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WELCOME, COMRADE BREZHNEV!

Editorial Comment

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WATERGATE

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Welcome, Comrade Brezhnev!

The visit of President Nixon to the Soviet Union last year was an important step toward improving U.S.-Soviet relations and advancing the cause of peaceful coexistence. Among other things it resulted in agreements representing significant progress toward imposing limitations on nuclear weapons and in agreement to open up U.S.-Soviet trade—in particular, to end the present tariff discrimination against the USSR and to establish the credit arrangements necessary for large-scale business transactions.

Of even greater moment is the coming visit to this country by Leonid Brezhnev, general secretary of the Central Committee of the CPSU. It offers the prospect of major new advances in lessening tensions and strengthening peaceful coexistence. It is an occasion to be hailed by all who are sincerely devoted to world peace and social progress.

Brezhnev comes to this country as the representative of the interests of the world working class, of the forces of national liberation and world peace. His visit serves the best interests of the U.S. working class, of the Black and other oppressed peoples, of all who are exploited and oppressed by U.S. monopoly capital. It calls for the widest expressions of greetings and support from the masses of working people of our country.

To be sure, the improvement of U.S.-Soviet relations which is developing does not mean that U.S. imperialism has changed its reactionary, aggressive character. On the contrary, it is part of the process of retreat which is being increasingly imposed on U.S. imperialism, a retreat marked also by the withdrawal of U.S. military forces from Vietnam. Such a retreat reflects the continuing shift of the balance of world forces in favor of the forces of anti-imperialism and the deepening of the general crisis of capitalism. It is this deepening crisis which gives rise simultaneously to the overtures to the Soviet Union on the one hand and to the monstrous conspiracy of reaction exposed in the Watergate scandal on the other. The basically reactionary, aggressive, anti-Soviet character of Nixon and the monopolists for whom he speaks has not changed. What *has* changed is the relationship of forces and the growing compulsion to come to terms with the ever more powerful forces opposing imperialism for whom Brezhnev speaks. It is Brezhnev, not Nixon, who occupies the stronger position in the negotiations which are to come.

There are, of course, those who oppose Brezhnev's visit. There are

those in ruling-class circles who fear the consequences of establishing closer ties with the Soviet Union. The *New York Times* has devoted no less than three editorials raising objections to the visit on the grounds that "this is the wrong time." The *Wall Street Journal* has similarly voiced reservations. In Congress a campaign is in progress, led by the notorious reactionary Senator Henry Jackson, to prevent the opening of large-scale trade on the spurious grounds of Soviet restrictions on emigration. At the same time there are certain "Left" anti-Soviet elements who oppose the visit on the equally spurious grounds of lack of democracy and alleged persecution of "dissidents" in the Soviet Union. And not least, there is the rabid hatred of George Meany and his cohorts for all that Brezhnev represents.

At the same time, some in progressive and Communist ranks have raised questions as to the advisability of Brezhnev's visit. Thus, it is asked: Will not a visit at this time only help to bail Nixon out of the Watergate mess and thus serve to strengthen the forces of reaction in the United States, the forces which are moving in the direction of fascism? Will not the development of closer relations with such an ultra-reactionary regime harm the interests of the working people of the United States? We believe that those who raise such questions are mistaken, that they fail to grasp fully the meaning of peaceful coexistence. Let us examine this point further.

Of singular importance for the promotion of peaceful coexistence is the breaking down of economic barriers between the United States and the Soviet Union. Hence the opening up of trade relations occupies a leading place on the agenda of the coming negotiations.

In Lenin's conception of peaceful coexistence the development of economic ties with the capitalist countries was assigned central importance from the very beginning. Peaceful coexistence, in his view, meant not merely the absence of a state of war between socialist and capitalist states; it meant also the existence of durable economic and cultural relations between them. From the outset, therefore, he sought economic ties with the very capitalist countries which were hellbent on the destruction of Soviet power.

The capitalist countries, Lenin argued, would sooner or later be driven by their own economic necessities to trade with the Soviet Union. "In Russia," he said, "we have wheat, flax, platinum, potash and many minerals of which the whole world stands in desperate need. *The world must come to us for them in the end, Bolshevism or no Bolshevism.*" (*Collected Works*, Vol. 42, p. 178. Emphasis added.) In proposing trade and concessions, Lenin made no bones about appealing to the profit drive of the capitalists. Moreover, he

sought to take every advantage of interimperialist rivalries and the pressures on the capitalists of particular countries to escape the economic blows of their antagonists by trading with the Soviet Union.

Such economic ties, said Lenin, while profitable to the capitalists, serve at the same time to build the Soviet economy. More, they serve to foster relations of peace, since one does not so readily go to war against a country with which extensive and profitable relations of economic interdependence exist. The conflict between capitalism and socialism is thus channeled into peaceful paths.

The correctness of this policy of peaceful coexistence, first elaborated at a time when newborn Soviet Russia was struggling for its very life, has since been brilliantly vindicated. Thus, in launching its cold-war policy at the close of World War II, U.S. imperialism sought economic domination over the rest of the capitalist world and the destruction of world socialism. A key weapon in its arsenal was the blocking of trade with the Soviet Union, a policy which it sought to impose on its imperialist rivals. But these, when they became strong enough, rejected this policy, and to escape U.S. economic pressures developed extensive trade with the socialist countries. As a consequence the anti-Soviet alliance embodied in NATO has collapsed and the United States has been left by itself in refusing to trade with the Soviet Union.

Today the USSR is a powerful, industrially advanced country second only to the United States. It has made phenomenal gains without the benefit of trade with the United States and will continue to do so, if need be. It is the U.S. monopolists, beset with growing economic problems and seeing huge potential profits going to their foreign competitors, who are pressing for opening large-scale trade relations. The Soviet Union is, of course, also desirous of improved economic relations. These would be clearly advantageous to Soviet economic development, not to speak of the service they would render to peaceful coexistence and world peace.

For U.S. workers trade opens the outlook of creating many new jobs and reducing unemployment. More, it opens the doors to establishing closer bonds between U.S. and Soviet workers, and among the former to a better understanding of the nature of socialism and its meaning to them.

In keeping with its policy of peaceful coexistence the Soviet Union is prepared to trade with any country on the basis of equality and respect for one another's interests. It does not lay down any general condition that the policies of the government in power must be acceptable to it (although in certain specific cases such as South Africa

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The Conspiracy That Led to Watergate

The roots of the Watergate conspiracy are deep. It gets its nourishment from the very bowels of monopoly capitalism. It is therefore of the greatest urgency that these roots be probed and exposed. The wiretapping at Watergate itself is but a minute fiber of the fabric of the total conspiracy. Each of its fibers is of importance. But one should not get lost in the maze of these individual fibers. It is necessary to deal with and understand the overall patterns in the fabric of this conspiracy.

Political bugging and burglarizing have become common occurrences in our land. These criminal practices—as is the case with most anti-democratic acts—first won acceptance as a weapon against Communists. The attempt to cover up the crimes is also standard practice. Capitalism's code of ethics is based on covering up its criminal activities. Thus, the bugging and the attempts to cover it up have a special significance here only because they are related to a deep-going, long-range conspiracy involving basic policies of U.S. monopoly capitalism and going to fundamental questions of the nature of its class rule. The Watergate affair is but the symptom. It is the conspiracy that is the essence of the matter. It is a deep-going, well thought out conspiracy of monopoly capitalism against the people of the United States.

A New Yardstick Is Needed

This conspiracy cannot be understood and its full significance cannot be measured by the yardstick of past conspiracies. It is a "scandal," but it is much more. It has created a Constitutional crisis, but it has created much more. There has been the use of dirty electoral tricks and provocations, but there has been much more. There is a serious development towards a presidential dictatorship, but there is much more.

This conspiracy is not like the Teapot Dome affair. That affair was a case of oil corporations bribing members of the President's cabinet so that they could drill for oil on government land. Other acts of corruption were exposed but they were minute compared to the Nixon conspiracy. Bribery and corruption have been a part of

the affairs of the U.S. government from the first day of its organization. In fact, they started with the first president. Nor can the roots of the present conspiracy be explained by differences between sections of monopoly capitalism. In its basic sense it is not a feud between the two old parties of monopoly capitalism.

The unfolding of such far-reaching class policies as are reflected by this conspiracy cannot be explained by transitory and secondary factors. It is true there are divisions in the ranks of monopoly capital. At times they influence events. They are a factor in this conspiracy. The crisis resulting from the explosion will no doubt deepen these fissures. But they do not explain such fundamental developments as this conspiracy reflects. Politicians from both parties are running for cover. They are making statements that "we must get at the truth." But this does not indicate that they have basically changed their outlook. They must never be permitted to forget that the web of this reactionary conspiracy was woven by the politicians of both parties and by presidents elected by both parties. The web of conspiracy was woven under Truman, Eisenhower, Kennedy, Johnson and now Nixon. The "national emergency" which became the legal "excuse" behind which the web has been woven was declared by Truman. This phony "national emergency" is still in effect.

The conspiracy is not an incident that will quickly pass. The cracks created by this explosion will remain as a permanent part of the political landscape of monopoly capital. They will remain because the explosion exposed the deep chasm of decay—the San Andreas fault of U.S. capitalism. They will not disappear because the basic factors that led to the conspiracy—the contradictions and the class forces that fed it—have not disappeared.

The Watergate explosion has exposed to the millions the corruption, the total lack of social consciousness, the hoodlum-mentality, the gangster morality, the acts of desperation which all reflect the decay of capitalism. They are developments of capitalism in the period of its general crisis—the crisis of its demise.

The Fibers Are Many

The processes that surfaced around the Watergate affair started with the cold war. The Nixon Administration has pushed them to a new level. The fibers are many but they add up to a creeping process of destroying or bypassing the Constitution and Bill of Rights. The Presidency has usurped the power to make war. The Congress and the President's cabinet and, of course, the people are obstacles to the conduct of reactionary wars of aggression. This is one of the important fibers.

Another fiber is the militarization of the country. The Pentagon and its military elite have become a powerful force in the country's political and economic life.

The intelligence complex has grown into a powerful political and ideological force. That the CIA and the FBI were so completely involved in Nixon's re-election campaign should surprise no one. The intelligence complex was a ready-made instrument of the conspiracy because there are no Congressional or public controls over these agencies. They are in their very structure a police state apparatus.

The rise of the National Security Council and the growth of its powers constitute another fiber of the invisible government. The second Nixon Administration set up a "supercabinet" and this put the final touches to a structure where all decisions were made behind the scenes by men totally out of public reach.

With the wage freeze the President took on dictatorial powers over wage scales.

These are some of the fibers of the reactionary process. These structural changes have taken place in support of reactionary monopoly-state capitalist policies in every area. The fibers have been fed by anti-Communism and racism. They have been covered up by demagoguery about "national security," "law and order" and "efficiency of government." The false appeal to "national security" has become a shield behind which every possible form of crime is committed. The present investigation of the Watergate affair studiously avoids these basic areas. The mass media have not probed and do not probe these roots. There is a studied cover-up of these class roots by all of the investigating bodies and by the mass media.

We are going to see many phases of what is now called the Watergate conspiracy. There will be twists and turns. There will be maneuvers, further cover-ups and deception. It is clear that we are now going to see a massive effort by all the frightened representatives of both parties of monopoly capital to reshut the lid—to keep the investigation "within bounds." Besides the Republicans and the reactionary Democrats, the liberal Democrats have already joined the "cover-uppers." They have lined up with the others because they know the ugly truth—that the more they dig the more the investigation will "get out of hand." They know that it will become obvious to millions of people that the conspiracy has deep roots in their own class—the ruling class. They are aware that the tracks will lead to the offices of the biggest corporations, the largest investment banks, the conglomerates and multinational corporations. They know the investigation will expose the corruption and decay of capitalism as a system. They know it will expose their politics as the politics

of capitalist corruption.

The Offspring of Capitalist Crisis

The criminal Nixon conspiracy is the maggot offspring fed by the crisis of U.S. capitalism. It was and is the ultra-Right response to the defeats suffered by U.S. imperialism in the foreign policy arena. It is a response to the fact that U.S. imperialism has been forced to maneuver and to retreat on foreign policy. It is a reactionary response to the collapse of the policies based on "cold war." It is monopoly capitalism's recoil reaction to the fact that U.S. imperialism has been forced to give up the policies of some 55 years' standing-policies of trying to stop the growth of world socialism by economic and military blockade.

The iceberg of the cold war policies is thawing out. The conspiracy was a desperate response to the shift in the balance of world forces and the problems that it creates for world imperialism, and especially for U.S. imperialism.

State monopoly capitalism is a product of the laws of capitalist development. Just as the growth of monopolization is an inevitable development, so the laws that give rise to monopolies have also given rise to the process leading to state monopoly capitalism—to the intertwining of monopoly capitalism and the state. With the process of monopolization the corporate structure increasingly comes under the iron-fisted control of a diminishing number of financial-industrial complexes. But this process not only changes the corporate structure; it also produces changes in the state structure. And as a result there develops a new relationship between the corporate structure and the state.

In this new relationship the state more openly and more directly serves the corporate interests. The state becomes a more direct factor in the drive for maximum corporate profits. The state can do this only by increasingly taking actions that are against the interests of the working class and the people. The pressures for changing the state structure and its relationship to monopoly capital are related to this new class assignment. The state's role is to seek solutions to the crises of capitalism at the expense of the people. It moves to shift the tax load to the backs of the people and through endless channels to pass on huge sums to the largest monopoly corporations.

It is therefore inevitable that the new state structure would develop in a direction which would place it beyond democratic influences. It is inevitable that the pressures would increasingly tend towards a dictatorial, police type of state. It is inevitable that the

state would increasingly rely on the military and on the more reactionary elements. It is also inevitable that such a structure would of necessity bypass the elected bodies of government, including the U.S. Congress. That this web would also be the embryo of a structure for the development of fascism is self-evident.

The increasing usurpation of powers by the executive branch of the government is a feature of the development of the state monopoly stage of capitalism. It parallels a similar process in the corporate structure. Elected government bodies become an encumbrance to carrying out the criminal policies and the swindles in which the state participates in partnership with monopoly capital. Thus the process through which the executive branch takes on more and more power is rooted in the developments of state monopoly capitalism.

Because this process has had the support of the "executive branch" of monopoly capital and very little, if any, opposition from other sectors of capital or from any section of the two old parties of capital, it has increasingly become a state structure since Truman. Thus the roots of the conspiracy lie in the system of monopoly-state-capitalism. These are actions of a desperate class represented by desperate politicians. They are acts of desperation by a class that sees the handwriting on the wall. Because capitalism is in the new stage of its general crisis, its contradictions and crises are deeper and sharper. It finds it more and more difficult to rule as it did in its "good old days."

Any meaningful change in monopoly's domination of the government would have to come by way of stripping away the main powers of the Presidential office, starting with the powers that it has usurped since Truman.

This conspiracy has been unusually successful because monopoly capitalism in crisis, facing new contradictions and insoluble problems, looks for and supports solutions that rest on destruction or at least bypassing of democratic bodies and democratic processes. In its crisis, monopoly capitalism seeks new ways to continue its rule of exploitation and oppression. So the conspiracy is not some feather-brained idea, but has its roots in the crisis of capitalism in its dying stage.

U.S. imperialism has been forced to maneuver and retreat in the world arena. This has raised great fears in the ranks of U.S. capitalism. In part, the criminal conspiracy was to make sure that this retreat would not spill over into a rout in the domestic arena. The conspiracy had both short-range and long-range goals. Before the presidential elections, Nixon conspirators talked about "changing the political landscape for the next 200 years."

A Well-Organized Conspiracy

The bugging of the Watergate was an incident, but the conspiracy it reflected was no casual, fly-by-night scheme. Indeed, it was a well thought out, carefully executed, most richly funded, centrally orchestrated scheme. In its basic essence it was anti-democratic and militarily orientated. It was to the core racist and anti-working class. It was an ultra-Right police state-like conspiracy. Amongst its aims was the destruction of the electoral structure. It proceeded to construct a new, special state structure staffed mainly by ultra-Right, FBI- and CIA-trained personnel. Like all such developments it took on its own inner logic. Each step of covering up led to a new stage in the conspiracy.

During moments of crisis the incubators of U.S. monopoly capitalism have always hatched such plans. What is new about this conspiracy is that it took root. What is new is that it had the support of monopoly capital, that it was funded by unlimited dollars. What is new is that it was able to establish its headquarters in the White House and to establish a power base in the Supreme Court. What is new is that in large measure it was able to hobble Congress and silence the opposition, including the main elements of the mass media.

The spiders of deceit began to spin the web of the conspiracy long before Nixon became President. Indeed, the path of Nixon to the White House is strewn with skeletons of corruption, provocation, deceit, "pumpkin papers," demagoguery, forged documents and doctored typewriters. Nixon has always been identified with the ultra-Right spectrum of politics. The new steps in the conspiracy began to appear on the day that Nixon was first inaugurated. On that day the fanatical, anti-Communist, ultra-Right cadres from all sections of the country began their trek to Washington. The conspiracy was a factor in every decision of the government. The aggression in Vietnam and the forced withdrawal of U.S. troops was cold-bloodedly synchronized to fit into the web of the conspiracy. The web included the 1972 Presidential elections.

The first phase of this new stage clearly surfaced during the 1970 Congressional elections. Nixon and Agnew went all-out to blitzkrieg the country. In a sense it was the "trial run." They were testing the tactic of all-out demagoguery in that campaign. But they had already organized provocations, including the now infamous stoning of Nixon's car and the use of the incident by Nixon to deliver a hysterical speech written days before the incident but delivered a day before the elections. And of course the subject was "law and order."

