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Editorial

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comment

At home

PREDICTABLY, after its electoral defeat, the Labour Party is now preparing to 'move to the left'. The leadership is in some difficulty due to the absence of a 'left' leader of any stature who has some semblance of mass support among the working class but a start has been made with the election to the Shadow Cabinet of Michael Foot.

The CPGB and some trotskyst factions are well aware of the strong anti-Tory sentiments that exist among militant workers and are trying to take advantage of it for the purpose of diverting this basically class feeling into the blind alley of 'pushing Labour to the left', and if successful, will bring some of these workers back under the influence of the Labour Party.

Under the guise of uniting all available forces against the main enemy they are in practice seeking to establish the leadership of one section of the capitalist class over the workers but they can only do this to the extent that they can sow confusion on the question of the class character of the Labour Party.

They try to perpetuate the idea that because the Labour Party was created by the trade unions, it must therefore be a working-class party. On the surface this may appear to be obviously correct, but the policies which it pursues are just as obviously against the interests of the working class if one accepts that the interests of the class demand that it capture political power and abolish private property in the means of production.

How is this to be explained?

British trade unions are totally adapted to functioning within the framework of capitalist democracy and the whole reason for their existence is, at best, to obtain for the workers a bigger share of the cake. This means that not only are they a part of the organisational structure of capitalism but also play an important role in maintaining the influence of capitalist ideology over the workers.

The function of any political party whose only aim is to obtain a bigger share of the cake is bound

to be limited to trying to establish the best conditions in which collective bargaining can take place. That it can never go beyond this function is assured in many ways, for instance the division between the industrial and political wings of the movement, as it is so often put. Labour Party and trade union conference decisions can be safely ignored by MPs because the Parliamentary Labour Party is autonomous and decides its own policies.

A study of the policies of both Labour and Tory administrations clearly shows that they differ only on the question of the best way of maintaining the capitalist system. The struggle between them is not a reflection of the class struggle between Labour and Capital but of internal differences within the capitalist class itself. 'The capitalist class never rules as a whole', wrote Engels in his 'Campaign for the German Constitution'. 'Even the big bourgeoisie, as soon as it has defeated feudalism, splits into a ruling and an opposition party which are usually represented by the bank on the one side and the manufacturer on the other. The oppositional, progressive fraction of the big and middle bourgeoisie then has common interests with the petty bourgeoisie against the ruling faction and unites with it in a common struggle'. A similar process has also taken place in Britain with the working class being used as the pawn by one or other section of the ruling class.

The rise of the Labour Party corresponded with the recognition by some strata of the ruling class that the old conceptions of free enterprise were on their way out.

Lord Sankey who headed the Royal Commission which advocated nationalisation of coal mines was no friend of the working class, and certainly no socialist. Nationalisation of electricity supply, railways, steel, etc. did not meet with outright opposition from the capitalist class as a whole because it arose from the needs of certain strata of that class which had been able to mobilise the working-class movement behind such a demand in the belief that piecemeal nationalisation would lead to socialism by easy stages.

THE MARXIST

Contributions to the next issue of *The Marxist*, which will be published in December, should reach the editorial office (see address below) not later than 1st November 1970.

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FROM THE EDITORIAL COMMITTEE

The financial problems of *The Marxist* are the common experience of all publications in any capitalist society which advocates revolutionary change in that society and seeks to build the necessary forces to carry out that task. An initial period of limited circulation makes it necessary to appeal for financial support to meet the gap between production/circulation cost and income from sales. If you share our view that this journal has served and can continue to serve the interests of the revolutionary forces in Britain and play a part in the development of a Marxism-Leninist Party, please assist in the following ways:

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The working class must, in pursuit of its own interests, take advantage of the contradictions within the ruling class but this can only be achieved when it has its own independent policy and tactics, and not by tailing behind and accepting the leadership of other classes as the CPGB and others would have us do.

The 1970 General Election showed a further drop in the percentage of the electorate casting its vote and undoubtedly indicates that disillusionment with the parliamentary parties is continuing to grow. Our investigations show that many workers who voted Labour did so on the basis of keeping the Tories out rather than in any positive conviction that there is any basic difference between the Parties, and it is to these workers that the so-called left is directing its attention.

What contributed to the Tory vote is more difficult for us to ascertain, but probably the image of the Tories as a party of law and order appealed to some of the lower middle and professional classes who, to judge from letters to the newspapers are very disturbed at the 'anarchy' in the industrial field, but for Heath to make 'law and order' an election issue is one thing, to implement it is another.

The Tories, like Labour, are still placing their hopes on the trade union leaders. In short, they are largely governed by the same objective conditions as Barbara Castle, and the same basic strategy will continue. The trade unions will be encouraged to 'modernise' their structures under threat of legislation if this is not carried out voluntarily. This involves new procedure agreements between unions and employers which seek to limit the independent activities of the rank and file at shop floor level and replace with direct control by the trade union establishment which will itself be 'freed' from effective control by the membership. Once established, these new agreements and procedures will be directed against the militants, and legal sanctions will be used to support the authority of the leadership over the membership. The attempts of the CPGB and similar 'lefts' to concentrate *sole* attention on anti-trade union legislation can well act as a smokescreen for the important preliminary preparations within the unions themselves.

Unity for what, and against what?

The kind of unity which Marxists strive for is determined by our basic attitude towards the fundamental question of the transfer of political power from capitalist to the working class, namely, that it cannot be brought about by a process of peaceful evolution but only by the forcible subjugation of

one class by the other. It also includes the acceptance of the proposition that destruction must come before reconstruction. Unless we consistently adhere to this standpoint we face the danger of being misled into supporting one or other section of the ruling class on the basis of it being 'the lesser of two evils'. This should not be confused with the correct tactic of giving support to a particular section of the capitalist class in specific instances in order to sharpen the contradictions within that class as a whole for the purpose of bringing about greater disorder.

At the present time probably a majority of people would consciously opt even for capitalist order in preference to disorder, and it is to the strengthening of these sentiments that Conservative, Labour, and revisionist alike direct their attention. Many class-conscious workers can recognise the qualitative difference between 'their' order and 'ours', but the influence of reformist ideas is still strong and there is a reluctance to accept that the transition from one to the other cannot be a smooth orderly affair, but, on the contrary, will be a rough and disorderly affair. This feeling is still strong even amongst militants whose spontaneous reaction to events is creating the disorder which they find difficult to accept as a conscious aim.

The capitalist class are trying to resolve this contradiction in people's minds by playing on this fear of anarchy in order to pressurise dissidents into sinking their class interests 'in the interests of all', i.e. those of the capitalist class. The battle can only be joined if we take the bull by the horns and boldly proclaim that we are fully aware that pursuit of working-class interests will create anarchy within the capitalist system, and that it is our class duty to do so until the final collapse of that system. If we on our part can help people resolve this contradiction in their minds by getting them to accept this idea, the spontaneous movement will become transformed into one with conscious direction. By taking part in the spontaneous struggles we will be able to lend them more consciousness and system so that a unity is developed which will be directed towards the political aim of the conquest of power by the working class.

What of other classes which are liable to be frightened by this 'anarchy'?

The line of the CPGB is that we should trim our sails so that we will not frighten them away from establishing unity with the working class against the monopolies. The practical effects of such a policy can be seen in the declining influence of the CPGB. The militants turn away, some become disoriented, the struggle declines and other classes

gravitate towards the enemy because it appears to be the strongest.

Our attitude must be that the working class will continue to 'create anarchy' because it is its way of refusing to be crushed by the forces of the big monopolists, that there can be no respite from this situation until the monopolies are defeated, and that the interests of other non-monopoly classes demand that they give support to the working class in this struggle or else they will be crushed in the

South-East Asia

IMPERIALIST POWERS have always attempted to cloak aggressive designs and aggression against other nations by attributing to those nations the very sins of which they themselves are guilty. Hitler accused his numerous victims of 'menacing Germany'; British imperialist adventures against Malaya, Kenya, Cyprus, Egypt, etc. were ostensibly to protect 'free peoples' from 'terrorism'; Israel occupies Arab lands and tries to subjugate Arab peoples in the name of liberty; US imperialism in Indo-China continues its long history of aggression under the pretence of defending Vietnamese and Cambodians from 'aggression' by their own liberation forces. Over the years the pretence has worn a little thin, but the same tune continues to be played.

One of the latest examples of such inverted truth may be found in a recently published article entitled *Asia and the Peking Empire Builders*, which claims that Mao is the heir of Genghis Khan and that he is 'nurturing plans which would have made these ancient conquerors green with envy'. What are his plans? Why, nothing less than the complete domination of South and South-East Asia.

Rarely have the imperialists presented their bankrupt arguments about 'Chinese expansionism' quite as clumsily as they are put in this article. Here are a few examples:

'They are working to create an atmosphere of permanent internal conflict in the area. They do not care a straw for the interests of the Asian peoples and the fate of those whom they are exhorting to rise in a "people's war".'

The references to specific cases of alleged 'Chinese interference' are instructive:

'China's frontier dispute with India in the Himalayas is more than ten years old, and from time to time it flares up with fresh force. Peking bombards India with ultimatums and tries to interfere in her internal affairs. It demagogically calls on Indians to launch civil war to establish "liberated areas". Renmin Ribao claims that "a great revolutionary storm" is brewing in India.'

Needless to say no facts are presented about the

battle between the two major classes. It must be shown that the main enemy of these classes is the monopolists, and that defeat of the working class would bring about a worsening of their conditions.

