

THE COMMUNIST

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"MAOISM": Marxist or Populist?

A book by Professor Joan Robinson has recently been published. It "The Cultural Revolution" in China (Penguin Books. 5/-). Joan Robinson is an eminent, if not very lucid, Keynesian economist, also a member of the Society for Anglo-Chinese Understanding and the China Policy Study Group. One of her little specialities over the past thirty years has been the publication of petty, jibing criticisms of Marxist political economy, which she has pathetically attempted to ridicule as metaphysics. She has also, in the manner of the liberal intelligentsia, delighted in sponsoring Marxist "heretics". For example, she supplied an introduction to the reprint of Rosa Luxemburg's "Accumulation of Capital", in which Rosa makes a Robinson-type "criticism" of Capital and propounds an utterly subjectivist theory of her own.

But though Joan Robinson is an inveterate and dishonest enemy of Marxism, it transpires that she is a great admirer of the "thought of Mao Tse-tung" - which we have always understood to be Marxism. Let us see how she operates.

"Accepting the dichotomy between the base of a social system and the superstructure, Mao Tse-tung shows how the superstructure may react on the base: Ideas may become a material force... Old fashioned Marxists might regard this as a heresy" (p12).

This is typical Robinson. The interaction between the superstructure and the base is not a discovery of Mao's. It was clearly explained by Stalin, and even by such "old-fashioned" Marxists as Marx and Engels. The very phrase "ideas become a material force" is Marx's.

Prof. Robinson says that the Chinese attacks on Soviet revisionism may seem exaggerated and unfair:

"But they are clearly right in opposing Stalin's contention that abolishing private property in the means of production automatically creates a classless society... The

NO 22

C O N T E N T S

"Maoism", Marxist or Populist? page one

Social-Fascism page four

A literary critic " nine

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Chinese Marxists maintain that Stalin made a serious and far-reaching error in asserting that class war comes to an end as soon as socialist is established" (p12/13). In this argument we meet an old friend. The "Marxist-Leninist leadership" in Britain has been intoning it for many years. We have heard it on numerous occasions from Prof. Rob.ainson's revolutionary friend, Mr. Roland Berger. We have heard it from Mr. Birch's colleague of last year and competitor of this year, Mr. Manchanda. We have heard it stated more cautiously by the great revolutionary philosopher and novelist Mr. Wm Ash. The fact that Stalin never said any such thing, and that he said the opposite very clearly, they seem to regard as a trivial little detail of not particular importance. Since the "Communist vanguard" spreads such lies about Stalin, and refuses to comment on the fact that Stalin happens to have said the opposite of what they say he said, why shouldn't the bourgeois Prof. Robinson do so? She, at least, does not pretend to be a Communist.

We know, of course that Prof. Robinson's hatred of Stalin is due to the fact that he did not believe the class struggle came to an end in 1936, and that under his leadership of the revolutionary forces both in Russia and internationally, her breed was effectually exposed as anti-Communist and had little opportunity to peddle their bourgeois liberalism in the workingclass movement. But of course she's entitled to pretend, if she pleases, that she hates Stalin because he abandoned the class struggle.

"Liu...is referred to as the Chinese Khrushchev. For us this has wrong associations. Liu represented what we think of as a Stalinist element..." (p13).

In the section of "The Thought Of Mao Tse-tung" we read: "There is an element in this of personal adoration which would be highly dangerous if its object were affected by it. But nothing could be further than Mao's style from the vanity and paranoia of Stalin's last years" (p28/9). Familiar noise, once again. The anti-Stalin "Communists" have failed to explain to us how a paranoiac could have given effective leadership in the anti-fascist war; could have coped as effectively as Stalin did with the multitude of intricate problems in post-war E. Europe, where the native Communist movements were politically very weak and inexperienced and the bourgeois liberal forces were very strong; and how a paranoiac could have produced such objective works of Marxist analysis as Linguistics and Economic Problems. Perhaps you could reveal that mystery Prof. Robinson. We can only account for "Stalin's later years" by assuming that, despite the cult, Stalin was as little affected with paranoia as Mao.

