workers Journal (May 1956 at Renault,)" an account of the incipient revolt at Renault over the call-up of a worker for the Algerian war and the blocking of the revolt by the union; "An Experience of Workers' Organization: The Employees Council at the General Life Insurance Co.," a detailed account of work in a modern office and how this led to independent organization by the workers; "Renault Workers Discuss Hungary," "The Factory and Workers' Management," an account by a Renault worker of how workers in a particular department organize their work independently of both management and the union; and "Agitation at Renault," an account of the present indifference among the Renault workers to the Stalinist-anti-Stalinist agitation of both the Communists and the Social-Democrats.

The magazine has also carried reports of the life and activities of workers in other countries. In 1948-49 a complete translation of *The American Worker* appeared in its pages. One of its writers has reported fully on the relations between East German workers and the Communists in the plants after the war.

Socialisme ou Barbarie has published one pamphlet, a pamphlet on the Hungarian Revolution which was published immediately after the outbreak of the revolution, addressing questions to Communist militants about the revolution.

Another series of publications is the work of the Johnson-Forest Tendency which developed as a body of ideas inside the American Trotskyist organizations. The supporters of this Tendency have since broken completely with Trotskyism and the Leninist theory of the party and the Tendency no longer exists. The actual account and analysis of their lives in the Trotskyist organizations and why they turned their backs on this kind of political life are contained in two documents, *The Balance Sheet*, written in 1947, and *The Balance Sheet Completed*, written in 1951.

From the moment that the supporters of the Johnson-Forest Tendency broke with Trotsky's theory of Russia as a workers' state, they realized that their break was not only with a political position but with a method of thought. Hence they set themselves to re-discover for this epoch what Marx had meant by capitalism and socialism and the philosophy of history which had guided his economic writings. By a close study of the Hegelian dialectic and of Marx's writings, they were able to grasp and hold tight the essence of

Marx, namely, his realization that side by side with the fragmentation and mutilation of the workers in the capitalist labor process, there is emerging inside the factory a new form of social organization, the cooperative form of labor.

In 1947 they translated and published the *Economic-Philosophical Essays of Marx* which he had written in 1844. In this same year they published *Dialectical Materialism and the Fate of Humanity*, an essay showing how the creative reason of the masses in revolution has produced all the great advances of civilization. In 1948 *Notes on the Dialectic* was written, an analysis of the development of the labor movement, applying the categories and method of Hegel's dialectical logic.

Three works exemplify their approach to the Russian question. "After Ten Years" is a re-examination in 1946 of Trotsky's *The Revolution Betrayed* in the light of Marx's philosophy of the activity of men in the labor process. "The Nature of the Russian Economy," also written in 1946 on the basis of an exhaustive analysis of all available data on the Russian 5-year Plans, shows how the contradictions of capitalism are inherent in the Russian economy as they are in the American economy or that of any other classic capitalist country. *The Invading Socialist Society*, published in 1947, is an analysis of the mass movement towards new forms of social organization all over the world, and in particular, the European movement towards a Socialist United States of Europe. Today the chapter on "Poland—Where All Roads Meet" is of special value.

The theoretical summation of the work of the Johnson-Forest Tendency is to be found in *State Capitalism and World Revolution*, originally written in 1950 and reprinted in 1956 under the auspices of six Europeans representing three different countries. Originally written as a contribution to the discussion in the Trotskyist movement, *State Capitalism and World Revolution* has not made the complete break with the Leninist conception of the vanguard party. Today we recommend particularly the section on philosophy to the general reader. In this section the philosophy of rationalism is traced from its revolutionary beginnings in the 16th century to its present counter-revolutionary form in the party of the elite, the administrators, the organizers, and the bureaucrats.

The introduction to the 1956 edition of *State Capitalism and World Revolution* ended as follows:

When the document was written six years ago, all this was mere theoretical prognosis. It is printed now with the more confidence as a guide to the great events ahead.

It is not the debates on free speech behind the Iron Curtain which will be decisive in the liberation of these oppressed peoples. It is what took place at Poznan. Like the Berlin rising in June, 1953, it came directly from the shop organizations of the workers. The ultimate aim in Coventry, Berlin, Detroit and Poznan is not liberal free speech nor higher wages, "compensation" nor "consultation," but the construction of a new society from the bottom up.