The conspiracy set up the secret center for provocations imme-

diately after Nixon took office. With unlimited secret funds the center set out to destroy or to disrupt all people's organizations which opposed the reactionary goals of the conspiracy. The CIA transferred a part of its "killer teams" of provocateurs from the foreign service to the home front to be used by the new structure.

The 1970 trial run was basically a failure. But the conspirators did not give up. They only decided on more drastic measures. Their basic principle of operation was that if they could not use a government structure they proceeded to destroy it or to bypass it.

Not long after the 1970 elections a story appeared that someone in the Nixon Administration had asked the Rand Corporation (interestingly enough this is the same outfit that had the Pentagon Papers) to make a study on the question of "what would happen if the 1972 Presidential elections were canceled." This story was not an idle rumor. It is now clear that it was part of the preparation of contingency plans for the conspiracy. While this study was being considered the plans of the conspiracy were going ahead.

As we know, these plans included, first, the build-up of a secret war chest of hundreds of millions of dollars. The method of collection did not differ from that used by racketeers and gangsters—namely, corruption and extortion. It included selling government contracts and government permits. And in fact, this reactionary police-state slush fund grew into hundreds of millions of dollars. The Watergate explosion has unearthed only a very small part of the fund or records of the sums that were used.

Second, the plan included the setting up of a stable of profession provocateurs—a secret center for these criminal activities. The basic cadres for this operation were CIA- and FBI-trained. The plans included specific contingency provocations against a whole list of political figures. It included planned provocations such as feeding the press with fake rumors, use of forged documents, sending paid homosexuals into the opponents' camp, bribery, the organization and staging of racist reactions against Black Americans, Chicanos and Puerto Ricans. It included special plans against the Left and Communists.

Third, the plan envisaged the continued creation of a new structure—a new reactionary base of operations that would bypass all institutions, parties and government structures. Indeed it was designed to bypass all institutions that were in any way subject to legal restrictions or operated in public view. It was beyond the reach of the public or of government scrutiny.

A very important element of this new structure was the "Re-elect the President Committee." It was set up some two years before the

election campaign. It became one of the instruments of the conspiracy. It bypassed even the closely controlled boss of the Republican Party. The "Chairman of the Board" was Richard Milhous Nixon.

A New Power Base

In the guise of "a White House staff," Nixon set up another power base. It was made up of the most rabid ultra-Right cronies of his own, as well as a collection of old cronies of Senator Goldwater and the Buckleys. And it included in addition the most racist elements from the South and other parts of the country. This new power base superseded and bypassed the President's cabinet. In fact the cabinet became for all practical purposes nonexistent.

Through the process of continually increasing Presidential powers, Nixon more and more bypassed Congress. In many areas the Congress largely became a nonentity. This new power base was staffed by ultra-Right hoodlums and protected by a wall of "executive privilege."

The conspiracy set up a Goebbels-like propaganda machine headed by an old ultra-Right crony of Mr. Nixon. This propaganda machine operated under the concept of the "Big Lie."

The conspiracy included a blitzkrieg attack to silence the mass media. This assignment was headed by Mr. Agnew. The aim was to silence the mass media—to make it possible for the conspiracy to continue its criminal activities without public knowledge or criticism. The "Big Lie" technique included calling all who opposed the policies of the conspirators "traitors." This was done openly and directly on television as well as by innuendo by the Haldemans of the conspiracy.

As the conspiracy developed, open racism promoted by the White House became an important element in its work. Nixon's and Agnew's open racism is another striking example of how racism serves as a weapon of overall reaction. Wallace and other racists became an integral part of this conspiracy. A reactionary conspiracy can be a success if it can divide the people along racial lines. This again sharply poses the question of the absolute need for white Americans to fight against this racist poison in their own interests, in the interests of the working class, in the interests of the nation.

The conspiracy included Nixon's continued military aggression in Indochina without any legal powers to do so.

It included the impounding of 40 billion dollars appropriated by Congress mainly for human welfare programs. It included the Nixon attack on Main Street. There was a conspiracy to permit prices and rents to soar while keeping wages frozen at a minimum. It included

the numerous anti-Communist bills now in the legislative hoppers in Washington.

An additional instrument of the conspiracy was the so-called "Democrats for Nixon" headed by the ultra-Right John Connally. This Committee operated on the basis of the biggest list of "extortables" in the country. It is widely known that people who had skeletons in their closets, whose names for one reason or other were in the FBI files, were the targets of this extortion. Massive wire-tapping became an instrument for getting material that was then used for purposes of extortion and corruption.

The "strict constructionist" majority on the Supreme Court were carefully picked as skilled legal technicians who are masters of de-tours, "experts" at bypassing the Constitution and the Constitutional rights of the people. They "strictly constructed" to mean that the Constitution must be interpreted only in favor of monopoly capitalism.

This conspiracy is not fascism. But it would be a serious error not to see the pattern that has been unfolded. It is a police state, fascist-like pattern. It is a pattern that has led to a piecemeal destruction of Constitutional rights. The Haldemans, Ehrlichmans, Deans, McCords and Liddys are a goon-squad, gangster-like cadre. Therefore, it is necessary to see the danger of fascism arising from this conspiracy. Its roots are the same. Its class forces are the same. Fascism has many faces. It does not necessarily appear in a brown shirt and with armbands. Like a chameleon it adapts itself to its national surroundings. Without overstating the danger, it is necessary to see how the fabric of the conspiracy can also be the fabric for fascism. In fact, there is one other thread in this fabric that links it to the fascist danger. It is the role of the gangster elements in and around the Nixon administration. This is not a new relationship. The participation of the Cubans in the Watergate affair has its roots in old relationships between the reactionary Batista government and U.S. gangster elements who have had close ties with the forces around Nixon. The relationship should not be too surprising. Gangsterism in politics is fascism. And gangsterism in the economic arena is capitalism. In this sense there is no conflict of interest between the two elements in the conspiracy.

The Forces Behind the Conspiracy

Who is behind this conspiracy? This, of course, is a very fundamental question. It is a question whose answer both the Republicans and Democrats will try to cover up. The class force that supports this conspiracy and its policies is monopoly capitalism. It is the

military-industrial complex in action. In fact, the unprecedented rise of militarism and the militarization of life is an integral part of this development. It was the big corporations that gave the hundreds of millions of dollars for the funding of this operation. You can be sure they were not misled about the aims of the conspiracy.

Among the reasons the conspiracy was as successful as it was is that it had the support of the major section of monopoly capital and because there has been no serious opposition from other sections of capital. It was successful because Democrats, including liberal Democrats, were either silent or gave their support. For example, during the election campaign of 1972 liberal Democrats joined hands with social democrats and put their names on an advertisement in the *New York Times* with the headline "COME HOME DEMOCRATS!" It was a document designed to disrupt the McGovern campaign. The signers included such people as Louis Stulberg, president of the ILGWU, Albert Shanker, president of the United Federation of Teachers, and many others. It now appears the advertisement was a Watergate operation. Whether these signers knew what they were doing at the moment is not a decisive question.

The conspiracy was successful because labor leaders like Meany, Abel and, of course, the old conspirator Jay Lovestone, were full-fledged members of it. They knew what they were doing. They were not fooled. To cover up his support, Meany now says, "We can live with it." Peter Brennan's role also now comes into sharper focus. The Brennan-led so-called "hard hat" attack on the peace marchers in New York was a well-funded, carefully planned operation of the conspiracy. The paid hoodlums hid their real identity behind the hard hats.

Brennan obviously was in on the plans right from the beginning. There was a ready-made figleaf for the conspiracy from the corrupt cadre in the field of culture, in the field of entertainment.

In some ways this reactionary conspiracy has added new features to Hitler's bag of dirty tricks. They have perfected the reactionary tactics that appear under a "Left" cloak—reactionary attacks that come from a "Left" direction. They destroyed organizations like the SDS by infiltration and provocation. They pushed organizations into dead-end corners by promoting acts of violence in their names. There was a member of the conspiracy from the secret center for provocations in each of the groups that bombed public buildings—bombings that were then blamed on "radicals." The infiltrators made red-baiting speeches in the name of these organizations. The latest of these developments is the organization of fascist-like gangs that have been attacking progressive, labor and Communist meetings

under the name of the National Caucus of Labor Committees. It has all the earmarks of a Watergate operation. These groups get money and cadre from the most reactionary sources. It is not accidental that they especially attack unions and movements that have taken a stand against the Meany-Nixon conspiracy. Monopoly capitalism's support for the Nixon policies has both short-range and long-range objectives. The reason Mr. Vesco, the imperialist global manipulator, turned over \$200,000 to the secret Fund for the Conspiracy is self-evident. He bought protection for a \$280,000,000 scandal. The Vesco affair is a clue to two features of the operation. It is a clue as to the sources of the sums of money that poured into the secret fund. And besides the financial contribution, the Vesco deal included putting a member of the Nixon family on the Vesco Corporation payroll—a typical godfather-like operation. But it is also a clue as to why the top monopoly corporations gave their political and financial support. They invested in the conspiracy because it was profitable. Their donations were payoffs for the Nixon policies. They were payoffs for the swindle that is called monopoly capitalism—payoffs for the corporate tax swindles, for corporate tax writeoffs, for the Nixon policies of racism, for skyrocketing prices and profits and the wage freeze.

But much more than money is involved in the relationship between this reactionary conspiracy and monopoly capital. What is also involved is the essence and the form of class rule, the nature of the structure of government. Capitalism, especially in its decaying stage, is increasingly anti-democratic. This tendency is a reflection of the fact that in this stage capitalism is sinking into ever deeper crises and contradictions. To overcome these it tends to move towards militarism and dictatorial rule. This creates the objective conditions for a reactionary anti-democratic conspiracy.

The Conspiracy Can Be Defeated

Those who want to hide the fact that this conspiracy is an offspring of monopoly capital would like the people to believe that the cause of the "scandal" lies in the fact that there is in the White House a gang "whose loyalties were for Nixon." Such talk, of course, is nonsense and a diversion. What is basic is that the loyalties of Nixon, Agnew, Connally, Mitchell and the rest of the White House gang are to monopoly capitalism. There are also some who place great emphasis on differences between monopoly groups based on regional self-interest. At best these are secondary factors. But in addition regional divisions in the ranks of monopoly capital are a disappearing phenomenon. The rise of giant conglomerates and the multiplication

of interlocking directorates zigzag across regional boundaries. Therefore such divisions have less and less meaning with regard to policy changes like those we are considering.

All historic developments contain within them the force that can turn them into a progressive direction. It is necessary to draw all the lessons from this reactionary development. It is important to see in full measure the dangers that are inherent in it. On the basis of this experience, one must repeat: "Yes, it can happen here as well!" In fact, in a sense it is happening here. From this it is necessary to draw all of the lessons on how reaction operates. It is necessary to draw the lesson that the people cannot place their confidence in the two parties of monopoly capitalism or in the liberal wing of capitalist politics. It is also clear that the struggle against reaction cannot rest on the use of divisions in ruling-class circles. The struggles and the victories against reaction can only rest on the mass mobilization of the forces of the working class and the people.

These lessons are decisive for the successful development of the struggle against these policies. It can happen here, but it can also be defeated! The Watergate explosion is an historic shattering setback for the forces of reaction. The explosion is proof of the fact that there are great reservoirs of power that can be brought to bear against monopoly capitalism. It is a serious setback with long-range implications. The forces of reaction are in disarray. All of the policies of the conspiracy and the Nixon Administration have suffered a setback.

The explosion has blown the carefully guarded lid off the FBI and the CIA. It has created a historic opportunity for movements and struggles against monopoly capitalism. A people's movement can push the explosion to the point where it not only rips off the shell of the conspiracy but turns back the reactionary offensive that it supported. This is the moment to launch a movement for meaningful people's Constitutional reforms—reforms that would give the people political power, that would destroy the political power of the monopolies, that would guarantee the election of working-class, Black, Chicano, Puerto Rican and American-Indian representatives to all levels of government. This is the time to fight for reforms that would drastically limit presidential powers, that would simplify the process of recall and impeachment, that would padlock the CIA, the FBI and the Pentagon, that would reduce the military to a bare minimum. This is the moment to battle for reforms that would meaningfully outlaw all forms of racism, that would scrap all anti-labor and anti-democratic laws. It is a moment for people's movements and for initiatives to roll back all of Nixon's actions in the areas of social

welfare and wage freeze.

During days of crisis masses can learn more in minutes than they can in months in more peaceful periods. This is one of those times. We Communists and Marxists must meet this challenge. The explosion has unearthed the decaying roots of monopoly capitalism. Millions can now more easily see the role of classes. We must explain on the basis of these experiences the class nature of capitalism. This is a moment when masses can see the corrupt, inhuman, oppressive nature of capitalism. It is a moment when anti-monopoly consciousness is growing. It can lead to new levels of anti-monopoly struggles, new forms of anti-monopoly coalitions.

Millions are drawing lessons from these events in the field of political action. It is necessary to take advantage of this moment to stimulate movements that will lead to the crystallization of independent formations in this field. Millions are becoming disillusioned with capitalist politics and with capitalism as a system.

The explosion has opened up new possibilities and opportunities for the presentation of socialism as the only meaningful alternative, as one that will destroy the roots of a system that gives rise to Watergates and the Nixon kind of administrations. This is a moment when it is necessary and possible to present the Communist Party as the only meaningful working-class revolutionary alternative to the whole capitalist mess.

Because the roots of this conspiracy are deep and spread into the very nervous system of monopoly capitalism the solutions cannot be superficial ones. They must go to the root of the problem. Therefore the outlook cannot be a return to "good old days" of capitalism. *Status quo* solutions are no solutions. Calls to impeach the President or demand his resignation are good mass slogans. But the fact that Agnew or Albert would then become President indicates that such slogans are not enough. Considering everything that has gone on, the 1972 elections were a fraud. Therefore a call for new elections is very legitimate and understandable. But in a more fundamental sense, it is necessary to raise sharply the question of the need for basic Constitutional reforms that move in the direction of destroying the power base of monopoly capital and the building of a power base for a people's democratic structure.

Racism in U.S. School Textbooks*

I believe that in the battle to end racism, history has conferred upon American youth, both Black and white, an honorable task. You will be among the pallbearers at the funeral of racism, and I am certain that you will throw the coffin into the graveyard of history, into the ashes of time.

Historically, our school system has been used to train white children to feel superior to all non-white peoples and races; likewise, it has been used to train non-white people to feel inferior to those who are white. These views persist, despite the fact that science and technology have proven that there are no superior or inferior races or peoples; that all the so-called "races" which comprise mankind are members of a common species, *Homo sapiens*.

They have proven that if there is any variation in the levels of social development between peoples, it is due to controlled and enforced environmental conditions, and is not hereditary. Thus, the starting point to undo the harm that has been done to peoples of color over several centuries is to change the environment from which racism has been nourished.

One of the institutions in the social system which creates that environment is the school system. In it, children from kindergarten through university are trained to be racists by methods that are both direct and subtle, by commission and omission.

In this connection, textbooks are the main weapons. This situation was graphically portrayed by one of the songs in the famous musical "South Pacific." The lyrics go:

You've got to be taught to hate and fear
 You've got to be taught from year to year
 It's got to be drummed in your dear little ear
 You've got to be carefully taught.
 You've got to be taught to be afraid
 Of people whose eyes are oddly made
 And people whose skin is a different shade
 You've got to be carefully taught.
 You've got to be taught before it's too late
 Before you are six, or seven or eight

*The following is the text of a lecture delivered at the University of Arizona on March 1, 1978.

To hate all the people your relatives hate
You've got to be carefully taught.

The Lesson of the Two Germanys

What prompted me to probe deeper into the situation around textbooks was the research that I had to do in preparation for my latest book, *Racism and Human Survival*. In my search for answers to show that the environmental factor is the primary cause of racism, I went through a study which made me relive the tragedy of Nazi Germany, and then to make a contrast between the two German states of today.

Both of these areas once followed Hitler and his racist doctrines down the pathway to destruction. I found that today, 28 years later, the people in the German Democratic Republic have largely eliminated racism from their society, have cleaned out from their school system all former Nazis and have instituted a curriculum to train their youth to not only understand but also support the struggles being waged by oppressed peoples all over the earth.

The situation that brought this so sharply to my attention was the response of children and youth in the German Democratic Republic to the unjust attempt to take the life of Angela Davis. They collected over a million signatures demanding her freedom. I wanted to know what had been done to arouse such social consciousness.

With this in mind, I visited the Ministry of Education. They informed me that this response was due to a policy of educating their children to understand the underlying causes of racism, to know who profits from it and how it is harmful to the common people, to the working class. Hence, they are taught, the necessity exists for them to react to social injustices against Black people and all oppressed peoples in this world.

I checked out these concepts from the textbooks used in their school system, from kindergarten through university. I was flabbergasted at what I found, for here was one of the greatest examples of how racism can be eliminated from society.

Later, I went to West Germany. There, I found just the opposite to be the case. The West German government is on the side of imperialism all over the world. West Germany, the United States and Great Britain are the main supporters of the racist regimes of South Africa and the Portuguese colonies. Although in less glaring form than in Hitler's time, they still train German youth to view Black people as savages and animals.

What causes these differences between peoples who formerly were geared in the same ideological direction? The causes lie in the difference in social systems—one system still has a need for lies and dis-

tortions to rationalize its brutal exploitation of peoples of color, while the other system has no such needs.

