

WORLD OUTLOOK

PERSPECTIVE MONDIALE

Un service de presse ouvrier

Vol. 2, No. 16

April 17, 1964

21, rue d'Aboukir - PARIS-2

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The London election was regarded by all sides in advance as a key test area that would most likely foretell the results of the general election. [See World Outlook March 6.] The forecasters therefore studied the results in the London election with particular attention. Two specialists in this field, Peter Pulzer and Michael Steed, forecast in The Observer April 12 that the swing to Labour in the general election will be around 8.5%. Results of by-elections elsewhere in the country confirm this figure, they state.

The London vote was particularly dramatic in view of the extraordinary lengths to which the Tories went in trying to win. They gerrymandered the entire area in such a way as to reduce the weight of the working-class vote and to swell that of the middle and upper classes.

The ballot, too, was not designed to help workers. Names of candidates appeared without party affiliations. Hundreds of complaints were registered by voters about the difficulty of obtaining from election officials information on what party some of the candidates represented.

The swing to the Labour party was so heavy, however, that all this trickery appeared to boomerang.

The ranks of the Labour movement feel greatly heartened by this impressive victory. The situation in the country seems to spell certain defeat for the Tories in October.

With this strong wind in the sails of the Labour party, the rank and file should feel doubly free now to begin considering the immense problems that must be met with Labour again in power.

After being ousted for thirteen years because of the ineptness and treachery of the last Labour government, the working class must see to it that this time an effective program is carried out; in other words, that the Labour government exercises its mandate to put the country on the road to socialism.

British business appears to be reconciled to a Labour victory. But that is because the capitalists count on Harold Wilson and the coterie around him performing the same kind of rescue work for their system as the last crew.

This may prove not as easy as on previous occasions, however. In the world of today, with revolutions lighting up the horizon on all sides, the working class will not feel inclined to let this enormous opportunity go sliding down the drain. They will be more inclined to make England the first country in Western Europe to demonstrate how swiftly a highly developed economy can elevate living standards for the masses and open up a boundless perspective of abundance and well being for everyone once it introduces genuinely socialist planning.

BELGIUM'S FASCIST-MINDED DOCTORS

After a spectacular effort to reach an agreement with the representatives of some 10,000 doctors who staged a nation-wide walkout at the expense of the sick and the injured in order to force cancellation of a public health insurance law, the Belgian government was forced April 12 to order conscription of the practitioners.

The medical men had organized an "emergency service" manned by only 2,000 doctors. When the negotiations broke down, they cold-bloodedly cancelled even this gesture.

It remained to be seen how effective the government move would prove to be in getting the doctors to actually care for patients. Thousands of them had crossed the borders into neighboring Holland, Luxembourg, Germany and France at the beginning of their ultrareactionary action in anticipation of such a move by the government.

Western Europe stood aghast at the bestial action of Belgium's doctors -- only too reminiscent of the attitude of the Nazi doctors in the nightmare of Germany's concentration camps and gas chambers.

The conservative Paris daily Le Figaro, which is opposed to socialized medicine, expressed this reaction in an unusual statement [April 13], drawing the line against the horror now being enacted by the witch-doctors' associations that have the Belgian doctors on their membership lists. Le Figaro reported the words of an anonymous French doctor sympathetic to the cause of his fraternity in Belgium:

"When all the arguments are exhausted," a French doctor told us icily, "war is declared. In every war there are victims."

To which Le Figaro protested: "Certainly, but in a war the victims normally must be the combatants. But in this 'war' of a profession against a government, the victims are not likely to be the combatants (one still wonders if the ultimate aim of the associations is not political), but more likely the children of the provinces of Liège and of Luxembourg where the beginnings of epidemics have been reported. . . "

The inhuman action of Belgium's doctors does seem to have a political connection. The Belgian weekly Pan was able to reveal some facts about this which were in turn put on the press wires April 9.

According to Pan, neofascists are deeply involved in the leadership of the doctors' associations. The strings are held by Pierre Joly, a sympathizer of the French terrorist OAS [Organisation de l'Armée Secrète] which conducted a bloodbath in Algeria at the end of the war there and organized widespread bombings and terrorist attacks in metropolitan France, including various attempts to assassinate de Gaulle, and one Dr. Teichman, head of the MAC [Mouvement

d'Action Contre-révolutionnaire] and of "Young Europe" ["Jeune Europe"] and editor of the OAS journal in 1961 and 1962.

The April 10 Paris Le Monde quotes the following from Pan:

"The course being followed by the doctors is in fact exactly in accordance with the procedures advocated in the brochure, Counter-revolution, Strategy and Tactics, printed by Pierre Joly in the days of the OAS. This is actually a collective job written by colonels Gardes, Argoud and Macheroy and R.P. Georges, S.J." Page 90 of the pamphlet outlines the means that counterrevolutionaries must use. Among them is a tactic involving the doctors. According to the authors it is necessary to campaign against "government and subversive encroachment on the free exercise and organization of the profession."

The book continues: "The limitation of the freedom of the medical profession, and by analogy the liberal professions, involves a unanimous reaction of hostility. These professions thus become reserves of counterrevolutionaries."

Pan asks: "Doesn't this text clarify certain aspects of the conflict?"

Unhappy Brazil

THE CAPITALIST ALTERNATIVE TO CUBA

By Joseph Hansen

Fidel Castro has said again and again that Latin America is faced with no other possibilities but to follow the example of the Cuban Revolution or suffer the consequences of military dictatorship. There is no third possibility, he has emphasized, such as that held out by Wall Street's glittering "Alliance for Progress" or Romulo Betancourt's eroded bourgeois democracy in Venezuela.

Castro's warnings have received dramatic confirmation in a number of cases. The Frondizi government in Argentina, which attached itself to the "Alliance for Progress" and its hidden strings -- to line up against the Cuban people and their socialist revolution -- was swept away by the military caste, the "gorillas," as they are called. A similar fate befell the Arosemena government in Ecuador last July.

Now the lesson is being repeated before our eyes on the colossal scale of Brazil, a country bigger than the United States, with a population estimated at 75,000,000, and borders touching all the South American countries except Chile and Ecuador, a country of such

importance in the Western Hemisphere that what happens there has big effect on all the others.

The counterrevolutionary coup d'état carried out by the "gorillas" and their political mentors like Carlos Lacerda, the reactionary governor of Guanabara [see World Outlook April 10], is now in process of being consolidated under the ministrations of the Big Brother to the North. Moreover the counterrevolutionary coup d'état, which aimed at perpetuating the feudal-like relations that make Brazil's countryside a living hell for her millions of peasants, has been certified as eminently "constitutional" by no less an authority on Brazilian law than the proprietor of the LJB Ranch in Texas. In fact unlike most judges, who sometimes take years to decide on the constitutionality of a point in law, the clarity of the case was so apparent to him that he wired his congratulations to the "gorillas" before the president of the country had reached exile.

This ruling by Johnson soon came under a cloud. Carlos Lacerda, who is recognized even by the White House as something of an authority on constitutional government in Brazil, had this to say to Agence France Presse April 11:

"It would be dishonest to say that the institutional act published Thursday [April 9] by the military chiefs is not an authoritarian act [acte d'autorité], but I am optimistic and I believe that the new regime can liberate us from the political system of which we have been prisoners since the dictatorship of Getulio Vargas and which we were not able to break by conventional means."

