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**1980**

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Of Emerging  
Class Struggles**

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OVER THE  
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*From the Editors to You . . .*

With this first issue of 1980, let us wish you a very happy and successful new year. Here at our office we are very optimistic about the continuing growth of Political Affairs, in content and in circulation, in the next year.

A special thanks is in order for those of you who have so generously contributed to our holiday fund appeal. Additional contributions are coming in daily, as are gift subscriptions. We will give a full "accounting" of the results of our annual appeal in our next issues, as well as individual acknowledgment of each contribution. If you haven't done so yet, please take a moment out now to send us *your* holiday gift to help us meet the challenge of the 80s.

Just a reminder . . . Our special double issue on the 60th Anniversary of the Communist Party USA is still available for only \$1.00. Bulk orders of 5 or more are at a 40 per cent discount. The supply is limited, however, so please send your orders in now.

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**Coming in February:  
Roscoe Proctor on the problem  
of plant closings and runaway shops.**



# 1980: Year of Unity and Advance

HENRY WINSTON

*Below is an interview by Political Affairs with the National Chairman of the Communist Party which forecasts the key struggles of 1980 and the decade ahead.*

**Q:** What do you see as the most important issues facing the people of our country in the coming year?

**A:** As readers of *Political Affairs* are aware, the people of the United States will be confronted this coming year with multiple problems, most of them stemming from the deepening crisis of world capitalism and the growing decline of U.S. imperialism as a world power. As well, tremendous advances are being made by socialism, led by the Soviet Union; a rapid rise of the entire movement for full national independence, and the growth of anti-monopoly movements in the capitalist countries, including in the United States, where the working class and its allies, Black and white, are playing a leading role.

Living standards are now plunging downward. Unemployment is increasing. Our cities rot and decay—not where the rich live, but where the workers and the poor live—especially in the ghettos and barrios. Inflation is uncontrolled. And there are now also concerted efforts to turn back the civil rights gains of previous years—meager though they were—and to place the major burden of hard times on the Black, Puerto Rican, Chicano, Native American Indian, Asian-Pacific peoples, and other racial and ethnic groupings, which strikes with special severity the jobless youth.

There is also the major problem of plant closings and runaway plants. And the question of how to cope with long range energy needs.

But as you've asked me what I consider to be the main issue for the coming year, let me say unequivocally, it is that of peace and political and military detente. Will there be an end to the arms race, or a further acceleration of it? This is issue number one—the issue of issues. This question relates to all other issues integrally.

How can there be an end to inflation if one of its major causes is swollen arms expenditures? How

can we meet the problems of our people at home, if tens of billions of added dollars—our tax dollars—are used to give another whirl to the nuclear arms race? How can we cope with the need for the conservation of energy resources—as we are constantly implored to do—when such vast quantities of energy are spent on armaments and war?

We now face a new danger. In the past months we have witnessed a reversal in the process of detente and the first signs of what could lead to another Cold War. This implies more frequent international crises and military confrontations, including the dangers of nuclear war.

The Carter Administration says it favors SALT II, but at the same time it gives way to the pressures for ever increasing arms expenditures, even insisting that the NATO countries accept a new generation of more sophisticated nuclear weapons aimed at the Soviet Union. These weapons are also directed against the anti-imperialist movements, movements for national and social emancipation, and in turn place increasing burdens upon the working class and all peoples in the United States.

If these are installed, it can only lead to an even more accelerated arms race. The Federal Republic of Germany just recently agreed to have both Pershing and cruise missiles placed on their soil. The Carter Administration also brazenly increased U.S. military forces in the Caribbean and in the Persian Gulf, and is now training a special military force to be used in new military adventures abroad, and it is seeking to breathe new life into the system of aggressive military blocs, headed by NATO.

The fight for the ratification of SALT II must mean no further escalation in arms spending. This is a moment to demand *immediate* ratification of the SALT II treaty. Ratification of SALT II must lead rapidly to SALT III, which can begin the process of cutting back on existing arms and open the era of disarmament. This is the most important single issue confronting this nation and the world.

**Q:** How will the elections figure in the conduct of the class struggle this year?

**A:** The 1980 elections will be meaningful only to the extent that the main issues confronting the people become the basis of the electoral debate. All candidates, whether presidential, congressional, state or city, must be compelled to state their positions on the key issues and without *ifs* or *buts*.

Are they for detente with the Soviet Union or for confrontation? Are they for more arms spending or for an immediate large-scale cutback to meet human needs? Are they for curbing the power of the giant corporate monopolies, or for permitting them to continue to rob the people? Are they for affirmative action to end racist inequality in jobs, education and living standards, or are they for continued inequality and discrimination?

The significance of the Party's electoral campaign and the candidacies of Gus Hall for president and Angela Davis for vice president, is that they will be projecting into the national debate the real issues confronting the nation and the people. Of course, whether their voices get to be heard by the majority of people depends upon whether the giant media monopoly is compelled to give them equal time over TV, radio and in the daily press.

In 1980 the election campaign will be the alpha and omega of the work of the Party. It will be the most important avenue for Communists and non-Party progressives to influence the national debate on issues, fight reactionary and anti-Communist trends and advance genuine people's solutions.

In 1968 our Party was on the ballot in two states; in 1976 we were on in nineteen states and the District of Columbia and in 1980 we're fighting to be on the ballot in thirty states. Special emphasis must be given to achieving ballot status in the most important industrial states. Success in this fight will constitute a mighty blow to the anti-democratic and anti-Communist laws designed to keep us, as well as other challengers to the Democratic and Republican parties, out of contention.