The system of capitalism has grown rich and powerful largely on the basis of the superexploitation of people of color the world over. Therefore, the fostering of racism is a necessity for that system.

Just the opposite is the case with socialism, which is predicated upon ending the exploitation of man by man, of class by class. But this objective cannot be realized except in the context of ending all forms of racial and national oppression. For this system, the elimination of racism is necessary.

With these examples in the background, I came home determined to do what the people of the G.D.R. have done, namely, to organize a struggle to eliminate the racist character of the textbooks used in the American school system. What I disclosed in reference to West Germany has already produced some results. The *Kritikon Literarum*, a West German magazine, reviewed *Racism and Human Survival*, and wrote:

Despite shortcomings of his historical analysis, e.g., he makes no mention of the Hitler-Stalin 1939 agreement, his argument, and, particularly, his comprehensive coverage of school textbooks in West and East Germany makes a strong case for socialism as a means to combat and overcome racism.

. . . Lightfoot produces evidence that every West German school teacher should read, in order not to repeat the traditional racist and colonialist lies included even in recent books.

This magazine calls upon West German school teachers to become a force to change the situation. Can we, in the United States, living in the most racist-ridden society in the world today, do less?

What Is Being Done?

In order to deal effectively with the problem we must discern what progress has been made, uncover weaknesses and take positive measures to overcome them. There are some who claim that the problem has been basically solved. I intend to prove that that is not the case.

What is being done to transform the educational system today? Many people, Black and white, of diverse backgrounds and political persuasions, have been repelled by the racist character of textbooks and call for changes.

Dr. Lloyd Marcus in 1960 declared:

Within a world of diverse peoples, it is essential that young citizens know what has happened when intergroup hostilities have

been cultivated and exploited to the ultimate degree. Textbooks have a definite role to play in assuring that those whose parents (grandparents) fought totalitarian aggressions in World War II, do not grow up in ignorance of the consequences of racism as an ideology, the swastika as a symbol of Hitlerian terror, and the evolution and full horror of genocide. The aspects of Germany's Third Reich have an important bearing on education for citizenship in an interreligious, interracial America. (Quoted in Michael B. Kane, *Minorities in Textbooks: Their Treatment in Social Studies Texts*, Quadrangle Books, Chicago, 1971, p. 4.)

The American Council on Education in 1949 also saw the necessity to make changes, and it wrote:

. . . the whole world is uneasy. We are in the midst of an era of tensions, and not the least among them are tensions among groups in the American population. Such tensions are serious threats to the American way of life, to our unity as a people, and to our economic, political and cultural welfare. Intergroup conflict is far more dangerous than are many of the more obvious, less insidious external threats against which we now erect barriers. (Quoted in Kane, *op. cit.*)

These examples could be multiplied by hundreds, and especially by minority groups—Black, Spanish-speaking, Jewish and others. An outstanding example is the work of the Council on Interracial Books for Children in New York City. This group and others have produced a voluminous amount of material aimed at the transformation of our educational institutions. As a result of their activity, there is no dearth of material upon which a whole new textbook system could be developed.

Many of these groups have made critiques of the textbooks used in the public schools, such as the 1949 study of The American Council on Education. In 1961 the Anti-Defamation League published a similar study, *The Treatment of Minorities in Secondary School Textbooks*, and concluded:

Although there has been marked, but very uneven improvement in intergroup relations content since 1949, only a few books within each subject-area category (*i.e.*, American history, world history, problems of American democracy) give a realistic and constructive portrayal of certain minority groups. No one book gives an adequate presentation of all four topics covered by this report. (Quoted in Kane, *op. cit.*)

Similarly, in the study by Michael Kane referred to above (a survey made in cooperation with the Anti-Defamation League), the conclusions are not happy or comforting. Whatever progress has been made

in erasing *clichés* about minority groups has been far less than adequate in light of the rapid social and educational changes of the last two decades. When we consider, for example, the new intense interest of minority groups in their rich pasts and hopeful futures, the improvement seems feeble indeed. The study concludes that not one of the textbooks analyzed is satisfactory with regard to all topics under investigation.

In 1966-67, Irving J. Sloan, aided by a grant from the American Federation of Teachers, AFL-CIO, made a study published in the book *The Negro in American History Textbooks*, which was revised in 1968, and in which he claims that great progress has been made.

These studies, coupled with others, make it possible to get a clear understanding of the present state of affairs in relation to racism in the textbook field. What we find is that there is not only a problem in relation to textbooks, there also is a problem in relation to the people who conduct the surveys.

The Kane Study

Despite weaknesses, the Kane study is about the most comprehensive and accurate presentation of the problem. Forty-five social studies textbooks were chosen for study in this report. Their selection resulted from a survey to ascertain which textbooks were used most widely by American school children. Over 50 localities, representing all geographic areas of the United States, and ranging in size from entire states to major cities to smaller county and city school districts, responded to questions on which texts they use most extensively in the teaching of American history, world history, and social problems and civics. From the texts named, 45 were selected, equally divided among these subjects. While the majority of books in each category were designed for use in senior high school classes, some were used in junior high school. In all cases the edition of the textbook reviewed was the most current then available. Nineteen of these 45 books had been reviewed previously in a 1960 study.

The Kane study broke down in summary form the status of the treatment of various minority groups. These are his conclusions:

American Indians

Of the 45 textbooks examined, 17 make no reference to the American Indian whatever. Ten of those that fail to meet the criterion of *inclusion* are world histories, and seven are social problem texts. Of the books that do discuss the Indians, two world histories and three social problems texts offer only brief and perfunctory information. Therefore, of the 30 texts in these categories only three world histories and five social problems texts can be considered reason-

ably adequate by the criteria of *inclusion*, *comprehensiveness*, and *balance*. (P. 113.)

Spanish-Speaking People

In 1969, as in 1960 and 1949, the Spanish-speaking peoples of the United States are generally ignored by textbooks. Only eight of the 45 books examined (five social problems texts and three American histories) offer textual references to this group in the continental United States. An additional four make references in photograph captions. The Puerto Ricans in continental United States are mentioned in seven texts, the Mexican-Americans in two, and the Cuban immigrants in two. Only six texts offer more than one paragraph of information about any of these groups, and only one mentions all of them.

American history texts flagrantly avoid references to Spanish-speaking peoples. The only clue they give students as to the presence of Mexican-Americans in the United States comes from a photo caption which simply states: "Los Angeles, like many other cities in the West, reflects its Spanish inheritance in the names of its streets, in art, architecture, music, foods, fiestas, and in its citizens of Mexican ancestry." (P. 130.)

Asian People

Not one book among the 24 contains a diversified, balanced portrayal of Chinese-Americans or Japanese-Americans. Characteristics such as the strong family unit, reverence for tradition, low rates of juvenile delinquency and crime, and industriousness of many members of this group continue to go unmentioned. Instead, a sense of racial inferiority pervades American history accounts of cheap labor, starvation wages and popular demand for restriction or exclusion in the late 19th century. In terms of occupation, the first Chinese railroad laborers and the later laundrymen and cooks are given no contemporary successors, such as engineers, teachers, doctors and businessmen.

The present 1969 study is unable to report any significant changes in textbook presentations of this topic. Not one world history makes any overt reference to the presence of people of Oriental origin in the United States. Of the 30 American history and American problems in civics texts analyzed, two histories and eight problems and civics texts violate the criterion of *inclusion* by totally failing to mention this minority group. Furthermore, of the 11 American histories and five social problems texts that mention Chinese-Americans, and of the ten American histories and six social problems texts that mention Japanese-Americans, none meets the dual criteria of *comprehensiveness* and *balance*. As a matter of fact, only two textbooks make references to either Chinese- or

Japanese-Americans in contemporary society, and these are hardly to be considered complete. (P. 121.)

Jewish People

In 1960 the textbooks devoted only a distressingly inadequate amount of discussion to Jews and the Jewish heritage in America. Since that time neither the quality nor the quantity of textbook references to the American Jewish people has improved significantly. In fact, one of the 15 American history texts reviewed does not even attempt to meet the criterion of *inclusion* by mentioning the presence of Jews in America; in the 14 that do, the references are all too often made in listing the various groups who came to America in colonial days or modern, dynamic people contributing to their betterment and providing examples for others. (Pp. 34-35.)

Black Americans

In 1960 it was said that "very little progress has been made since the 1940's in this area. In fact, the cardinal weakness in present texts is a striking lack of any serious discussions of the American Negro's current struggles and changing status." At that time, of the 24 texts (eight in each subject area) analyzed, 13 omitted all reference to Blacks in contemporary society, and nine of these are world histories. . . .

All American histories reviewed in the current study as well as all social problems and civics texts—with the exception of one remarkably unaware book—meet the criterion of *inclusion* by offering some information on the contemporary Black man. Most of them, however, could be judged inadequate on the basis of the lack of frankness—as necessitated by the criteria of *balance*, *comprehensiveness*, and *realism*—in their treatment of the need and reasons for the current civil rights movement. In the textbook coverage of the contemporary Black American history, quality ranks far below quantity. Only five books (four American histories and one social problems text) offer what might be considered exceptional or satisfactory treatments. Nine other texts (three American histories, five social problems texts, and one world history) cover the subject well or with reasonable adequacy. In 20 texts the accounts are so brief, perfunctory, or non-committal that they can only be considered inadequate. Ten others, as has been mentioned before, do not cover the topic.

Therefore, less than one-third of the textbooks selected for their popularity in American classrooms offer reasonably good accounts of the Black man in contemporary society. (P. 136.)

Finally, Kane presents a summary conclusion of the whole survey:

Although there have been some genuine improvements in the

textbook presentations of the topics examined it has been an uneven development at best. A significant number of texts published today continue to present a principally white, Protestant, Anglo-Saxon view of America's past and present . . . in 1969, no single book provides an adequate presentation of all the major topics covered by this report. (P. 136.)

Although this report is more comprehensive than some of the others, in my judgement it suffers, like all of them, from some very basic weaknesses.

The Sloan study is much more optimistic, but also most misleading, for what has been attempted in this study, even more than in others, is to graft onto textbooks that are basically racist in character some minor or secondary features which, even if they were included in the textbooks, would not change too much of what is involved.

A Basic Change Is Needed

It seems to me that approaching textbooks in this way is like treating with patent medicine a chronic ailment which calls for an operation. If there is to be a basic change from racism in the textbooks, a revolutionary change, then the whole structure of the treatment of American history, world history, and the social studies will have to be basically revised. It is impossible within the present structure to solve the problem by adding this or that reform.

However, until such time as a revolutionary change can take place it will be necessary for the democratic forces to begin creating the kind of material out of which a basic rewrite can come. At the same time a struggle can be waged to utilize those books which presently meet certain standards. In this connection, I should like to indicate in brief what I consider to be some of the main themes that are essential in all aspects of American textbooks.

It is my contention that it is not possible to deal accurately with the basic contributions that ethnic groups have made in the evolution of the United States without viewing these problems in the context of a class-structured society. Most historians and sociologists who treat the evolving U.S. society do so mainly on the theory that great men are the makers of history; the common people are placed in a secondary role. And since the oppressed minority groups fall overwhelmingly in the category of the common people, their contributions automatically are a very minor feature of the development of the nation. The facts of history show that the primary force generating man's progress upon this earth has been the people. They have given birth to great men and women who made contributions to these developments, but it is they who have been the primary force.

History also shows that the rise and development of civilization has come as a result of the cross-fertilization of history by all the peoples that comprise mankind and, further, that while all have contributed, at particular stages of history some have contributed more than others, according to the special social and natural circumstances in which they operated.

If this becomes the principal theme upon which U.S. history is written, then the contributions of the ethnic groups will come more largely into focus. Because of special circumstances minorities in our country have not been able to produce great men and women in substantial numbers in all fields of human endeavor. But when we examine what the *people* did we get a different story.

Consider, for example, the American Indian. What has been the nature of the contributions of the Indians? We are told that the ruthless destruction of the American Indian was a precondition for the rise of modern civilization on this continent. Yet one American history textbook tells it like it really was. In *Rise of the American Nation*, by Lewis P. Todd and Merle Curti (Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, New York, 3rd ed., 1972) we find the following:

The value of the contribution the American Indians have made to the world is beyond reckoning. Mankind will be forever in their debt.

Nearly five hundred years have passed since men and women from the Old World began to settle the American continents. During all that time, none of the settlers nor their descendants have discovered and developed a single major agricultural product from the wild trees and plants of the New World. And yet, long before the first Europeans landed on the shores of the Americas, the Indians had developed more than twenty valuable products. In addition, they had learned to use many other products of the forests and grasslands. The amazing truth is that more than half of all the agricultural goods produced in the world today came from plants originally discovered and cultivated by American Indians.

The shelves of our stores are filled with these products, either in their natural form or processed into an almost endless variety of packaged and canned goods. How different our eating habits would be if we did not have corn, tomatoes, white and sweet potatoes and the many varieties of beans! If we did not have chocolate and maple syrup! If we did not have turkeys! (P. 117.)

The information contained in this book should become the basis for all textbooks dealing with the American Indian.

Consider also, for example, the growth of the economy here in the State of Arizona. The contributions of Chicanos are immeasurable.

The economy of this state is based mainly on copper, cattle and cotton. What has been the role of Chicanos in its development?

In the copper industry, among other things, the leaching process by which Kennecott extracts the metal from the ore was developed by Mexican copper workers and taught to the Kennecott Copper Company. The cattle ranching industry of the Southwest was developed by Mexican workers who taught the owners of U.S. and British capital how to raise cattle, thus adding enormous profits from their investment.

It is such facts that the historians *deliberately* omit.

Let us take another example, the African people. For many years, we were told that the Africans were nothing more than savages, climbing up and down trees like monkeys on the continent of Africa. Many textbooks, in one form or another, still convey this impression. However, as observed by Benjamin Quarles in *The Negro in the Making of America* (MacMillan, New York, 1964), Africans made contributions not only to Africans, but also to advancement of the total resources of mankind. Quarles wrote:

African societies before the penetration of the Europeans were not backward and static, with their peoples living in barbarism and savagery. A more accurate view is now being unfolded by modern-day scholars in history, anthropology, archeology, and linguistics. The fruits of their researches show that the people of Africa from whom the American Negro is descended have made a rich contribution to the total resources of human culture. (P. 7.)

Also largely omitted in most textbooks is the role of the immigrants who came to America—the common people, from all backgrounds including Anglo-Saxon. Our growth as a nation has been achieved, in large measure, through the genius and industry of people from every race and from every corner of the world. Their brains and their brawn helped to settle our land, to advance our agriculture, to build our industries, to develop our commerce and to make the United States a leading nation such as we are now. The immigrants arrived in this country penniless and in debt, but their skills, their trades and their willingness to work, plus the unpaid labor of my slave forebears, made America great and rich.

People's Contributions to Democratic Advance

However, it has not been only in the area of the economic advancement of the nation that the common people made their contributions; it has been in the area of politics as well. Were it not for the small farmers and the artisans of Revolutionary times, it is doubtful whether the Bill of Rights would ever have been appended to the U.S. Constitution. The people have played a tremendous role in every major

advance made in this country. Long before the politicians responded to them, the cries for democratic advances were heard from the common people.

What was true in respect to the Bill of Rights was also true with regard to the ending of slavery. Long before Lincoln wrote the Emancipation Proclamation, demands for abolition were made by the people. In regard to women's suffrage, it was the women themselves who pressed upon the nation the necessity for women's right to vote.

In fact, every social advance that this country has made met with opposition from the privileged few, from the days of the Robber Barons down to this day of monopoly corporate interests. This class, the rich ruling class, has been the force that had to be defeated in order to make our country great. This is the story which must be told to children and youth in the textbooks used in the school system. Especially must the role of labor come to the forefront in contrast to that of the rich. Also the role of women in the making of this country must be illuminated.

I stress these points because they are important in respect to the contributions of Black Americans. Most historians today, among them Black historians, are wiping out the stereotypes in respect to Blacks, and most now speak about the outstanding achievements of some Black individuals. This is very important—but it does not tell the whole story. Nor does it signalize the contributions that Blacks *as a people* have made. Most of them, for example, do not show the role of the slaves who, by their labor and brainpower, helped to build this nation economically.

Now and then, someone makes mention of the effect the slaves have had upon the entire world economy. For example, Quarles says:

Moreover, the Negro's role in the United States also throws light upon some of the major trends in the history of the Western world since Columbus. The commercial revolution of early modern times had as a basic component a plentiful supply of transplanted Africans. Three centuries later the Negroes on the plantations of the South produced the staple—cotton—to which the Industrial Revolution owed so much of its explosive world-wide influence. (*Op. cit.*, p. 19.)

But after expressing this thought, this author proceeds to write a book in which the dominant theme is the Black personalities who helped make America great.

No doubt, one reason why there is almost complete silence on the role of the slaves in the making of the nation's wealth is that it would lay the basis for Blacks to demand compensatory measures to pay them back for what was robbed from them and their ancestors. If

American industry and the big banks and insurance companies owe their rise and development to unpaid slave labor, to superexploited labor, then this would lay the moral basis for Blacks to acquire significant ownership in them, a condition which could be realized only within the context of a socialist reorganization of our society.

The High Cost of Racism

Another major theme which is presently neglected in most textbooks or by the reviewers is the high cost of racism for the common people. White Americans must be shown that racism directly affects them. All the examples in history must be brought forward to prove this fact.

A good example is the Civil War. It was clear from 1520 onward that slavery was incompatible with the industrial development of the United States, and yet it took 43 years for Northern forces to comprehend that basic truth. It can also be shown that, even after the Civil War broke out, the war was not being fought for the ending of slavery as much as it was for containing slavery, and that for two years, between 1861 and 1863, unnecessary white blood was spilled because Lincoln failed to understand that he could not preserve the Union without freeing the slaves.