(The Encyclopaedia Britannica says: "...the term paranoia is reserved for rare, extreme cases of chronic, fixed and highly systematised delusions". It is characterised by rigid thinking, dogmatism, solitary rumination and egocentricity. Its sequence of development is erotic disturbance, guilt feelings, anxiety, persecution complex. Sometimes the paranoiac explodes into action, but

his action "is inappropriate to the real social context" since he is responding to delusions. In Linguistics and Economic Problems Stalin was dealing, not with social reality, but with his paranoiac delusions. Freudian psychiatry is a genuine science - according to a real victim of paranoid grandiosity, L. Trotsky. Do give us more of it Prof. Robinson. Maybe Marx was also dealing with his paranoia when he developed his value theory. And how often was Lenin described by your political ancestors in terms of paranoid grandiosity?)

What is the function of Prof. Robinson's brand of non-Marxist, anti-Stalinist, "Maoism", and the variants of it circulated by Messrs. Ash, Berger, Manchanda, etc.? It is to negate the revolutionary influence of Mao's politics by divorcing it from Marxism (called "Stalinism" for this purpose) and distorting it into a form of populism. This trend has functioned with great effectiveness over the past five years in preventing the growth of a Marxist political movement in Britain. It has almost totally disrupted the anti-revisionist movement that began to develop in 1963, and in its place it has developed a form of "Maoism" characterised by subjectivism, emotionalism and sloganising.

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Since the foregoing was written, a review of Prof. Robinson's book by Jack Woddis has been published in the Morning Star (April 24). Woddis, of course, makes good use of Prof. Robinson's absurdities to attack the Chinese C.P.: "Prof. Robinson...attempts to explain what is happening in China on the basis of her own peculiar interpretations of Marxist conceptions... The essence of her explanation is what she regards as the new contribution made by Mao Tse-tung to our understanding of the relations between the base of a social system and its superstructure. Thus...she refers to Mao Tse-tung's thought that "Ideas may become a material force"... It might interest Prof Robinson to know that Mao Tse-tung's slogan comes from none other than that "old-fashioned Marxist" Karl Marx itself."

"She further quotes...the opinion of "Chinese Marxists" that "Stalin made a serious and far-reaching error in asserting that class war comes to an end as soon as Socialism is established". She is apparently unaware of Stalin's 'theory' of the 'sharpening of the class struggle' under Socialism..." etc.

"Maoists" like Robinson, Ash, Berger etc are a gift to revisionism in Britain.

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What is it that makes Prof. Robinson want to appear as a "Maoist", and what is it that enables her to carry off the deception with some success? Prof. Robinson is a bourgeois political economist who has given long service as a liberal in the struggle against Marxist political economy. Like many of her kind she sensed that Marxism could be very useful to the bourgeoisie if it could be turned into a variety of sociology divorced from political economy.

4.
But Marx and his scientific successors have always insisted that political economy forms the basis of all scientific sociology. Stalin initiated the struggle against modern revisionism in the early 50s with a major work on political economy: a work which, more than any which has been written since, provides a key to the economics of modern revisionism. It is proper that Prof Robinson, the bourgeois economist, the die hard enemy of Marxist economic theory, should be possessed by a deep-seated hatred of Stalin, the major Marxist economist of the mid-twentieth century.

But why has Prof. Robinson become a "Maoist"? Because of the particular nature of the revolution in China, which for almost thirty years had the character of a protracted civil war and anti-fascist war, there is little in the writings of Mao which deals with economic matters, and nothing which deals with questions of the political economy of socialism and of revisionism - which are the subject of Stalin's "Economic Problems".

Mao is the first major Marxist whose writings do not include works on contemporary problems of political economy. (As we have said, this is due to the particular history of the revolution in China). That is why Prof. Robinson can jump in and represent herself as a "Maoist" in the bourgeois interest. The "Maoism" propagated by SACU and the China Policy Study Group, being "Marxism" minus Marxist political economy, (or, in a word, anti-Stalinist), is nothing but a variety of mindless populism.