Some of the State Department's Latin-American experts, distressed at the effect of President Johnson's swift acclaim of the counterrevolutionary coup d'état, have sought to find a scapegoat for his declaration. Thus Arthur Krock, who is often used by the State Department as an unofficial channel to the powerful New York Times said in his column of April 8: "An authoritative explanation given to this department is that the President and Mr. Rusk acted on recommendations from Ambassador Lincoln Gordon in Rio de Janeiro and his 'country team'. . . ."

It is not without irony that Lincoln Gordon has given almost revolutionary-sounding speeches in Brazil about the need for reforms and all that jazz connected with the "Alliance for Progress."

President Johnson may not be quite so jubilant in public over the triumph of reaction in Brazil; but the last thing in the world he will do is disclaim the credit due him and Dean Rusk and his appointee Thomas C. Mann, now Washington's chief Latin-American policymaker, for their good job in toppling Goulart and ending the hope for even the most modest reforms in Brazil in any other way except along the path blazed by the Cubans. Johnson needs that "victory" in Brazil for his election campaign, to steal the thunder away from the right-wing Republicans.

Meanwhile the people of Brazil are beginning to pay the price for the counterrevolutionary coup d'état that was baptized and blessed by the White House.

Reports trickling through the censorship set up by the military junta (now relaxed -- for outgoing news) indicated that in the first days after the generals seized power, some 3,000 people were rounded up in Rio de Janeiro alone and jammed into the reeking dungeons that go by the fair name of "prisons" in that city. These hell holes were already so crowded and run on such incredible levels that a desperate prison rebellion flared up there only a little more than three years ago.

One report guessed at 7,000 in all of Brazil caught up in the massive witch-hunt. The victims include prominent individuals of all kinds anywhere to the left of the medievalistic landholders. Union figures are prominent among the prisoners.

The military junta purged a congress already notorious for its reactionary coloration, throwing out some 40 deputies. People as prominent as Janio Quadros, the president who resigned because even his conservative program of "enlightened capitalism" was rejected by the oligarchy, have been deprived of all political rights for ten years.

After this, the junta settled on one of their own inner circle to be president, and he was immediately rubber-stamped by the complacent congress after it was stripped of still more of the constitutional powers that stand so high in the opinion of the president of the United States. The reactionary general placed in supreme power in Brazil April 11 is Humberto Castelo Branco. He was unanimous choice of the military junta, that body of constitutional experts who issued a decree April 9 called an "institutional act" which calmly declared that their "revolution" was in itself the final authority, taking precedence over the old constitution.

Reliable reports as to the reaction among the workers and peasants to these bitter events are not yet available. It is possible that they are still reeling from the blow, particularly in the cities, and are not yet fully aware of exactly what happened.

This element of surprise can for a time give the military caste's dictatorial regime an appearance of strength which it really does not have. This can become evident rather quickly in Brazil where raging inflation has accustomed the entire working population to constant battles to keep up with the athletic cost of living.

It is too early, however, to venture to predict whether the same pattern of political instability that has characterized Argentina, for instance, will be repeated in this unhappy land, or whether Brazil will look more like Stroessner's Paraguay.

ALGERIANS STUDY IMPORTANT CONGRESS DOCUMENTS

The preparations for the congress of the Algerian Front de Libération Nationale [FLN], which is scheduled to begin in Algiers April 16, show that this will be a most important event. It is in fact the first national political gathering since Algeria gained independence. Great crises have occurred since then, beginning with the one that flared up in July 1962 the moment freedom was won. The congress, bringing together the rank-and-file militants and their present leadership, will have the opportunity to draw a balance sheet on these events. The significance of the occasion is indicated by the reaction of such former prominent figures as Belkacem Krim and Mohamed Boudiaf, who returned to Algiers on the eve of the congress. Ben Khedda broke two years of silence to offer his views.

The texts prepared by the preparatory commission, which have been printed in the Algerian press, are of the greatest interest as indicators of the direction and degree of development under the Ben Bella government.

The documents take up six full pages of the April 6 Le Peuple, and are divided as follows:

- Analysis of the national liberation movement up to November 1, 1954, when the armed struggle began.
- Armed action and the popular resistance.
- Characteristics of Algeria.
- The party.
- The state.
- The foundations of foreign policy.
- Economic perspectives. (The subdivisions include: capitalism, the transition period, economic tasks of socialist construction.)
- Realization of the aspirations of the popular masses.
- Economic and social situation following independence.
- Party statutes.

The texts are quite condensed so that even long excerpts could not replace study of the documents in their entirety, which we recommend. They should prove of first-rate interest to revolutionists throughout the world as an accurate indication of the conclusions reached at this point by the vanguard of the Algerian Revolution in the guiding wing of the Algerian Workers and Peasants Government. The documents present a balance sheet of the struggle conducted by

the Algerian people, of the situation in their country as the vanguard found it on taking over after more than 130 years of colonialism and close to eight years of the liberation war. They formulate here their policies, their perspectives, and lay out the structure of the party which they wish to build to guide Algerian society along the road to socialism.

The establishment of socialism is strongly affirmed throughout the documents. And it is not the "socialism" on the lips of so many politicians in the developed as well as underdeveloped capitalist countries.

The Algerian Revolution offers, as is well known, numerous analogies with the Cuban Revolution, particularly the fact that neither the Cuban nor Algerian leaderships (as collective bodies) originated in the traditional labor movement or had a Marxist education and training. In both cases, the revolution itself carried the leadership toward Marxism.

But it is here that the first difference appears. The Cuban leadership has openly advocated Marxism and Leninism for several years. In the documents submitted to the FLN congress, however, no explicit reference is made to Marxism, although the method of analyzing society and of elaborating policy is certainly Marxist. The substance of Marxism is to be found here but not the term.

Without doubt, the reasons for this difference are due to some extent to differences in personality. But, in the case of Algeria, the protracted struggle conducted without help from the French workers' movement as a whole explains much.

Not only is Marxism not mentioned, but specific reference is made to the Islamic religion. The Algerian Revolution, it is declared, will "restore" to it, "its true image of progress." Thus is reflected in the text the combined character of the Algerian Revolution.

A broad outline summary of the history of the struggle for independence is offered, particularly of the period following the first world war. The FLN is linked to the North African Star [l'Etoile Nord-Africain], to the Parti Populaire Algérien. The role played by Messali Hadj at the time is mentioned. (After long years of struggle, he caved in after the armed struggle began.)

Other movements are characterized as follows: "The reformist tendency of the liberation movement included the Oulémas Association, the Algerian Communist party and the Federation of the Elect."

The "colonialist positions of the Popular Front" are correctly criticized and the "parties of the French left" are condemned for their refusal to support the struggle of the Algerian people. Such

references to the record are not without purpose. They even constitute part of the evidence against the Social Democratic and Stalinist leaderships which should be brought to the attention of the workers in the capitalist countries.

With regard to the attitude of the governments of the workers states during the war for independence, these terms are used:

"Due to reasons of a diplomatic character, the attitude of the socialist countries in relation to the Algerian Revolution were not always clearly expressed. The birth of the GPRA [Gouvernement Provisoire de la République Algérienne] saw the socialist countries of Asia engaged in unconditional support of Algeria. The socialist countries of Europe followed them later, although on the humanitarian level, their aid had been steadfast."