Or take the example of world history as it unfolded in the 17th, 18th and 19th centuries. During these centuries, the main victims of racism were people of color—Red, Black, Brown and Yellow. While the capitalist class in the West exploited the working class in their countries, this was not comparable to the exploitation and persecution of the people of the colonial world. But in the 20th century we find that the same set of circumstances which previously drove the white-led nations to the destruction of tens of millions of people of color now created conditions where the main casualties were white. One hundred million people, mostly white, died in the 20th century as a consequence of racism spilling over into this century.

Thus, racism can be likened to an Australian boomerang which, when thrown, will kill the object in front of it but, given time, will circle and kill the killer. Such is the universal nature of racism. It can be considered as a basic element of social development, the failure to deal with which can be as destructive to mankind as the failure to comprehend and deal with laws of nature. It is this aspect of racism that must increasingly come to the forefront in our endeavors to draw our youth away from this poison. Children must be shown from the cradle on up that racism will hurt them as surely as if they put their hands on a hot stove.

This approach is all the more necessary in the light of the developments since the 1972 elections. The Nixon Administration, emboldened

by its success in dividing the country more deeply along racial lines, now proceeds to undo all the social gains that have been made by the people since the days of the New Deal of Franklin Delano Roosevelt.

To summarize, our textbooks, as shown by recent studies, still inadequately portray minority groups in their rightful role in the making of the United States. Our textbooks and reviewers still do not deal with the class nature of the evolving U.S. nation, and racism is not portrayed as a source of self-destruction for the working people.

I therefore call upon U.S. students to pick up the torch and carry this struggle throughout the nation. Students of the United States, you have made history in the last decade or so! By your actions, you have helped to create a peace movement the likes of which no nation at war has ever seen since the Russian Revolution of 1917. You have called for basic reforms in many aspects of American life. Today I call upon you to mount struggles on every college campus, in every high school in the land, demanding that the entire textbook system be changed. I call for these changes not only for Black survival but for the survival of the nation.

(Continued from Page 54)

contribution to the popular unity. Despite real difficulties, stemming from the ideological struggles among diverse reformist currents that take place with the CFDT and from the syndicalist traditions of French trade unionism which hold them back from collaboration with the Left parties, this trade union unity is becoming stronger. The CGT is of the opinion that even without signing the common program as the political parties have done, the central trade union bodies give it their full support in asserting their will to continue to uphold their militant demands, which is so necessary with respect to any government, including a Left government.

It is difficult to foresee the rhythm and the forms of the class struggles in France in the years to come, but it is certain that they will by no means slow down. Their outcome will depend on the capacity of each of the two opposing classes, the working class and monopoly capital, to gather around itself the majority of the people and to isolate the other. The Communists consider that this rallying around the working class is already well advanced and that the elections have further promoted it. They consider also that it depends greatly on them, the Communists, to bring about its acceleration and triumph.

The Coming Negotiations in Auto

On the backdrop of the approaching contract negotiations between the United Automobile Workers and the Big Three, several things stand out. First is the fact that the reactionary Nixon, though in deep trouble over Watergate, is pressing monopoly's war against the living standards of the people. Second is the existence of Phase III and the participation of the top labor leaders on the wage-control Labor-Management Advisory Panel. Third is the fact that this year all of the major unions, except steel, with contracts covering over four million workers, are negotiating new contracts. Fourth is the economic situation in the country, featuring runaway inflation, especially in food prices, and runaway profits for the nation's richest corporations, with the auto companies leading the way.

Fifth, in the face of monopoly's drive for superprofits and super-productivity, the leaders of the largest and most powerful unions are confining their demands to improvement of fringe benefits and are attempting to ignore the basic need for wage increases to combat inflation and for a fight against the man-killing speedup on the job. What is building up, unless it is checked by the growing rank-and-file pressure, is one of the most colossal sellouts of the workers' basic interests in the history of the labor movement. The top leadership of the auto union is still a party to this raw class collaborationism. Finally, and most important, is the explosive ferment among the rank and file, which is more and more being expressed in organized form.

The Collective Bargaining Program

It is against this background that negotiations begin in auto in mid-July, with the contracts with the Big Three expiring on September 14. Between now and then, much can happen to change the priorities which were brought into the Special Collective Bargaining Convention held on March 22-23 in Detroit.

The keynote speech by union president Leonard Woodcock and the Collective Bargaining Program presented to the Special Convention were both designed to give priority to fringes at the bargaining table. Top priority was given to demands for a \$650-a-month pension after 30 years' service regardless of age, for general improvement of pension benefits and industry-wide pension reinsurance, for ending compulsory overtime, for improvements and increases in supplementary unemployment benefits (SUB) and the health provisions,

and for a prepaid dental care program. There is also a demand to "modernize" the cost-of-living formula (COLA) which is called "not just noninflationary but counterinflationary because it eliminates the need for negotiating wage increases which anticipate and thus may contribute to future inflation." Such an approach feeds and reinforces the monopolist myth that wage increases *cause* inflation.

The convention resolution also says that "working conditions . . . assume the highest priority" but the approaches to correcting the killing and crippling working conditions are distinctly anemic. However, rank-and-file pressure may make the correction of some of the worst of these conditions a key to the national and local settlements. While the resolution reaffirms that "the right to strike over health and safety issues must remain inviolate," it does not provide for union health and safety committees in all plants, with power to shut down unsafe jobs, as called for in some local union resolutions. Instead it says that "conditions in the workplace require frequent regular inspections by company industrial safety and health staffs," that workers should be informed of the findings and should not be required to work at potentially hazardous operations, and that the union should help the company train workers in the use of "monitoring equipment."

The resolution ties production standards to product quality. It says: "There is an interrelation between good quality and reasonable work pace." The fact that most of the poor quality of today's car is engineered into it as built-in obsolescence is ignored. While it is true that speedup harms the quality in that a worker does not have time to do a particular operation properly, it is not the main cause. The massive recalls of automobiles are due to engineering defects, not speedup. Woodcock's approach to the "question of how to perform work" is that it "should not be a matter of confrontation in collective bargaining because you can only have a confrontation in collective bargaining if you have in sight a solution to the problem" and, he says, no one has a solution. But the workers have a suggestion: for a start, slow down the work pace.

The demand raised in the resolution to which management will put up the most real resistance is that a "worker must be considered innocent until proven guilty." This demand challenges one of the key "rights" or "responsibilities" granted management under the company security clauses of the present contracts. As it stands now, a worker is considered guilty and is punished even if later he is able to prove himself innocent. Even when the worker wins the grievance, the settlement seldom includes back pay for time lost because of suspension from the job or being sent home for a day or two. Thus,

even though the grievance is won the punishment stands and the worker loses. This company "right to maintain discipline and efficiency of the employees" is therefore a powerful weapon in the hands of the company to intimidate the worker to whatever degree it desires. To win the proposed change in the contract, which will seriously weaken the dictatorial power of the company over the worker, will require solid, active support from the local union rank and file.

Although the Collective Bargaining Program was passed overwhelmingly by the delegates to the Special Convention, this does not close the door on other issues to be placed on the table or on changes in priority of issues. Even though the Convention was carefully controlled, the anger of the workers over working conditions did break through and force some modification in priorities. Repeated declarations came from the platform to the effect that the resolution was only a guide and not a fixed, unalterable set of demands. There have also been several statements since then from Solidarity House (UAW national headquarters) emphasizing the priority of doing something about the problem of working conditions.

It is estimated that there are now about 1½ million 1973 model cars in stock. This is a high inventory. Production and sales are at record levels. The auto companies are working overtime in many of their assembly plants, as much as 10-12 hours a day seven days a week, and it is compulsory. If a worker does not work overtime a big fuss is made. He or she is often penalized. This overtime is scheduled to continue at least until June. This date coincides with the opening of contract talks; it is a couple of months before the contracts expire; and it comes just before changeover. One is led to suspect, therefore, that the auto companies are preparing for a campaign of attrition in case things get a little sticky. They realize that the workers in the plants can be hard to get along with in spite of the leadership. They could well be planning to cut back on overtime, lay off workers, maybe provoke strikes, and so on, to try to undermine workers economically and dampen the militancy that exists down below so that the possibility of a strike will be lessened.

Conditions in the Plants

Speedup is reaching the physical limits of human endurance. This is true in all of the Big Three, with General Motors setting the pace. There have been and there will continue to be walkouts, authorized or unauthorized strikes, and other actions by the workers in their efforts to get some relief from the speed of production. There is one feature of this fight that is especially worthy of note. Because the

union leadership does little about this problem, some of the workers' resistance is taking the form of individual actions. These range from beating up foremen to just not coming in to work. In fact, the inhuman speedup is the major cause of absenteeism. In some plants it is an all too common occurrence for workers to fight one another as a result of the pressure for more and more production. When a worker gets behind because the line is too fast or for some other reason, arguments and fights develop because the workers do not want to be penalized or jumped on by the foreman. There have been situations where workers and foremen have been killed in such fights. There are even cases where foremen have cracked up because of the drive for more production by the company.

The intensity of production is hard to believe unless one is in there. Lines that were running 48-50 cars an hour are now running 63-65 with the same manpower or less. In the Lordstown plant, which is highly automated and has about two-thirds of the work force it had prior to the automation, the rate is over 100 cars an hour. Add to this the problems of the workers who produce the parts that feed these lines and the fact that some operations are automated while others are not, and you get an idea of the many kinds of problems that arise from speedup. The automated feeder jobs set the pace for those that are not automated.

The widespread use of drugs in the plants helps the company speedup drive. Those who are on the "hard stuff" have to work every day to feed their habit. Many times their source of supply is in the plant. If you add to this the "pep pills" and other drugs that serve to stimulate the worker, you have a prescription for production "pace setters." This explains why companies do next to nothing to stamp out the use and sale of drugs in their plants. It is very profitable because of the increased exploitation it permits and because it takes the workers involved out of the struggle against these conditions.

The racism of the companies is shown in the superexploitation of Black, Chicano, Puerto Rican and Arab workers, and in the job assignments they receive. A Black worker is required to do the same work that two or even three white workers were previously doing. Thus the company gets more production with less manpower at the same wage. The hottest, dirtiest, hardest, heaviest and most unhealthy jobs are reserved for Black, Chicano, Puerto Rican and Arab workers.

Of the 1½ million workers in the union, it is estimated that 200,000 are women, of whom about 40,000 are Black, Chicano or Puerto Rican. In the main, women are placed on lighter jobs such as those in the trim departments or the wire room, or on clerical jobs. But

efforts are also made to put women on hard and dirty jobs. Chrysler in Detroit hired a number of women who were on Aid to Dependent Children (ADC) or on welfare and have used the threat of firing them when they resisted being put on jobs too heavy or hard for them. (If fired, they could be deprived of their ADC or welfare payments.) The company has also used the "equal rights" argument to try to make women work on jobs dangerous to their health. There have been protests and some strikes by the men workers, each time forcing the company to assign the women to other jobs. There are still too many instances of women suffering hernias and other ailments as a result of being forced to work on jobs that are too heavy or otherwise damaging to their health.

In the present contracts the companies have a powerful club to hold over the heads of militant workers and stewards who try to fight the speedup drive. The three contract clauses that are most useful are the company security clause, the improvement factor and the no-strike clause.

The company security clause gives the company "sole responsibility" to hire, promote, discharge or discipline for cause and "to maintain discipline and efficiency of employees." The improvement factor clause recognizes *the principle* "that a continuing improvement in the standard of living of employees depends upon technological progress, better tools, methods . . . and a *cooperative attitude on the part of all parties* in such progress." (Emphasis added.) Also recognized as a principle is that to produce more with the same amount of human effort is a sound economic and social objective.

The no-strike clause starts out by declaring union adherence "to the principle of a fair day's work for a fair day's pay." It then goes on to state: "The Union will not cause or *permit its members* to cause, nor will any member of the union take part in, any sitdown, stay-in, or slowdown in any plant of the Company or any curtailment of work or restriction of production or *interference* with the operations of the Company." (Emphasis added.) Any union leader who does not want to fight can find adequate "justification" in these clauses of the contract. The problem the workers face is how to get rid of these crippling clauses and in the meantime how to fight speedup in spite of them.

Major Problems Faced by the Rank and File

The real problem the workers face is how to get the demands that are most important to their welfare off the bargaining table and into the national and local contracts. It boils down to keeping the benefits that have been won and getting more.

Companies like Ford are making a big show about being adamant against ending compulsory overtime. The union leadership has also made much of eliminating compulsory overtime and there is a lot of support for this position among the membership. The company figures that the union leaders will have to win this one and it hopes it can make the union give up in return some demand that is really important to the workers and costly to the company, such as "innocent until proven guilty." Thus the companies could grant something which costs them nothing in order not to have to agree to something that could cost them a lot.

Overtime adds about \$100 a week to a worker's gross pay. This has enabled workers to absorb the price increases to some extent. That is why there are mixed feelings among workers about overtime work. They know it is killing them, but they need the money. Hence the issue is voluntary overtime rather than eliminating overtime to make more jobs.

There is an important challenge to management prerogatives being placed on the bargaining table. It is the demand to end the practice of considering a worker guilty and penalizing him even if later proven innocent, also the practice of company enforcement of new production standards while they are in dispute. It will take a real fight to win this one. It would force the company to stop stalling on settling so many grievances.

Since there is already too much class collaboration in the contract and in the practice, there is certainly no need for the proposed "harmony clause," which reads: "The management and the union acknowledge in writing that their relationship is one of mutual respect and responsibility; that the growth and success of the company are of direct interest to the workers and their union, and the growth and success of the union are of direct interest to the company; that each party, therefore, pledges respect, understanding and cooperation with the other and covenants that it will not, in any way, impede the growth and success of the other." It will take a lot of rank-and-file pressure to keep this out of the next contract. The union leadership seems determined to put it in, and of course the company is willing.

Other management prerogatives that are a cause of concern among the rank and file are the unrestricted right of the company to shut down plants or departments and move them to new locations at will, also the right to impose shop rules and penalties for violating them. Workers have no voice in determining the shop rules, yet these, in effect, become part of the contract and the union representatives become joint enforcers.

In addition to the negotiation of a national contract there will take place the fight for local union demands. In many ways the issues in some of these struggles are more important to the workers than the national agreement, for they affect its application to specific conditions in individual plants. The big thing that workers are aroused about is that the practice of signing the national agreement before the local agreements are settled leaves them to fight alone. It enables the company to deal with locals one at a time. Faced with this overwhelming power, the workers usually lose out on their most important local demands. Therefore there is a great deal of pressure from below against signing any national agreement until *all* local agreements are settled.

Then there is the question of how to fight speedup. The first necessity is the removal of the no-strike clause from all contracts. The second is the ending of the present requirement that a speedup grievance must be filed by each individual worker on each operation. The usual settlement of such grievances merely shifts part of the operation to someone else.

In order to hold an authorized strike it is necessary to put together a "strike package." Such a "package" is made up of hundreds of individual speedup grievances of individual workers on what are called "tight jobs." When the workers strike, as they did at Lordstown, even if they win on nearly all the grievances in the "package," little is changed. When they go back to work the line speed remains the same and the number of men on the job remains the same. What has happened is merely that the workload has been shifted around enough to give the aggrieved workers some relief by distributing their excess burden among other workers. This method of handling speedup undermines the effectiveness of strike action. It makes it impossible for the workers to do anything effective about the problem even when they fight.

Some efforts have been made to meet this problem by having all the workers on a line or on a given operation file a group grievance that challenges the over-all speed of the job. This way it is possible to get to the heart of the problem. The company has to deal with groups of workers rather than with workers one at a time. A group of workers can strike on a single grievance aimed at slowing down the line or at least putting on more manpower. Stewards can have the backing of groups of workers and therefore be in a better position to fight.

Another problem is certain special demands of Black workers. The foundry and forge workers are demanding full pension benefits after 25 years of service instead of 30 years. A recent study shows that

on the average these workers die seven years earlier than other production workers. Other special demands relate to hazardous jobs. The aim is to make these premium jobs in terms of pay, relief time, vacations, etc., and to improve the working conditions by cutting down on life-sapping heat, gases, smoke and dust. The shorter life span of Black workers in the Detroit area is largely attributable to the kind of jobs they are required to work on.

While questions of health and safety are strikeable issues, there are so many steps that have to be gone through in such a situation that a worker could be permanently injured or killed before the matter is corrected. There should be union health and safety committees with power to shut down unsafe operations whenever they deem it necessary in order to protect life and limb or health. No worker should suffer any loss in pay while corrections are being made.

One question on which the union leadership is very vague is the matter of a wage increase, and this in spite of the soaring prices. The cost-of-living formula, even if it is "modernized," will take care of only a part of future increases in the cost of living. The argument for COL wage increases as against across-the-board wage increases is that COL increases come only after "a prior increase in the general level of prices." Therefore, it is said, such increases are "noninflationary" or even "counterinflationary." But any wage increase that can be won now is clearly after the fact. It would take a wage increase of at least 10-15 per cent just to catch up, even though there have been cost-of-living increases during the life of the present contract.

Despite the experience of months of skyrocketing prices while wages stood still, most workers still believe that rising wages cause rising prices. It comes out in many ways. A common expression is: "What's the use? They'll just raise prices anyway and we'll be no better off." They don't seem to see that since prices are going up in any case they would be better off with a wage increase than without one. This is a major ideological question that Marxists must tackle vigorously in order to bring greater clarity to the workers on the relationship between wages, profits, exploitation, prices, etc. Uncertainty among workers on this question is a major deterrent to mounting the struggle against the Nixon attack on their living standards.