S O C I A L F A S C I S M

There are at present four "Albanian Societies in Britain, three of which claim to be anti-revisionist. They are, in order of appearance, run by the Baker-Bland clique, a clique made up of the Manchanda-Kenna-Archbold elements, and the C.P.B. (R. Birch group). The latter has support from Albania. None of the others have.

Some I.C.O./C.W.O. members happened to become involved in the Manchanda body, and have been members of it during the past year. It is therefore necessary that our position with regard to this body be clarified. A general meeting was held on June 30, 1968 under the chairmanship of Mrs. N. Berger (S. McGonville was secretary, A. Manchanda treasurer, E. Brar acting secretary). With the full support of these officers (excluding McGonville who was absent) a number of social-fascists were elected to the Committee: Mrs. H. Edwards, I. Kenna, F. Kenna. Edwards' nomination was opposed by C.W.O. members on the grounds that fascists had no place in such a society. But with the exception of CWO members all of those present (only about 12) voted in support of Edwards' nomination.

The Edwards-Kenna position, which had been clearly and publicly stated, was that the British working class as a whole (and the working class in all the imperialist countries) was a labour aristocracy whose class interest lay in helping the imperialist

ruling classes to suppress the anti-imperialist revolution.

This meeting was adjourned due to pressure of time, but it was unanimously decided that it should be re-convened within three months. The CWO members made it clear that they would take up the social fascist matter very sharply when it was reconvened. But it was not re-convened for 13 months. Manchanda and Brar ignored the decision of the general meeting for as long as possible for the clear purpose of shielding the social fascists. But finally a general meeting was held on July 6 1969, at which the C.W.O. characterised the Kenna position as social fascist and proposed the expulsion of these elements. (In the meantime Mrs. Berger and McGonville, and also Edwards, had resigned from the Society). With the exception of four C.W.O. members, all present voted in support of the social fascists.

Despite various attempts to confuse matters, the issue had been made abundantly clear by the end of the discussion. Only two speakers beside the C.W.O. members showed any serious political interest in the matter: R. Archbold and Meisl Brar. Archbold exposed a number of absurd statements made by the Manchanda clique, in particular H. Brar's identification of objective class interest with subjective political development. Both Archbold and M. Brar stated their disagreement with Kenna's position, but they did not agree that it was fascist and they held that it should be treated as a "fraternal" disagreement. In addition to this M. Brar said that she had never seen or heard it stated by

Kenna that the objective class interest of the British workers was imperialist and led to collaboration with the ruling class to suppress the anti-imperialist revolution abroad. However Kenna has stated publicly on numerous occasions since 1966 that the British working class as a whole was a labour aristocracy. M. Brar and Archbold were members of the Anti-Revisionist Front (now defunct) when Kenna proposed:

"On the world scale, the British worker belongs to the labour aristocracy. The average wage of the British worker is many times the average wage of the worker in Asia, Africa and Latin America. We have more cars, television sets, wash-machines, refrigerators etc. per capita, better social services, a longer life-span, a lower infant mortality rate, a higher meat consumption. This is not a question of making moral judgements but a question of orientation in the international working-class struggle. "

And on the meeting of July 6, Kenna stated on three separate occasions that the British working class as a whole was a labour aristocracy.

Manchanda accused the C.W.O. of distorting Kenna's position when it said that the interests of a labour aristocracy lay in maintaining the dominance of imperialism. Manchanda presumably thinks that the interests of the labour lieutenants of imperialism

6.

are antagonistic with the interests of imperialism! But however much Manchanda may wish to confuse the issue, it necessarily follows from the statement that the British working class as a whole is a labour aristocracy, that the British working class as a whole has an objective interest in maintaining the imperialist exploitation of the colonies and neo-colonies.