The actual relationship of classes can only be determined in the course of struggle, not by an abstract analysis, and this only on the basis of an intensified and more consciously directed struggle by the industrial working class.

border dispute because any serious examination of them would show that China has neither claimed nor occupied an inch of Indian territory, but has, on the contrary, had to repel Indian incursions into Chinese territory. We are also told that 'Chinese agents are weaving intrigues and plots in Bhutan and Sikkim' and that 'the small Himalayan state of Nepal has not been spared the attentions of China either. Here too the Maoists have been making mischief'. Turning to Burma we are told that 'rebels, egged on by the Maoists, continuously raid local institutions and military camps'. Concerning China's 'designs' on Laos we are treated to this gem:

'From time to time China threatens Laos. This reminds Laotians of the golden seal with the legend "Submit or be destroyed" sent to their ancestors by a Chinese emperor several centuries ago'.

Which Laotians feel threatened is not made clear. But it is when our writer gets to Cambodia that we are really in for a treat. If you thought that Sihanouk's overthrow was probably engineered by the CIA, stand corrected. The villain was really China — 'China's interference was one of the factors that precipitated the Right-wing coup' — we read.

Just in case anyone may imagine that we are quoting from an article in 'Readers' Digest' we should perhaps say that its author is one M Ukraintsov and that it is published in the June 9 issue of the Soviet magazine *New Times*.

We are not surprised to find anti-Chinese propaganda in the Soviet Press, but we are a little surprised to see how remarkably crude the Russians are becoming in their anti-communism. We assume that the increasing difficulty they are experiencing in concealing the reactionary character of their policies is causing them to panic.

A few comments are needed on Mr Ukraintsov's article. The sections quoted above reveal much more about Soviet policy than they do about China. The theme is that China is 'causing trouble' in other countries to suit her own expansionist ends. She stirs up 'internal conflict', calls for 'liberated areas' in India, weaves 'intrigues and plots' and 'makes

mischievous'. The terminology is revealing; it displays a completely reactionary, philistine acceptance of the capitalist, semi-feudal and neo-colonial status-quo prevailing throughout much of South East Asia. It reveals contempt for the very idea of liberation and implies support for the most reactionary governments and forces against the liberation movements. The suggestion that armed struggle anywhere must be part of a 'plot' hatched in Peking is a piece of arrant nonsense no more worthy of attention than the lurid imaginings of the late John Foster Dulles.

In a key passage near the end of the article we read the following:

'By forcing their adventurist tactics on some detachments of the Communist and national liberation movement in South East Asia and trying to use them as an instrument to establish China's domination of Asian countries, Peking is dooming these forces to defeat'.

This contains the core of Moscow's concern over South East Asia, but to bring out clearly just what this is, the passage needs interpreting.

Needless to say China is not forcing anything on anyone. A reading of communiques which have appeared in the Chinese press following discussions and agreements between China and many other states, parties and liberation movements, leaves no doubt that China's assistance to its friends is motivated by genuine sentiments of solidarity and by nothing else. To which detachments of the Communist and liberation movements is Ukraintsov referring? As Moscow doesn't regard what it chooses to call 'Maoist groups' as part of the communist movement, he can only have in mind the Vietnam-

ese NLF, the Pathet Lao, the Cambodian liberation forces and possibly the DRV and North Korea. In saying that 'Peking is dooming these forces to defeat', Ukraintsov reveals exactly where Moscow stands regarding South East Asia. The article makes hardly a mention of US imperialism's presence in that part of the world and its recent escalation of aggression into Cambodia. What are the facts?

The US imperialists are facing defeat in Vietnam. They have spread the war in the hope of finding salvation on a wider battlefield, but in doing so have united the Indo-Chinese peoples against them. The peoples' liberation movement is developing rapidly in Cambodia and Laos. The Koreans have obviously become suspicious of Moscow's close amity with Japan and have subsequently drawn closer to China. The people's war against US imperialism in South East Asia is expanding and the prospects of victory are good. That is how things stand.

To the Russian revisionists this is a gloomy picture. They don't like people's war (note the way they always put it in quote marks) which they regard as 'adventurism', and they want it to stop. They don't really care if US imperialism remains in South East Asia — all they want is that it should negotiate its presence there respectably. The Russian revisionists express their anxiety about South East Asia being 'eaten up' by China, just as do the US imperialists. What they really *mean* of course is that they do not want to see South East Asia liberated; they do not want to see the revolution spread. That is the simple truth behind Ukraintsov's reactionary horror stories about Genghis Khan and the 'yellow peril'.

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Marxism-Leninism and Parliamentarism

by Sean McConville

THE FOLLOWING ARTICLE was submitted to us before the General Election last June, in reply to the argument presented by Dick Jones in issue Number 13. Because of limited space we were unable to publish it in our last issue. Although the election is past we feel that the questions raised in comrade Jones' original article need the fullest discussion and we have therefore decided to print Sean McConville's contribution even though it was written in the pre-election period and is to some extent dated. We hope to continue the discussion in future issues of *The Marxist* and we will be happy to consider for publication articles and letters from our readers.

THE EDITORS

LENIN'S ARTICLE, *Left Wing Communism*, is nothing less than a detailed guide to revolutionary tactics in the European situation. Yet its title is very often used by the revisionists as a kind of slogan or fetish against Marxist-Leninists. It is also used to try to justify the 'left' labour-revisionist alliance strategy of the Communist Party of Great Britain, by means of statements torn entirely from context. It is as well to begin by making clear that this is not the dispute with Dick Jones (Marxist Number 13). His argument is that it is easier to expose Labour when they are in power. People can learn from their own experience in such a situation, and this is the most advantageous and efficient learning that can take place. He opposes both Parliament and Social Democracy and supports the line of revolutionary seizure of power and proletarian dictatorship. With this proviso as his position, we must none-the-less state that we disagree with his specific tactical line, and the purpose of this article is to try to show the sources of his error and to offer an alternative view on the tactics for the next Parliamentary election, in the context of a broader consideration.

To avoid the accusation of formalism it is necessary to consider the essence of Lenin's article, the end to which his tactical advice was directed. It is further necessary to consider the relationship between the tactics advocated, and the concrete political circumstances which gives meaning to those tactics.

Most generally the article had the intention of detailing those tactics necessary to bring about revolutionary overthrow of the bourgeois state. It is a handbook for revolution, particularly concerned with pointing out the nature of the scientific Communist outlook, in contrast to the various 'abstract' or 'pure' versions being put forward at the time.

The collapse of the Second International and the mass betrayal by socialist 'leaders' in various countries with regard to national chauvinism and parliamentarianism, had produced a situation in the international movement very similar to that existing today. New parties, new principles and tactics were

being worked out in conditions of reaction from, and abhorrence of the opportunists and betrayers. Deep revolutionary feelings of groups and organisations often took the form of indiscriminate rejection of all institutions and tactics seen to be connected with the opportunists. As Lenin points out this is 'infantile', i.e. a feature of the movement at its early stage, and incorrect in that it does not distinguish between the form and content of tactics. In form, there might be similarities between the tactics employed by revolutionaries on the one hand and opportunists on the other, but in content and intention, there was all the difference in the world.

Groups of Marxist-Leninists in Britain and other countries have recently had similar experiences. Reacting from the betrayal of the modern revisionists, they have dismissed a whole range of tactics, not differentiating their content when applied in a revolutionary manner, from the formal similarity to the tactics of modern revisionists.

However, vital differences in the concrete situation in Britain and the world must be analysed before the essence of Lenin's advice may be separated from the specific form that it took at the time. With regard to Britain, Lenin was writing at a time when there had been no experience of a Labour Government. There is a qualitative difference between this, with its implications for the masses and the experience that advanced class elements had had of the Labour leaders opportunistic nature. Lenin was concerned to show that despite their exposure to such advanced elements, it was necessary, essential, for the Labour Party to be exposed in action, as a government.

'... I want with my vote to support Henderson in the same way as a rope supports a hanging man ... The impending establishment of a government of Hendersons will prove that I am right, will bring the masses over to my side, and will hasten the political death of the Hendersons and the Snowdons ...'

(*Left Wing Communism, English edition*
Peking 1965, page 90.)

'... if Henderson and Snowden gain the victory over Lloyd George and Churchill, the majority will in a brief space become disappointed in their leaders and will begin to support Communism, (or at all events will adopt an attitude of neutrality towards the Communists) ...'

(*Left Wing Communism*, page 85.)

This last statement gives a clear indication as to the particular political context in which Lenin was writing. Not only was it a time when the masses had not had the experience of Labour as a government, which would lead them to reject illusions about it, it was also a time of impending parliamentary and political crisis.

'In Great Britain ... conditions for a successful proletarian revolution are clearly maturing.'

(*Left Wing Communism*, page 86.)

So Lenin's advice was given at a time of impending parliamentary crisis, when the main factor likely to assist the bourgeoisie was the deceiving nature of the Labour Party, which had not as yet been in power. The situation today is very different. There have been six Labour governments, and although one may detect in embryo a parliamentary crisis, the crisis of capitalism has yet to be focussed on the political level and at parliamentary institutions in particular.

As for Lenin's hopes, the history of the working class movement in Britain has yet to be analysed in a Marxist way. For one reason or another working class experience of social democracy was not crystallised at that time, and political mass learning did not take place in the manner in which Lenin predicted.

Lenin focussed on the Labour Party because of its importance for the bourgeois constitution, for parliamentarianism. Without Labour, the bourgeoisie would have been faced with incredible difficulty in maintaining the parliamentary form. (Of course fascism in one form or another would have been introduced, but this was seen as a one-way ticket.) We too must focus our attention on the main element of the bourgeois state, and from *that* point analyse its supports and weaknesses.

Monopoly capital depends on Labour today, not only in the political sense (though it is getting sterling service there), but in a more profound and long term sense, ideologically. Labour is the continuing testament to the openness of the corridors of power. If it no longer conveys notions of fundamental change to the electorate, it does demonstrate that power is not held in a few hands, and that by waving tweedledum at tweedledee the electorate have some control over their own fate. (In some trifling and marginal areas this may be true.) They can choose between the brand names — Tory or Labour. This illusion of choice, reinforced by the legitimacy and continuity that the bourgeois constitution bestows is

the basis for the very existence of parliament. And parliament is the anchor upon which the shifting ship of state depends. Changes here, brought about by crisis and precipitating further crisis, can have only two outcomes — open fascism or revolutionary change. Labour and its equivalent in other countries, is one of the basic factors for the continuance of bourgeois society.