We usually hear a lot of talk about freedom of

speech, but there is no real free speech when the candidates of the corporations can buy all the time they need, or get it free, while those of the Communist Party and other independent challengers, who do not have the same kind of funds, are kept from the right to participate fully and equally in the debate. Success in winning ballot status will enable Gus Hall and Angela Davis, as it will tens of thousands of voters, to express their real feeling about conditions today.

**Q:** What prospects do you see for the advance of the democratic forces, including the Communist Party?

**A:** The prospects for an advance of the progressive movement and of the Communist Party in 1980 are good, despite the confusion and rhetoric that will emanate from the election campaign. The prospects are good because an increasing number of people are beginning to understand the need to combat state monopoly power for the menace that it is.

They have correctly held the giant oil monopolies responsible for the scandalous rise in fuel and gasoline prices, rejecting the lies that this was due to an actual shortage. This is an important step forward in consciousness.

We also see increasing signs of progressive coalescence on issues, and these, though loose and amorphous as yet, are nonetheless harbingers of a great anti-monopoly coalition up ahead.

Also for the first time since the Cold War years, we see important labor leaders and growing sections of the working class who now identify with socialism, as they understand it, as a goal. If these forces can keep from being divided during the election campaign, and continue to unite around issues, 1980 can be a year of important advance.

As for the Communist Party, which has all along been advocating and working for a great people's coalition against the corporate monopolies, the year 1980 will undoubtedly be one of further growth in size and influence.

Steel and metal-working members of the United Steelworkers of America (USWA) face a series of negotiations for new contracts in 1980 covering some 600,000 workers in the basic steel, aluminum, can and nonferrous metals industries. The pattern for these negotiations will be set in the basic steel industry, which opens formal negotiations in February. The USWA and the steel industry will be conducting these talks under terms established by the Experimental Negotiating Agreement (ENA) now in effect between the union and the major steel producers. Under ENA, the union is not allowed to strike, the companies pledge a three per cent general wage increase, and all issues unresolved by negotiation by April 15 are to be submitted to binding arbitration.

These negotiations take place under four lengthening shadows.

First is the combined effect of the developing crisis of overproduction in the entire economy and the ever-deepening problems of the steel industry in particular. It is generally agreed that we are heading into a depression, which especially affects steel output and employment. Unemployment is already up, with some 20,000 steelworkers recently laid off.

The second shadow looming over the negotiations, especially in basic steel, is the companies' accelerating drive to ruthlessly increase productivity through a combination of modernization of equipment and an unprecedented speedup campaign. Key to this campaign, especially at industry giant U.S. Steel, is a cutback in production capacity through the phasing out of older mills and even whole plants. The first stage of the drive, already announced, is USS's scheduled closure of 15 plants around the country, with a loss of 13,000 jobs. Steelmaking capacity will be reduced by one million tons.

The stated policy of the steel companies is to get out of all areas of production except those which show the highest profit levels. In fact, based on their pattern of new investments, it would be pos-

Mike Bayer is Steel Coordinator for the CPUSA.

sible to conclude that they want out of steel altogether. USS, for instance, allocated *all* of its money for new investment to non-steel areas. This "official line" of the industry is far from the truth. It ignores the fact that the steel companies are not opposed to expanding. In fact, they would like to expand; they just do not want to pay for it. We will return to this point.

The other side of this productivity drive is a speedup program aimed at increasing the rate of exploitation. In this category is the unprecedented campaign of harassment being conducted by the companies. It is no accident that this campaign has initially concentrated on minority and women workers. Counting on divisions among the steelworkers, the companies have tried, generally successfully to establish "precedent" that such harassment is a "management prerogative."

Along with this has come an attempt to throw even the minimal safety standards which exist out the window. Industrial accidents and deaths in the nation's mills are dramatically rising.

There has been a substantial increase in the ratio of foremen to workers, especially in those plants and mills where the companies are trying to get rid of "past practices" which they consider uneconomical.

Crew cutting and making people work out of their classification has also increased. Among craft workers there is a concerted effort to put maintenance people on piecework rates.

And, in ever greater numbers, jobs are being contracted out. All kinds of jobs . . . labor . . . skilled production worker . . . and maintenance. The new contracting out agreement is regarded by the companies as an open invitation to union busting.

The third shadow hanging over the negotiations is the role of the government as facilitator of industry plans. Whether it is as expeditor of mergers (for example, Jones & Laughlin and Youngstown Sheet and Tube), administrator of the trigger price system, dispenser of higher and faster depreciation allowances, or guarantor, and even provider, of

investment capital, the Carter Administration has assumed the task of helping Big Steel "become profitable." Nowhere has this been more obvious than in the refusal of the government to do anything about the 5,000 to 6,000 jobs already lost by the merger of J&L and Youngstown, the 13,000 cut by USS, and the refusal to discourage or prohibit future attempts to shut down plants.

Next year, metal workers will also have to contend with the government's wage guidelines and its new pay board. The fact that Lloyd McBride, USWA president, has joined this board is no help. The policy of the government is best summarized by Paul Volcker of the Federal Reserve Board. He said that U.S. workers will just have to get used to a lower standard of living in the future. This policy is aimed, first and foremost, at the USWA and the other organized sectors of basic industry. It is no accident that Volcker and President David Roderick of USS say practically the same thing on this subject.