Kenna adds the clause "on a world scale" or "internationally though not nationally". But he does not explain what this means. It is just a phrase thrown in to confuse the issue. But let's try to discover the meaning in it. If the British working class "is a labour aristocracy on a world scale" then obviously its class interest lies in siding with its own monopoly capitalists in the struggle against colonialism and neo-colonialism, and thereby helping to maintain the economic basis of its position as a "labour aristocracy on a world scale". But what possible meaning can there be in saying that it is not a labour aristocracy on a national scale? Perhaps it only means that there is no proletariat in Britain in which it could function as labour lieutenants of capitalism, since the whole working class is composed of labour lieutenants. Or perhaps it means that while with regard to the maintenance of the British imperialist system its interests are identical with those of the monopoly capitalists, there is a conflict of class interest when it comes to the question of who should be the imperialist ruling class, since the labour aristocracy would rather enjoy the whole of the imperialist plunder of the colonies than share it with the ruling class. This fits in with Mrs. Edwards statement at the Spirit of Bandung meeting that the class struggle in the imperialist countries was merely a struggle between various imperialist forces over the division of the imperialist loot. If Kenna does not mean either of these things we cannot imagine what he means by his qualifying clause.

Some speakers (M. Brar in particular) said that Kenna had never actually said in so many words that there was an identity of class interest between the workers and capitalists against the anti-imperialist revolution, and refused to work out the necessary implications of the "labour aristocracy" theory. The same attitude was taken by many during the extensive discussion of the question in 1967. But Kenna offers no comfort to these ost-rich marxists. Unlike them he does not deny his position under pressure, though he may not be too specific about certain aspects of it.

If Kenna's assertions are correct there is no objective social basis for a Communist movement in Britain. If there is an objective basis for a Communist movement in Britain, ie an industrial proletariat whose objective class interest is Communist, then Kenna's position can only be described as social-fascist: under the guise of "Maoist" phrases it represents antagonistic class interests as being identical, it maintains that workers and

capitalists have a common national interest in maintaining Britain's international position as an imperialist exploiter.

Kenna, of course, declares that he opposes imperialism even though there is no class basis for anti-imperialism in Britain. Of course! Who would listen to him if he peddled his fascism under an openly imperialist position? But while his "anti-imperialism" does no damage to imperialism, he pseudo socialist fascism renders a very real service to imperialism. The disruption of the very weak anti-revisionist movement, to which the Kenna-Manchanda clique has made a very real contribution, is a gain for imperialist politics.

When Kenna's pamphlet was published in 1966 there was political confusion in the anti-revisionist movement: however, compared with its degeneration since then, all was clearness and light. At least fascism and racism had no place in it. The notions of Herbert Marcuse had no place in it. But now there are few groups which have not been corrupted by these things. Kenna has contributed in no small measure to this corruption. For about a year he concentrated on spreading fascist theory in a detached sort of way. But since 1967 he has followed up his fascist theory with practical support for racists. At a public meeting run by the "Internationalists" (another "bourgeois working class" group) Michael X propounded his sex and drugs, and black racist, "political" views on the struggle against the fascist white race. Kenna demonstrated his support for this line. He has been followed by many others. And he has at various public meetings since then demonstrated his support for other racist tendencies.

During the past year the theory of "progressive racism" has been propagated by a number of "Maoist" cliques in Britain. White racism is reactionary: black racism is progressive - so we are told. The propagators of this view are chiefly coloured petty bourgeois and intellectual elements, and white petty bourgeois liberalism who, as usual, are being driven crazy by the manner in which the major class antagonism is resolving itself.

But is it possible that the "Maoist" Kenna belongs to the same political category as Enoch Powell (the right wing Conservative with whom some "Maoist" groups suggested forming an alliance against the "Quisling" representative of the U.S. ruling class, Harold Wilson, only two short years ago!)? Ostensibly they are extremely opposed tendencies. But are white and black racism extremes of opposition? Is there such a thing as "progressive racism"?