The Fight against Racism

The most serious problem within the union is racism among the white workers and the company's use of it. During the 1972 election campaign in Michigan all the major candidates concentrated on

the racist anti-busing issue. Since the elections a steady stream of racist propaganda has been spewed forth by the press. Racism will be a major issue in the Detroit elections this year, with the current police commissioner running for mayor. Probably no other state has been subjected to such an intense racist campaign. The purpose is to create a base for fascism among basic industrial workers, to widen divisions in the ranks of the working class and to weaken its ability to fight back against the Nixon onslaught. It is to create division within the ranks of the UAW to such a degree that it would be very difficult, if not impossible, to develop unity in the fight against the companies during the contract struggle and after.

The racism that white workers indulge in in their communities cannot be left behind when they come to work. The Black workers know this and it affects the relationships in the plants and in the union. It is hard to say what effect this situation is going to have. Black workers are not in the mood to set this question or their special demands aside "in the interests of unity" as has been done in the past.

The first sign that there is some concern about this growing cancer is the week-long workshop on racism held at Black Lake in April. It was attended by union activists including local union presidents from all parts of the country. This indicates that at least there is now recognition that the problem does exist and needs attention.

The position of Black workers in the union has changed greatly during the last decade. There are over 300,000 members who are Black. Most of them are in Michigan and in the largest locals. A very significant figure is the number of Black presidents of local unions. (Current local union elections are not expected to change the picture greatly.) There are 53 Black local union presidents throughout the country, of whom 26 are in the Detroit area. Even more significant is the fact that seven of the largest UAW locals have not only Black presidents but majority Black memberships and executive boards. In Ford Local 600, five of the unit presidents are Black although the local president is not.

It is clear that the Black workers are in a qualitatively different power position in the union than ever before. The emergence of the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists should serve as a stimulant to organizing this power. It will still require an organized, class-conscious rank and file to realize its full potential.

For Rank-and-File Organization

The importance of overcoming our weaknesses in industrial concentration in auto in Michigan and the Midwest as a whole cannot

be overemphasized. The Big Three have more than 325 plants under contract with the UAW. Over 200 are in the Midwest, 169 of them in Ohio and Michigan and 133 in Michigan alone.

The structure of the UAW is more democratic than that of any other major union in the country. There exist many avenues through which the rank and file, if it is organized, can express itself and have an impact on the policies and practices of the local unions and the International. There are local union meetings, stewards' meetings, committee meetings of all kinds, local executive board meetings, conferences, etc., that members can attend. To make the most of these opportunities requires an organized rank and file with a class-conscious leadership. In some locals there are even procedures for recall of stewards and officers which can be used.

There are many local union caucuses of rank-and-file workers in the UAW. This has been true throughout its history. The great majority of them function only during union elections, but there are a few that have an ongoing program of activity. One of these is the United National Caucus, with its main base in the Detroit area. In its membership, leadership and orientation it is primarily a skilled trades caucus. Its activities are almost solely anti-leadership although they do issue good programs. UNC pays little attention to the problems of production workers and therefore is having little success in mobilizing them. There is still a great need for a rank-and-file organization of production workers. There seems little chance, however, that UNC can measure up to the task.

There are numerous "Left" groups that have been active for some time, issuing their propaganda to the workers and trying to organize them. The pattern which runs through all of their literature is one of attacking the union leadership as such, of attacking the union and/or exposing bad conditions in the plant in order to attack the union for doing nothing about the situation. None of these groups are in the business of treating the company as the enemy or organizing the workers to fight against the company for better conditions.

Some of our own comrades have the same hangup. They say that the main obstacle to taking on the company is the union leadership and that until you get rid of the leadership you can't fight the company. The trouble with this approach is that with no struggles against the company no rank-and-file leaders emerge in whom the workers can have any confidence. The workers don't consider that you have done something just because you have called the leadership a lot of dirty names. They are used to politicians calling each other names. No matter how correct you are, how can you expect the workers to think you are going to be any better if you are not

helping to do something about the day-to-day problems they face in the plant?

The coal miners have set an example of how to get rid of a bad union leadership. It was a rank-and-file struggle against black lung which made possible the mobilization and organization of forces powerful enough to defeat Boyle. They were able in the process simultaneously to fight the coal operators, the state and the union leadership. And they were able to do all three because they kept in their sights the real enemy—the coal operators—as the bullseye and the primary target. Success in the fight to change the direction and leadership will require the same approach. This applies particularly to the coming negotiations.

(Continued from p. 65)

(Syracuse), and Stephen Wright (College Entrance Examination Board).

This collective essay shows the Jencks volume to have been mistaken in methods, conclusion and recommendations. It shows the study to be racist and to reflect and bulwark the "cultural autocracy" characteristic of U.S. society; and it relates the present appearance and publicity for such a volume—and the analogous work of the Shockleys, Banfields, Jensens and Moynihans—to growing efforts by reaction to maintain the *status quo* and to repress the mounting militancy of the impoverished, exploited and insulted. We have here but suggested—not really summarized—the contents of this entire issue and of this particular collective essay; they constitute required reading and point the way towards effective counterattack against the despicable prostitution of science now going forward in the United States. This debasement accompanies and strengthens the unspeakable prostitution of the political processes in the United States emanating from the Water-gate gangsters momentarily in control of the government of the United States.

April 30, 1973

On May 7, 1973, Judge Owen D. Cox of the U.S. 5th Circuit Court of Appeals in Texas, ruled that the racial discrimination suffered by Chicano children in the schools of Corpus Christi "is unconstitutional—not *de facto*, not *de jure*, but unconstitutional" and gave the district superintendent thirty days to produce a plan to eliminate this discrimination. The district has appealed to the Supreme Court but Judge Cox said that such an appeal in no way excused delay in implementing his order. Its full text was printed in the *Corpus Christi Caller*, May 9, 1973.—H.A.

Racism and Speedup in an Auto Plant

For those who have never worked in an automobile assembly plant, such assembly plants are made up of three production departments: body and paint department, trim department and a department called final assembly.

The hardest work of any of the departments is in the body shop, where the body is welded together. Ninety-five per cent of the employees who now work in the body shop are Black. The operations there are gas welding, grinding and arc welding; the line speed is 63 jobs an hour. When it was all white in the body shop the production speed was 32 jobs an hour. At one time they had approximately 3500 people working in that department; now it is down to 2000. The first operation in the body shop is installing the floor panel. There's a machine with which you put the floor panel in, clamp it down, then weld it. The side panel is done by a similar operation. The next operation is the top panel, which is put in with a machine and then welded. So, with the line running 63 jobs an hour, you can see how the workers are under the pressure of speedup. The water fountain can be twenty feet away and they can't leave to get a drink of water.

At the time when there were only white workers working in the trim department, the steward and the foreman were able to settle work standards grievances on the job. The steward and the foreman were able to agree on what manpower was needed for a job when it was in dispute. But today the foreman is only a pusher. He can make no decisions on placing manpower or anything else, all he can do is make recommendations. All the authority has been taken away from him.

Today all decisions concerning production are made by an industrial engineer, who is what you would call a time-study man. They first decide how much manpower is needed on a job and then these time-study men watch the workers like a hawk watches a chicken. As you know, if a worker works on a job long enough he will find a way to make the job easier to perform. And when he does the time-study man is right back.

After the body leaves the paint shop it goes through an oven. Then the body goes into a department called the trim department. This is a department where all the trim is put on the body, upholstery, seat cushions, seat covers and floor covers. The best way to

understand what the workers do in the trim department is to look inside your car. Everything you see inside your car is done in the trim department. The trim department is the largest department in the plant. Once there were 3000 workers working in that department. At that time production was 35 jobs an hour. But also when production was 35 jobs an hour it was not Black workers working in the trim department. Now there are 2100 workers in the trim department, 65 per cent of whom are Black and production is 63 jobs an hour. The purpose of this speedup is to take away from the workers what the company calls "available time."

The line speed is the cause of tremendous unrest in the auto plants. At Dodge Main the line is speeded up so fast that some workers stay in the hole.

What is meant by staying in the hole? On the conveyer line there are work stations set up for the workers to put parts on the car bodies. In some places these work stations are twenty feet apart. Each worker is assigned parts which he is to put on the car body. If he can put the parts on the body without moving with the line into another work station he is not in the hole. But if he works into another work station, and if when he gets back to his station the car body is half way through his station, then he is in the hole. And he stays there until the foreman or reliefman comes and gets him out. This prevents workers from even talking to one another while working on the line. The company knows this and therefore they have reliefmen to help workers on the line rather than stopping the line for relief. You can see how getting in the hole puts a strain on a worker and causes him to take a day off.

From the trim department the cars go to the assembly plant. There is a place on the assembly line where the motor is attached to the body. This is where people work in the pit. By pit I mean a long hole where workers stand while the motor is going down the line. The workers in the pit have to connect the motor to the body—with air hammers, with air wrenches, screwing the nuts that tighten the body down. There's no ventilation to draw the heat and dirt out of the pit. The oil from the car drops down on them, yet the workers in the pit get the same wages as other workers—no difference in pay. They get the same relief as other workers—no difference in this also. But they work under a strain and these workers are the ones who are always absent. Most of the workers in these pits are Black. When a white worker is put in the pit, he will get out at the first chance and then another Black worker is put in there. They also tried to put some women in the pit, but the men wouldn't have it. This is one time that they stood up. They would allow them to put the women

on the other jobs, but they wouldn't allow them to put women in the pit. The company had to back down, but they had intended, because of absenteeism, to put women in there.

That is the end of what we call the production departments. Now we go to the inspection department, which consists of about 1100 people. They inspect all over the plant. This department is 95 per cent white—even though they have on the hiring sign "No Discrimination." The company hires, and it's hard to prove that they're discriminating. They do hire some Blacks, but most of the time when they hire whites they put them in inspection. Then there's the tool crib (the crib is the place where the tools are distributed to the workers), which is 95 per cent white and the skilled trades department, which is 99 per cent white.

There is one other department called the transportation department, i.e., stock, receiving and shipping. This department consists of stock chasers, truck drivers, checkers, etc., people unloading box cars and unloading stock that comes in to feed the production line. This department is about 50/50 racially. Here the pressure comes down mainly on the stock chaser, who has the most responsibility. A stock chaser has to know how many parts are needed for each line. For example, if you're a stock chaser on the assembly line it's your job to supply the assembly line with bolts, nuts, screws and so on and you've got to know how many it takes to run the line. As a result of this pressure you find many of the white stock chasers with a lot of seniority resigning from this particular classification and going back to truck driving where there is less responsibility.

The company has figured out that by promoting Black supervisors they're able to get more work out of Black workers. Now they're putting on Black women as supervisors, something they never did before. With women they have a new technique. The company figures that with women they can get more out of workers—and it's true.

Another serious problem is when a worker gets sick on the job and asks to go to the medical department. Sometimes it takes three or four hours before the foreman can get a man to replace him. If he walks off the line and causes the line to stop he will get fired. The company doesn't want to stop the line even for one minute. If a worker falls out they just push him aside until he is picked up by the company ambulance.

The company complains about absentees and claims that young workers just don't want to work. The company even asks the union to cut down on absentees. It makes no difference how a worker feels when he comes to work—the line speed is the same. When a worker takes his wife or girl friend out and stays out late at night he catches

hell on the line the next day, since the company has scheduled production 9-10 hours a day six days a week. Again, you can see why there is so much absenteeism.

In every assembly plant there is what is called a bottleneck. A bottleneck is a job on the line that can stop or slow down the line speed. When a worker on one of these jobs is absent the company needs to put two workers or sometimes even three workers in his place to keep the line moving at the same speed. After the Detroit rebellion in 1967 hard core workers were hired in the auto plants. This is when many women were hired off of welfare and put on the jobs that are called bottlenecks. That cut down on absenteeism for a while, since these women would have to continue working on these jobs until they became sick.

You can buy anything in the auto plants that you can buy in the street. The dope pusher and the loan shark are working out in the open. Dope is wide open inside the auto plants. The company allows it to be in the plant because it helps the company to get more production out of the workers. You will find most of the dope addicts on these "tight" jobs, the bottleneck jobs. I am told that when one of these workers gets a fix the tiredness leaves him and he is able to put out production with joy.

The way a pusher works is that at first he will let a worker get what he wants during the week and let him pay for it on the weekend. Then the dope pusher makes a deal with the shark. The dope pusher freezes up on his customer, who then goes to the loan shark and pays him twenty-five cents on the dollar to get money to support his habit.

The 9-10 hour days which the companies have been scheduling for more than a year and the pressure of speedup cause accidents, tiredness and irritation, cause some workers to become excited and cause others to become angry and easily provoked. So when you hear about workers fighting in the auto plants, long hours and speedup are the most to blame. The company knows this is happening but this is the way they can get the production out and that is all that interests them.

After the Parliamentary Elections in France*

In September 1968 Benoit Frachon, president of the General Confederation of Labor, said: "The events of May-June 1968 were the first great class confrontation in France in the period of state monopoly capitalism." The recent parliamentary elections of March 4 and 11 may be characterized as the transference to the electoral plane of the level attained by the class struggle in France as a result of the profound shakeup produced throughout all of society by these 1968 events.

Indeed the 1973 elections did not resemble any previous ones. This was so not only because they were not, like the preceding ones, dominated by one particular issue (such as the Algerian war) or by the personality of General de Gaulle, but above all because so much was at stake. The French people were in fact required to declare themselves for or against the assumption of power by a government of the Left, a government with full Communist participation, a government setting in motion a program of economic, social, political and democratic transformations of wide scope, a government that would contribute to creating the conditions for transition to socialism. Previously, even when one voted Communist, to vote for the Left was to vote for strengthening the opposition. In 1973 voting Left meant voting for an anti-monopoly policy, broad and concrete at the same time. It meant voting for a new policy in every sphere without exception, from cultural life to foreign affairs.

The Common Program

This was the case because there existed the common program of a government of the Left, signed in June 1972 by the French Communist Party, the Socialist Party and the Movement of the Radical Left. Thus it was possible for every French man or woman to know precisely, by reading the common program, what would happen in France in the next five years. Never before had the French Left, when it was united, offered anything more than a rather vague platform, even in 1936. It may be said in passing that no party, no

*Written for publication in *Political Affairs*. English translation by Abraham Zitron.

movement, no political force has ever taken a step so serious and so democratic.

The common program of the Left set as its objective the satisfaction of the basic demands of the working class and other strata of the people, demands concerning not only the standard of living but also the quality of life. "To Live Better, to Change Life," such was the title of the common program. But the parties which subscribed to this program refused to be content with the mere statement of this position which, without a precise and realistic spelling out of the means of achieving the demands, would have been demagogic. Hence the common program included a large aggregation of economic and social reforms intended both to assure economic growth and to direct this growth toward individual and collective consumption.

The foundation of these reforms was the nationalization of the banking and credit sectors and of the 13 large industrial monopolist groups (steel, chemical, electrical, electronics). At the same time the common program called for a considerable extension of democracy, not only by returning to democratic practices which had been increasingly eroded by personal power, but also by its extension to the management of enterprises and the national economy. Finally the common program projected a policy in foreign affairs fully oriented toward peaceful coexistence and the spread of international cooperation, but at the same time toward safeguarding national independence, without which a democratic and socialist experiment would be destined to fail. It is evident that the breadth of these measures was commensurate with that of the needs and demands and hence that it was the question of *change* that was at issue in relation to the common program.

Let us add that the campaign of reaction during the last weeks before the elections, a campaign which tended to underline and exaggerate the fact that the common program proposed a "change of society," frightened a part of the electorate, as we shall see. But at the same time it enhanced somewhat the significance of the vote for the common program and made each vote registered for this program beyond any doubt a vote for basic changes.

Election Results

It is in relation to the stakes in the elections and the conditions of the campaign that the results should be judged.

In the first round about 42 per cent voted for the common program (21.3 per cent for the Communist Party, 20.4 per cent for the Union of the Democratic and Socialist Left, uniting the Socialist

Party and the Movement of the Radical Left). If we add the votes obtained by the "Leftist" candidates, Trotskyites or members of the United Socialist Party, the Left received more than 46 per cent of the votes (11 million). The candidates declaring themselves part of the Gaullist majority or close to it before the first vote received barely more than 38 per cent of the vote (9 million). The Left thus gained 2 million votes compared with the 1968 elections, while the Gaullist majority lost more than 1 million. The "center" candidates received slightly less than 3 million votes or 12.5 per cent, a very slight improvement over 1968.

The study of the results by regions, according to public opinion polls, shows further that the Left is in the majority or is growing considerably in the active and young sectors of the people: workers, middle and higher cadres, teachers, urban dwellers generally. On the other hand the electoral base of the Right has become an old, rural and inactive electorate. The day after the elections a bourgeois newspaper was led to say that the France that works, the France that thinks, is as if in a state of secession in relation to the ruling regime.