Finally, steel and metal workers will have to contend with the lengthening shadow of class collaborationism. While McBride muted the overt collaborationist policies of the Abel administration immediately following his election, recently his posture has become more blatant. The contracting-out agreement, the agreement to arbitrate disagreements over what constitutes a local issue, the attempt to convince the American Bridge workers to accept wage cuts to increase USS's profits, are steps which increase the companies' ability to exploit the workers. Perhaps the furthest he has gone to date is his flat out statement that the union leadership will not oppose the current "shakeout" in steel. Current estimates place the cost of this position at 20-30,000 lost jobs during the next 3-5 years. Even in the face of USS's cut of 13,000 jobs, the International leadership has developed neither a political posture nor an economic program to fight for these jobs. They are prepared to see them go down the tubes.

Of course, the primary reflection of this collaborationist policy is that, at precisely the time when steel and metal workers are facing a concerted attack, the union leadership is doing less than ever to protect the rights of its members in the shops. In fact, the International leadership has spent more time trying to stop militant rank and filers, including rank-and-file local union officials, from

battling the company than it has defending the workers they are supposed to represent.

While the above presents a grim picture for the 1980 negotiations, not everything is going the companies' way.

### Emerging Forces

The most important fact is that the mass rank-and-file upsurge, which has the political content, if not the organizational form, of a Left-Center coalition of forces, continues as the dominant feature among members of the USWA, especially in basic steel, can, and copper, but including important sections of the other metal-working units as well as the old District 50 locals. These forces are represented in many local union leaderships.

They came to the fore because of their concern that the present disastrous course be changed. Emerging most dramatically in the course of the campaign of Ed Sadlowski for president of the USWA in 1977, they led the majority of the workers in basic steel, who supported Sadlowski's bid. In two districts, District 31 in the Gary-Chicago area and District 33 in the Iron Range of Minnesota and Michigan, directors who speak for this movement were elected. This rank-and-file base was also the source of most of the pressure from within the union to oppose the Weber anti-affirmative action suit. The rank-and-file base continues to be the source of progressive activity within the union.

Second, there have been some significant changes in the mass patterns of thought among steelworkers. Steelworkers are not "immune" to the effects of either inflation or unemployment. Jobs are being lost, not only for a couple of months due to some temporary downturn in production, but forever. Inflation has taken its toll even on the wages of steelworkers. SUB benefits will not work in a period of mass layoffs for those who most need them.

This awareness has contributed to a much higher level of militancy and consciousness of the need to do *something*.

Nowhere was this militancy more clearly expressed than in the reaction of the workers at American Bridge Works and the Youngstown Works of USS to the efforts of the company to increase profits at the workers' expense.

The American Bridge workers were told that if

they refused the company's demand of a three year wage freeze, the plant would be shut down. The workers knew these shutdowns were coming, but refused to be accessories to the plan. In spite of the International Union's defense of the company position, the American Bridge workers voted overwhelmingly to reject this blackmail.

In Youngstown the workers reacted with outrage to the company's announcement that they were shutting the plant down. For the past three years workers there have cooperated with the drive to make the mills more profitable. Despite this, these 3,500 workers were sacrificed on the altar of higher profit. Led by the local union leadership, hundreds of steelworkers went to Pittsburgh to demand from USS that they keep the plant open. When the company refused to speak with them, the workers stormed and occupied for some hours USS's corporate headquarters under the slogan "People Before Profits."

Third, the inter-relationship between the policies of the government and the companies has led to a much clearer understanding on the part of thousands of workers that their hopes lie primarily in the efforts of themselves and their fellow workers. Combined with this is the fact that the level of class consciousness, as reflected in class solidarity, has increased. Support for the efforts of other members of the class, coal miners, shipyard workers, textile workers, etc., is becoming more and more general.

In steel, the ability of the companies to sell their song of going broke, of imports, of pollution requirements, has been dramatically reduced. While there remain sections of workers who still subscribe to these ideas, they are much less widespread than they have ever been. This is especially true insofar as the question of the ENA is concerned.

The basis for the ENA has been exposed as patently false. The question of imports is now exposed for what it is . . . the result of the pricing policy of the U.S. industry, their inability to compete in certain areas because of their refusal to invest in new technology and the U.S. industry's refusal to expand to meet demand. (U.S. steel capacity has declined almost two per cent over the past two years. During this time, steel demand in the U.S. has increased four per cent.)

Also positive is the fact that, primarily as a result

of the struggle waged around the Weber case, there is a new consciousness and appreciation of the need for class unity. While there has been no sharp change in the position in which minority and women workers find themselves as a result of the companies' vicious discriminatory policies, the possible levels of unity around issues of common concern to all workers is greater than ever before. What is new at the present time is the increased awareness by growing numbers of white, male workers, that issues of discrimination against minority and women workers can be such an issue for them.

This is not to say that the companies have given up trying to divide the workers six ways to Sunday. Far from it! But, the ability of conscious elements to struggle for unity in the face of these attacks is greater than in over thirty years.

Finally, the Left, and especially the Communist Party, is stronger today than it has been since the early fifties.

### Issues in the Negotiations

Steelworkers are entering this period of negotiations facing the most vicious drive by the steel companies to roll back the living and working standards of workers since 1959. They intend to take away much, and are probably aiming for a 15-20 per cent cut in real wages over the term of the next contract. They intend to cut the work force by 30,000 or more workers during the next five years. In this they will be aided and abetted by the Carter Administration.