What things are said here in a diplomatic way!

A severe but quite correct criticism is made of the leaderships that led the struggle from 1954 up to the meeting at Tripoli. "The Revolution suffered in its evolution from the absence of a revolutionary leadership and a program reflecting the interests of the most oppressed masses."

But the period covering the July 1962 and subsequent crises is passed over hurriedly. Nevertheless, it would not be surprising if a good deal of discussion at the congress dealt with this period, particularly if it is held behind closed doors.

The account of the heritage of poverty, of suffering, of bitterness serves to pose the short- and long-range tasks faced by the Algerian masses. The importance of self-management is emphasized:

"Self-management is and will continue to be the manifestation of the uninterrupted development of the popular national revolution into a socialist revolution, posing all the economic and political problems resulting from the transition that is underway from colonialism to the emergence of a state opening the road to socialism."

The documents cover a wide field. It would take an article just to consider the program of action and the immediate tasks proposed for the various sectors of Algerian society.

Great importance is attached to Algeria's complex cultural problems.

It was inevitable that the draft would come out for a single party since this concept was included in the constitution. [See World Outlook September 27.] A correct criticism of the limitations of bourgeois democracy is generalized in an improper way to justify this position. However, it is recognized that a single party raises the danger of "confiscation of the revolutionary power for the benefit of a caste."

The text states that the party must be distinguished "physically" from the state in order not to be absorbed by it. But it likewise declares that the head of the government must also be the head of the party. Which proves that the separation of party and state is not a simple matter. The problem is not specific to Algeria but is posed in all the workers states without having been resolved in any of them.

In foreign policy, while taking into account the necessary relations with the capitalist countries, the draft singles out the neo-colonialist danger and proclaims support for every struggle of a people seeking emancipation.

To conclude this brief indication of the content of the documents, we repeat that the general lessons drawn by the Algerian vanguard and the perspectives they see are set down in a highly condensed way. The material will without doubt prove to be a precious instrument for the Algerian militants as they work to construct Algeria's socialist future. It should be carefully studied by revolutionary militants elsewhere in the world to better understand the Algerian Revolution and to bring its lessons and tasks within the wider range of problems included in the world socialist revolution.

TROTSKYISM HAUNTS BOTH MOSCOW AND PEKING

By Pierre Frank

The new flare-up has evidently brought the Sino-Soviet conflict to the point of definitive rupture. After some months, during which articles expressing Peking's view remained unanswered, Moscow has opened its own attack, publishing the report made by Mikhail A. Suslov two months ago at the Central Committee of the Communist party of the Soviet Union. This came shortly after the publication in the Chinese press of an article entitled "The Proletarian Revolution and Khrushchev's Revisionism." [See Hsinhua March 31 for full text.]

That the definitive rupture is close at hand can be judged from the fact that Suslov's report calls for the convocation of a conference of Communist parties, not to seek a compromise, but to assure a "serious, and from all appearances, prolonged struggle." From now on, the most faithful supporters of the Moscow leadership, such as the heads of the French Communist party, will defend this proposal, denounce any attempt at evading taking a clear stand, of maintaining a straddling, conciliatory attitude, etc.

Without the least doubt, Khrushchev was compelled to conclude that the Chinese would concede no compromise solution, that continuation of the situation of the past months would enable the Chinese to gain ground, would encourage all those who would like to utilize the

conflict to display a certain independence. Therefore he decided to pose the question of a conference as a means of lining up the maximum forces against a danger that "is growing; all the more so since we are dealing with leaders of a government party, who have at their disposal a vast state apparatus and means of ideological action." (Suslov.)

What will be the response of the Communist parties to this proposal for an international conference? The answer will prove to be of considerable interest. At the 1960 conference, 81 parties sent representatives. Can Khrushchev hold a conference at which this number would be appreciably less without losing face? Up to now the Italian Communist party has maintained a reserved attitude on such a conference although Togliatti politically is for Khrushchev and against Mao. The famous "unity" of the official Communist movement is in for a severe test.

* * *

This development on the organizational level has been accompanied by an intensification of political attacks, as is attested by the two documents mentioned above. In this article we will leave aside the epithets cast by both sides in the purest Stalinist style. Likewise the gross distortions of each other's positions. The old Stalinist school shows that it still has its representatives in the two camps. One must admit, however, that in this field, Khrushchev, during his Budapest junket, proved himself to be the most apt student. Thus, on the question of nuclear war, he attributed a whole series of stupid propositions to Mao and concluded that "only a complete idiot" could hold such views.

Inevitably, each side strikes hardest at his adversary's weak points. The Soviet leaders draw the maximum from the Chinese view that Yugoslavia is a "capitalist state"; and, of course, the Chinese praise of Stalin. Contrariwise, the Chinese point to many excellent examples of the bankruptcy and the stupidity of the policy of the parliamentary and peaceful road to power. (Iraq, India, France, Algeria, Spain. . .)

However, in these documents written by bureaucrats, where reality and the differences are expressed in a quite distorted way, a certain number of essential things appear in sharp relief.

The Suslov report, for instance, begins by underlining the principal difference in the current conflict. The fundamental thesis in the 1960 declaration, he says, is that the "world socialist system" -- meaning the economy of the workers states -- is the decisive factor in the evolution of the entire world toward socialism. Suslov accuses the Chinese of revising this thesis when they write: "The revolution of national liberation in Asia, Africa and Latin America appears today as the most important force in dealing direct blows to imperialism." To say this, he holds, means that "the Chinese theoretic-

ticians grant it [the world socialist system] only the role of a 'point of support' consigned to support and to develop the revolution of oppressed nations and peoples throughout the world." To say that, Suslov adds, is not to understand the importance of peaceful economic competition.

He likewise accuses the Chinese of distorting the Soviet point of view: "By distorting the root of the matter, the leadership of the CCP seeks to prove that economic competition would signify that 'the oppressed nations and peoples in general do not need to conduct a struggle, to make a revolution, that they have but to wait tranquilly while the Soviet Union outstrips the most developed capitalist countries in the level of production and material well-being.'"

If there is a "distortion" of the thinking of the Soviet leaders, it is in the sense that they are not totally hostile to mass struggles. However, they don't envisage them as revolutionary struggles for the conquest of power, but simply and primarily as means of pressure on the capitalist states to bring them within the orbit of Soviet diplomacy -- as points of support for that motor force of history which economic construction in the USSR and the other workers states has become.

Unquestionably, this is a difference of first-rate importance, brought out by this conflict, for the consideration of Communists the world over, particularly the Communists of countries suffering the evils of the capitalist system. Should their main strategic objective be the overthrow of their capitalist system or should they seek to bring about bourgeois political combinations in their country that will come to a diplomatic understanding with the Kremlin? Is the motor force of history no longer the revolutionary struggle of the masses but economic construction in a certain number of workers states? This is the essential issue which the Trotskyists have emphasized for years to the best of their ability although with but limited forces and limited means. The Chinese are bringing this out now with a force, which, as we see, has aroused fear among the Khrushchevist leaders.

As we have likewise said many times, the Chinese did not reach this view through purely ideological means. They did so through the necessities of their own situation, through empirical testing of Soviet policy, to some degree at their own expense. Because of the pragmatic way in which they progressed politically on this point and because of the fact that the needs of the Chinese state weigh considerably on them, the Chinese are not always consistent in their line concerning this. The Khrushchevist leadership, on the other hand, is absolutely consistent in its line on peaceful economic competition to which it seeks to subordinate the mass movement.