While the new edition was still at the printers, the Hungarian Revolution broke out and on the cover the following was added:

Hungary is merely the beginning. All political parties, including Stalinists and Trotskyists, and intellectuals of the right and left, for years preached and acted on the theory that the modern totalitarian state by its combination of terror and indoctrination could mould any population to its will. Now the revolution in Hungary has blasted all these cowardly and defeatist illusions, and the most indoctrinated and the most terrorized have accomplished the greatest proletarian revolution in history.

Marxism alone can explain these events. *State Capitalism and World Revolution* is published today exactly as it was written in 1950. It alone, by its analysis of modern production and political relations, foretold with precision and confidence the violent explosions immanent in all forms of the contemporary state, whether totalitarian or democratic. In its detailed exposure of the fallacies of the "Vanguard Party" and "The Plan" it is the only political analysis in English which outlines the future of scientific socialism.

The body of ideas in *Facing Reality* has been developed in the closest relation to what workers are doing in the plant, listening to them and sponsoring publication of writings by the workers themselves. Without this there could be no theory corresponding to reality. The first of these was *The American Worker*, a diary of a General Motors worker's life in the plant, published

in 1947. Side by side with this diary was published a philosophical analysis of the daily life of the worker, showing how in his activity and attitudes to his work is contained the basis for the reconstruction of society. In *The American Worker* the diary and the philosophical analysis are still separate. Not until 1955 are theory and actual experience of the working class joined together in a single document. This is in the account of the Shop Stewards Movement in Britain from which we have quoted extensively in the text and which is reprinted as an appendix to *State Capitalism and World Revolution*.

Along the lines set forth in *Facing Reality* several journals have been attempted. The lessons learned from their successes and failures have been incorporated into this study. The first of these was Correspondence, published at Detroit, Michigan, every two weeks from October 1953 to March 1955 and thereafter bi-monthly.

The June 1955 issue of the bi-monthly carries an account of the British dock workers' strikes in 1954 and 1955. The December 1956 issue is devoted to an account of "Wildcat Strikes at U. S. Rubber" and the February 1957 issue gives "A Forward Look Into Chrysler."

As we go to press the editors of Correspondence are publishing sample issues in preparation for a four-page weekly. The April 1958 issue carried a special Transit Supplement, reporting the efforts of New York subway workers to organize themselves independently in opposition to the Transport Workers Union and the New York Transit Authority.

Correspondence has also published two pamphlets. The first, entitled *Wildcat Strikes and Union Committeemen* contains a factual account of the nation-wide wildcat strikes against Reuther in 1955 and an account of the problems of editing the paper which centered around the editor, an ex-committeeman. The second Correspondence pamphlet is entitled *Every Cook Can Govern* and is a popular study of Athenian Democracy.

In 1955 there was a split from Correspondence and another publication, News and Letters, was begun along the general lines of Correspondence.

In 1954 a group of workers at the Renault plant in Paris began publication of a small mimeographed paper entitled *Tribune Ouvriere*. The project began from the enthusiastic reception among Renault workers of a leaflet written by one of the workers of the Socialisme

ou Barbarie group on the question of abolishing the hierarchy in pay and skill among workers. Since that time Tribune Ouvriere has appeared monthly and some 30 Renault workers meet every two weeks to write and edit articles for it.

In Holland another journal, Spartacus, has for years devoted itself to expressing concretely the conception that it is the activity of the workers themselves in their shop floor organizations which is bringing the socialist society.

There are other journals in Britain, the United States, and France, such as Dissent, Liberation, and Universities and Left Review. But while these to one degree or another oppose official society and do useful work, it is our view that it is impossible for them to make real progress so long as they do not align themselves positively with the forces of the new society which are embodied in the phrase: Workers Councils in every department of the national activity and a Government of Workers Councils.