From this position it is correct to state that in Britain now parliamentarianism and social democracy are inextricably linked. Dick Jones accepts this position but he obscures the actual nature of the relationship by describing parliamentarianism and social democracy as 'twins' and 'synonymous'. This implies parity of importance of institutions. In some 'democratic' capitalist countries parliament exists without social democracy. In none do they exist without an equivalent. The label, i.e. 'Labour', 'Democrat', 'Nationalist' etc., is immaterial, as long as in accordance with their specific historical background, the people accept it as it is presented, an indicator that they are really free to choose. This is an important distinction to make, because it means that the politics and traditions of such parties are of subordinate importance. It also means that we should concentrate our attention on a destruction of the formal aspect of social democracy in Britain, that is to say, upon the illusion of freedom, upon its constitutional role.

The Lesser Evil?

Here the situation differs considerably from the twenties and even thirties. At that time, change, not preservation of the bourgeois state, was a basic component in the appeal of Labour to the working class. It was necessary at that point to concentrate political energy upon the exposure of the specific programmatic claims of Labour. The task has shifted now, and it is in some ways more simple. The myth of real difference between the two parties is no longer central in terms of programme. It is now possible to move to a direct attack on parliamentarianism, without having to expose the bogusness of the Labour claims to socialism.

Dick Jones says: 'This vast section will demonstrate its faith in Parliament and the Labour Party, no matter how cynically some may do it, by turning out in their millions in the coming general election.' It is the nature of the faith, as indicated above, that is the important question. The faith is not the socialist intentions of the Labour Party. (How many workers after these years of Labour 'socialism' have any idea of what real socialism is?). But it is in the freedom that parliament represents. They choose the lesser of two evils, and sometimes the difference between the two evils is so small in their minds that they will choose because of the voice or face or some irrelevant personal aspect of the party leader. It is

not faith in socialist claims and promises that we have to attack, therefore, but perception of the situation as being a choice between two evils, according to the rules of the game. The only way we can do this is by offering an alternative — don't play the game, don't be forced into a false and hypocritical 'choice'.

Two further points must be made in passing. The description, 'Parliamentarianism and the Labour Party are synonymous' is used to imply that exposure of parliament must be by way of exposing Labour, and it has been indicated that a distinction must be made between the exposure of Labour in a formal sense, which is necessary, and exposure of claims to socialism which is not necessary. This statement has another aspect to it though. It implies that a campaign to persuade workers not to vote is motivated by a refusal to utilize parliament, to the maximum extent to which it can be used. This is not so. A campaign seeking abstention is directly concerned with parliament, and with basic exposure of the fraudulent nature of the bourgeois state. It has as its basis the conception that it is not the superfluous 'exposure' of Labour that is needed, but the mobilization and education of numbers of people, in a clear demonstration that the illusion of the 'sacred freedom to vote' no longer holds. It is based on the notion that it is no longer Labour, but the parliamentary process that must be shown to have lost the confidence of the working class. A refusal to become involved on the parliamentary issue would take the form of ignoring the election altogether.

The Growing Abstention

The second point is that a relatively small section of workers and other elements do still believe in Labour as a path to socialism. They are rank and file members and political supporters. While in some ways these people are more advanced than the abstainer, in other ways they are more retarded. They have an affinity to socialism, and recognise it as the only alternative to the present situation. However, they are still at the stage of belief in Labour's claims and socialistic promises. In this regard they are more retarded than those who take a lesser-evils view, or those who take the view of a plague on all your houses. They are to be found particularly in the unions, and recognising their position, different tactics must be applied in order to manifest to them the nature of the social democratic union leaders. In all though, the half-spoken view that a Labour deceived man is better than a Liberal or Tory deceived man must be dragged into the open. Such a view is and has been a serious impediment to mass work. It is based on the notion that there is a left to right continuum, and that judgement can be made in degrees. This is fallacious, there are qualitative

differences between those who support the revolutionary path, and those who do not. The working man or woman who supports a 'left' MP is as much out in the cold as one who supports a foaming at the mouth right wing Tory, despite subjective motivations and intent.

The view which has been put forward here of disillusionment with the socialistic promises of the Labour Party can be taken a stage further. A section of the electorate have developed their disillusionment and have ceased to participate in the game of charades. From the 1950 election to the 1966 election, the percentage of those bothering to vote has declined from 84 per cent to 75.8 per cent. This is without encouragement from any political party or group, and in the face of all the hysteria whipped up by the mass media. A bourgeois commentator Professor R. Rose, writing in the Times (March 11 1970) says:

'Another indicator of dissatisfaction with the party system is the decline in turnout at every general election since 1950. Among twenty nations only five have a higher proportion of voters staying away from the polls at general election time. A generation ago it was fashionable to argue that low turnout was proof of popular satisfaction. People did not vote because they had nothing to vote against. Fashions change in universities as well as parliaments. Today such apathy is often considered a sign of disengagement from the system.'

If such people can come to make such an analysis is there any excuse for Marxist-Leninists to dawdle behind? Worse still, in the face of the failure of all the propaganda organs to stem a decline in the vote, who is going to volunteer for the position of a modern Canute?

Discussion on the question of voting or abstention at the next election is in itself somewhat misleading unless an attempt is made to provide a broader context. A positive contribution of Dick Jones' article is that it shows the necessity for work to provide a concrete programme of tactics on as broad a scale as possible at national level. A possible negative outcome of the article might be concentration of attention on the very narrow and restricted question of electoral tactics. It is important to emphasise Lenin's statement:

'... The action of the masses — a big strike, for instance — is more important than parliamentary activity at *all* times, and not only during a revolution or a revolutionary situation.'

(*Left Wing Communism*, page 55.)

The problem of the next election is a problem leading immediately to mass work and mass organisation. It is easy enough to say what is needed in mass organisation, but that is not the point being

made here. The next election and our activities in connection with it must be seen as an opportunity to begin to build a mass movement. It is not merely a question of organisational discomfiture at the lack of a line, but a question of utilizing any and every opportunity we have of communicating our distinctive and correct outlook, *in tactical form*, to the greatest possible number of people. It is in this light that the line must be put forward — '*DON'T VOTE, ORGANISE!*'

This is no plea for apathy or political somnolence. It is a slogan whose implementation depends on the transformation of opting-out abstention into opting-in abstention. It requires a direct and vigorous campaign, to the limit of our resources to give a specific political character to abstention, to encourage abstention, and to explain the full and correct political significance of abstention to those who now do so.

Need to Organise

But this is only half of the slogan — the other half calls for organisation. The beginning of this organisation will come from the campaign itself, but it will have a positive, constructive and aggressive character, and should not be limited to mere reaction to the election. As has been said above, the Labour Party is a critical feature of parliamentary 'democracy'. The call to organise would have the strategic objective of doing as much damage, on as wide and deep a scale as possible, to the Labour Party as an institution. It would seek maximum destruction and discrediting. The task of smashing the Labour Party is complex, and not just a matter of shouting slogans. A campaign must have objectives at various levels, therefore. It must be combatted at both national and local electoral levels. This must be in the slogan of abstention. Should conditions permit in the future we should stand a few anti-parliament and anti-council candidates. At the organisational level we must win over or neutralise rank and file membership. The tactics here are assorted, but for example joining, disrupting and bringing out branches etc. in particular circumstances, might be considered. Again, slogans about the evil of social democracy are not enough. We must appeal to the political consciousness of the rank and file, to their sense of class solidarity and desire for socialism. A most important organisational aspect of the Labour Party is in trade union links. These must be severed, and at the same time, other political links must be created. The political levy, and the possibility of local autonomy in its spending, might be considered here, and tied up with the notion of militant and political workers' associations.

The advocacy of such a campaign runs the risk of being accused of wishful sloganising, unless it is linked to specific features of the situation *here and*

now. It is not being suggested that million upon million of workers are within easy reach of our propaganda. With a clear commitment, and with some initiative and imagination an impact far in excess of our size could be produced. We should be willing to accept tactical alliance with other organisations in pursuit of campaign objectives.

Two great tactical advantages which the 'Don't vote — organise!' approach has over the vote to expose line (the political case notwithstanding), may be also seen clearly when the specific nature of the situation at this time is looked at. Firstly, we could not, organisationally, influence or contact more than a few thousand workers in a vote to expose campaign. Yet they are the workers who are closest to us, and politically most advanced. They *know* the nature of social democracy. Are we going to ask them to recreate illusions long since shed, so that they may shed them again to demonstrate the efficiency of our formula? Secondly, the massive technical problem of putting forward the same policy — vote Labour — at the formal level, as is put forward by the whole spectrum of political dross from the CPGB to the Trots, to substantially the same audience does not arise. The essence of this problem — how to differentiate our own position — seems insoluble. With an abstain/organise approach such differentiation is immediately apparent. We do not put forward a retrogressive policy to advanced workers, and we have the possibility, if we make good use of every opportunity, of securing wide dissemination of our views.

Harder Task For Labour "Lefts"

What happens if our wildest aspirations are attained, if substantial numbers do not vote, and if we attract some of the responsibility for a Labour defeat? Will we be dismissed as 'lefts' and 'infantile'? Unless it is posited that the working class position is basically different under Tory and Labour governments it seems hard to sustain this view. The *styles* certainly vary, and we can be sure of more obvious class conflicts, and a more direct state-worker conflict.

The Labour Party would certainly be demoralised, and this would provide an environment in which to attack and dismember it. The notion of it rallying around the 'left' MPs is plausible, but it will not be Benn, Greenwood, Castle, Stonehouse and others of the litany long recited by the CPGB. We can choke these people with their public records, anytime. Other true guardians of the soul of Labour will emerge, it is true, but they will not have the same easy task as during the last Tory years. At no time then was there an organisation in this country dedicated to the destruction of the Labour Party, *as a party*, and the construction of a mass workers' movement.