Steelworkers go into this battle with many weapons. There is a rank-and-file movement which is stronger than at any time since the early fifties; there are levels of unity between different sections of the union which are broader than at any time since the thirties. But they have to contend with an official leadership which is committed to class collaboration, which puts the interests of the companies ahead of the workers.

Such a leadership can be compelled to reverse its course. It was done twenty years ago when David McDonald, then president of the USWA, was forced by the militancy of the rank and file to refuse to buckle under to the companies' take-away demands. But this struggle will not be an easy one.

More than anything else, it will require a new level of leadership from within the rank-and-file. It

will require a stronger and more unified Left than exists now. Without such a Left, there will not be the impetus or guidance for steelworkers to chart a course out of the swamp of class collaboration. That Left will have to see as its main goal the building of a mass coalition of forces with the Center. This is the only effective road to challenging the companies' program of takeaway contracts and ever-weaker unions.

Within that Left the Communist Party will continue to play an important role. We reject all tendencies to separate the Party from this Left, and especially those which try to separate the Left from the majority of steelworkers.

The Communist Party has played an especially important role on the question of plant shutdowns. General Secretary Gus Hall's speech in Youngstown in December 1977, published as the pamphlet *Beat the Steel Crisis! Save Every Job!* was the first clear voice raised in the struggle against plant closures. The pamphlet by Rick Nagin, *Shakeout in Steel*, exposed the steel companies' long-term job-cutting program. In other statements since, the Communist Party has tried to direct the attention of steelworkers to the source of the problems they face and a winning strategy to overcome them.

Today, it is the Communists in steel who are in the front ranks of the fight for a decent contract, true equality of all steelworkers, a more unified Left, a broader rank-and-file movement and a stronger union, prepared and able to defend the interests of its members.

Rank-and-file forces in locals across the country have been trying to come to grips with the issues around the coming negotiations. The National Steelworkers Rank-and-File Committee, the only national rank-and-file organization now active, has summarized these efforts in a program for the contract negotiations. Their program is based on the following:

The primary issue is the ENA itself. It is not simply that the ENA denies the fundamental workers' right to strike in the abstract. The issue is the ENA as the obstacle to a decent wage . . . the ENA as the obstacle to a safe work environment . . . the ENA as the obstacle to a just seniority system . . . the ENA as the obstacle to the fight for jobs.

A continuing issue which is often tied to the ENA

is the internal union matter of membership ratification of contracts. Having engineered the defeat of this measure at the Basic Industry Conference last December, the McBride administration has forestalled action on this question until the next constitutional convention in August. The only possible way for the membership to have a direct voice in the ratification procedure would be for the Basic Industry Conference, which has the right to ratify, to decide to submit the proposed agreement to the membership.

Second, money will be a big issue. A 3 per cent wage increase with an inadequate cost of living adjustment doesn't sound like much in an era of 13 per cent annual inflation. "Three per cent doesn't pay the rent" is more apropos than ever.

Third, job security, especially for those in the older mills, is a major issue. As the workers at Youngstown Sheet and Tube and U.S. Steel found out, the current setup does not protect them. The shorter work week, as a measure for protecting jobs and creating new jobs at plants still operating is a central issue.

Preservation of life and limb is also high on the agenda most steel and metal workers have on their minds. Whether it's cancer in the coke plant or getting squashed by a coil on a shipping line, workers do not want to continue to mix their blood with the steel they pour in order to make the companies rich.

And, finally, the erection of structural safeguards against the companies' attempts to divide and rule. Expansion of plantwide seniority to every aspect of the production process on a truly plantwide basis. A new apprentice program based on affirmative action. They never used "objective" tests to segregate, they don't need them to get rid of segregation. Discrimination in the way the companies treat workers, whether by race, sex, age, skill or language must be brought to an end.

It is also a feature of the present crisis, and the new levels of consciousness among steelworkers, that public takeover of mills which the steel companies no longer want to operate has come to the fore as part of the answer to plant shutdowns. Local officials and rank-and-file members alike are seriously considering this option despite the refusal of either the government or the McBride leadership to consider any alternative to the closures.



In 1959 the steel companies tried to take back the gains of almost twenty years of organization. They failed because the workers were determined to fight for what they had. But the companies did gain something. They gained a twenty year period during which they were able to chip away at those gains.

In 1979 steelworkers face a similar situation. But steelworkers have resources of struggle much greater than twenty years ago. The test of the next year is to realize the objective possibilities of the moment.

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# Occupational Safety and Health: A Class Question

CATHERINE BERNARD

Perhaps nowhere is capitalism's placing of profits before the people's welfare more dramatic than in occupational health and safety. In industry's drive for higher productivity and increasing rates of profit, health and safety protection are callously ignored. American workers now suffer 2,000,000 disabling injuries per year on the job, 14,000 accidental deaths, 400,000 new cases of occupational disease and 100,000 deaths from job-related disease, according to the Department of Labor.