The Chinese attack has proved strong enough to place the Soviet leadership on the defensive on this point. In Budapest, Khrushchev was obliged to plead: "We are not against the world revolution,

but. . . " But, but, we can't do this for other people. As if anyone had posed the question that way.

* * *

In the Chinese view, classes have not been abolished in the USSR; capitalist dangers remain; and under the capitalist pressure revisionism surges up -- as has been seen in the Communist parties since the end of the war, first of all with Browder, then with Tito, and now with Khrushchev.

In the Soviet view, China is a country where nonproletarian layers exercise enormous predominance and the leaders of the CCP "certainly lack the Marxist-Leninist temper to firmly oppose the pressure of the petty-bourgeois spirit."

In other words, for the one side it's a question of the pressure of capitalism in the country; for the other side, the pressure of the petty bourgeoisie.

But, while finding this difference in the social roots of their positions, each of them accuses the other of one and the same political crime -- Trotskyism. Once again in this dispute, Trotskyism -- buried so many times -- makes its appearance.

With the Chinese, Trotskyism is simply a reformist, a Menshevik concept -- their presentations on this subject are more than summary. Suslov finds Trotskyism in the Chinese position not only in their "factional" methods, not only in their propositions on the degeneration of the Soviet leaders, but also in their views on the colonial revolution, in their concept of the armed revolutionary struggle, in the question of "peaceful coexistence." (1)

It is a considerable error to maintain that the two antagonists launch mutual accusations of Trotskyism because, as certain bourgeois or Social Democratic commentators think, it is the strongest epithet among Communist parties. For years the bureaucrats preferred to maintain silence rather than mention Trotskyism and the Trotskyists.

It is easily demonstrable that the top Soviet and Chinese ideologues are closely following the Trotskyist publications -- these publications whose circulation is generally nowhere near that of the official Communist press.

They do not cite other political currents. And for good reason. They know -- not from considered theoretical deduction but from a kind of instinct of self-preservation -- that this crisis in their ranks does not pose a capitalist or social-democratic threat. After

(1) It would require several articles to point out all the distortions in Suslov's article of the real Trotskyist views.

so many years in which the world relationship of forces has been favorable to socialism, the danger which these leaderships sense in the membership of their own organizations is Trotskyism.

When the Chinese hear the talk about the crimes of Stalin, when the Soviet leaders hear the talk about uninterrupted revolution, to each it sounds like the echo of the Trotskyism that can reappear with the present great revolutionary upsurge in the world.

They are afraid. And they seek at the same time to frighten each other: "Look who you're working for in the final analysis!" This is what they are telling each other. The Soviet leaders reveal that they are even more preoccupied, more worried over this, than the Chinese leaders.

Whatever either side does, they cannot put a brake on the movement of history. For many long years the bureaucratic machines have dominated the mass movement. The growing strength of this movement is breaking through this grip. The machines accuse each other of capitulation, of revisionism, adventurism, etc. They explain the current crisis by the pressure of the bourgeoisie or of the petty bourgeoisie. They show themselves incapable of labelling themselves, of seeing what they themselves are -- bureaucrats; and seeing that their days are numbered.

The present crisis of the Communist movement is above all the crisis of these bureaucratic leaderships, a crisis of the regeneration of communism. That is why these leaderships will end up doing right well; helping in their own way to bring about the final triumph of Trotskyism.

CHARLEY CHAPLIN KNOWS WHAT IT MEANS

In an interview granted the London Sunday Times just before his seventy-fifth birthday [April 16], Charles Chaplin, the world's most loved comedian was asked how he felt about poverty.

"Missing a meal doesn't matter," he responded. "Sleeping out when your young is an adventure."

Evidently recalling the days before he became the famous sad little cane-twirling man of the silent movies, he struck a clenched fist against his heart. "Poverty is humiliation. It's feeling inferior and seeing your mother feel inferior and going to the work-house to ask for alms."

Chaplin is still very active and very much up to date. He gave a sharp analysis of the murders of Kennedy and Oswald and said he was sure they were both engineered by "haters."

DANGE'S "LETTER" -- KEY ISSUE FOR INDIAN CP?

By Kailas Chandra

The split in the Communist party of India [CPI] has come much sooner than expected. It is taking place not over the ideological or political differences that exist between the two major warring factions within the leadership but over something involving the personal integrity of the party's Khrushchevite chairman, S.A.Dange.

The left wing has unearthed from India's national archives (now open to research), a letter purported to have been written by Dange from jail, forty years ago, to the then British Viceroy of India, allegedly offering to work for the British government if he were released.

The year was 1924. Dange, still in his early twenties, had been convicted in the first Cawnpore "Bolshevik Conspiracy" case and sentenced to four years, along with three other Communist leaders -- Muzafar Ahmed, Shaukat Usmani and Nalini Bhushan Gupta.

From the Sitapur District Jail in Uttar Pradesh, Dange allegedly wrote to the Viceroy, promising to use his "exceptionally influential position" among Communists in India and abroad "for the good of your Excellency's Government and Country. . . if I am given the opportunity by your Excellency granting my prayer for release."

Dange is also alleged to have assured the British Viceroy that he had "never been positively disloyal towards His Majesty in my writings or speeches nor do I intend to be so in future."

Leftists in the CPI claim that the letter is genuine. Their testimony appears to have foundation although the circumstances ought to be borne in mind. The young Dange had just become engaged to the girl he was later to marry. Now he faced four years in prison.

But the Central Secretariat of the CPI issued a statement on March 13 -- in the absence of Dange who was away in Moscow -- branding the letter as a "forgery" and even insinuating that the British police might have placed a forged document in the national archives.

The Secretariat also declared that the leftist "sectatians" within the party had circulated this document (which was first published in the Current, a rabidly anti-Communist Bombay weekly) "in league with reactionaries" to discredit the party "leadership."

However, two leaders of the left faction -- M. Basavapunniah and P. Ramamurthi -- challenged the Secretariat's contention that the Dange letter was a forgery and claimed that the handwriting was "authentic." They demanded that Dange should quit his post because of this deed and they threatened to press for his removal from office at the forthcoming meeting of the party's National Council.

Soon other leaders of the left faction all over India, including Muzafar Ahmed (Dange's co-defendant in the Cawnpore case) issued statements echoing the same demand -- "Dange must quit as Chairman."

Dange's Reaction

On returning from Moscow March 28, Dange defended the Secretariat's statement and repeated the charge that the letter was a forgery. He threatened disciplinary action against the leftist leaders who had publicly vilified him after the Secretariat's declaration.

The Secretariat, which met in New Delhi on April 1, called for drastic steps against "splitters and disruptionists," thereby making a split in the party almost a certainty. The Secretariat also accused the leftists of deliberately attempting to "disrupt the Party at the behest of the leadership of the Communist Party of China." Peking had also called for a split in the CPI.

An emergency meeting of the National Council of the CPI was scheduled for April 10 to deal with the "grave inter-party situation."

Obviously the Dange letter is not the basic cause of the present rift. Serious political differences exist between the right and left wings, with the "centrists," headed by E.M.S.Namboodiripad, attempting to play a conciliating role. [See World Outlook January 17.]