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LENIN

and the Birth of Bolshevism

Part Two

by Mike Faulkner

IN this part of the article I have tried to draw from Lenin's writing, during the period 1902-1904 and 1919-1920, essential elements of his teaching on the party. I have considered the views of some of his critics and tried to relate the principles of Leninism to the party-building tasks confronting us today.

LENIN chastised Rosa Luxemburg for ignoring the concrete facts of the Russian Party struggle, and for indulging in grandiloquent declamation about opportunism in the countries of bourgeois democracy, while saying nothing about the concrete manifestations of opportunism in Russia. He pointed out that his opponents in Russia ignored the Congress 'and by so doing leave all their assertions devoid of all foundation of fact.'

Lenin v. Trotsky

Typical of such opponents was Trotsky. He published an attack on Lenin under the title of 'Our Political Tasks' which he dedicated to 'my dear teacher Paul Axelrod'. Unlike Rosa Luxemburg, Trotsky was not viewing the Russian events from afar; he had been a delegate at the Congress. If the factual inaccuracies of the German socialists could be partly excused because of ignorance, this certainly wasn't the case with Trotsky, which is no doubt the reason why Lenin did not consider his criticisms sufficiently worthy of respect to warrant a reply.

E. H. Carr describes 'Our Political Tasks' as 'brilliantly vituperative'. Vituperative it certainly is. All the baseless Menshevik attacks are repeated. Much space is devoted to the charge of 'Jacobinism' and it is asserted that Lenin and his supporters are preparing to establish a 'dictatorship over the proletariat', of the preparatory stages of which it is said:

- '1) The preparation of the proletariat for the dictatorship is an organisational task which consists of preparing the proletariat for the receipt of an authoritative organisation to be crowned by a dictator.
- '2) The appearance of the dictator over the proletariat should be consciously prepared in the interests of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

'3) Deviation from this program is opportunism.' (Trotsky, *Our Political Tasks*, Connolly Books, 1969.)

At frequent intervals in his diatribe Trotsky comments acidly on Lenin's personal qualities and the quality of his Marxism — as he sees them:

'Dialectics has nothing to do with Comrade Lenin. He is firmly convinced that "opportunism leads to the Martovist and Axelrodist organisational views not accidentally but by its very nature, and not in Russia alone, but throughout the world".' (*Ibid*, p. 18.)

The section in double quotes is taken by Trotsky from 'One Step Forward, Two Steps Back'.

'This malignant and mostly obnoxious suspiciousness of Lenin, the flat caricature of the tragic intolerance of Jacobinism, is, it should be admitted, the heritage as well as the degeneration of the old "Iskra" policy.' (*Ibid*, p. 25)³

Although in later years Trotsky was to admit that he had made mistakes, the character of his admission can only lead one to conclude that he regarded his opposition to Lenin and the Bolsheviks between 1903 and 1917 as a matter of minor importance. He wrote in his autobiography:

'I must here add that the errors I have committed . . . always referred to questions that were not fundamental or strategic, but dealt with such derivative matters as organisation and policy.' (Trotsky, *My Life*, p. 161.)

The relevance of Lenin's teaching on the Party

The Second Congress of the RSDLP in 1903 revealed the political gulf between Bolshevism and Menshevism; the Bolshevik Third Congress of 1905 crystallised the differences. The 1905 Congress

stressed the need to 'organise the proletariat for an immediate struggle with the autocracy by means of armed struggle'. Throughout the revolution of 1905 and all the vicissitudes of subsequent years, through the organisational break with the Mensheviks in 1912 and up to 1917, the lines of demarcation between Bolshevism and every variety of opportunism were becoming more pronounced. The application of Marx's teaching on the dictatorship of the proletariat to the conditions of struggle in Russia was an important theoretical contribution of Lenin's during those years. Recognition of the need to carry through a *democratic* revolution against the autocracy did not detract from the emphasis he placed on the leading role of the proletariat and the necessity to consolidate its leading position after the overthrow of the autocracy, in order to be able to carry the revolution through to the establishment of proletarian power for the construction of socialism. Central to Lenin's perspective for the development of the struggle was his conception of the party.

To what extent can it be said that the organisational model elaborated in 'What Is To Be Done?' and in 'One Step Forward, Two Steps Back' was intended to be applicable at all stages of the struggle in all countries?

Lenin was not in the habit of establishing rigid rules for application at all times regardless of conditions. Quite obviously much of what he said in 1902 and 1903 about the type of party needed, relates specifically to the conditions prevailing at the time. This is clear from his explicit references to the different conditions prevailing in other countries, calling for different forms of organisation. Under conditions of secrecy the principle of electability could not be operated; in conditions of bourgeois democracy it *must* operate. At a later date, in the light of changed conditions, Lenin was to revise some of the views expressed in 'What Is To Be Done?'

It is necessary to separate those aspects of Lenin's teaching on the Party, which referred to the needs of a particular time and a definite set of circumstances, from the *essential* elements of that teaching. Basic to everything Lenin wrote on the subject is the idea of the party as a *vanguard detachment* of the proletariat. He never regarded social-democracy simply as 'the movement of the working class itself', and it was precisely the reluctance or inability of the non-Bolshevik adherents of social-democracy to move beyond the confused thinking and stultified organisations of the Second International that led him to break decisively with them. Whatever may have been the differences between the Russian Mensheviks, the left of the SPD and the German revisionists, they had in common a pronounced distaste for Lenin's political organisational principles.

Just as it is clear from his writings in 1902-1903 that Lenin never intended his formulas to be applied in *every detail to all situations*, it is equally clear that these and subsequent writings on questions of political organisation contain much that is profoundly relevant today. He was not thinking only of Tsarist Russia when he wrote:

'But it would be *Manilovism* (smug complacency) and *Khvostism* (following at the tail) to think that at any time under capitalism the entire class, would be able to rise to the level of consciousness and activity of its vanguard, of its Social-Democratic Party . . . To forget the distinction between the vanguard and the whole of the masses which gravitate towards it, to forget the constant duty of the vanguard to *raise* ever wider strata to this most advanced level, means merely to deceive oneself, to shut one's eyes to the immensity of our tasks, and to narrow down those tasks.' (Lenin, *Collected Works*, Russian edit., Vol. VI, pp. 205-06)

The Critics

Those who oppose Leninism (often in the name of Lenin) sometimes come close to arguing that in Lenin's scheme, centralism (whether democratic or 'bureaucratic') was intended only as a temporary expedient. This line of argument doesn't fit the facts. It springs from a deeply felt resistance to the idea of an organised political vanguard as necessary to the struggle for power. The Luxemburg view of 'social-democracy' as 'the movement of the working class itself' is counterposed to the theory of an advanced detachment of the class. In terms of organisation and political action, a gulf separates the two concepts.

Dealing with this question in his biographical sketch of Rosa Luxemburg, Tony Cliff misrepresents Lenin by repeating the 'Jacobin' argument, and proceeds to erect and demolish an Aunt Sally, when he says:

'A conscious, organised minority at the head of an unorganised mass of the people suits the bourgeois revolution, which is, after all, a revolution in the interests of the minority. But the separation of conscious minority from unconscious majority, the separation of mental and manual labour, the existence of manager and foreman on the one hand and a mass of obedient labourers on the other, may be grafted on to 'socialism' only by killing the very essence of socialism, which is the collective control of the workers over their destiny.' (T. Cliff; *Rosa Luxemburg*, p. 49)

Adherents of the Luxemburg view fail to grasp the fact that there is *no contradiction* between the theory of the party as a vanguard detachment, and

the creative revolutionary will of the masses. On the contrary, every successful revolution has shown that the very qualities in the masses that Rosa Luxemburg was so passionately concerned to release, can only be released and guided along a revolutionary path under the leadership of a Marxist-Leninist party.

Certain respected (and respectable) 'Marxist' scholars have the habit of listing numerous examples of statements by Lenin on this or that matter over decades, detecting apparently contradictory elements in his pronouncements on the same subject, and gleefully concluding that there is no central thread, no such thing as 'Leninism', which is simply a dogma invented by Stalin. Needless to say, such scholars (who incidentally, always find much to admire in Trotsky) have recently been writing prodigiously in the bourgeois press in celebration of Lenin's centenary. Typical of such writing is a recent article appearing in 'New Society' entitled 'The Fate of Lenin's Isms', which claims that:

'Localism, pluralism and democratism can be traced in Lenin's model of party organisation quite as much as the unqualified "centralism" of 1902-4 (which only recurs in the siege-years of 1919-21)' (P. Sedgwick, *New Society*, April 23, 1970)

The term 'unqualified centralism' doesn't tell us much, but the general meaning is clear: apart from three or four extraordinary years Lenin is supposed to have been an advocate of 'pluralism' (a nice, vague bourgeois term!) and 'democratism'. Enough has been said about 1902-4, but what about 1919-21?

The Second Congress of the Communist International

Reference may be made to the theses on the 'Fundamental Tasks of the Communist International', July 1920; to Lenin's speech on conditions of affiliation to the C.I. and to the conditions themselves. It cannot easily be argued that the conditions all communist parties were expected to fulfil before they could affiliate were conceived as temporary expedients because the USSR was under siege! From the Theses and the Conditions, it is abundantly clear that Lenin and the Bolsheviks were concerned to effect a decisive break with the organisations and organisational methods of the Second International, and that they saw as the only alternative, *Bolshevised* proletarian parties *operating democratic centralism*. According to Lenin's perspective this was necessary, not merely for the Soviet republic under siege, but for the world revolution. Condition 13 reads:

'The parties affiliated to the Third International must be built up on the principle of democratic

centralism. In the present epoch of acute civil war the Communist Party will be able to perform its duties only if it is organised in the most centralised manner, only if iron discipline, bordering on military discipline prevails in it, and if its party centre is a powerful organ of authority, enjoying wide powers and the general confidence of the members of the party.'