Occupational health and safety is a major economic question. Workers who are disabled by industrial accidents and diseases bear the brunt in wage losses and often in medical costs, unless they are able to work their way through the bureaucratic Workers' Compensation system, which generally provides totally inadequate compensation, and which is almost lacking in coverage for occupational diseases. Government health and safety standards are all subject to so-called "cost-benefit" studies before new standards can be implemented. If industry considers the costs of implementing these standards to cut too much into their profits, they pressure the courts to set aside or modify the standard, often successfully. In addition, pressures from unions, communities and government regulatory agencies on industry to invest capital in environmental and health protection technology is used as an excuse to close plants. An example is the steel industry, where the companies would rather import coke than bring obsolete and dirty coke batteries into compliance with federal regulations.

Occupational injury and disease is as old as work. New production methods and new production relations bring new types of health problems. The Industrial Revolution caused a dramatic increase in job-related injury and disease. During the early years of industrialization, safety standards were non-existent and accidents were rampant. As late as

1907, a Bureau of Labor report put the annual death toll from accidents at 15,000 to 17,500 out of 26 million male workers, triple the present rate. Official reports concluded that these high death rates could have been avoided by such simple precautions as machine guarding, enclosed passenger elevators, fire escapes and housekeeping and fire precautions.

Job diseases, some of them known for hundreds of years, also began to multiply. Lead, mercury, arsenic, silica and noise exposure slowly destroyed the health of workers, reducing their life span and permanently disabling them. These conditions worsened through the 1920s and 1930s and only began to be alleviated with the growth of the trade union movement.

The period following World War II brought new types of industrial health problems. The petrochemical industry was born, and has caused the rate of occupational cancer to reach epidemic proportions. New production methods created a rise in stress-related diseases, both physical and psychological. The dangers of pervasive radiation are only beginning to be acknowledged.

Declining conditions facing the working class in the last decade are reflected in the health and safety struggle. Inflation forces workers to place their emphasis at contract time on recovering lost real wages, often at the expense of other important issues. High unemployment, itself described by the head of the United Auto Workers research department as a major cause of occupational disease, makes the struggle around safety and health more difficult. Fear of losing their jobs stops many workers from complaining about unhealthy and unsafe conditions.

Runaway shops can force tradeoffs in environmental and health protection to keep industry from leaving for areas where regulations are less stringent. For example, a large sector of the asbestos industry, under attack for creating an epidemic of dust disease and cancer, has moved to Mexico and to South Africa. Being forced to comply with safety and health regulations is often used as the company's

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The author wishes to acknowledge the important collaboration of numerous activists of the Health Commission of the CPUSA in the preparation of this article.

justification for closing marginally productive or obsolete plants, but often the threat to close plants is an excuse to avoid compliance, as was the case when the government issued a strict standard for cancer-causing vinyl chloride. The industry, stating the costs of implementing the standard were prohibitive, threatened to close plants. (Later, as a result of improvements in production due to the new standard, the vinyl chloride industry was actually found to *increase* its profits!)

Despite these obstacles, the growing rate of disease and injury has caused the trade union movement to take up occupational health and safety as an issue for action.

### **Health and Safety Hazards in Key Industries**

Industrial workers face life-threatening hazards—silica, asbestos and other dusts, cancer-causing chemicals, heat and cold, stress, noise and toxic substances of all kinds. For example:

*Miners.* Miners' heroic struggles have left an indelible mark on working-class history. Many workers have followed the miners' lead. This is true in the fight for occupational health and safety. Hazards facing miners involve both the immediate threat, quick death in cave-ins and explosions, and longterm dangers from "slow starting" diseases such as Black Lung. Underground coal miners may work hundreds of feet below sea level, often in a stooped or kneeling position all day. In their drive for profits, the mine owners refuse to do even routine maintenance, resulting in cave-ins and accidents. Electrical hazard from faulty drilling equipment is another often reported problem. These hazards are fully preventable.

Black Lung disease is a direct result of mechanization of mining operations without the installation of proper ventilation systems. Coal dust churned up by machinery is inhaled by miners and scars their lungs until eventually they lose all ability to breath. The militant struggle by the rank-and-file Black Lung Association for the 1969 and 1978 amendments to the Social Security Act improved the possibility for miners to get some financial compensation for lung damage. But the job has only begun. Contrary to industry protests, this program is not costing the coal companies much money. Less than 15 per cent of the over 100,000 claims of disabled miners have been approved by

the U.S. Labor Department.

Prevention of Black Lung disease is entirely possible. It has been eliminated in the socialist countries. Great strides toward this have been made in some Western European countries. Prevention methods are not a secret. The answer is simply effective ventilation systems and free, accessible, preventive health services.

Early detection of lung disease is a vital necessity to stop the slow death of silicosis and Black Lung. The recent elimination of miners' health care clinics is tantamount to giving many a death sentence. Reports are that over 40 per cent of the once-effective network of miners' clinics are now closed. Coal mine owners are responsible for this, forcing the UMWA Health and Retirement Fund to turn over the clinic system to commercial insurance carriers. Deductibles and prepayments have replaced free, comprehensive care, and miners and their families now put off seeking care to avoid paying medical bills. Delays in payments from commercial carriers have caused doctors to quit the clinics. Reconstituting these health clinics will be a major struggle for the miners in the 1980s, but it will require a united effort with others who are also demanding their health rights.