Left Wing Document

The left wing has finally begun circulating counter proposals to the position held by the Dangeite leadership. According to a press summary released April 1, "the left wing CPI would like to accept the proposition that it was absolutely essential to replace the 'present bourgeois-landlord state headed by the big bourgeoisie, by a state of peoples' democracy led by the working class' for the fulfillment of the basic tasks of the Indian revolution.

"The left wing would like the objective to be achieved through peaceful means by developing a powerful mass revolutionary movement and by combining 'parliamentary and extra-parliamentary forms' of struggle."

These points, according to newspaper reports, are contained in a rough draft program prepared by three prominent leaders of the left group, M. Basavapunniah, P. Ramamurthi and Harkishan Singh Surjeet.

Copies of the draft have been circulated among "leading members" of the party for discussion and comment on the basis of which a final draft is to be prepared and submitted to the National Council.

The draft, according to its authors, was prepared after consul-

tation with leading members of the "left wing" who are "in violent disagreement with the present leadership on several fundamental ideological, theoretical, political and organisational questions."

For the first time, the left wing has placed a document before the rank and file of the CPI for discussion. Unfortunately its impact is being dissipated because of the big noise over Dange's alleged letter.

Letter Yellowed with Age

The petition claimed to have been written by Dange forty years ago, even if it is found to be genuine, has interest only as an episode in the history of the CPI. Dange might have written such a letter. But not even his enemies would accuse him of having played the role of a British stooge in his subsequent political career.

The record shows that despite his alleged plea, Dange was not shown any particular leniency by the British government. He had to serve his full term with only the normal time off.

The supposed letter did not prevent the British government from arresting him again in 1928 in connection with the famous Meerut case and making him one of the main defendants in a "Communist Conspiracy" to overthrow British rule in India. On this occasion Dange served seven years in jail.

Dange was one of the few young intellectuals (including Muzafar Ahmed, C.G. Shah, etc.) who came of their own volition to the Communist movement in the early twenties. The most convincing explanation for this mysterious letter is that it might have been written by the 22-year-old "conspirator" as a wrongly conceived "tactic" -- a foolish attempt to deceive the British Viceroy and secure his freedom. Perhaps the imperialist proconsul saw through the maneuver and simply filed it.

From a Communist standpoint, it was unethical for a young militant in prison to offer to serve British imperialism, even as an attempted bit of trickery. But then what of the ethics of attempting to convert it into a scandal for factional use forty years later?

Period of Real Collaboration

There was indeed a period when Dange did collaborate with the British rulers of India -- during 1942-45 when the entire CPI, including Dange's present leftist critics, supported the British "War Efforts" while the people throughout the country were engaged in a struggle for freedom from imperialism.

In the light of such a record, it is not surprising that the factional struggle in the CPI is being conducted on such a low per-

sonal level at the expense of crucial ideological clarification and study of the real history of the party.

The Dangeite leadership is loyally carrying out the Khrushchevite line in the world Communist movement by pursuing class-collaboration with the Nehru government. Its policy signifies sabotage of class struggles in India.

The leftists, however, have yet to offer a consistent revolutionary alternative to the revisionist policies of the Dange leadership. At most, the draft program they are now circulating can be considered only the beginning of what is needed.

That the leftists resort to personal attack instead of conducting a serious political discussion is a sign of weakness. They are, in fact, resorting to the old discredited Stalinist practices in fighting their political opponents. Stalin's answer to political opponents was to frame them up. Khrushchev repeated what he learned from his master. In liquidating Beria, he dubbed him a British spy.

Slanders do not educate anyone. They serve only to cloud the issues on which the workers need clarity if they are to successfully accomplish the revolutionary tasks they face. In place of such methods, what is required is a free debate on the issues in which all Marxist tendencies should be invited to participate.

This could play a big role in the preparation of the Indian masses for the coming revolutionary struggles against the present capitalist-landlord system.

SPLIT IN COMMUNIST PARTY OF INDIA

NEW DELHI, April 10 -- The Communist party of India [CPI] split yesterday when twelve top leaders walked out of the Central Executive Council meeting. This occurred after forty-five minutes of bitter wrangling.

The twelve included E.M.S.Namboodiripad, Bhupesh Gupta and Jyoti Basu. Leaders of the so-called "centrists" in the dispute between Moscow and Peking, which has torn the party, they joined the "pro-Chinese" wing when the chips were down.

The other nine, leaders of the "left" wing, were A.K.Gopalan (leader of the CPI group in the lower house of parliament), Promod Das Gupta, P. Sundarayya, M. Basavapunniah, P. Ramamurti, H.K.Konar, Harkishan Singh Surjeet, Jagjeet Singh Layallpuri and M.R.Venkat Raman. They had been holding faction meetings the past few days despite orders of the Khrushchevist leadership banning such gatherings as "splitting activity."

Although the real issue was the differences now separating Peking and Moscow and how these affect party tasks and perspectives in India, the split occurred on an almost trivial matter. The meeting was started with S.A.Dange in the chair. As soon as the agenda for the National Council was proposed, Namboodiripad demanded that an alleged prison letter written by Dange forty years ago to the British Viceroy should be made point number one.

He was supported in this by the West Bengal leader Jyoti Basu, who also demanded that Dange should leave the chair while the question was being discussed. The majority argued that Dange should stay in the chair and sought to shout down the "leftists."

Despite interruptions from Namboodiripad, Dange suggested that a vote should be taken. The "leftists," however, said they would no longer participate if such "crucial things" were to be decided by a "narrow majority."

Bhupesh Gupta offered a compromise formula -- that both the letter and disciplinary issues should be taken together and that the meeting should be adjourned temporarily for personal talks over the situation. This was not acceptable to the "right" faction.

Harsh epithets were exchanged. Namboodiripad is said to have remarked that he would not like to remain in a party presided over by a "British spy."

Dange is said to have retorted: "Let him go out. What does he think of himself."

Finally Dange told the dissidents that "the disruptors can get out." That was the end of the joint meeting.

The remaining eighteen members of the Central Executive Committee continued their meeting and adopted the agenda which they had proposed for the National Council. This includes a resolution on the "disruptive and antiparty activities" of certain leading party members; consideration of the alleged Dange "letter"; and tasks facing the mass movement. They also decided to recommend expulsion of seven of the dissident Executive members "for their splitting activities."

It later became known that Bhupesh Gupta, leader of the Communist group in the Rajya Sabha [upper house of parliament], had resigned from the Central Secretariat, the highest policy-making body of the party. He is expected to eventually leave the party but to maintain leadership of the parliamentary group, which may now change its name. The resignation is to be considered by the National Council.

The "pro-Chinese" grouping undoubtedly had plans ready for their next step. This may be the immediate declaration of the formation of another Communist party in India.

REPORT FROM NEW ZEALAND

By Harry Holland

WELLINGTON -- Victor G. Wilcox, general secretary of the Communist party of New Zealand, recently received world-wide publicity. This was not due to any particular achievement in the class struggle in this country, but to a speech he made on February 18 in Canton. A month later, the Chinese news agency Hsinhua, singled out certain sentences for general release, and the March 20 Peking Review published the entire text.

Wilcox's speech was a strong declaration in favor of Peking and against Moscow and his main point was that "at this stage open polemics cannot be stopped."