The Conditions variously demanded that all parties should periodically re-register their members, bring their parliamentary factions under control, 'wage a persistent struggle against the Amsterdam "International" of yellow trade unions', effect a 'complete and absolute rupture with reformism', and combine legal with illegal work — *everywhere* create a duplicate illegal apparatus, which at the decisive moment, could help the party to perform its duty to the revolution'. Statute 17 stressed: 'Needless to say, in all their work the Communist International and its Executive Committee must take into account the great diversity of conditions under which the various parties have to fight and operate, and should adopt universally binding decisions only on questions on which such decisions can be adopted'.

In his Theses Lenin calls for 'the violent overthrow of the bourgeoisie, the confiscation of its property, the destruction of the whole of the bourgeois state apparatus from top to bottom', and warns against:

'The common idea prevailing among the old parties and the old leaders of the Second International that the majority of the toilers and the exploited can acquire complete clarity of Socialist consciousness and firm Socialist convictions and character under the conditions of capitalist slavery, under the yoke of the bourgeoisie (which assumes an infinite variety of forms; the more subtle and also more fierce and more ruthless the given country is), is also the embellishment of capitalism and bourgeois democracy, is also the deception of the workers. As a matter of fact only after the vanguard of the proletariat, supported by the whole of this, the revolutionary class, or the majority of it, overthrows the exploiters, suppresses them, emancipates the exploited from their state of slavery, improves their conditions of life immediately at the expense of the expropriated capitalists, only after this, and in the very process of the acute class struggle, is it possible to educate, train and organise the broadest masses of the toilers and the exploited around the proletariat, and, under its influence and guidance, to rid them of the selfishness, disunity, the vices and weaknesses engendered by private property, and to transform them into a

free union of free workers'. (Lenin, *Selected Works*, Vol. 10, p. 165)

The Communist International was not *imposing* a set, rigid pattern on all communist parties; it was establishing the political and organisational prerequisites for membership. It was drawing a sharp line of division between parties of bourgeois reform and parties of proletarian revolution. Revolution had to be taken seriously and nothing, absolutely nothing of the laxness, the liberalism, the 'democratism' which had debilitated the Second International could be tolerated. This apparent harshness was not just a response to the needs of the moment, but an expression of the heightened political consciousness brought about by the Bolshevik revolution, a recognition of the enormity of the tasks facing the world proletariat. It is evident from the documents and reports of the Second C.I. Congress that revolutionaries are being urged to develop a completely new type of party which will be capable of meeting every onslaught of the bourgeoisie. There should be no illusions that under conditions of bourgeois democracy there was no need to build an 'illegal' organisation.

Thesis No. 12 reads in part:

'In all countries, even the freest, "legal" and "peaceful" in the sense that the class struggle is least acute in them, the time has fully matured when it is absolutely necessary for every Communist Party systematically to combine legal with illegal work, legal with illegal organisation. For in the most enlightened and free countries, those with the most "stable" bourgeois-democratic system, the governments already, notwithstanding their false and hypocritical declarations, systematically resort to secret black lists of Communists, to endless violation of their own constitutions in order to render semi-secret and secret support to the White Guards and to assassinations of Communists in all countries, to secret preparations for the arrest of Communists, to placing provocateurs among the Communists, etc., etc. Only the most reactionary philistinism, no matter what beautiful "democratic" and pacifist phrases it may be cloaked in, can deny this fact, or the imperative conclusion that follows from it, *viz.*, that it is necessary immediately, for all legal Communist Parties to form illegal organisations for the purpose of systematically carrying on illegal work, and of fully preparing for the moment when the bourgeoisie resorts to persecution.' (Lenin, *Thesis No. 12, Selected Works*, Vol. 10, pp. 172-173)

In all essentials this description undoubtedly fits the conditions prevailing in Britain today.

Some present tasks

In Britain, as in most other capitalist countries, Marxists are faced with the task of re-constructing the revolutionary movement; of replacing those parties which still bear the name 'communist' with real communist parties which will be able to lead the working class to victory in the struggle to overthrow bourgeois society. The history of the working class movement throughout the world has shown the truth of Lenin's famous dictum 'without a revolutionary theory, there can be no revolutionary movement'. It has also shown that without a proletarian revolutionary party there can be no proletarian revolution. There is nothing to suggest that this will not also be the case in the future. About the need for a revolutionary party, there is no room for argument. But there is, and will for some time remain, much argument about what constitutes a revolutionary party in present-day conditions.

It would be futile to attempt to draw up a blueprint for such a party. Although no one imagines that it will suddenly spring into existence, fully matured and faultless, some comrades seem to think that it is only possible to start on the organisational task of party-building *after* a perfected abstract model has been worked out on paper, and such a view too often becomes the basis for sideline criticism of any and every step taken by others toward the building of a party.

Without doubt most of the problems involved in reconstructing the revolutionary party will only be solved in the course of practice. That doesn't mean, though, that we should go to the other extreme and imagine that things will somehow 'work themselves out' without very much thought about theory.

The term 'Marxist-Leninist' is too often used as a talisman nowadays. It is often considered necessary only to announce oneself to be a 'Marxist Leninist', or to append the abbreviation 'M-L' to a group or organisation in order to establish a special 'sanctified' state of innate superiority over all other contenders for the title 'revolutionary'. But genuine Marxist-Leninists must earn their spurs.

A party calling itself 'Marxist-Leninist' is making a serious claim and defending a glorious tradition. Such a party, existing in the conditions of Britain today, will need to relate the teachings of Marx and Lenin to these conditions. It will need to understand that 'Marxism-Leninism' is not some magic formula with the aid of which all problems can be solved. Convenient formulas, catch phrases and stereotypes too often take the place of serious Marxist thought and analysis.

There must be a real coming to terms with the problems facing the working class in the advanced capitalist countries at the present time. In the course of building a new revolutionary party there will have to be a serious study of the almost universal (in the capitalist world) degeneration of the old parties into revisionism. It does not help much to ignore the history of the movement or to argue, for instance, that the CPGB has always been revisionist, which amounts to the same thing. There is need for much more than 'revolutionary' forms, slogans and symbols. The content of policy, inner-party life and the relationship between party and class needs also to be revolutionary, for these are matters which will determine whether an organisation will gain the respect of the workers, whether it will grow and continuously extend its influence until it really becomes a 'vanguard party'. Declarations of support for China and Chairman Mao do not in themselves confirm the revolutionary quality of anything, for such things may be merely formal, and devoid of any real meaning in terms of living struggle. Whether or not a communist party has really learned from Marx, from Lenin and from Mao Tse-tung will in the long run be determined by whether it is able to integrate with, command the respect of, and give revolutionary leadership to its own working class.

Changed World

The world has changed enormously since Lenin died and only a dogmatist would argue that everything he said applies just as much to Britain in 1970 as it did to Russia in 1903 or 1920. But only a revisionist would argue that the *essential character* of a communist party as defined at the Second World Congress of the C.I. is not as relevant today as it was then. Nowhere in the world has there been a successful proletarian revolution without the leadership of such a party.

Regarding the tasks facing revolutionaries in Britain, one or two questions concerning party-building deserve the closest attention.

Democratic Centralism

Marxist-Leninists cannot afford to treat lightly the related questions of centralised leadership and democracy. The majority of communist parties throughout the world turned into bureaucratic-centralist machines devoid of all semblance of democracy. Those comrades with experience in the CPGB will know at first hand the difficulties of a minority which knows itself to be in the right, faced with a bureaucratic leadership enjoying majority support which invokes 'democratic centralism' in defence of its betrayal of Marxism. Ways must be found to ensure *from the beginning* that the prin-

ciples of proletarian democracy are *genuinely* and not merely formally linked to the vitally necessary principle of centralism and strict discipline. Lack of attention to this important matter cannot be tolerated. There will need to be full and prolonged discussion on the subject and it cannot be abstract discussion.

Criticism and self-criticism

Self-criticism is still more talked about than practised. But it is essential to the healthy functioning of a proletarian party. Mao Tse-tung's 'Combat Liberalism' should be read and re-read; it is universally relevant. But criticism (not opportunist, but serious, proletarian-principled criticism) must also extend beyond matters concerning the inner life of the party. An open, enquiring approach to all political questions, big and small, national and international must be encouraged. Amongst some comrades there is still an attitude of mind that has more in common with Roman Catholic faith than with Marxism. Accordingly, it is felt that certain matters should not be discussed; that certain questions are best left alone because there may not be a line on them, or that whatever the line is, it must be right. In the past this led to an uncritical attitude to everything the Soviet Union did — a point perhaps best illustrated by the fact that only a handful of people in the CPGB criticised Khrushchev revisionism *before* the Communist Party of China did so. Marxist-Leninists can accept nothing on faith; faith has nothing in common with Marxism.

Legal and illegal work

It seems apparent that almost universally under the conditions of bourgeois democracy communist parties have seriously neglected Lenin's warning quoted above concerning legal and illegal work. Needless to say, hard facts on this are difficult to find, but all the indications are that insufficient attention has been paid to the question and grossly inadequate preparation has been made to meet the contingencies of illegality. Most probably a leadership operating in a bourgeois democracy, *really does not* seriously expect that it may find itself one day under conditions of fascist dictatorship. Of course it is ridiculous to argue that such a view is pessimistic and that we have to prevent the bourgeoisie imposing fascism. This kind of naivety breeds the feeling that 'it won't happen here', and leads to communist parties operating exclusively on an open, legal level.

It should never be forgotten that the Communist Party of Germany, with its mass working class support, armed detachments, large parliamentary and trade union representation, was all but decimated in a matter of a few months in 1933. A more recent

and poignant example of what can happen when a communist party cherishes illusions about bourgeois democracy is the fate of the Indonesian Party in 1965.