*Steelworkers.* The safety and health problems of steelworkers were catapulted into the headlines when 15,000 coke oven workers, a large number of them Black, raised their voices against the cancer threat from coke gasses. This rank-and-file struggle rocked the leadership of the USWA and forced the Federal Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) to resist pressures from the steel monopolies to issue a weak standard for coke oven emissions. Public hearings on the coke oven standard held by OSHA heard the steel monopolies piously claim that they have reduced workers' health hazards through the "large amounts" of money spent to upgrade the coke ovens. But rank-and-file workers organized by the National Steelworkers Rank and File Committee told the hearing of the murderous conditions in the ovens. The Communist Party also testified on the need for maximum protection for coke oven workers. They presented testimony concerning the techniques developed by Soviet and Czechoslovakian safety and health experts to protect coke workers in those countries.

As a result of these hearings, OSHA established a standard on coke oven emissions that, if enforced, will finally provide some protection against cancer. The key, however, is enforcement of the standard, which the steel companies have ignored. By January 1980 all coke ovens are supposed to be in compliance with the standard, yet, as of Fall 1979 not one coke oven in the entire country is in compliance!

Steel foundries are hotbeds of industrial disease, particularly silicosis, a fatal respiratory disease. At U.S. Steel's Southworks foundry, 31 out of 70 workers were found to have a high degree of silicosis. The growing use of toxic chemicals in the steelmaking process adds new dimensions to steel hazards. A Johns Hopkins University study documented an alarming increase in cancer and other occupational disease, not just from the coke ovens, but for other steelworkers exposed to chemicals since the 1960s at the Sparrows Point Bethlehem Steel plant in Maryland.

*Auto Workers.* Speedup is the basic health threat to auto workers. The fight to eliminate forced overtime and to shorten the workweek is a central health and safety struggle for these workers. An important part of this struggle is to force OSHA to take responsibility, which they can by law, for the speedup issue and other issues of productivity when they affect worker health.

Heat, noise, lead exposure, silicosis and cancer are other major health problems in auto. Unbearably high temperatures have been the cause of several spontaneous strikes in the industry. In the stamping plants, auto workers face shattering noise levels which far exceed the current OSHA standard of 90 decibels. Amputations of workers' limbs are a common occurrence in stamping plants. Lead exposure in battery plants causes serious health damage and harms workers' reproductive systems. Working with asbestos, vinyl, chrome and rubber all increase the risk of getting cancer.

*Chemical and Oil Workers.* The consequences of the failure to determine and to make known the hazardous nature of industrial chemicals has become a front page news item. The now infamous case of vinyl chloride, which causes a rare form of liver cancer; asbestos, which will cause lung disease and cancer in approximately half of all exposed workers; the chemicals BCME and DPCP which

cause cancer and sterility—these are all examples of industry *knowing* the potential for disaster and doing nothing to inform the workers exposed. About 70,000 chemical compounds are in common industrial use, a number which grows by about 700-1000 per year. Until 1976, when the Toxic Substances Control Act was passed, most of these chemicals were not required to be screened or tested, and weaknesses in this law permit many chemicals still to go untested. (By contrast, in the Soviet Union and other socialist countries, no chemical can be introduced into common industrial production unless it has been tested in both short term and long term animal studies.)

The long term effects of most chemicals are unknown and we may be seeing the tip of a lethal iceberg today—chemical workers suffer cancer, skin diseases, breathing problems, neurological disorders and reproductive dysfunctions. Massive environmental contamination in New Jersey, PBB poisoning in Michigan, PCB dumping in the Hudson River area, the Hooker Chemical Love Canal dumping disaster—these are just a few examples of an industry blatantly ignoring the dangers to the lives of their employees and the communities around their plants.

Oil refineries have stopped the practice of "cracking down" (shutting down to conduct maintenance), and when this stopped, the oil refinery explosions which regularly hit the news started.

*Nuclear Power Workers.* The combination of the growing energy crisis and the utility companies' insatiable drive for profits has caused the proliferation of unsafe nuclear power plants. The Three Mile Island nuclear accident has forced the American public to face the dangers of nuclear power, among them the incredible hazard facing the workers in nuclear power plants.

In the nuclear arms industry, nuclear shipyard and uranium mine workers are daily exposed to radiation. Nuclear power plant workers are regularly contaminated, many of them called "sponges" because they soak up high levels of radiation, moving from one plant to another, trouble-shooting in defective plants. Nuclear shipyard workers have a cancer rate three times the expected rate. Uranium miners die of lung cancer at five times the expected rate. The use of unskilled, temporary workers for



high-exposure radiation work is a growing trend in the industry. There is no single regulatory agency overseeing the exposure and potential dangers to these workers. Various agencies share jurisdiction, all of them having different standards of what is "safe."

The growing movement against unsafe use of nuclear power, against nuclear weapons, and in favor of people's control of energy resources—uniting diverse forces, including many trade unions—provides some hope that this reckless endangerment of workers' and communities' health will begin to be controlled.

#### *Other Industries.*

Electrical workers are constantly exposed to the hazards of electrical voltage, radiation, solvents and such toxic substances as beryllium, cadmium, lead and mercury.

The killing of 51 construction workers at a West Virginia cooling tower was one horrible incident in an industry which is rife with instant death. The construction industry, with its seasonal production schedules, uncertain work opportunities and high rate of non-union labor, makes fighting for improved safety conditions extremely difficult.

Transit workers constitute a major industrial workforce, and they face eight hours of what passengers find unbearable for even two hours a day—ear splitting noise, heat and air pollution. Neglected maintenance has increased the accident rate.

In rail and truck transport, the movement of hazardous substances, often through densely populated areas, poses a grave threat to both the workers and communities. Regulations on transport of hazardous materials are poorly enforced, and the speedup pressure on transport workers makes a dangerous situation much worse.