The second round of the voting fully confirmed the results of the first. The "centrist" politicians forced their candidates to withdraw in order to check the "Marxist front": in eight districts out of ten, therefore, a Left candidate faced either a Gaullist or a centrist candidate. The Left candidates, whether Communist or Socialist, everywhere acquired almost all the votes of the other candidates on the Left. Thus it was clearly demonstrated by the voters who voted Socialist in the first round that they had not expressed simply their discontent but also their approval of the common program and the alliance with the Communists. The partitioning of the districts, which was such as to produce an overrepresentation of the countryside and the medium-sized towns and an underrepresentation of the workers' suburbs, permitted the Gaullist coalition to retain an absolute majority of the seats (267), although in the first round it had obtained only 38 per cent of the votes. However, it lost more than 100 seats, which were gained by the Left (73 by the Communist Party, 102 by the Socialist Party and Left Radicals, and 3 by other candidates), which thus received 36 per cent of the seats for their 46 per cent of the votes. The reformers and the other candidates of the Right obtained 45 seats.

All of French public opinion judged these results as a considerable weakening of the forces in power. These and the forces of reaction did not triumph at all. The word "respite" was the one which flowed most often from the pens of the journalists, including the reactionary

ones. The union of the Left and the common program had successfully passed the trial of fire. It had come within reach of a majority and the possibility of victory in the near future was confirmed.

On the other hand the general strategy of the forces of big business was strongly compromised. It is a rule with all political reaction, in France as elsewhere but especially in France, always to have "two irons in the fire." The first is that of the government in control; the second is that of an alternate team capable of creating illusions by proposing partial changes so as better to preserve what is essential, and to propose changes which, if possible, would for a time rally the Socialist Party or a part of it. This strategy is that of the "third force." But now big business had been able to save itself from the victory of the Left only by the swift rallying, in panic, of the "reformers" to the reactionary bloc. The oppositionist mask of these "reformers" had fallen away and the possibility of attracting socialists to themselves had been distinctly weakened. Thus the Left, united around the common program, stood out after the elections even more strongly than before as the only alternative to the present regime.

At the same time the election results raised two important questions. What were the reasons for the success—or rather the respite—obtained by the regime in spite of everything? What were the reasons for the lesser advance of the Communist Party compared with that of the Socialist Party within the Left? The Central Committee of the French Communist Party, in its session at the end of March, invited all Communists and all those on the Left to reflect on these questions.

The two questions are closely linked.

The Anti-Communist Campaign

As the election date approached, an extraordinary anti-Communist campaign was developed, with the dual purpose of keeping those who were discontented but still hostile to the Communists from voting Left but also of getting those who persisted in voting Left to give preference to the Socialists. For the Right it was a question of weakening the Communist Party as much as possible, whatever the results. Should the Left have won, a weakened Communist Party would be less of an obstacle to the efforts of the reactionary forces to bring the Socialist Party back toward class-collaborationist policies.

In this campaign there took part all the reactionary political elements, including the President of the Republic himself; a multitude of ideologues, publicists and journalists; the employers' organization

speaking in its own name—something which had never been seen in France before.

All these elements, after maintaining silence about the common program until December, after making fun of it in the ensuing weeks as a ridiculous, impractical program, incapable of seducing the French people, and then perceiving that the program, contrary to their expectations, was winning the approval of growing sections of the people, ended by asserting that the common program would in fact install socialism and that the domination of the Communists within the Left would assure that this socialism would be in the image of that of the USSR or Czechoslovakia. They brandished the scarecrow of socialism and at the same time, to make the scarecrow more frightening, they slandered the socialist countries.

The common program, according to them, had to mean the setting up of a bureaucratic, totalitarian regime in which the Communist Party would strangle the other parties. The common program, according to them, meant the collectivization of all goods, including consumer goods such as private dwellings, confiscation of private bank deposits and savings and abolition of inheritances. M. Pompidou debased himself to the point of using these "arguments" in his television appearances.

This campaign was destined to create obstacles to the movement toward acceptance of the common program by the French people, including the workers, but especially among the older people, women and peasants, dissatisfied with the regime but fearful in the end of changes painted in such dark hues. The Left, the Communist Party, possessing means of propaganda obviously much inferior to those of the politicians of big capital, could not prevent some hundreds of thousands of voters, hesitant at one moment, from deciding in the end to vote against the common program.

In this campaign against the common program the Socialist Party was relatively spared, in contrast to the Communist Party. It is understandable that it aroused less fear. We may add that the Socialist Party joined in the anti-Communist campaign to a certain extent by appearing before the French people in the following manner: if you are adherents of the common program vote for the Socialists, who are "the best guarantors of liberty." This was to intimate that the Communists were more doubtful guarantors and to add the Socialist Party's weight to the offensive designed to restrict the influence of the Communist Party.

It is remarkable that in spite of this campaign and in spite of all the polls which up to the eve of the elections placed the Socialist Party ahead of the Communist Party, the latter gained votes, both in

number and percentage of the total, remained the leading party of the Left and won the Socialist votes where it remained in the running in the second round. It is also significant that the anti-Communist campaign bore little fruit within the working class and in those regions where the democratic movement is of long standing, while it was rather effective among the middle-class elements and in those regions where the influence of reaction predominates or has predominated for a long time.

Yet the fact remains that the Communist Party gained less ground than the Socialist Party and that the whole of the non-Communist political forces, from the reactionaries to the Socialist Party, had pressed with all their strength to bring about the relative weakening of the Communist Party and were rejoicing at the advancement of this weakening. It is a disturbing element within a situation which the Communists consider on the whole a good one. If this state of affairs should become consolidated, the firm anti-monopoly orientation of the forces of the Left would be endangered. Indeed, it is evident that only the Communist Party can keep this alliance on a consistent class basis.

In explaining the reprieve obtained by the majority grouped around the President of the Republic, we should not neglect other factors.

The Leftist currents, weak in numbers but having some influence among the intellectuals and students, also used their campaign to attack the common program. The trade union centers other than the General Confederation of Workers (CGT), particularly the French Democratic Confederation of Labor (CFDT), originally Catholic and now penetrated by Leftism, also the National Education Association (FEN) with a reformist leadership, refused to commit themselves firmly to the common program. In this way additional obstacles were placed on the path toward union of the popular and democratic forces.

On the other hand, if the lengthy revolutionary experience of a large part of the French workers and other strata of the people has made them apt to assimilate quickly the content of the common program and its objectives and capable of understanding the stakes in the fight, it is evident that the more backward strata, politically and culturally, have difficulties in orienting themselves in a political situation so complex, so crucial. They have difficulties in going beyond their limited social horizon to arrive at the most general political consciousness. Much more than the few months separating the signing of the common program from the elections is needed to get them to traverse that road.

That is why George Marchais, general secretary of the French

Communist Party, could declare that the popular union was in a way still very young and that it had failed to win to itself the individuals and social strata which are precisely the most difficult to win because of their inexperience and backwardness.

After the Elections

Let us repeat, however, that on the day after the elections it was clear to all the French people that a new threshold, after that attained in 1968, had been passed and that in the class struggle taking place in the country the relationship of forces has changed in favor of the working class and the people. Besides, scarcely more than a few days had passed since the elections when very important popular organizations were developing within the working class and among the high school and university students. The masses have not at all lost confidence since the elections; on the contrary, they have understood that "something has happened."

The French Communists have for a long time based their policy of the possibility and necessity of unifying the majority of the French people around the program of an anti-monopoly government, on an analysis of the evolution of French capitalism toward state monopoly capitalism, in which economic and political power is concentrated in the hands of a small fraction of the bourgeoisie and in which, as a result, the immense majority of the people are objectively driven into the camp opposed to the monopolies. Since their 19th Congress in 1969 the French Communists have considered the hour for changes close because of the general crisis of French society which the development of state monopoly capital is provoking. Enormous masses of capital are overaccumulated, bringing on inflation and speculation. Independent producers are rapidly eliminated and go to swell the number of wage earners. The exploitation of the latter already goes far beyond the working class and hits the white-collar workers, the technicians and the civil servants. In the enterprise, in the parish and in the region, on the political level, participation in decisions and responsibilities—in a word, democracy—is denied not only to workers, who never did enjoy it, but also to categories and to men who formerly saw in capitalism the ideal democratic regime. The youth is worried about its future and rejects the old liberal values which a more and more corrupt and authoritarian capitalism contradicts at every turn.

It goes without saying that the electoral success of the old and new majority in no way resolves this crisis. It is significant that the latter carried on an exclusively defensive campaign, a campaign *against* the common program and not a campaign *for* any particular

program. The day after the elections, like an operatic chorus in which the singers chant "Let us run, let us run" while remaining in one place, the forces of reaction kept on saying: "It has been a close call, the dissatisfaction is real, it is necessary to take it into account and to produce another policy." But they were quite incapable of saying *what* policy. On the contrary, when it would have been highly profitable for them to use their apparent success to propose at once some social and democratic measures, the majority in the new government have committed themselves still more firmly to the road to authoritarianism, with the concentration of power in Pompidou's hands, and have limited themselves to charitable discourses on the conditions of the "most disadvantaged." The rise in prices, artificially masked during the two months prior to the elections by measures to reduce taxes, has resumed. The weakening of French capitalism's will to resist U.S. imperialism makes it possible to predict a major capitulation in the "Nixon Round" next fall and the resultant dangers of unemployment.

The crisis persists since the elections have registered the weakening of the regime. The strengthening of the popular union and the victory of the common program are more than ever on the order of the day.

In these conditions the French Communist Party sets itself the following line: to support and develop all people's struggles, to carry on an energetic ideological battle against anti-Communism and for socialism, to strengthen the popular union constantly at the base and at the summit.

To support and develop all popular struggles. The existence of the union of the Left and the common program gives to the economic and political struggles perspectives which they previously lacked, for example in 1968. In the present conditions the negative traits—Leftism, reformism—which are spontaneously assumed by the struggles of the strata which recently entered the battle (students, immigrant workers, workers of peasant origin) pass into the background in relation to their objective meaning. They contribute, each on its part, to a further weakening of the rule of the monopolies. Furthermore, these negative features can be eliminated more rapidly, for Leftism and reformism are in effect signs of impatience which can be explained by the absence of political perspectives. The existence of such perspectives now permits the masses more easily to make the tie between their own dissatisfaction and the need—and above all the possibility—of political change. The Communists, therefore, will strive to bring about the convergence of all these struggles in the popular union and to show concretely how the common program answers their demands. The 1973 elections having passed, there can

be no question of waiting for the presidential elections in 1976 or the legislative elections in 1978. It is fitting that the French people who found themselves together in voting for the Left should find themselves together in the coming struggles, along with the millions of others who will take on the garb of this unity before demonstrating it in the next elections. "The common program is yours," the Communist Party's slogan during the election campaign, retains its full value.

To wage an energetic ideological battle against anti-Communism and for socialism. As we have said, anti-Communism has been effective among those who are politically backward. But these are people who are exploited and dissatisfied. They cannot be written off. It is necessary to convince them, to win them to the support of the common program. Step by step we must force the retreat of anti-Communism, the fear of change, the fear of socialism. That cannot be done by proclamations, by phrase-mongering, but only by patient toil.

It is necessary on the one hand to show from the experience of the socialist countries and from the vulgarization of the theoretical foundations of scientific socialism that this socialism is not at all the old "equal sharing" and egalitarian or handicraft-based socialism of the 19th century but that it presupposes the development of the economy on a modern basis, the joining of socialization of large-scale means of production with personal responsibility, private ownership of consumer goods, and even the operation of small private enterprises in the countryside, in commerce and in the handicrafts. It must be shown that socialism favors a cultural revolution without precedent. It must be shown that socialism presupposes workers' participation in directing the national economy and their enterprises, a very important question because the absence of economic democracy weighs more and more upon the French workers and because reaction bases its campaign against socialism especially on the theme of liberty.

On the other hand it is necessary to show that while it is based on certain universal features, socialism never appears in a single mold, according to one particular model. It must be shown that the situation in France will make French socialism distinct from any other. France is a country in which capitalism will bequeath to socialism a high level of development of the productive forces, a long-standing democratic tradition, a lengthy experience in class struggles and in the unity not only of the working class but also of large sectors of other popular strata.

To wage such an ideological struggle requires a daring and imagination without precedent. The Communists must answer all the questions—even, to begin with, the most anti-Communist—of the most

diverse groups, even the most uninformed, the most foreign to the practice of the revolutionary working class. It is a question of the least trained and most unfavored workers, whose existence is most crushed and closest to destitution—workers whom the elections have once again shown to be easily influenced by the most reactionary ideology—as well as of the highly paid salaried strata (engineers, technicians, executives, intellectuals, high-ranking employees in commerce, banking and government). For four years the Communists have held numerous “debating assemblies,” especially those conducted by Communist cells in which the Communists of the neighborhood, shop or village speak to neighbors, workers, friends with whom they come into close daily contact. Hundreds of such gatherings take place every month, thousands during the election campaign. These gatherings, which permit Communists to work in an atmosphere of intimacy, are definitely the kind of ideological activity which suits the needs of this period. There are no speeches; instead, the whole gathering is devoted to an exchange of questions and answers, so that the citizens come to know the Communists and the Communists come to know what is at a given moment on the minds of the people around them.

To strengthen the popular union constantly at the base and at the summit. George Marchais said to the Central Committee of the French Communist Party in March that the unity of the Left, the unity of the Communists and the Socialists, was giving nightmares to the big capitalists and that these would do everything they could to break it. This unity has objective bases in the discontent and the will for change of the popular masses. It is favored by the almost total closing off of perspectives of a “third force” policy, as we have noted, and by the ratification by the Socialist voters of their party’s unity policy. Nevertheless, this unity cannot be considered irreversible. There are always dangers that the temptation toward class collaboration may reappear among certain Socialists. That is why the popular union at the base, in struggle, is indispensable to maintain and strengthen the current of unity which leads to the unification of the political parties. Simultaneously the parties’ unitary political actions are a precious encouragement to the struggles and they reinforce the Left’s chances of success. Thus the parties of the Left maintain a functioning liaison committee which brings their representatives together periodically. They have established in Parliament a joint Left delegation and introduce bills in common, just as they have jointly presented candidates for posts of Parliamentary responsibility (presidencies of commissions), and they participate jointly in public gatherings to which unions or democratic organizations invite them.

The trade union unity between the CGT and the CFDT is another

(Continued on Page 29)

IDEAS IN OUR TIME

HERBERT APTHEKER

Education, Money and Democracy

On March 21, 1973, the Nixon Supreme Court ruled, 5-4, against the Chicano worker, Demetrio Rodriguez, who had sued the state of Texas on behalf of his three sons, charging that the educational system of the state was so structured as to deny them educational facilities equal to those offered other children in the State.

The majority opinion was written by Justice Lewis F. Powell, Jr., and he was joined by the remaining Nixon appointees: Chief Justice Warren Burger and Justices Harry Blackmun and William Rehnquist, as well as Justice Potter Stewart. In a stinging dissent of unusual intensity, the one Black member of the Court, Justice Thurgood Marshall, labelled the majority's decision "a retreat from our historic commitment to equality of educational opportunity." Mr. Rodriguez himself put the matter succinctly and clearly: "The poor people have lost again," he said.

Putting the question in class terms, as Mr. Rodriguez did, illuminates it and helps explain why this Texas case is even more fundamental than was the Brown case of 1954 wherein a unanimous Supreme Court affirmed the illegality of racially segregated education. The facts for Texas and for the particular school district of Texas—Edgewood—involved in the Rodriguez case are contested by no one; they represent a condition which exists everywhere in the United States, with the exception of Hawaii and the District of Columbia, since the two latter areas treat their educational systems as a single district.

What are facts and what do they mean? The basic data we will present; what they show is:

- That forty-nine of the fifty states forming our nation have significantly class-biased public educational systems where the children of the bourgeoisie have considerably more money spent upon them—out of public funds—than do the children of the working class.
- That these differentiations are great within each of the forty-nine states and that they are vast also as between different states

taken as a whole.

- That the tax rates for the schools attended by the children of the bourgeoisie are considerably *lower* than the tax rates for the schools attended by the children of the working class although, as stated, the amount of money spent for the children of the rich is much more than the amount of money spent for the children of the poor.

Here are the facts—and we repeat that these are not contested by anybody. Let us commence with Texas since it was a case contesting that state's system which the Court rejected. In that state, the yearly expenditure per classroom unit, in the 1960's, ranged from a maximum of \$11,872 for the richest district to a minimum of \$3,783 for the poorest—that is, a differentiation of about 350 per cent. In the specific district wherein Mr. Rodriguez lived, Edgewood in San Antonio, the yearly expenditure per pupil came to \$356; in a nearby district, Alamo Heights, the sum expended per year per pupil came to \$594. Furthermore, in the district in which Mr. Rodriguez lived, the school property tax came to \$1.05 per \$100 assessed valuation, while in Alamo Heights, the tax came to only 85 cents per \$100. That is, while the district expended only \$356 per year for the education of each of Mr. Rodriguez' sons, which was sixty per cent *less* than for the sons of the rich in a nearby district, the tax rate in Mr. Rodriguez' district was about twenty-five per cent *higher* than that in the richer district!

Neither Texas, nor Edgewood District in Texas, is in any way unique; on the contrary, such distinctions are quite common. Here are some figures for various states, giving the maximum and the minimum yearly expenditures per classroom unit: *Alabama*: \$7,110, \$3,120; *Massachusetts*: \$12,076, \$5,074; *Arizona*: \$13,176, \$3,413; *California*: \$15,910, \$3,671; *New York*: \$24,172, \$3,581; *Illinois*: \$18,649, \$2,861; *South Dakota*: \$10,443, \$1,931; *Wyoming*: \$25,237, \$4,165. Furthermore, taking states as a whole and giving average expenditure, one finds, as an illustration, that the respective figures for Mississippi and New York in terms of annual expenditure per pupil were \$413 and \$1,125.