A certain sensationalism was added by his revelations about the pressure which Suslov exerted in Moscow on a delegation from the New Zealand Communist party in an effort to get them to line up behind Khrushchev. "When in discussion we said, as we see it, your concept is by exploiting the rest of the socialist world you are going to advance to communism. In other words, they are going to advance to communism on the backs of the socialist world and the people and Communist Parties of other countries. When we said that, no effective reply. But what was the answer that came after a little while: In effect it was, Comrade Wilcox, we are very perturbed at the position of the Communist Party of New Zealand and your position in leadership. You are little-nation chauvinists."

The rank and file, however, are not solidly behind Wilcox. In Christchurch, for instance, two party members have been expelled (Sturt and Lygate) and one report estimates that one-third of the party membership there have resigned in sympathy.

The rebels take the position, in essence, that the leadership is pro-Peking in words, but pro-Moscow in practice. While Wilcox is feted in China for opposing revisionism and adopting a "no compromise" attitude towards the Social Democracy, party members are cast out here for applying precisely that line in the Lyttleton electorate.

To put things in proper perspective, the political situation in New Zealand should be borne in mind. The elections of last November offer a convenient reference point:

The poll was high, 90.47% of the electorate turning out (as compared with 89.79% in 1960). The National party (the Tories) stayed in power, their vote declining 0.54%. New Zealand's second strongest political formation, the Labour party, gained one seat and a microscopic increase in the over-all percentage (from 43.42% in 1960 to 43.76%). The Social Credit party again failed to win a seat and its vote dropped from 8.62% to 7.95%. This misnamed "Liberal" party, an extreme right-wing grouping, which contested the elections

for the first time, won 0.86%. The vote for the Communist party was 3,167, an increase from 0.21% in 1960 to 0.26%.

From these figures, it is self-evident that the main axis of the problem of creating an effective working-class political leadership centers around the Labour party, however interesting in itself the present dispute in the Communist party may be. A few observations about the kind of campaign waged by the Labour party leadership may, therefore, prove of use to fill in the background.

The Labour leadership strained mightily in the election to give the party a "modern" image. They stressed the need for incentives to "everyone" so as to achieve greater productivity and to boost export earnings. Appeals to the workers on a class basis were specifically rejected, such things as nationalization being characterized as "old-fashioned."

In New Zealand the share of national income going to wage and salary earners has dropped relatively in the past decade and the rather high standard of living has been maintained only by ever-increasing numbers of married women taking up full or part-time employment, while the pernicious practice of long overtime has been extended among all sectors. The Labour party leaders, however, neglected to make this an issue.

They promised a three-week annual paid holiday for all. (At present two weeks annual holiday on full pay is mandatory.) They also promised that if productivity increased, then wage rises would follow on a proportionate basis.

In opposition to the proposed testing of nuclear weapons in the South Pacific area by France, they promised to take steps to convene an international conference.

When the disappointing election results were known, Nordmeyer, the Labour leader, attributed the "no-change" result to the atmosphere of prosperity created by wind-fall high export prices, accruing to New Zealand farmers, on overseas markets.

There is merit to the explanation but the basic reason for the present standstill is the total inability of the Labour party leadership to pose problems facing rank-and-file party members and sympathizers in terms of the class struggle.

This is felt among sectors of the working class. Indirect evidence of this came on March 23 when the leadership of the industrial labour movement called on the political leadership to return to the pre-1955 party constitutional objective of the "socialisation of the means of production, distribution and exchange."

The report of the Federation of Labour bitterly reproached the "New Look" leaders for obscuring the "irreconcilable conflict of

interest between capital and Labour" and "thus departing from the working class and the trade unions."

These bold words are from men who have soft-pedalled the class struggle in the trade-union field. With harsher prospects for the workers now looming, they feel compelled to move left -- in terminology if not, thus far, in any significant actions.

NEGRO FREEDOM FIGHTERS FACE WHITE RACISTS

By Evelyn Sell

The Senate filibuster on the civil-rights bill drones on while the civil-rights battle lines harden. The political manœuvres in Washington are designed to fit the needs of an election year. Groupings within both capitalist parties are supporting the bill in order to capture the very important Negro vote. The Southern Dixiecrats in the Senate are putting up a sham battle to impress the racists back home. They don't have to worry about the Negro vote because most Southern Negroes are denied access to the ballot box.

Both the Democrats and Republicans are trying to please everybody, friends and foes of civil rights alike. The politicians are succeeding in pleasing very few because the longer the civil-rights struggle continues the more impatient the contending forces become.

The slow pace of concrete victories in equal opportunities in jobs, education and housing is driving the Negro revolt into mass demonstrations and civil disobedience campaigns. The rising tide of Negro pressure is hardening the reactions of the racist counter-revolution. Heirs of centuries of anti-Negro propaganda, racist-minded whites, including a regrettable number of workers, turn on the Negro as a convenient scapegoat for all the problems created by a capitalist system in crisis.

On March 13 some 15,000 white parents, opposed to the integration of New York public schools, picketed City Hall. Small riots broke out in Cleveland during January when white parents opposed a Board of Education move to transfer Negro children to schools in white neighborhoods.

In defiance of the Catholic church's support to the civil-rights bill, a Catholic lay group distributed 100,000 copies of a leaflet attacking the legislation as "a huge and major step toward the Establishment in America. . . of a TOTALITARIAN POLICE STATE." [Emphasis in original.]

The most recent example of the deep-seated prejudices in the North was the relatively large vote gained by Alabama's Governor

Wallace in the Wisconsin presidential primary, April 7. The primary election is designed to choose delegates to the Democratic and Republican national conventions to be held this summer.

Governor Wallace campaigned in the South on the slogan: "Segregation now, segregation tomorrow, segregation forever." He entered the Wisconsin primary in order to provide a "focus of protest" against civil-rights legislation and activity. He surprised himself and the experts with his success.

His goal was to capture 10% of the Democratic vote. He polled 24%. His greatest support came from a strong Democratic working-class district in Milwaukee.

Negro leaders are under constant pressure from their white liberal "friends" to placate the white racists, to slow down, take it easy, be content with small, gradual gains. On several occasions now the respectable leaders have acceded to these pressures.

The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People [NAACP], the Congress on Racial Equality [CORE], and the Urban League refused to support the second New York City school boycott. Although it was successful (267,000 children stayed home from school), it did not match the first boycott when almost half a million participated.

A march on the state capital of Florida on March 28 was reduced when the NAACP leaders refused to go along with CORE leaders' demands that the procession march on the state house. The protest march, decimated by the dissension, included only 1,500 persons who walked to a baseball field where a rally was held.

When the Group on Advanced Leadership [GOAL] scheduled a meeting for Malcolm X in a Detroit church, local ministers tried to cancel the meeting on the grounds that Malcolm "would just stir up strife and trouble." GOAL went to court to secure their right to hold the meeting.

Malcolm outraged all respectable leaders when he called on Negroes to organize rifle clubs to protect themselves from racist attacks. Senator Lausche reported to the U.S. Senate that some rifle clubs were already being organized.

The New York police commissioner blasted Malcolm as "irresponsible." Malcolm replied, "The greatest compliment anyone can pay me is to say I'm irresponsible, because by responsible they mean Negroes who are responsible to white authorities -- Negro Uncle Toms."