#### *Special Problems of Oppressed Minorities and Women.*

Discrimination has caused racially and nationally oppressed workers as well as women workers to be concentrated in some of the most hazardous jobs. This has resulted in documented higher rates of job-related disease, injury, and death. The life expectancy for Black males in this country is 62.2 years compared with 71.9 years for white males. Occupational disease and injuries are to a great degree responsible for this difference. In comparing Equal

Employment Opportunities Commission employment figures for minorities and OSHA statistics on death and injury rates, it was found that fifteen per cent of Black workers are partially or permanently disabled due to job illness and injury, compared to 10 per cent for whites. Five out of every 100 Black workers are injured on the job each year, a rate 37 per cent higher than that for whites. Blacks have a twenty per cent greater chance of dying of occupationally caused illness than do whites.

Unemployment, high among minorities and women, has recently been cited as a leading cause of disease and death. The Joint Economic Committee of Congress published a study stating that a one per cent increase in the unemployment rate over a period of six years was associated with over 36,000 deaths through cardiovascular disease, cirrhosis of the liver, suicide and homicide.

Many high hazard industries also employ a large minority workforce. In the rubber industry, 60 per cent of Black workers mix cancer-causing chemicals. The largely unorganized textile industry, where workers die a slow death of Brown Lung disease, has a workforce that is 25 per cent Black, and 50 per cent women.

Native Americans who have been working as uranium miners since the early 1950s in the Southwest are now found to be dying of lung cancer and fibrosis of the lung at epidemic rates.

Agricultural workers—overwhelmingly Chicano, Puerto Rican, and other national minorities—in addition to working and living under the most degrading conditions imaginable, are exposed to highly toxic pesticides, which cause skin disease, neurological disorders, birth defects, and cancer. Workers are exposed while crops are being sprayed, as well as being forced to pick crops with pesticide residues still on them. Until very recently, the Labor Department permitted ten year old children to harvest crops sprayed with pesticides. Between 1950 and 1965, 60 per cent of the pesticide poisoning deaths in California were among children.

Women's increasing participation in production has brought with it additional and special health and safety problems for women workers. First, the double burden of housework and child care, in addition to work outside the home, places added stresses on women. Secondly, while jobs women

hold are generally not thought of as hazardous, in fact, in industries with high numbers of women workers, such as textile, auto, garment and electronics, some of the worst hazards exist. In white collar and service jobs, the hazards may not be as acutely dangerous, but they are equally prevalent.

Women workers are exposed to particular dangers related to their reproductive function. Many women have been faced with a choice between being sterilized and being unemployed. Discrimination against women who are of child bearing age is a prelude to a more extensive and sophisticated screening out of workers who are considered by industry to be at high risk for occupational disease. The fight for pregnancy leave with job security, and transfer to safer jobs during pregnancy with rate retention are important parts of the health and safety struggle.

### **Trade Union Action on Safety and Health**

In recent years and months, there have been many examples of the commitment of the American trade union movement to the struggle against unsafe and unhealthy conditions in the workplace. Karen Silkwood, killed when she tried to expose dangers in plutonium plants, is a martyr to many causes—the anti-nuclear power and women's movements among them—but she was first and foremost a courageous local union officer struggling to protect the members' lives.

In 1968, in response to worker and union pressures, the AFL-CIO created a Standing Committee on Occupational Health and Safety. From then until 1976, the committee never met. At that time Al Gropiron, then President of the Oil, Chemical, and Atomic Workers Union, and a militant on occupational health and safety, became head of the committee. Under Gropiron's leadership the committee brought AFL-CIO sponsored lawsuits against the Department of Labor, challenging certain OSHA standards and state OSHA laws which were inadequate. In September, 1978, the committee convened the first AFL-CIO Health and Safety Conference, which attracted 1200 delegates and established a new Health and Safety Department within the AFL-CIO.

These current efforts are a continuation of a long history of trade union activity for job safety. It is

no coincidence that the most dangerous industries, such as railroad, logging, and mining, were the targets of groundbreaking union organizing efforts. The infamous 1911 Triangle Shirtwaist Fire, where 146 garment workers, most of them young women, died, served to galvanize the widespread union support among New York City's garment workers. The perils of meatpacking were graphically portrayed by Sinclair Lewis' *The Jungle* and became legend. In the 1930s hundreds of Black workers died of silicosis while building a tunnel for Union Carbide at Gauley Bridge, W. Virginia, sparking an effort by unions to make silicosis a compensable disease.

Labor's efforts to improve job safety have traditionally been hampered by the employer's ability to keep standard-setting and enforcement of health and safety regulations on a state, rather than federal, level. While a few federal safety laws were on the books in the mid-1960s (such as the various Mine Safety and the Walsh-Healy Acts for government contractors) they were generally as unenforceable as the impotent state laws. The situation changed on November 20, 1968, when a coal mine in Farmington, West Virginia, owned by the Rockefeller-controlled Consolidation Coal Co., exploded, killing 78 miners. The impact of the Farmington disaster, combined with the miners' awareness that Black Lung disease had become epidemic, caused them to renew their push for stronger safety regulations, strict enforcement of coal dust standards and new compensation laws.