The paradox of the poorer districts taxing themselves at a higher rate than the rich ones and getting less money for the education of their children—as indicated for Edgewood District in Texas—again is typical. Thus, one school district in Chicago where rich people live has an educational fund levy of 0.405 cents per \$100 and an expenditure per pupil per year of \$1,169, and another where poor people live has a tax rate of 1.25 cents and an expenditure of \$480—that is, a tax rate three times *higher* nevertheless results in expendi-

tures per child almost three times *lower!**

The wealth of a school district determines very largely the amount of money spent upon the public schools; is this reasonable and is this not in fact discriminatory? Can such a condition produce that which is required by practically all state constitutions: "a general and uniform system of common schools"—to quote the typical provisions of the Indiana Constitution? A survey conducted by the United States Office of Education showed that in forty-nine of the states "there are wide variations in the amount of financial support for public education," that "the upper twenty-five per cent of the classroom units . . . were supported with approximately 38 cents of every school dollar spent for all classroom units in the nation . . . [while] the lower twenty-five percent of the classroom units were supported with only about 15 cents of the total school dollar for current expenditure.** And remember—to add injury to insult—that the tax rate among those living in the poor districts is higher and usually much higher than the tax rate in the districts where the rich live!

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In the face of the XIV Amendment to the Constitution wherein it is stated that "no State shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States" and in the face of the unanimous Brown decision of the Supreme Court where it was held that discrimination by race did in fact mean that states were abridging privileges, how was it possible for five of nine members of that Court, in 1973, to hold that discrimination by income did not abridge these privileges?

In effect the majority decision came down to asserting that to hold such discrimination unconstitutional would mean so drastic a challenge to the *status quo* that the five men did not want to do it. There were torturous reasoning and evasions: for example, that the U.S. Constitution, unlike the state constitutions, does not mention education at all and that federal courts have tended to consider education as a right of a citizen, while the state courts—in accordance with the wording of state constitutions—tend to view education as a *duty* imposed upon the state; and a right can be rejected while a duty cannot be shunned. This reasoning by the way, undercuts the necessity of *free* public education so far as the federal government is

* For a convenient summary of data see: Arthur E. Wise, *Rich Schools, Poor Schools*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1968.

** F. W. Harrison and E. P. McLoone, *Profiles in School Support*, Government Printing Office, Washington, 1965, p. 11. A good work on the entire range of economic discrimination in the United States is S. M. Miller and Pamela Roby, *The Future of Inequality*, Basic Books, New York, 1970.

concerned. And opposition to such education has been a feature of the extreme Right in the United States currently, as it was a feature of reactionary thought throughout the 19th century.

But, of course, the reasoning is basically specious, and in any case the unanimous decision was rendered in 1954 with the same U.S. Constitution and the same state constitutions and court decisions. No, the decision was rendered in the way in which it was in 1973 because the Rodriguez case touches at the center of the oligarchic and anti-democratic reality of the United States social order; it goes to the fact of class division and domination by the rich and the realities of laws and courts and decisions which basically serve to bolster that *status quo*. Additionally, the Rodriguezes of the United States and the Browns of the United States (involved in the 1954 decision) suffer racist discrimination, as well as economic superexploitation; but it is that latter reality and the monopoly-capitalist structure which requires such exploitation—and such racism. It is that base against which the Rodriguez suit was aimed.

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Newsweek (April 2, 1973), in reporting on this case, declared: “Neither Rodriguez nor any other case has challenged the *use* of the property tax—the only issue is how fairly the burden falls.” This is false; the issue is both the dependence upon such a tax for the major source of revenue with which to support public education and the manner of its assessment and distribution. Dependence upon the property tax results in less money for the education of the poor and higher tax rates upon those who live in poorer areas; and this result was *the intent of the system*—and not a sheer coincidence or accident. It is only insofar as the present regressive tax picture in general is transformed—and especially that connected with the educational system—that any approach can be made, within the strict limits of a capitalist society, to the equalizing of education and its burdens and benefits. As a matter of fact, even the Powell decision which—given the mountain of uncontested evidence of gross inequity—rather apologetically came to the conclusion it did, stated that “*the need is apparent for reform in tax systems, which may well have relied too long and too heavily on the local property tax.*”

In arguing in defense of the Powell decision, James J. Kilpatrick, that bellwether of the Right whose column appears in scores of newspapers, wrote (*Philadelphia Bulletin*, April 3, 1973) that the XIV Amendment “never was intended to guarantee a perfect equality in public services.” Of course, nobody said that was the intent of the Amendment—“perfect” indeed! And at issue here is not “perfect” but

the grossest kind of inequality existing not simply in a "public service" but in that basic function of the states (as the Supreme Court itself has often said), namely, the education of its citizenry. Mr. Kilpatrick went on from this distortion to outright falsification when he wrote that the children involved were receiving the "same twelve years of free schooling" and that they were served by teachers having "the same teacher-salary scale." How can education costing three or five or ten times as much for one child in one state as for another be "the same"? And as for the salary scales, they are significantly different and are higher in the more affluent schools than in the poorer ones. Thus, where the expenditure per pupil unit was \$200, teachers' salaries (in 1966) came to \$4,507 per year, but where the EPU was over \$500, the salaries came to \$7,728 annually. And in the first case the salaries of principals came to \$6,900, and to \$10,658 in the second. Furthermore, in the first category there were 33 teachers per 1,000 students, while in the second there were 48; in the first case, the cost of teaching materials was \$3.10 per pupil unit and in the second was \$18.04. (Wise, *op. cit.*, p. 137.)*

Mr. Kilpatrick concluded his exercise in mendacity by writing: "The natural inequalities of wealth in our society, the majority concluded, are not to be nullified by court decree." Leaving aside Mr. Kilpatrick's 18th-century thinking which makes it possible for him to write of the economic inequalities in a monopolistic society as being "natural," of course the case before the Supreme Court did not seek to "nullify" those inequalities. Such "nullification" will take more than a case before a court; the instant case argued that discrimination in the expenditure by a state of public money for educational purposes favoring the children of the rich as against those of the poor represented unequal conduct as specifically forbidden by the XIV Amendment. The Powell decision ruled in effect not that the data or the conclusions were false but rather that they were true but were so challenging to the prevailing order that the Court did not want to render a decision really in accordance with both the evidence and judicial precedents.

* In this brief essay, I cannot examine the efforts of John S. Coleman and more recently Christopher Jencks to "prove" that in terms of learning there was no difference, or trivial difference, or little difference or not much difference or not marked difference (all these quite distinct phrases are used by these authors in their works) as between schools where much was spent and those where little was spent. But even these works observe that such differences meant much to the children *while at school* and in any case their works cannot be used to justify continued expenditure of grossly *more* money for the children of the rich than of the poor!

The 5-4 decision is not the end of the struggle to eliminate economic inequality in the public education system in the United States. On the contrary, the closeness of the vote and the language of the majority opinion indicate that significant victories can be won on this front. At the same time, the battle is being waged on another field and that is the state legislatures and courts. Here the possibilities of victory are even greater than on the federal arena because education is a state function in our country and because the constitutions of the states are so clear on the need and the duty of providing an equal education to its citizens.

What is possible here was indicated in the decision of the Supreme Court of New Jersey on April 3, 1973, where the Court, in the person of Chief Justice Joseph Weintraub, found for the plaintiff, a Black youngster named Kenneth Robinson of Jersey City. His suit, supported by the entire Black community of the state and by many Black-white mass organizations and civil liberties groups, was directed against the prevailing economic inequalities in the New Jersey system and specifically against that state's overwhelming reliance upon the property-tax levy for support of its schools. The double inequity involved here—over-taxation of the poor and under-appropriations for the poor, as already explained—were explicitly brought forward and accepted by the Court as valid and as clearly showing that the present funding of public education in the State was unfair and unconstitutional.

Now comes, of course, in that state the struggle in the legislature—which means also in the streets—to obtain the necessary remedial legislation, perhaps modeled on the situation in Hawaii where moneys are proportioned equitably throughout the state. Whatever particular method is decided upon—and several alternatives are present—the point is to see to it that a progressive tax system replaces the present regressive one and that the quality of public education is enhanced and is made available on a fully equal basis for all the youngsters.

Contrary to Mr. Jencks' conclusion in his study of inequality it is not necessary to await the coming of socialism for either this kind of a struggle or for the achievement of important successes. Indeed, it is through such struggles waged on a mass level, energetically and imaginatively, that the dawning of a socialist United States is brought closer.

April 9, 1973

II

Space consideration having made it necessary for the preceding material to be held over one month, the opportunity has presented itself of offering further data and commentary.

The United States Civil Rights Commission, while the Rev. Theodore M. Hesburgh of Notre Dame University was its chairman (he resigned early in 1973 in protest against Nixon's inaction and hostility in the area of civil rights), sponsored several important studies in the areas of economic inequality in public education and discrimination against Chicano children in the Southwest and in California.*

The volume on economic inequality contains invaluable appendices showing disparities in expenditures per pupil in elementary and secondary-level public schools throughout the nation, data on tax rates, pupil-teacher ratios and a detailed chart showing the nature of dozens of suits pending in state courts wherein aggrieved parents, with the participation of relevant organizations, are seeking to remedy the inequalities.

As though anticipating the reasoning of Justice Powell in the *Rodriguez* case of March 1973—wherein the Court found against the plaintiff partially on the ground that to devise methods of relief was too difficult and controversial—this study of the U.S. Civil Rights Commission, observed:

There is ample precedent for the Supreme Court to conclude that a particular type of discrimination violates the equal protection clause without prescribing a specific formula for remedying the violation. In *Brown vs. Board of Education* (1954) the Supreme Court held that separate but equal public school education denied equal protection of the laws. No specific formula was prescribed for attaining a discrimination-free school system. Rather, the Court deferred ruling on the question of relief. (P. 31.)

Still, that very report did also anticipate that—given a Nixon Court—the verdict might well be what it in fact was to be; it noted that the “equal protection claims” in the case of *Rodriguez*—then on its way to the Supreme Court—were certainly substantial; yet, it added, “it is not difficult to imagine that a Court, reluctant to play an ‘activist’ role, would decline to immerse itself in the complexities or controversies surrounding the school finance question.” (P. 21.)

Yet, to view the Court's decision in the *Rodriguez* case as reflecting simply restraint—as though it were really an impartial decision which refused to “take sides”—is quite erroneous. On the contrary, the Court's decision was a blow against efforts at approaching an egalitarian and democratic public system of education in the United States.

*U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, *Inequality in School Financing: The Role of the Law*, Clearinghouse Publication No. 39, August 1972; and a five-volume report making up the Commission's *Mexican American Education Study*, issued between April 1971 and March 1973—all available from The Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402.

Two paragraphs from a recent essay by John E. Coons, professor at the School of Law, University of California, go directly to this question:

The decision of the Supreme Court in the school finance case is an apparent model of judicial restraint. Despite the evident and conceded injustice of a system which creates and depends upon rich and poor school districts, the Court shrank from extending equal protection to the victimized school children in the forty-nine states at risk in the case.

Yet the notion that *Rodriguez* is "restrained" can be understood only in a formalistic way. It may be true that the Court chose inaction; it did not thereby avoid choosing sides on the question of educational policy. Indeed, in practical effect *Rodriguez* represents a judicial stifling of the democratic process on questions of school finance and governance. Justice Powell's majority opinion may shout judicial restraint to the housetops, but all that has effectively been restrained is the creative energy of state legislatures that had been tooling up to comply with a constitutional norm that spending may not be a function of school district wealth. These plans will quietly expire; the Court has effectively legislated the *status quo*.*

* * *

As the New Jersey case involving the Black youngster, Kenneth Robinson—described in preceding pages—has shown, however, and as in fact Professor Coon himself emphasizes elsewhere in this essay, the Powell decision *need* not cause such plans to "expire" if they are fought for in city and state legislatures and in state courts.

In the five volumes devoted to Chicano education, prepared by the Civil Rights Commission, the realities behind the Rodriguez effort are clearly delineated. Here are some of the salient findings, in the words of the Commission itself:

"Public school pupils of this ethnic group are severely isolated by school district and by schools within individual districts; for the most part, Mexican Americans are underrepresented on school and district professional staffs and on boards of education" (Vol. I, p. 59). "Mexican Americans are grossly underrepresented among teachers. . . . An even smaller proportion of principals than teachers is Mexican American. . . . Employment and school assignment patterns for Mexican Americans in other nonteaching professional positions such as assist-

*Professor Coons was the senior author of a seminal article on this subject in *California Law Review*, vol. 59, 1969, pp. 305ff. A basic treatment is in John E. Coons, *et al.*, *Private Wealth and Public Education*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 1970. The above quotation is taken from *The Nation*, April 30, 1973, p. 556.

ant principals, counselors, and librarians, is similar to that of Mexican American teachers and principals" (Vol. I, pp. 62, 63).

Having reference to Arizona, California, Colorado, New Mexico and Texas, the Commission declared that it "had ascertained that deprivation by exclusion is being practiced against Mexican American students" and that: "The dominance of Anglo values is apparent in the curricula on all educational levels; in the cultural climate which ignores or denigrates Mexican American mores and the use of the Spanish language; in the exclusion of the Mexican American community from full participation in matters pertaining to school policies and practices" (Vol. II, p. 3). After presenting detailed examples and data, the conclusion is offered:

Cultural exclusion is a reality in public schools of the Southwest. This report has documented exclusionary practices in the vital areas of language, heritage, and community participation. Until practices and policies conducive to full participation of Mexican Americans in the educational process are adopted, equal opportunity in education is likely to remain more myth than reality for Mexican American students (Vol. II, p. 49).

Specifically on the matter directly involved in the *Rodriguez* case one of the volumes in the Civil Rights Commission report states:

The Texas school finance system results in discrimination against Mexican American school children. Predominantly Mexican American districts are less wealthy in terms of property values than Anglo districts and the average income to Chicanos is below that of Anglos. These circumstances existing, the State of Texas has devised an educational system by which the amount spent on the schooling of students is a function of district and personal wealth. *The end result is that the poor stay poor and those receiving inferior education continue to receive inferior education* (Vol. III, p. 28. Emphasis added.).

Indeed, in its study of Texas, the Commission concluded that it "has devised a system of school finance by which expenditures on education are strongly tied to the property wealth of the district and the personal income of district residents." The system as a whole "can perhaps best be described as a repressive jumble of provisions and conditions that do not adequately reduce financial disparities between Anglo and Mexican American districts and insure that significantly less is spent to educate Chicano children than their Anglo counterparts" (Vol. III, p. 29).

It is that "jumble" with those purposes which the U.S. Supreme Court allowed to stand in the *Rodriguez* decision.

The final volume in the Commission's study is an especially valuable

one; it is entitled *Teachers and Students: Differences in Teacher Interaction with Mexican American and Anglo Students*. In terms of this decisive element in education—the actual relationship between teachers and students (ignored, let it be emphasized, by the Coleman and Jencks studies which insisted on minimal impact of the nature of schools upon learning and futures of the children, but which paid no attention whatsoever to the relationship between teachers and students!), this volume documents with care the following findings: “there are gross disparities in favor of the Anglos” and these “are likely to hinder seriously the educational opportunities and achievement of Chicano pupils . . . the language and cultural background of Mexican American students are virtually excluded from the school programs in the Southwest. . . . It is the schools and teachers . . . not the children, who are failing . . . the schools will continue to fail until fundamental changes are made. Changes are needed in the way teachers are trained and in the standards by which they are judged, and changes are needed in educational programs and curriculums so that all children may be reached” (Vol. V, pp. 43, 44).

* * *

Certain further comments may be offered on the Jencks book which was promoted in complete Madison Avenue style from a Waldorf-Astoria press conference to full-page ads in the *New York Times*, reminding one of the expert public-relations job done with the equally poisonous book containing William Styron's *Confessions*—attributed to Nat Turner.

It may be observed, first of all, that despite the plethora of appendices and bibliographical apparatus there is no mention of and not a single citation to the outstanding professional journal devoted to the subject of the Jencks study—namely *The Journal of Negro Education*, published for over thirty years at Howard University and filled with studies of consequence to the Jencks topic! This reminds one of the ignoring by the “respectable” historical profession for about three decades of the work of Woodson's Association for the Study of Negro Life and History and of its *Journal* published four times a year every year since 1915!

Secondly, the entire basic question of the relationship between teachers and administrators and the children in the schools*—and of the social order as a whole towards those children and their parents

*See, for instance, Jonathan Kozol, *Death At An Early Age* (Boston, 1967); and Herbert Kohl, *Thirty-Six Children* (N.Y., 1967). Referring to a school in Harlem and the white teachers employed there, Kohl wrote: “the most frequent epithet they used in describing the children was ‘animals’” (p. 187).

—is ignored in Jencks, though there are abundant studies on this question—many of them cited in the fifth volume of the Civil Rights Commission study to which reference has been made above.

Indeed, Jencks *et al.*, in their own book—no doubt being unable to ignore considerations such as those mentioned—state: “Our research has convinced us that this is the wrong way to think about schools” (p. 13)—yet they go on for hundreds of pages to expatiate and pontificate on exactly that “wrong way”! Surely, this is the most extraordinary admission ever to have been made at the beginning of what is supposed to be a scientific effort.

In addition to ignoring what actually goes on in the classroom and the literature dealing with teacher-student relationships and attitudes and their central importance in terms of actual education, and the entire body of work—largely from Black scholars—represented in *The Journal of Negro Education*, there is no reference whatsoever in the Jencks book to the very considerable literature on compensatory education—which alone would knock into a cocked hat this book (negated in any case, as we have noted, by the authors themselves by the time they reached page 13!).