It is not only a matter of *defence*. Preparation for the ultimate class conflict (which will *not* take place under conditions of bourgeois legality) *demand*s the building up of an alternative leadership and organisation which will be capable of giving practical leadership to that struggle. It may be said with certainty that any party calling itself communist which fails to take such steps is in fact a revisionist party.

More than ever we need to study the teachings of Lenin. The basic premises of Leninism are as valid today as ever they were, and wherever the struggle for liberation is waged, the example of Lenin inspires men. In this centenary year, British Marxist-Leninists can best honour him by working the harder to build a Party genuinely founded on Leninist principles.

³ Ten years later in the context of another polemic with Rosa Luxemburg on the national question, Lenin had occasion to make the following remarks about Trotsky: "Trotsky has never yet held a firm opinion on any serious question relating to Marxism: he always manages to "creep into the chinks" of this or that difference of opinion, and desert one side for the other." (Lenin, *Selected Works*, Vol. 4, p. 286).

Parliamentarism

Continued from page 8

If Labour win, as they may do, the coming peaks of crisis for British imperialism will produce further and more serious attacks upon the working class. The corporate-state aspect of social democracy will become more and more discernable, and the task of exposing the bourgeois state will be facilitated in this way. Our record and our organisational work will give us the ear of wider sections still of working people.

It is advocated that a mass campaign be initiated, with the help of whatever tactical alliances may be made, and utilising every suitable avenue to secure publicity on the slogan — 'Don't vote, organise!' This campaign to be seen as truly mass, with mass as opposed to restricted parliamentary objectives. The response in at least three areas that have been canvassed to some degree, Bristol, London tenants and Yeovil, should be immediate and productive. It is held that the case for such a campaign is abundantly established on both the political and organisational levels, and that it has reality and feasibility overwhelmingly on its side.

In terms of the Marxist-Leninist movement, a particularly important benefit must be noted. It presents a means of combating doctrinarism and isolation which is a prominent and destructive aspect of

the present state of the movement. It offers a means of overcoming dogmatism whose manifestation often takes the form of mechanical reference to Marxist texts in response to contemporary problems, or an introverted club mentality characteristic of those who are saved despite the world.

This is not yet a revolutionary period, but events move fast, and crises mature overnight. It is worth remembering what Mao said of mass work at a similarly volatile time:

'Every revolutionary party and every revolutionary comrade will be put to the test, to be accepted or rejected as they decide. There are three alternatives. To march at their head and lead them? To trail behind them gesticulating and criticising? Or to stand in their way and oppose them? Every Chinese is free to choose, but events will force you to make the choice quickly'.

(Report of an Investigation of the Peasant Movement in Hunan.)

This was true of the mass movement in China's countryside. It is also true of the increasing rejection of political charades by great numbers of the people in this country.

Correspondence

Discussion on Stalin

from Hilda and Edward Upward

WE WOULD very much like to see a discussion in *The Marxist* on the role of Stalin. We do not think that modern revisionism can be understood unless the period of Stalin's leadership is opened up for discussion. Revisionism can hardly be said to date from 1956. We ourselves are ex-CPers who were fighting the revisionist British leaders in the years 1947-9. We left the CP but continued for some years after that to support Stalin and the Soviet Union. It was the apparent approval of the CPSU for the revisionism of the Western Parties which made us feel that further struggle for an anti-revisionist party in Britain at that time was useless.

Although certain corrections of the policy of *Looking Ahead* were made after the Declaration of the Nine Parties, the publication of *The British Road to Socialism* in Pravda in 1951 seemed to endorse its revisionism. If Mao today can boldly come out against revisionism why did Stalin fail to do so in his life-time?

We are very disturbed when we find writers in *The Marxist* classing Stalin with Marx, Lenin and Mao. Surely it must be understood that serious discussion is urgently required on the whole period of Stalin's leadership.

We very much appreciate *The Marxist* and wish it every success.

Nationalism and the Proletarian Revolution

by C K Maisels

'Comrade Lenin draws the following conclusion; "Marx had no doubt as to the subordinate position of the national as compared to the labour question." Here are only two lines but they are decisive. And this is what some of our comrades who are more zealous than wise should drill into their heads'. (Stalin)¹

MARXIST-LENINISTS see everything (right up to the realisation of Communism) from the point of view of class struggle. Therefore we must ask 'what class interest does nationalism serve, in what historical period and region?'

To assist us in this class analysis let us examine in depth the fundamental tenet of Marxism-Leninism on the national question.

Marxists proclaim the right of all nations to self-determination. This is not an abstract bourgeois legal or 'moral' thing we recognise but purely a method whereby the bourgeois nationalistic mystification can be readily disposed of, so that the most fundamental contradiction between capital and labour, be laid bare for all the masses to see and grapple with:

'The obligations of Social-Democrats (Communists) who defend the interests of the proletariat and the rights of a nation which consists of various classes, are two different things.

'In fighting for the right of nations to self-determination the aim of Social-Democrats is to put an end to the policy of national oppression, to render it impossible and thereby to remove the grounds of hostility between nations, to take the edge off that hostility and to reduce it to a minimum.

'This is what essentially distinguishes the policy of the class-conscious proletariat from the policy of the bourgeoisie, which attempts to aggravate and fan the national struggle and to prolong and sharpen the national movement.

'And this is why the class-conscious proletariat cannot rally under the "national flag" of the bourgeoisie.' (Stalin, emphasis added)²

This is why 'our program (for self-determination) refers only to cases where such a movement (for secession) is actually in existence.' (Lenin).³ The last

thing Marxist-Leninists do is to fan such a movement. This is only common-sense, since we are trying to dispose of national prejudices generally. Anything else would be absurdly self-defeating.

Now, if we assume for the moment that the Scots are still a 'nation' in the Marxist (objective) sense ('A nation is a historically evolved stable community of language' [Gaelic, English, Lallans, Arcadian?] 'territory, economic life' [Union of Crowns 1603, Union of Parliament 1707] 'and psychological make-up manifested in a community of culture'.) (Stalin)⁴ would the movement for Scottish autonomy be objectively progressive? Would it aid the class struggle against capitalism-imperialism or divert the masses from that struggle? This is the only possible criterion for Marxist-Leninists.

An answer to this must be based on investigation, not on subjective conceptions, and as historical materialists we have to examine the whole background of nationalism historically to understand its present role in the world and particularly in Britain.

We find that nationalism in its modern form dates from about the French Revolution of 1789. It is well understood that this revolution was a bourgeois anti-feudal revolution and the beginning of a series of such revolutions throughout Europe. It is also well known how nationalism was engendered in that revolution, Frenchmen being encouraged to regard the new Republican state as their own, since all were citizens, in contra-distinction to the old Monarchist attitude of the state being of, and belonging to, the King — 'L'état c'est moi.' Now (1789) it was Liberté, Égalité, Fraternité (initially Propriété) now one was proud to be French. Thus, 'Vive le Roi' became 'Vive la France, Vive la République' in the myth that all men being equal (constitutionally) all had a community of interest in 'France, La Patrie' and of course in her economic development. This ideological formulation (nationalism) was and is always necessary for the bourgeoisie in setting up capitalist states. It is a key part of the bourgeois superstructure, pinning the economic base in position for

the full development of capitalism. By this device, although capitalists might own the means of production and live in idle luxury, the proletariat sells its labour 14 hours daily for a subsistence wage — still all had an overriding interest in the preservation of 'their nation' and in the domination of other nations.

It is clear therefore that the concept of nationalism at that time (18th Century) was part of the then progressive anti-feudal revolution, whereby the bourgeoisie became the ruling class, replacing the landed aristocracy.

That this device of nationalism is used by the rising bourgeoisie in its struggle to overthrow feudalism and establish capitalism is further proved in studying subsequent bourgeois revolutions (e.g. Central Europe, 1848).

However, that this is a practice not only confined to the European bourgeoisie of the last few centuries, can be seen in the contemporary anti-feudal/anti-imperialist struggles as waged in Egypt and Algeria (Arab Nationalism), China (Chinese Nationalism — while the revolution there was led by the bourgeoisie) Indonesia, etc.

'Throughout the world, the period of the final victory of capitalism over feudalism has been linked with national movements.' (Lenin)⁵

'Therefore the tendency of every national movement (my emphasis) is towards the formation of national states (original emphasis) under which these requirements of modern capitalism are best satisfied.' (Lenin)⁶

Hence we find in the liberation movement today, in Asia, Africa and Latin America, since the struggle there is at this stage mostly against the local feudal aristocracy supported by foreign imperialism, that the progressive forces can and do include the local (national) bourgeoisie in a fight to rid the country of feudal and imperialist domination. While the working class and the peasantry are involved in this struggle in order to clear the way for socialism, the local bourgeoisie are of course only taking part in order to gain scope for the development of their own capitalism in the country concerned. However, when still at the anti-feudal/colonial stage, the struggle embraces nearly all the classes pursuing their different but temporarily concurrent class interests, (proletariat, peasantry, petit bourgeoisie, big bourgeoisie) with the exception of the feudalists and comprador bourgeoisie; the struggle thereby taking on a 'national' character, i.e. the struggle is one which is 'nation-wide', it is a struggle of national liberation. We therefore see that the nationalism of this struggle is an expedient developed as a result of the prevailing

economic/political conditions within the three continents.

Thus, in no way is this situation that prevailing in modern Europe/North America.

Nationalism, as we have seen, is always the tool of the bourgeoisie, historically (1789, 1848, etc.) and in the 20th Century also (Nazi Germany, Fascist Italy, Falangist Spain, etc.) At present in the three continents there can be a brief identity of interest between the national bourgeoisie and the working masses against feudalism/imperialism, and hence this nationalism for the moment can play a progressive role. However, now that the progressive role in Europe of the bourgeoisie is long finished, so too is the progressive role of nationalism and only its reactionary role remains.