The responsible Negro leaders are calling for prayer vigils, letter-writing campaigns and persuasion to end the Senate filibuster. Meanwhile, the participants in the day-to-day civil-rights demonstrations are stepping up their civil-disobedience activities as their method of pressuring Congress to pass the civil-rights bill. Marches,

lie-ins at construction sites, sleep-ins at state legislatures, sit-downs at the site of the World's Fair in New York City -- these are the methods of the Negro Freedom Fighters in the streets.

All signs point to a major confrontation between these Freedom Fighters and the racist counterrevolutionists in the coming months. The question being posed more and more sharply every day is: Which side are you on? Civil-rights supporters must answer that question not with words but with deeds.

SADISTIC COPS SENTENCED IN SOUTH AFRICA

As a departure from the rule in South Africa, a court decided to punish four white policemen and a court clerk for torturing two Africans, one of whom died, in a police station in Bloemfontein last December. The two prisoners were trussed, handcuffed, and plastic bags were put over their heads.

Evidence was given that Izak Mogaise died after being punched, slapped, whipped, dropped on a cement floor, given electric shocks and suffocated.

Constable Jacob Maree admitted hitting the Africans and applying electric shocks to Makhetal, who was on the floor, his handcuffed hands over his knees and a broomstick forced between his arms and the back of his knees. Maree said he whipped the helpless prisoner with a sjambok [leather whip].

One of the policemen, Gert Coetzee, told Justice Smit that he doubted whether there was a single police station in all of South Africa that did not use the same method in seeking "evidence." He said he learned to use plastic bags at the police station.

Mogaise and his friend Philemon Makhetla were being questioned in a routine case involving the theft of £6/15s. [\$19] from a restaurant where they worked. [See World Outlook April 3.]

The sentences were passed April 11. Gert Coetzee, found guilty of assault, was sentenced to seven years and six strokes. Constable Jacob Maree, found guilty of homicide and assault, was sentenced to nine years and six strokes. Constable Johannes van Wyk, found guilty of culpable homicide and assault, was sentenced to six years and six strokes. His term was suspended for three years. Court clerk Johannes de Bruin, found guilty of assault, received three years and six strokes. Warrant Officer Gert Roussouw, guilty of defeating the ends of justice, was sentenced to four years.

The judge said he thought the case was "a terrible slur on South African law and the police."

DEUTSCHER'S VIEW OF THE TROTSKYISTS

By J. B. Stuart

Isaac Deutscher's monumental work -- now completed with the appearance of the third volume of his Trotsky biography* -- is excellent on several different levels. It is a first-rate narrative, with a style and development of plot comparable to the best creative literature of our day. In this way it serves as a popular introduction of great value, on a second plane, to an exposition of Trotsky's political theories -- that is, of living Marxism. Deutscher selects with remarkable aptness key passages from the master's writings and paraphrases with an almost scientific economy of words, entire works, an accomplishment which by itself will earn him the gratitude of both revolutionary students and students of revolution in time to come.

But his exposition of Trotsky's ideas, scrupulously rendered, is in each case submitted to searching criticism, and thus gives the inquisitive reader not only a panoramic view of a vast field of knowledge; by his questioning approach he stimulates further critical, and therefore fruitful, study of the subject.

Of outstanding interest is Deutscher's elucidation of what he calls "Stalin's Great Change" or the "second social revolution" of 1929-30, in the first chapter of the new volume. Therein he attempts to apply the theory of the permanent revolution in an explanation of the process of industrialization and collectivization which brought about the Soviet Union's economic transformation into the world's second power. Although elements of this explanation are present in Trotsky's writings and in the thinking of Trotskyists since, nothing as fully elaborated has appeared before. To be sure, Deutscher's theory still has features that can be subjected to effective criticism. It will probably undergo further elaboration and modification before reaching a more finished and less disputable form. But even as it stands, it is a stimulating exercise in Marxist analysis.

Of course there are numerous issues that Deutscher raises which will arouse controversy among Marxists and scholars in general. In these observations, I will confine myself to one or two of special interest to those who follow the Trotskyist movement.(1)

*THE PROPHET OUTCAST, by Isaac Deutscher. The Oxford University Press. 1963. 543 pp. New York, \$9.50. London, £2/5s.

(1) I should like to make clear that for many years I have not belonged to any Trotskyist organization or participated actively in their work. This is not of my own choice but rather because of circumstances beyond my control. While my interest in the movement and my attachment to its basic ideas have in no way diminished in all this time, I believe that I can say without self-deception that I can

Trotskyists, more than others, will appreciate Deutscher's achievement. Beyond the intrinsic value of his work, superior in many ways to Mehring's biography of Marx (which is itself a classic), Deutscher has the distinction, within the sphere of academic scholarship, of re-establishing the true historical figure of Trotsky, the nature of his thinking and the character of his struggle. He himself indicates the enormous obstacles facing this task after the long years of falsification and obliteration under Stalin, in which the full power of a tremendous state apparatus, compounded by the effort of an international network of boundless ramifications, participated unsparingly and relentlessly.

Deutscher is, to put it mildly, less appreciative of the work of the Trotskyists, facing the same immense impediment in the political sphere -- among ordinary, less sophisticated and less educated workers and youth groping for the truth, for an answer to the problems of the age, for a road to successful solution in action. His complete admiration for Trotsky and his unstinted recognition of the stature and genius of the man is matched by an almost opposite judgment of those who undertook to carry forward the ideas for which Trotsky stood and the organization which he founded to promote these ideas.

Quite naturally, Trotskyists will be grieved if not offended. However, even impartial observers will find Deutscher's attitude toward the organized Trotskyist movement strange and rather puzzling. But feelings and emotions aside, Trotskyists no less than others are bound to probe the cause and the reasoning.(2) For if they have

view it now with a certain measure of objectivity. What I have written below is, therefore, less impassioned than would be possible for a militant involved in propagating or defending views that are a collective responsibility. I cannot vouch that the views expressed coincide with those of the official bodies of any of the Trotskyist organizations, nor would I expect them necessarily to agree with me. But I do think I have a particular contribution to make in discussing Deutscher's work and that this can help make for a better understanding of both its importance and its shortcomings.

(2) In a footnote on page 312 of the third volume of his biography, Deutscher refers to a dispute the American Trotskyists had with opponents within the movement in 1953-54 who, apparently following Deutscher's evaluation in Russia After Stalin and in articles in the press at the time, pursued a policy which seemed to lead to conciliation with Stalinism, if not to capitulation. After the experiences with capitulations in Trotsky's day -- which also were based on events in the Soviet Union; e.g., the turn to industrialization and the opening of the Third Period in the Comintern, both of which appeared to be turns in the direction of Trotskyism -- James P. Cannon and his co-thinkers raised warnings. That the danger was not without reality was borne out by the fact that in several countries small groups of

learned anything at all from Trotsky it is the necessity to understand human phenomena, to seek objective explanations, rather than to indulge in expressions of distaste or dissatisfaction.

Fortunately, Deutscher himself offers us an opportunity to do this, because it can readily be seen that the root of his attitude toward the Trotskyists lies in his major criticism of Trotsky: The proclamation of the Fourth International and Trotsky's devotion to the construction of it in the last decade of his life are described by Deutscher as no less than a "fiasco."

It would be hypocritical of Trotskyists to say that this part of Deutscher's work does not detract from the value of his biography. It does. Nonetheless, we must regard this fault, as we consider it, with a sense of proportion. If it detracts, it in no way vitiates.