Let us take the case of black immigrant workers. If there is racist resistance to their integration into the British working class from the white workers, what should be the attitude of Marxists? Should they take class interest to be fundamental and work on the one hand to overcome the racist outlook among the white workers, and on the other to prevent white racism from

8.

giving rise to black racism, and so attempt to integrate the working class and eliminate racism from it? For holding that position we have been labelled as "racist" by the "Working Peoples Party of England" and the Manchanda clique. The alternative is to take it that the racial division is fundamental and organise black against white. At a "WPPE" meeting on racism a short time ago that position was put forward in the name of "Maoism". It was upported by Kenna (and was not opposed by A.H. Evans). Because we opposed it we were at once labelled white racists by the white liberals present who were striving to be accorded the status of honorary blacks. On the other hand we were supported by black workers.

In order to give itself a veneer of "progressiveness", black racism in Britain must try to represent the condition of the black workers as that of an exceptionally oppressed internal colony. But in fact, if the British working class is a labour aristocracy the blackworkers in Britain are labour aristocrats, and if a race war is to be fought out it will be between black and white sections of the labour aristocracy and will have no more "progressive" content than the Wars of the Roses.

We will not here go into the question of the most exploited or oppressed section of the working class in detail. Previously we have shown that Catholic workers in the 6 Counties must be included among the sections of the British working class subjected to the greatest oppression and discrimination (though not necessarily the greatest exploitation, which is a different matter), and that the banner of Catholic sectarianism might be raised by them as justifiably as the banner of black racism by the black racism by the black section. If we are to have racism parading in Marxist dress, why not religious sectarianism? If we are to have "progressive racism" why not "progressive religious sectarianism". When our series on racist "Black Power" groups in Britain was published, the slogan of "Catholic power" had not yet been raised. But in the current issue of New Left Review the "Marxist" Peoples Democracy leader, M. Farrell, raises the slogan of "Catholic power" as a socialist slogan.

There is racism and religious sectarianism in Britain. There are petty bourgeois elements who try to build up sectarian movements by aggravating these. The only Marxist approach is to work at overcoming racist and sectarian influences in the working class. To base a "Marxist" movement on "progressive" racism or sectarianism is to help to develop the materials of fascism in Britain. And when "Marxists" are heard jeering at the working class, and, in defiance of all the facts, representing the white workers as a racist mass of labour aristocrats, there is no other name for these "Marxists" but fascist. It is not merely that the nature of their theory is fascist. Their practical behaviour is fascist.

Manchanda has for many years been carrying on attacks against

9.
Stalin. He has declared on numerous occasions that Stalin didn't know the difference between antagonistic and non-antagonistic contradictions. But he has never given a single concrete example of where Stalin mistook a non-antagonistic contradiction for an antagonistic one. Could it be that "Stalin's error" was that he failed to realise that the contradiction between Marxism and fascism was a contradiction among the people. H. Brar declared with great emotion, after Kenna's position had been made absolutely clear by Kenna himself: "I do regard Cde. Kenna as my comrade". That makes H. Brar's position pretty clear.

When giving the secretary's report H. Brar referred to the Albanian society run by the "Reg Birch clique". He held that the reason why the Albanians dealt with Birch's Society was that the "Birch clique" had been pouring poisonous gossip about the Manchanda group into Albanian ears.

But does the fact that genuine Communists refuse to have any dealings with opportunist scum like Manchanda and Kenna need any complex explanation or speculation:

A LITERARY CRITIC

The ranks of the "Maoists" who propagate the notion that the British working class is a "bourgeois working class", or a "labour aristocracy", whose objective class interest lies in helping the British ruling class to suppress the anti-imperialist movement in the neo-colonies, have gained a new recruit from the bourgeois intelligentsia. Messrs. Evans, Kenna & Edwards have been joined by Mr. J. A. Hoffman. In his introduction to A.H. Evans, "Down with Falsehood in the Name of Science", Mr. Hoffman refers to "the view of Mao Tse-tung that the British working class is still a bourgeois working class" (piv). Of course no source for this alleged view of Mao's is given: from such a quarter, where subjectivism rules supreme and where the most superficial kind of impression takes the place of scientific investigation, ^{no} more is to be expected.