'First, the advanced capitalist countries and the United States of America. In these countries, the bourgeois, progressive national movements came to an end long ago.' (Lenin)⁷

Reaction is exactly the role of nationalism in Britain today. Let us look at Scottish and Welsh nationalism. These two regions were among the first to industrialise (18th Century), and hence develop a modern proletariat.

The proletariat is by far the biggest single class in Britain, and in every single region of it. Scotland and Wales have long been bastions of social democracy. It is well known that they traditionally provided the Labour Party with a permanent majority of their representation at Westminster, and indeed it was on a militant sounding platform of reformism and 'socialism' that the Labour Party even added seats to its permanent majority in these regions at the elections of 1964 and 1966. However, after only about twenty-five months in power widespread disillusion with the Labour Party set in and nowhere more so than in Scotland and Wales; for in no places were the economic problems more pressing (due in part to the centripetal effect of London's ten millions), in no places was there such strong traditional loyalty to the Labour Party, and hence in no places were the electors' initial hopes higher. As this disillusion became more widespread and more bitter it was not confined to disenchantment with the Labour Party itself but, more seriously, with the very concepts of reformism and social democracy. The bourgeoisie, seeing that the social-democrats were not fulfilling their designed 'heading-off' function, but were in fact producing the opposite effect (being unable to produce the goods, owing to the present crisis of world capitalism), had therefore to find a satisfactory substitute before things got out of hand and the masses started to challenge the bourgeois-

democratic system itself. What so convenient as a replacement as that constant handmaiden of the bourgeoisie — nationalism.

From being tiny inconsequential entities with a few members, little funds and less organisation, the Scottish National Party and Plaid Cymru became suddenly the dominant parties in Scotland and Wales. How did this startling transformation come about? Anyone reading the bourgeois press from late 1966 onwards can clearly see how both the SNP and PC were manufactured for the job of providing the diversion traditionally offered by the Labour Party. The encouragement of these parties was not confined to the press but was aided by the other mass media. Both SNP and PC were tailor-made as mass parties for the job at the necessary time and place. It is claimed that the SNP and PC have working-class support and indeed they do have some, for it was to gain this very thing that they were after all created by the bourgeoisie. So also do the Labour, Liberal and Conservative parties have some working-class support, but no Marxist would call any of them proletarian parties, and neither can the SNP or PC be so called. In fact the chief strength of the SNP and PC is the petit-bourgeoisie and small bourgeoisie, whence the great majority of their leaders is drawn. Hence to speak of Scottish or Welsh (or English, for that matter) nationalism as a progressive force, or of a Scottish or Welsh national-liberation struggle, is to play the game of the bourgeoisie.

'The imperialist epoch and the war of 1914-16 have particularly brought to the forefront the task of fighting against chauvinism and nationalism in the advanced countries.' (Lenin)⁸

The ruling classes of Scotland and Wales have long been merged with that of England and the working-class of Scotland, Wales and England has long been one homogenous working class. Nowhere in Britain has capitalism not triumphed over feudalism (although many vestiges inevitably remain) and thus nowhere in Britain can capitalism or its ideological adjunct, nationalism, play a progressive role.

'In Western, Continental Europe, the epoch of bourgeois-democratic revolutions embraces a fairly definite period, approximately from 1789 to 1871. This was precisely the period of national movements and the creation of national states. When this period drew to a close, Western Europe had been transformed into a settled system of bourgeois states which, as a general rule, were national uniform states. Therefore, to seek the right of self-determination in the programmes of present day Western European Socialists is to betray one's ignorance of the ABC of Marxism.' (Lenin)⁹

It is the monopoly capitalist class of Western Europe/North America which oppresses alike all the peoples of Western Europe/North America, and also super-oppresses the peoples of the other three continents. Hence to speak of 'English' Imperialism only helps divide the proletariat in Britain; British US monopoly capitalists must be specifically identified as the imperialist oppressors. If the English proletariat derives significant material benefit from the exploitation of Scotland and Wales (as in fact sections of the British proletariat does from British Imperialism in the three continents) then how do we explain the low material standards in the North-East (Newcastle), North-West (Liverpool) and South-West (Cornwall) of England? The centripetal effect of an unplanned economy will inevitably concentrate prosperity in the London area and precisely the same, only on a smaller scale, is true of the Edinburgh area.

'Uneven economic and political development is an absolute law of capitalism.' (Lenin)¹⁰

Unfavourable economic development is no excuse for chauvinism, no matter how socialistically disguised.

'The interests of the working-class and its struggle against capitalism demand complete solidarity and the closest unity of the workers of all nations; they demand that the nationalistic policy of the bourgeoisie of every nationality be repelled.' (Lenin)¹¹

Workers' Party of Scotland please note: Lenin makes no exception here or anywhere for the Scottish bourgeoisie.

It is therefore obvious that liberation for Scottish and Welsh workers can come about only by overthrowing capitalism itself. If this is not done no amount of secession can ever succeed in bringing freedom, only diversion.

Having said this, how do we come to grips with the nationalist parties? It should be done by the methods already employed in dealing with the other diversionists, e.g. social democrats (LP, CPGB, etc.) by:—

(1) separating the leadership from the working-class members who are genuinely progressive, but are misled into supporting the nationalists —

(2) discrediting the leadership by exposing them as agents of imperialism, since basically they aim to retain the status quo (dictatorship of the bourgeoisie) —

(3) showing that imperialism is the enemy of all the world's peoples including Scots, Welsh, English, Irish and Vietnamese, that the nationalist parties are therefore nothing but diversions, that liberty and economic social advance can only come about by the complete overthrow of the present system, i.e. capitalism, and its replacement by socialism; led by a party of the working-class, a Marxist-Leninist Communist Party.

Bourgeois Nationalism

We cannot tag along with, follow behind, or try to lead these nationalist movements or parties — we must resolutely struggle against them while propagating scientific socialism. We must constantly hammer home that SNP and PC and their like are nothing but tools of the ruling class. The nationalists will not just go away if we ignore them; the bourgeoisie in their crisis have increasingly a great need for nationalism. We must do mass work and popularise Marxism-Leninism in order that the proletariat shall not be side-tracked in the epoch of the decline of imperialism and the transition to socialism.

As Stalin plainly pointed out in 'Deviations towards Nationalism' (1934): 'It should be observed that the survivals of capitalism in the minds of men are much more tenacious in the sphere of the national question than in any other sphere . . . The deviation towards nationalism is the adaption of the internationalist policy of the working-class to the nationalist policy of the bourgeoisie.'¹²

The Workers' Party of Scotland is in relation to Nationalism and the SNP, just as Trotskyism (and Revisionism) was in relation to social democracy and the Labour Party, until only recently when some objective reality affected even them. The Trotskyist 'Revolutionaries' believed (some still do) that the Labour Party was the party of the proletariat and could be pushed to the left and revolution. A couple of years of Labour government convinced even some Trotskyists that the LP is nothing but a bourgeois diversionist party, and they are now leaving the LP like rats from a sinking ship. Any Marxist-Leninist could have told them that the Labour Party never was, is not and never could be, a proletarian party; that it cannot be transformed and therefore must be destroyed. Trotskyists and Revisionists believed that the LP and social-democracy was fundamentally progressive (but with wrong leadership) and could therefore be used. They did not understand (and still do not) its intrinsic diversionist role.

The misguided comrades of the WPS believe that Scottish (also English, Welsh, Cornish and Irish) Nationalism is a progressive force, and can therefore be used. They either do not understand, or

opportunistically refuse to accept the fundamental role of nationalism.

The Trotskyites and Revisionists are now being forced by events to abandon the LP if they wish to retain any revolutionary image. Having sunk into social democracy via the Labour Party they now have to do a complete about face, write off all their previous work for the LP and attempt to fight against it. This because the progressive mask of the LP is now torn off.

At present Scottish Nationalism and the SNP have the appearance of a progressive movement to some honest people who have almost no political understanding. Deceived by this, sincere people will work in and around the nationalist movement only to discover, in some years' time, that they have been most cruelly misled, have been wasting their time and worse — have been propagating an at best diversionist movement which they will then have most fiercely to destroy. Comrades must not fall into this trap; they must not be deceived by the 'potentially progressive' facade of nationalism. They must unite to expose it now, as part of their struggle against all bourgeois diversion. Instead of tragically wasting their time fostering nationalism (in whatever form), they must arm the masses by creating a powerful, unified and correct Communist Party.

The other side of the SNP nationalism ticket is inevitably the hoary old call for Federated Communist Parties (in Britain). This fundamentally anti-Leninist position is adequately disposed of in the 'National Question and the Struggle for Socialism in Britain.'¹³ Quoting in that document from 'Stand of the GCM (M-L)' it is stated:

'The struggles for liberation in Russia and China, where the problems of nationality were more acute than is the case in Britain, were led successfully by one united party acting on behalf of all nationalities within the then existing state structure. Representing as they did all nationalities these parties recognised the right of any nationality to independence. Likewise the struggle against the British capitalist state must be waged by a single party which recognises the right of nations to secede.'

It will further be observed that after the victory of the revolution and the formation of the nationalities into autonomous republics there still remained one united Communist Party in the USSR and likewise in People's China.

So here we have it, pointed by logic and proven by history — one state machine — one Communist Party.

After the defeat of British monopoly capital and its replacement by the dictatorship of the proletariat, since in Britain today there remains some subjective nationalism in Scotland and Wales, the right of those places to secede, should the masses therein so desire, will be upheld. However, socialism will not be achieved and the right to self-determination won if the communist movement is fragmented into separate parties.

Here we need only conclude by quoting Stalin:

'Experience has shown that the organisation of the proletariat of a given state according to nationality only leads to the destruction of the idea of class solidarity.

'All the proletarian members of all the nations in a given state must be organised in a single, indivisible proletarian collective body.'¹⁴

This is the duty incumbent upon the WPS, and from which they absolutely cannot excuse themselves. If they attempt to do so, the proletariat will sooner or later demand a reckoning and the chauvinists will be dealt with as enemies of the people.