Trotskyists did in fact wind up by joining the Communist party, at that time still in the grip of unreconstructed Stalinism. Deutscher's ideas were seen as the fountainhead of this trend and therefore attacked. As Joseph Hansen has acknowledged in his review of The Prophet Outcast, "many harsh and even unjustified things" were said about him. (See International Socialist Review, winter 1964.)

Insofar as the present writer was involved, although only in private correspondence quoted by Cannon, in these unjustified remarks, a personal apology and explanation is in order. I was not acquainted with Deutscher at the time and knew little about him beyond what appeared in print and what others in England related to me. The heat of the polemic distorted for me both the nature of his contributions to the British bourgeois press (Churchill at the time obviously based himself on these in his first efforts among Western statesmen to meet the Kremlin's "co-existence" line) as well as his attitude toward the Soviet bureaucracy itself. Later on, particularly after 1956, I had occasion to recognize that I erred, more especially after attending some of Deutscher's lectures. It became clear to me that, whatever our differences may be, he spoke -- and wrote -- from Marxist convictions, making no concessions of principle either to the publications for which he wrote and the organizations for which he lectured or to the Soviet bureaucracy which he took as his subject. It was then obvious to me that I had done him an injustice.

As matters turned out, our opponents of that time within the Trotskyist movement did not bear out our fears either. We had erred, I believe, in not grasping that the time was not propitious for capitulations to Stalinism. Under the impact of events in the international extension of the revolution in Asia, Africa and Latin America, as well as within the Soviet camp, we found ourselves coming closer together again in our views, influenced mutually in the course of polemic and discussion. I would like to think that our relations with Deutscher were similarly affected by this new international trend, although on a different level.

If we regard this as a major fault in the work, and examine its implications, we must do so with no less objectivity than in recognizing the merits of the biography as a whole.

* * *

Trotsky's need for the proclamation of the Fourth International and his preoccupation with the "menial" tasks of its construction were no less a part of the man than his theoretical contributions or his writings in various fields, or even his genius in action in the 1905 and 1917 revolutions. For, if there was anything that pervaded every phase of his thought and activity, it was the dialectical method of Marxism, not as some "closed system," but as a living and developing mode of thinking, linked with historical experience, whose lessons were indispensable to solving the problems of humanity. The root of his decision on the Fourth International lies in the very origins of Marxism.

Marx, in "settling accounts" with the Young Hegelians, with his whole Hegelian experience, had already written in his youth that up to that time the philosophers had seen their task as explaining the world, while the real task of philosophy now was to change it. That is why he and Engels and their grouping, as a "splinter" of the Left Hegelians, proceeded to the organization of the Communist League, initiated with the Communist Manifesto. For Trotsky, too, it was not enough to explain the world in his epoch, in which Stalinism and fascism and preparation for another world war predominated. The explanation had to be embodied in an organization aimed at changing it.

What kind of organization was it to be? Historical experience had shown that only the type of combat organization developed by Lenin had been capable of leading a proletarian revolution to the successful overthrow of the capitalist system, of changing fundamentally the old world and laying the foundations of the new socialist world. Trotsky had had that lesson brought home to him both in the course of long years of struggle against Lenin's concept as well as in the fire of revolution; that is, by negative and positive experience. Deep appreciation of the crucial importance of the Leninist type of organization dominated his attitude toward the Communist party throughout his long internal struggle with Stalin. He was certain of the correctness of that struggle. He was aware of the growing degeneration of the party in Stalin's grip; but this did not cause him to alter his appreciation of the Leninist concept of the party. (In the second volume of his work, Deutscher touches on this aspect of Trotsky's view of the party; but, as I tried to show in a review of that volume at the time, he does not give it the weight it deserves and consequently lays undue stress on psychological and other factors that obscure rather than clear up the question of why he persisted in the line of reform and why he defended the party against previous opposition tendencies.)

The experience with the rise of Hitler in Germany, which showed

that under Stalinism the biggest party outside the Soviet Union, in the most promising situation within any of the advanced capitalist countries, could be wiped out without even coming to the point of combat, was the decisive event which convinced him that the Third International was a finished force as a revolutionary instrument. The concept of the Leninist party, the embodiment of Marxist thought as a means of action, had to be saved from continuing discreditment by Stalinist degeneration. It could be done only by building on that concept anew, under a new banner. That was what required the proclamation of the Fourth International and the difficult, painful, often frustrating process of the primitive accumulation, so to speak, of Marxist forces anew.

To be sure, the careful student will find strewn throughout the chapter dealing with this subject, enough quotations, references and remarks by Deutscher himself, to reconstruct this view of Trotsky's decision, particularly by tracing them back to original sources. Here, as elsewhere, Deutscher is conscientious in his scholarship. But he appears to be affected by a compulsive memory from his own past: as a leader of the Polish Trotskyists at the time, he opposed the proclamation of the Fourth International in the thirties; thought it was premature and unwise, because such a step in the past was always taken in a period of revolutionary upsurge; in consequence, his view had been borne out against Trotsky's because of the failure of the new international to lead revolutions, to assume mass proportions and make a major impact in the world during the ensuing years. It is the only difference of opinion with Trotsky, certainly the only documented one, that Deutscher mentions for that whole period. Deutscher thus suddenly projects himself, as it were, into the political scene he is depicting.

One can understand the temptation of the political protagonist to get satisfaction from a seeming confirmation of a judgment and forecast as against that of a Trotsky, but then the question arises -- certainly after an interval of twenty-five years -- what is the point? What alternative course was proposed and tried that proved superior? Deutscher does not say. I trust he will not take it amiss if we conclude that Deutscher's past as politician here seems to echo cacophonously with the more harmonious work of Deutscher the historian.

In part, therefore, Deutscher does not treat the problem altogether as an historian and a scholar. Still, he does have second thoughts about it. He writes: "[Trotsky] believed that he was bringing to life an organization that would play a decisive part in the revolutionary class struggle to come. What is less clear is whether he hoped for success in the near future or whether he was working 'for history', without any such hope. His own statements are contradictory." Deutscher then proceeds to examine these statements.

[To be concluded next week.]

AND WHAT HAPPENED TO THE DINOSAURS?

Walter Lippmann, considered to be one of the brainiest commentators in the capitalist world on foreign affairs, had the following to say April 10 about U.S. policy, after wistfully discussing de Gaulle's new mobility, especially as shown in the recognition of China:

"The truth is that we do not have and will not permit ourselves to have a Far Eastern policy. From South Korea to South Vietnam we are inhibited from having any policy except to seek no solution and to remain frozen where we are. Considering the fact that we are by all odds the most powerful of the non-Communist countries, we look a lot like one of those prehistoric animals which was all armor and teeth but had almost no brain."

NEEDED -- A STUPIDITY DETECTOR

Congressional investigators in the United States came up with an amazing discovery in the very first week of an investigation into the use of lie detectors in the government of the world's most moral power.

They discovered that some eighty per cent of the operators of the magic gadgets, which are used throughout the government, are completely "unqualified" to administer the tests.

It is not clear whether the lack of qualification means that eighty per cent of the operators are congenital liars who remained undetected by the machines, or whether it is a reflection of American incapacity to develop a stupidity detector.

CORRECTION

In the article by Livio Maitan "Economic Difficulties in Italy" [World Outlook April 10] on page 30, five lines from the bottom, change the word "taxation" to read "ground rent."