One of the chief statistical bases for Jencks is socio-economic background, but this is defined entirely in terms of the father's occupation and his years of schooling; women are ignored, and in establishing socio-economic background, the actual wealth and the full income of the parents are ignored!

Happily there has now appeared a series of studies of the Jencks volume which together constitute an absolutely devastating critique. These make up most of the *Harvard Educational Review* dated February 1973*. Excellent critiques are offered by Philip W. Jackson of the University of Chicago; Alice M. Rivlin of the Brookings Institution; Lester C. Thurow of M.I.T.; an especially significant analytical piece of surgery by Kenneth B. Clark of the City University of New York,** and above all the essay by Ronald Edmonds of Harvard on behalf of the collective thinking of himself and of other Black scholars: Andrew Billingsley (Howard), James Comer (Yale Medical School), James Dyer (Carnegie Corp.), William Hall (Princeton), Robert Hill (National Urban League), L. D. Reddick (Temple), Howard F. Taylor

(Continued on p. 40)

*The relevant sections of this number have been brought together in a separate publication *Perspectives on “Inequality”* which may be purchased for \$2.50 from Harvard Educational Review, 13 Appian Way, Cambridge, Mass. 02138.

**See also Professor Clark's letter in the *New York Times*, April 26, 1973.

COMMUNICATIONS

CARL REEVE

On Weinstone's Review

I am very appreciative of the thoughtful, thorough review by William Weinstone of my book *The Life and Times of Daniel De Leon in the April Political Affairs*. I am appreciative, also, of the valuable space given to the book by *Political Affairs*. There are a few thoughts I would like to express on the conclusions reached in the review.

William Z. Foster, Elizabeth Gurley Flynn and many others a number of times emphasized that there were no Lenins in the United States during the period written about (1890 to 1914). This was certainly true. At that time, many outstanding leaders of the socialist and trade union movement were syndicalists or dual unionists; many were sectarians; many were opposed to political parties.

In analyzing their leadership, however (Debs, Haywood and Connolly, for example) and to be objective, we should evaluate their positive, as well as their negative contributions. All leaders in that period, as Foster points out, made serious and sometimes grave political and organizational mistakes. They were caught within the framework of

the history of their time. There had not yet been a successful socialist revolution in the world. There were no socialist countries in existence. Lenin's writings were largely unknown when, for instance, De Leon died in 1914.

William Weinstone's review cited, in some detail, material from the book on De Leon's non-Marxist conception of the state; his incorrect attitude on the woman question; his sectarianism in the populist movement; his dual unionism; his rejection of immediate demands; his policy of peremptory expulsions of those who did not agree with him; the chapter on Lassalle's influence on De Leon; his failure to understand basic working class questions as shown in his controversy with Connolly. These un-Marxian ideas were analyzed and criticized in the book and Weinstone agrees with me on them.

But is it, in fact, "one-sided" also to recite De Leon's positive achievements during his 24-year leadership of the Socialist Labor Party? When De Leon entered the SLP in 1890, it was not a party at all (as Engels said) but a few isolated socialist groups, almost all of them composed of

German exiles, meeting in back rooms of bars and ignoring the American labor movement. De Leon *did* unite these groups into a national party. Not merely in New York, but elsewhere, he forced the members out of the fraternal halls and organized a nationwide socialist party. This was an achievement for that period. He also launched the first nationwide socialist election campaign and this, too, was an achievement. He started the first daily socialist newspaper printed in English in the United States.

It is true that at the point of discussion of the reorganization of the SLP, I should have analyzed the shortcomings of the SLP in connection with the lack of democracy in the party, in the light of Lenin's teaching of the role of the party and the importance of ideology to the party. Nevertheless the SLP made advances in the early 1890's under De Leon's leadership.

The IWW leaders who split with him in the fall of 1908, acknowledged his valuable services in 1905, 1906 and 1907, in helping form the IWW and helping defeat the corrupt, reformist Sherman Right-wing group. C. Desmond Greaves also mentions De Leon's services in this period.

Elizabeth Gurley Flynn's book *I Speak My Own Piece* mentions the "miracle" in the Moyer, Haywood, Pettibone defense, represented by the SLP, the SP, the IWW, professionals and trade unionists working on a common defense front. That united front was launched and led by the IWW leaders, De Leon and Debs. The

Right-wing Socialist Party apparatus dragged its feet.

De Leon *did* play a positive role in fighting against the imperialist Spanish-American War and mobilized the SLP branches to do the same. Philip Foner's *History of the Labor Movement* records the anti-war activities of the SLP.

De Leon fought against reformism all his life, both in the Right wing of the SPA, and the Gompers AFL bureaucracy. This is history. Should we leave it to bourgeois writers to praise De Leon's "admirable" campaign in defense of the Haymarket martyrs, which caused him to lose a professorship at Columbia?

It would be arrogance on my part to claim that the book made no mistakes.

In 1928-29, I wrote a series of three articles for *The Communist* on De Leon and the state. At that time I took the traditional attitude that De Leon did nothing good and was completely anti-Marxist throughout his career. Rereading these articles today, they seem narrow-minded and sectarian, non-dialectic, since they do not give any of the positive aspects of De Leon's work. I did not wish to make the same mistake this time.

In reading over hundreds of copies of the New York *Daily Call* (Socialist Party publication) of De Leon's period, I was struck by the absolutely filthy white-chauvinist news stories, printed without editorial comment—not occasionally, but frequently. These stories from capitalist news

sources linked Blacks to every crime in the calendar. The Blacks and the Chinese and Japanese peoples were treated as sub-human.

In the *People* there is almost none of that. De Leon fought the Gompers-SPA Right-wing coalition, led by Berger and Hillquit. De Leon did not waver on the question of white chauvinism or restricted immigration, one of the questions of the day whereby Gompers introduced white chauvinism into the labor movement. Gompers and the SPA Right-wing wanted to exclude from the country the "ignorant foreigners," "inferior races," etc. Why should we not say that the booklet, *Flashlights of the Amsterdam Congress* by De Leon, which contains theoretical mistakes on other questions, demonstrates a splendid anti-white-chauvinist attitude, especially in De Leon's successful fight in the Second International to defeat Hillquit's resolution calling for restricted immigration? Of course, his theoretical error that there is no *special* "Negro problem" was raised in my book.

In 1907-08, De Leon, more than ever, was caught up in what would be called today the "cult of the personality." He became absorbed by factionalism, against Connolly among others. His bureaucracy increased with his frustrations. He could brook no opposition. But at this time he had been the leader of the SLP for more than 17 years, and for 11 years of that time the SLP was the only socialist party in the

United States.

I believe that the main mistake I made in the book, one of omission, was not to emphasize clearly the progressive deterioration of De Leon's leadership. In the book on James Connolly, which Ann Reeve and I are writing, we have come upon a quantity of unpublished material which bears this out.

De Leon's attacks on Connolly served to tarnish De Leon's image and discredit his leadership in the IWW and elsewhere. But even in his last years, some of his writings were a contribution to socialist thought. This is true, especially, in his analysis of "confiscation," capitalist and socialist, where he refuted, in several pamphlets including *Fifteen Questions About Socialism* (printed after his death), reformist attacks against the right of a socialist society to "confiscate" without compensation to the bourgeoisie.

I believe that a dialectical, Marxist approach to history must include positive as well as negative aspects of socialist parties and leadership. These must be weighed and a balance taken.

I believe very strongly that William Weinstone's review, together with my book, "The Life and Times of Daniel De Leon" have marked a further stage in the study of De Leonism, as part of the history of socialism. This should result in a clearer evaluation of what his sectarianism meant to socialism and labor in his period, reflecting on our own time.

A Reply to Reeve

Carl Reeve, in his letter, is in general agreement with my review of his book, which gave both the positive and negative features of De Leon's work, laying stress on the latter as did Reeve. I wrote that the book made a useful contribution as the first published biography of this important socialist figure. My main criticism was that in his desire to correct mainly negative views of De Leon he subjectively went to the other extreme, exaggerated his contributions and played down his severe faults. He repeats this weakness in his letter.

My review objected to a number of omissions, understatements and overstatements, particularly to his entirely wrong claim that De Leon had many concepts on party organization "similar to those worked out by Lenin's Bolshevik Party." Also I disagreed with his summation, which stated that "in spite of his sectarianism De Leon gave a Marxist substance to the socialist movement of his time." I said that this was "grossly one-sided and only partly true," and tended to mitigate De Leon's harmful policies. The term "one-sided" did not refer to the book as a whole, as he seems to think.

Regarding this summation the terms "misleading and only half-true" would have been more precise. On the one hand De Leon

translated and circulated many Marxist classics (not without some distortions), spread socialist propaganda and relentlessly fought reformism and class collaborationism and made other positive contributions which my review noted and praised. On the other hand he rejected and revised many basic ideas and propositions of Marxism in the *Daily* and *Weekly People*, which he edited, in his many pamphlets and speeches, and especially in his sectarian and frequent splitting policies on the major questions of the labor and popular movements indicated in Reeve's letter. Also un-Marxist was his major shift to syndicalism and his shocking rejection of Volumes II and III of *Capital* as not being Marx's work but that of Engels and, in his view, not worth reading. As I wrote, De Leon's ideas were a mishmash of Marxism, Lassalleism and syndicalism. Reeve criticizes most of these weaknesses but they hardly justify his grossly exaggerated conclusion that despite them, De Leon gave a *Marxist substance* to the socialist movement of his time.

Unfortunately, Reeve further minimizes and even condones De Leon's weaknesses in his letter by saying that there was no Lenin in the United States at the time and that others made mistakes. That is so. But De Leon was criticized

and opposed on a number of his policies by SLP members and leaders whom he bureaucratically expelled or forced out, and by other Left socialists. He had the counsel of Marx and Engels who wrote considerably on the U.S. labor movement and who criticized the Lassallean and sectarian errors of the SLP (See *Letters to Americans*, International Publishers, New York, 1953.) De Leon was fully familiar with these writings but he ignored their advice, evidently thinking wrongly that it did not apply to the United States.

The book suffers from an insufficiently dialectical approach to De Leon's development at various stages. Reeve evidently realizes this when he regards the main mistake of his book as the failure to indicate De Leon's "progressive deterioration" in leadership. This is so especially in his adoption of syndicalism during the period of 1904-1914. It is idealism, not materialism, however, to attribute this to deterioration, frustrations, etc. It was part of a general "Left"-sectarian trend which developed as a reaction to the growing reformism of the SP leadership and of the Second International after 1900. It was due, I think, to the changed objective conditions—the rise of imperialism—which cannot be gone into here, as well as to subjective factors, especially to the increasing isolation of the SLP because of un-Marxist strategy and tactics. It was due also to De Leon's lack of faith in the U.S. working class to change the reformist poli-

cies and leadership of the mass unions by consistent and patient revolutionary Marxist work and education—a petty bourgeois stand being repeated by some pseudo-Left elements today.

Importantly this major turn away from Marxism was the result of De Leon's persistent rejection of fighting for reforms including democratic demands as part of the struggle for socialism. Lenin, in his letter to the American Socialist Propaganda League in 1915, wrote: "We preach always that a party not uniting this struggle for reforms with the revolutionary methods of the working-class movement can become a sect, can be severed from the masses, & that that is the most pernicious menace to the success of clear-cut revolutionary socialism." (*Collected Works*, Vol. 21, p. 424.)

Surely this sharp criticism applied to De Leon and the SLP in his time and especially later, after the rise of the Russian Revolution and the formation of the Communist International. Under the leadership of De Leon's close co-workers, the SLP became a reactionary petty-bourgeois, viciously anti-Communist and anti-Soviet sect. While noting De Leon's contributions to the fight against class collaboration which is part of our revolutionary socialist heritage, it would have been helpful if the summation had pointed to the SLP of the last half-century as an extremely bad legacy of De Leonism.

BOOK REVIEWS

DANIEL MASON

Zionism: A Marxist View

The propaganda about U.S. oil "shortages," and its link to oil nationalization moves of the Arab nations, the precarious balance in the Middle East, the negotiations over the future of U.S.-Soviet relations, the impending visit of Soviet Communist leader Leonid Brezhnev to the U.S.—all in the news these days—underscore the importance of Hyman Lumer's new book exposing Zionism's reactionary role in world politics.* This is so because Zionism plays a key role in U.S. imperialism's "solutions" to the problems involved in the subjects listed above.

For the U.S. monopolies, the highly publicized "threat" of so-called oil shortages is tied up with the Arab countries' moves to wrest control of their richest resource, oil, from imperialism's grasp. World Zionism and its military and political power center in Israel are basic in U.S. imperialism's efforts to repossess the Middle East's oil resources, even if it means war. In the anti-Soviet propaganda campaign which U.S. imperialism is now accelerating for the purpose of pressuring the

Soviet Union into concessions, Zionism, because of its deep influence in U.S. society, is the leading force.

Lumer's book, therefore, comes at a very opportune time, and provides a basis for counterattack by those who see the very real menace to world Jewry and to the state of Israel itself in Israel's remaining a tool of imperialism. It can also help to open the eyes of the many well-meaning, humanitarian non-Jewish people in the U.S. who have been hoodwinked by Zionist propaganda into adopting an anti-Arab, anti-Soviet posture.

The insidious menace of Zionism to the Jews in the U.S. and to our nation as a whole is solidly documented and illuminated by Lumer, who is highly qualified for the task. He is a long-time leader in the progressive Jewish movement in the U.S.; he has studied at first hand the position of the Jews in Israel, the Soviet Union, Poland and other countries; he has made a number of scholarly, Marxist-Leninist contributions to the elucidation of the Jewish question.

Lumer bares the nature and roots of Zionism as "a reactionary bourgeois-nationalist ideology based on two fundamental falla-

*Hyman Lumer, *Zionism: Its Role in World Politics*, Interational Publishers, New York, 1973, 154 pp., paper \$2.45.

cies: (1) that the Jews throughout the world constitute a nation, and (2) that anti-Semitism is incurable and eternal." Demolishing the arguments of the Zionists by referring to the history of Zionism itself, he then proceeds to show how the Zionists have utilized this spurious ideology to misdirect the political energies of Zionist-influenced Jews and to create a military and political center for their activities in Israel.

He reveals how, from the very beginning, the leaders of Zionism had determined to become agents of imperialism against the Arab world, against socialism and for capitalist reaction. He shows how Zionist-controlled Israel and Zionist organizations throughout the world have been used not only in the direct political and military interests of imperialism but even in the nefarious skullduggery of espionage.

In a well-documented section of this chapter on Zionism's aid to world imperialism, Lumer exposes the disgraceful role of Israel's present Zionist rulers in tying the developing states of Africa to imperialism and in the preservation of the domination of South Africa by the tiny white-supremacist minority.

Since the U.S. has become the world center of Zionism outside of Israel and since U.S. Zionists have become the link between Israel's rulers and U.S. and world imperialism, knowledge of U.S. Zionism is essential to an understanding of its menacing role. In two chapters, "Organized Zionism

in the United States" and "Bulwark of Reaction," Lumer shows how U.S. Zionism has become an agent for "U.S. monopoly capital, including Jewish capital," to make Israel "another arena of exploitation, of the extraction of super-profits at the expense of the Israeli working people," how U.S. Zionism has sought to isolate the Jews from its natural allies, the Black people, the Puerto Ricans and other oppressed peoples in the U.S., how U.S. Zionism has become an obstacle to the struggle against anti-Semitism.

Of particular significance is Lumer's chapter entitled "A Spearhead of Anti-Sovietism." In the present configuration of world forces, the Soviet Union plays the leading role in the struggle against imperialism, for the liberation of the oppressed peoples and nations, for the birth of socialism in the rest of the world. Therefore, U.S. and world imperialism have always sought to isolate the Soviet Union. Today, U.S. Zionist leaders figure importantly in imperialism's plans toward this end. The Zionist leaders are eager agents. They come by this naturally because of their bourgeois-nationalist roots and development. Long before there was a Soviet Union, Zionist leaders opposed socialism and offered themselves as bulwarks against its spread. The basic campaign of U.S. and world Zionism today is to spread the poison of anti-Sovietism.

Lumer provides the material to counter this campaign, which is against the interests of U.S. Jews

and of the nation. He shows the falsity of the charge of "Soviet anti-Semitism," explains why the Zionist leaders have become the center for the anti-Soviet campaign, describes the life of Soviet Jews, their position in society, their culture and their relation to Israel.

In conclusion, Lumer calls for "a fight . . . against the idea of Israel as a state of all the Jewish people and of Jews exclusively, and for an Israel conceived of as the land of the Israeli people—a land of full equality for all Israeli citizens, whether Jew or Arab, Western or Oriental . . ."

He stresses that, "In the United

States—the heartland of world imperialism and the home of the world's largest Jewish community—the fight against Zionism takes on exceptional importance. It is here, above all, that the dangerous machinations of U.S. imperialism in the Middle East must be combatted. It is here, next to Israel itself, that the pressures to compel a basic change in Israeli foreign policy must be generated. And it is here that the struggle against the slanderous attacks on the Soviet Union and other socialist countries must be focused."

In this struggle, Lumer's book can and must become an important force.

(Continued from Page 3)

this may be a factor). If it did so it would trade with few capitalist countries indeed. But the benefits of improved relations survive particular capitalist regimes and their policies. Nixon may well be drowned in the Watergate flood but the agreements for trade, disarmament, scientific collaboration, etc., negotiated in the course of the Brezhnev visit will remain, to the benefit of the peoples of both the Soviet Union and the United States. Everything possible must be done, therefore, to assure the fulfillment of the great potential which this visit holds.

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