'Such nationalism is not so transparent, for it is skilfully masked by socialist phrases, but it is all the more harmful to the proletariat for that reason. We can always cope with open nationalism for it can easily be discerned. It is much more difficult to combat a nationalism which is masked and unrecognisable beneath its mask. Protected by the armour of socialism, it is less vulnerable and more tenacious. Implanted among the workers, it poisons the atmosphere and spreads noxious ideas of mutual distrust and aloofness among the workers of the different nationalities.'¹⁵ (Stalin)

SUMMATION

Nationalism is always a key part of bourgeois ideology. Nationalism is being fomented now in Scotland and Wales in order to provide an alternative to centralised reformism.

Marxist-Leninists must on no account help spread this new diversion but must resolutely expose and attack it.

Under some historical circumstances the bourgeoisie (and hence its ideology) can play a progressive role. The national bourgeoisie (and hence nationalism) can still play a (temporarily) progressive role in parts of Asia, Africa and Latin America; but certainly not in Western Europe/North America — the heartlands of capitalism-imperialism.

The masses of Scotland and Wales do not see secession as their only way to liberation. They do seek some drastic remedy for the economic social problems of Scotland and Wales (as do the regions of England).

This remedy can only be the direct transition to socialism via the proletarian revolution. There is no intermediate stage in metropolitan imperialist countries.

The petit and small bourgeoisie in these areas, wanting a larger slice of the imperial cake, offer nationalism and secession as the peoples' salvation.

The monopolists in the present time of crisis see this nationalism as the lesser of evils. We know socialism is what the masses are searching for. We must prove it to them so that they will fight for it under guidance of a united, democratic-centralist, Communist Party.

Scientific socialism and nationalism in Scotland and Wales (also England and Ireland) are mutually exclusive. One can only be propagated at the direct expense of the other. To say that both could or should be popularised is merely rationalised chauvinism, in complete opposition to Marxism-Leninism — Mao Tse-tung Thought. 'Consistent Social-Democrats (Communists) must work solidly and indefatigably against the nationalist obfuscation, no matter from what quarter it proceeds.'¹⁶ (Stalin)

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A review by Colin Penn of

A History of the Albanian Party of Labour

Chapters one and two; published by the Institute of Marxist-Leninist Studies of the Central Committee of the Party of Labour of Albania

ALL WHO HAVE STUDIED the policies of the Albanian Party of Labour since the late 1950's must have been struck by the number of occasions on which statements by the Party have cast new light on political developments. The Albanian Party was the first, in 1960, publicly to resist Khrushchev's attempts to bully the Chinese into accepting a revisionist standpoint, incurring the bitter enmity of the Russian leader. Since then Albania, in an exceptionally difficult geographical position and with its natural resources largely undeveloped, has never wavered in its assertion of opposition to revisionism, its adherence to Marxism-Leninism, and its determination to remain independent.

One therefore turns with high expectation, which is not disappointed, to these first two chapters from the official History of the Party, up to the end of the war in 1945. It covers a time when the Party had yet to earn the confidence of the people, when it led a desperate armed struggle for national independence against both Italian and German fascism, a period when it 'learned by doing'.

Before World War II Albania was the most backward agrarian country in Europe. Nearly 90 per cent of the population was engaged in agriculture and only 4.5 per cent of the national income was derived from industry. Illiterates made up over 80 per cent of the people.

Discontent was widespread among nearly all sections and in 1924 there was a bourgeois-democratic revolution. It lasted only six months, however, before it was overthrown by forces led by the reactionary Zog (who afterwards proclaimed himself king), helped by Yugoslav, Serbian and White Russian forces.

It was in 1929 that the first Communist group had been set up, in the town of Korca, where Enver Hoxha graduated in 1930. He was jailed for his part in a student protest and later went to France to continue his studies. He established connections with the French Communist Party and contributed to *l'Humanité*. Returning to Albania as a Communist in 1936, he immediately threw himself into the struggle.

The united front policy approved by the 7th

World Congress of the Communist International in 1935 marked a new stage for the Albanian movement. The Korca group considered that in Albania at that time the national question took precedence over the social one. To engage in battle with no forces beyond the working class would, they believed, be adventurism. In spite of numerous difficulties and splits caused by Trotskyists the new line had much success. At the elections in June 1938 the democratic block got 86 per cent of the votes and a number of measures were taken to improve conditions for the poorest people.

When, in 1939, Mussolini attacked Albania, Zog fled the country and the big bourgeoisie threw in their lot with the occupationists. The workers' movement assumed a pronounced anti-fascist character and common struggle gradually pushed differences into the background.

The Trotskyists in the Korca group began to violate its decisions openly. They said that Albania had no proletariat, no class struggle, and therefore no basis for a communist party. They also called the peasants reactionaries who could never become reliable allies.

In 1941 the Communist Party of Albania was formed — and in the same year Enver Hoxha was sentenced to death, in his absence. The new Party began to prepare the people, ideologically and militarily, for an armed uprising, refusing to wait for the training of experienced cadres with a firm theoretical grounding, as some wished to do. They did their utmost to link themselves with the masses and to convince them politically. Their aim was to unite the masses within the National-Liberation Front.

Armed struggle by partisans began to spread and in certain liberated regions National-Liberation Councils both exercised the functions of local government and mobilised the people for struggle. The partisan detachments also helped the peasants in their work.

Towards the end of 1942 the big landowners and reactionary bourgeoisie, alarmed at the progress of the National-Liberation Front, formed their own

organisation to oppose it. The Trotskyites helped them, telling the people that struggle against the invaders would lead to the destruction of Albania as a nation. At other times they put forward leftist slogans, such as: for a proletarian revolution, for the dictatorship of the proletariat. These could only lead to disunity.

The Communist Party throughout exercised the greatest forbearance in dealing with those who did not agree. They aimed to work with all who opposed the aggressors, however unstable they might be, and again and again sought to convince their opponents — and did convince many of them — that they were taking the wrong road.

Communist underground work among soldiers, gendarmes and policemen increased rapidly. Partisan attacks on German and Italian troops multiplied. Vicious reprisals only increased hatred and stirred revolutionary enthusiasm. Most middle and high school students took to the mountains. The Albanian National-Liberation Army was set up in 1943, consisting at first of 10,000 men. It fought a People's War with conscious discipline, love for the masses, honesty, very high morale, and brilliant tactics. The Party explained to the people that political power would not be granted by anyone but must be taken by force.

After the capitulation of Italy the Anglo-American Mediterranean Command began to exert pressure on the partisans not to launch attacks on the reactionary forces, although these forces had aligned themselves openly with the Germans. The Command tried to get British and US officers accepted as advisers; in London Churchill held talks with ex-King Zog on the possible formation of a government in exile.

Just as the Germans announced that the Party and the partisans had been wiped out, the partisans began a counter-offensive. Attack kept the morale of the army high and by May 1944 they numbered 35,000. Over 50,000 men were used by the Germans against them, but by the end of October all the south of the country had been liberated, while only five cities in the north were still in German hands. The Anglo-American Command wanted to send paratroops and special units to 'assist' the Albanians, who declined the offer. British commandos were landed in the town of Saranda, after the Liberation Army had wiped out the German garrison there, but the Liberation Command insisted that they should leave.

By 24 November 1944 the whole country had been liberated. The Nazi troops were pursued into Yugoslavia. During the war a million Albanians tied

down more than 15 Italian and German divisions and put out of action some 70,000 of them. The Albanian people achieved full national independence. The war had been an anti-fascist and democratic revolution, during which elements of socialist revolution developed. The war against the invaders was interwoven with the war against the main exploiting classes.

Through the Communist Party the working class played the leading role. Though in the Party and in its leading organs the number of workers was small, this did not prevent the working class from leading. Almost the whole of the petty bourgeoisie joined in the war and showed remarkable patriotism. The middle bourgeoisie vacillated. The intellectuals proved to be patriotic. The most active force in the war was the youth, first being the city youth, workers and students; then came the peasant youth, who formed the majority.

The Communist Party was the inspirer, organiser and leader of the National-Liberation War. The History sums up thus:

'While maintaining an upright attitude towards all allies and making a correct assessment of the assistance and support from abroad, the Party never expected others to bring freedom to the Albanian people. It resolutely carried into effect the principle of the primacy of self-reliance and taught the people to realise clearly that liberty is not granted but is won by bloodshed, with many hardships and sacrifices.'

The History is written in a very clear and straightforward way, making it easily readable. None of the difficulties the Party met, or its mistakes, are shirked. One looks forward eagerly to the two volumes still to come, which will deal with the difficulties of a different kind which were encountered after the war, and the Party's firm struggle against revisionism.

HISTORY OF THE PARTY OF LABOUR OF ALBANIA is obtainable from *Banner Books Ltd.*, 90 Camden High Street, London NW1. Price 8s 3d

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WITHOUT COMMENT

THE FOLLOWING is reprinted from the November 13th 1967 edition of Life Magazine dealing with the 50th Anniversary of the Russian Revolution.

'Whenever 38-year-old Albert Mikhailovich Paramonov talks about his job as manager of the Ivanovo Textile Combine, one of the largest mills in Europe, his voice reveals the new excitement he feels.

"I can hire and fire," he says. "Nobody tells me how many workers I must have any more; that's my decision. I can raise a foreman's wages and I can give out bonuses. And I can go directly to the consumer with my fabrics."

All routine stuff for any Western industrialist, but for Paramonov these are freedoms scarcely a year old, granted him under the economic reforms now beginning to change not only Russian industry but also the old hard-line Marxist approach to economics. These partial reforms, emphasising the profit motive and personal initiative at the managerial level, have freed Paramonov and other consumer-industry bosses from a system of centralised planning that prescribed minutely what they would make, how they would make it and how they would sell it.'

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