Let us glance at what Mao has actually said in this connection. Has he written off the workers in the imperialist countries as "bourgeois workers" or "labour aristocrats" as the "Maoists" Evans, Kenna and Hoffman allege?

"Although the subjective forces of the revolution in China are now weak, so also are all organisations...of the reactionary ruling classes, resting as they do on the backward and fragile social and economic structure of China. This helps to explain why revolution cannot break out at once in the countries of Western Europe where, although the subjective forces of the revolution are now perhaps somewhat stronger than in China, the forces of the reactionary ruling classes are many times

10.

stronger." (A Single Spark. 1930. SW Vol 1 p119)
There is no hint of the "bourgeois working class" notion there,
Mr. Hoffman.

"All the imperialist powers of the world are our enemies, and China cannot possibly gain her independence without the assistance of the land of socialism and the international proletariat. That is, she cannot do so without the help of the Soviet Union and the help which the proletariat of Japan, Britain, the U.S., France, Germany, Italy and other countries provide through their struggles against capitalism" (On New Democracy. 1939. SW Vol 2, p355). And what about that, Mr. Hoffman? Mao, being a Marxist and not a bourgeois intellectual with a hankering for "originality", takes the struggles of the British proletariat against its own ruling class into account as a factor helping the Chinese revolution (Lenin and Stalin took them into account as factors helping the revolution in Russia.) This would be absurd if, as the Evans-Kenna clique maintain, there was no proletariat in Britain but only a labour aristocracy or a "bourgeois working class", whose class interest lay in helping the British ruling class to suppress the anti-imperialist revolution.

Concerning the labour aristocracy, Mao wrote:

"Since there is no economic basis for social reformism in colonial and semi-colonial China as there is in Europe, the whole proletariat, with the exception of a few scabs, is most revolutionary" (Vol 1 p324). That is obviously correct, but it has nothing to do with the drivel of the Evans-Kenna clique. Mao nowhere disagrees with the view of Lenin and Stalin that the labour aristocracy, even at the peak of Britain's monopoly of the world market, was only a small fraction of the working class. And it is abundantly clear from his statements on the international revolution in recent years that he is in complete agreement with it.

So where, Mr. Hoffman, did Mao express "the view that the British working class is....a bourgeois working class"?

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In the past we have, in our criticism of opportunists tended to gloss over the opportunism of A.H. Evans since he was the sole worker amid the bunch of opportunists who make up the "bourgeois working class" tendency. It is clear that this was a mistaken, subjectivist approach, and will be corrected in the future. Here we will only point out that Evans was present at a number of public meetings (WPPE & Spirit of Bandung meetings) in 1968 at which black racism was predominant. While Kenna was actively supporting black racism, Evans did not speak on this matter. But by propounding the bourgeois working class notion, and by failing to expose racism and advocate class struggle as the CWO did, he made himself in practice part of the racist clique.

This is all the more remarkable since the ostensible reason for his split with M. McCreery in 1964 was McCreery's failure to take a class view of the African liberation struggles and the role of the African bourgeoisie. But Evans is now allowing race to obscure class in a way that McCreery never did.

Hoffman declares that Evans is "our most gifted Marxist". (And of course if Allah is God, Mahommed is the Prophet.) But the fact is that Evans, who held the most influential position in the anti-revisionist movement in 1963/4, is the individual most responsible for its degeneration. In 1963-4 he held that Britain was on the brink of a revolutionary situation, and that for that reason there was "no time" to put the movement on a sound footing by making a thorough analysis of the politics, political economy and history of modern revisionism. In 1965, to account for the Vanguard fiasco, for the fact that the masses did not rally to his leadership, and that the revolutionary situation which he predicted with such certainty in 1964 did not materialise, he began propounding the "bourgeois working class" theory. The Vanguard fiasco, which clearly resulted from the subjectivism of the "leaders", had to be blamed on the working class. And the revolutionary phrasemongering of 1964 was replaced with the notion of the splendid isolation of the elite revolutionary individuals in a totally reactionary society in 1965. One variety of subjectivist attitudinising was replaced by another. It was impossible on the basis of either attitude to make a concrete contribution to the development of the Communist movement in Britain.