The life of the modern worker is governed but not exhausted by his life in the plant. *Indignant Heart* is the story of a Negro worker, from his childhood in the South to his later experiences with political parties, the union, and Negro organizations in the North. *A Woman's Place*, written by two working women, is a profoundly simple statement of the problems faced by American women today. In these writings a new literature is being created, breaking completely not only with the approach of the sociologist but also with the Existentialist intellectual preoccupied with his own dreary doubts and anxieties.

We can refer here only to a few other works which give the necessary background to our thinking or which in themselves show that serious thinkers today in every sphere are accumulating the material for a new approach to both the past and the future.

Lenin's writings of 1920 and 1921, collected in Volume IX of his *Selected Works*, are an indispensable guide to anyone, worker, student, or political leader, who seeks an understanding of the relations between the state, the unions, and the masses in the modern world.

*A Little Democracy Is a Dangerous Thing* by Charles Ferguson is a brief but powerful argument for complete control from below in every sphere of modern life if the partial democracy that exists today is not going to be driven towards totalitarianism. *The Social Psychol-*

*ogy of Industry* by J. A. C. Brown sums up the work that has been done in the field of industrial relations in the last twenty-five years, particularly since the end of the last war, and the unavoidable conclusion from all these researches that productivity will never be increased until the organizations of workers on the shop floor feel they have control over their work. Two parts of a book, *A Study of American Society*, now in preparation, have been completed. The first describes the life of the Detroit auto worker and the conflict that has existed since the formation of the U.A.W. between the activity and aims of the workers and those of the union. The second part examines the crisis in the modern family in the United States. Extracts from *A Study of American Society* have been published in Correspondence, April 1956, June 1956, and June 1957.

A. S. P. Woodhouse of the University College in Toronto has given us in *Puritanism and Liberty* an account of the conflict between the rank and file soldiers in Cromwell's New Model Army and Cromwell himself, showing the insistent drive towards democracy on the part of the ranks in the face of Cromwell's own hesitations. Professors Haller and Davies have made an important contribution to the current re-examination of the English Revolution by their collection and editing of the Leveller Tracts. The introduction is particularly valuable today, showing Lilburne and his followers in a far more favorable light than hitherto in their relations with Cromwell.

The finest study of the activities of the working class during the French Revolution is *La Lutte de Classes* by Daniel Guerin.

Du Bois' *Black Reconstruction*, first published in 1935, remains to this day the best study of the American Civil War, being based on the role played in it by the Negroes, particularly the slaves.

Mbiyu Koinange's *The People of Kenya Speak for Themselves*, tells the story of how Kenya Africans were building schools, cooperatives, and their own political organizations in an effort to become a part of the modern world when they were thrown back, not by the Mau Mau but by the offensive of the European settlers backed by the British government. Two Europeans have made valuable contributions to the theory of the colonial revolution today, showing that the nationalist struggle is not only for independence but to liberate new forms of social organization. Thomas Hodgkin in *Nationalism in Colonial Africa* describes the various

forms in which the newly urbanized Africans organize themselves. F. LeGros Clark in an essay entitled "Conditions of Economic Progress" (published in *The New West Africa*) states unequivocally that technical progress can take place in the underdeveloped areas only through the release of the creative energies and self-organization of the African people, whatever risks and tensions this may introduce to newly independent governments.

In recent years scholars have been rediscovering by hard research how the great artists of the past, in particular Shakespeare, were the great creators that they were precisely because they created for the mass popular audience. Among the valuable works on this subject is *Shakespeare and the Popular Dramatic Tradition* by S. L. Bethell.

This Appendix does not pretend to be in any way complete. It shows an attitude of mind.

## ON THE AMERICAN WORKING CLASS

**The American Worker** by Phil Romano and Ria Stone.

Originally published in 1946. An article by a young auto worker describing life in a FM plant and a philosophical article incorporating that experience into the body of Marxist theory. 70 pages, \$1.00.

**Union Committeemen and Wildcat Strikes** by Martin Glaberman.

Two articles: the story of the 1955 wildcats in auto and a discussion of the radical union committeeman. 23 pages, \$.50.

# **Punching Out** by Martin Glaberman.

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## ON MARXIST THEORY

**A Workers Inquiry** by Karl Marx.

A questionnaire for workers. 12 pages, \$.25.

**Mao As a Dialectician** by Martin Glaberman.

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