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Evans and Hoffman support the fascist invasion of Czechoslovakia. They tell us that the Soviet revisionists invaded Czechoslovakia to defend socialism there. (Kenna represents the whole affair as an inter-imperialist squabble, Czechoslovakia being an imperialist country and the Czech workers a labour aristocracy). They support the one-party system in revisionist countries, and therefore oppose freedom of working class political organisation. They see in the opposition of the working class to the monopoly of political organisation by the revisionist bourgeoisie nothing but a manifestation of fascism in the working class. And they represent the contradiction between Communism and Soviet revisionism as being "not as grave" as the contradiction between both of these forces and imperialism. All of this nonsense is put forward in the name of "Maoism". But the C.P.C. opposed the invasion of Czechoslovakia, exposed the deception that its function was to "defend socialism", and at the present time China is being subjected to military harassment from the revisionist "defenders of socialism" in Russia. If the Evans/Hoffman position is Maoist, we must assume that the politics of the CPC are not being determined by Mao's politics. But since that assumption is clearly ridiculous, the Evans/Hoffman pretence that their position is Maoist can only be looked upon as the extreme cases of subjectivism yet seen in this swamp of subjectivism.

12.

Evans position on Czechoslovakia was dealt with in the last issue. Here we will only comment on a point that has been clarified in Hoffman's latest pamphlet (Essays on Shakespeare). On p6 we are told "modern revisionism still stands to the left of Trotsky". And on p27: "Marxism is qualitatively different not only from bourgeois thought, but from all class thought" (our emphasis).

What is the precise meaning of the first quote? Marxism makes its analysis on the basis of working class interest, and in the first place investigates the class content of political tendencies. It does not measure political tendency against a spectrum of gradations of "leftism".

Marxism is a form of class thought, it is not "qualitatively different...from all class thought". It engages in class analysis, not "leftist" analysis.

The Polish revisionist philosopher Kolakowski, has recently developed the notion of a classless "Left". "...the Left must be defined in intellectual, and not in class terms" (Marxism & Beyond, p95). The working class does not necessarily belong to the "Left", he says. "the Left is the fermenting factor in even the most hardened mass of the historical present" (p103) - like Evans, Kenna and Hoffman amid the bourgeois working class! Kolakowski also supports the bourgeois working class notion: "...the statement that it must be in the interest of the working class to belong to the Left does not always hold true.... Even the real immediate interests of the working class can be in opposition to the demands of the Left. For example, for a long time the English workers benefitted from colonial exploitation - and yet the Left is an enemy of colonialism" (p94)

Hoffman's views fit in with this classless view of "the Left". How else could he measure the relative "leftness" of trotskyism and Khrushchevism. From the Marxist viewpoint the basic thing about these opportunist trends is their class nature, which is bourgeois.

The view that Marxism is not "class thought" was also propounded by Kolakowski.

All of Hoffman's pamphlets to date have dealt with literary criticism. He represents literary criticism as the main requirement at present: and since he belongs to a "left" which has no class basis in British society, why should he not put literary criticism to the fore? Many fierce phrases occur in his pamphlets.

In the Shakespeare pamphlet Hoffman refers to "the fool Volpe" because of Volpe's view of Shakespeare; and to "vermin of the order of Michael Faulkner" because Faulkner was so irresponsible as to have a translation of some Brecht poems published about the same time Hoffman published a pamphlet categorising Brecht as a "sewer rat". But in the present state of Marxist politics in

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