In March 1969, the 40,000 coal miners of West Virginia, with the support of the Farmington widows and the newly formed Black Lung Association, struck the entire state for one month until the legislature passed a Black Lung Compensation—Safety Enforcement Bill. This struggle for safety in the coal mines brought together the militant and moderate forces in the UMWA, and was an important factor in the growth of the reform movement which later unseated the corrupt Boyle machine.

Later that year, the miners were able to force the enactment of a similar federal bill—the 1969 Coal Mine Safety and Health Act, which provided for issuance of mandatory standards for both safety and health; enforcement of these standards; involvement of union representatives; a system of

regular medical examinations for active miners, under federal supervision; compensation for those already victims of occupational disease, including the right to transfer to a dust-free job if partially disabled.

At the same time, the trade union movement was in the midst of a three year lobbying effort for similar legislation for other workers. Their efforts were spurred by the continuing rise of accidental injury and death on the job and the utter failure of state safety programs to reduce that toll. As with the miners, other trade unionists were becoming aware of the epidemic of occupational disease due to toxic chemicals in the workplace.

The Occupational Safety and Health Act (OSHA) was passed in December 1970, the result of a broad coalition of unions (with some scientific support), over intense industry and political opposition. Since OSHA's passage, unions have negotiated various new types of health and safety protection in their collective bargaining agreements.

Both before and since the passage of OSHA, two major tactics have been used—often successfully—by employers to discourage or frustrate action on safety by rank-and-file workers: attempts to penalize workers economically in response to safety demands, particularly by threatening plant closings, and threats or acts of discipline, black-listing, and firings of safety activists. How have workers responded to these assaults? As the facts about workplace hazards have continued to emerge the rank and file have repeatedly demonstrated their willingness to confront such tactics with their own unity and ingenuity. Workers today are more likely to challenge the existence of hazards on the job than previous generations. As a result, both the union leaderships and OSHA itself have been subjected to increasing pressures to establish strict provisions, through collective bargaining and through legislation, to eliminate hazards and give workers greater control over their environment.

### **Rank and File Activities**

In the face of stiff management resistance, what has been the response of the rank and file and militant local leaderships? The most well known activity is the coal miners' unauthorized strike. While not

limited to safety disputes, job hazards are among the most frequent causes of such strikes in the coal fields.

In an increasing number of local and national labor agreements unions have secured broader rights for worker safety representatives to investigate hazards and press for management action. (In such cases, the *responsibility for correcting* the hazard still rests with management, where it belongs.) But where the grievance procedure is too slow to protect them, workers have sometimes jointly refused to work under the dangerous conditions. Most workers participating in such refusals are not protected from disciplinary action by either their union contract (which generally prohibits strikes during the life of the contract or whose language on the right to refuse hazardous work is complex and restrictive), the National Labor Relations Act (which the Supreme Court held in its 1974 Gateway Coal decision requires arbitration of all safety disputes when a contract has a no strike clause) or OSHA (except in the most extreme circumstance). Nonetheless, workers continue to organize work-refusals and other job actions over safety when their lives are threatened or when conditions are simply intolerable. This year the Supreme Court will rule on a worker's right to refuse hazardous work in the Whirlpool vs. Marshall case and its decision will have far reaching implications for the health and safety movement.

As more unions and workers have learned their rights under OSHA, they have sought to involve OSHA in safety disputes. However, numerous obstacles to the effective administration of OSHA exist. In most local OSHA offices, the volume of complaints has so increased in recent years that the inspectors have no time to make random inspections, so they only follow up complaints. While it is illegal, there have been reports that some employers receive advance warning that an inspector is coming, and a recent Supreme Court ruling requires OSHA to obtain a search warrant before inspecting a workplace if the employer asks for one. Many hazards exist for which OSHA has set no standard. When citations are issued, the fines are small or non-existent. The law contains many provisions for the employer to avoid or postpone correcting hazards.

Faced with the limitations of OSHA, many trade

unionists have looked for other means of advancing the struggle around health and safety. They have come to understand that a broad approach to safeguarding workers is necessary. This understanding, along with the desire of progressive professionals to aid workers and their unions, has led to the formation of independent coalitions which fight for workers' health safety rights, the strengthening of OSHA and Workers Compensation reforms. These coalitions—called COSH groups—provide a place where regional and local unions can come together to work on common problems, get technical assistance from medical, scientific, and legal experts and plan political action. They seek to work with the labor movement at all levels.

The first such organization, the Chicago Area Committee for Occupational Safety and Health—was started in 1972. There are now over ten regional committees including Philadelphia, Rhode Island, Massachusetts, Western New York, New Jersey and New York City. The COSH groups have been instrumental in spreading the word about worker safety and health beyond any one plant, industry, or community.

### **Union Leadership Response**

In occupational health and safety, as on many other issues, there are varying levels of willingness to struggle among the union leaderships. In a very few unions, the leadership have taken a militant stance, and have mobilized the rank and file at a relatively high level on this issue. Other leaders attempt to deal with health and safety primarily at the negotiating table, and involve the membership on a minimal level. Still other leaders are openly class collaborationist.

Most unions active in health and safety have sought to have input into the administration of OSHA through the standard-setting process, by forcing inspections or workplaces and by encouraging strong enforcement of the law. They have undertaken political activities in the form of Congressional lobbying to defend and increase OSHA's appropriations. An increasing number have filed lawsuits against the Secretary of Labor to force OSHA to take action in controversial areas. Most unions have meager resources and little staff currently assigned to this area, although recent federal

grants by OSHA to various unions totaling some one million dollars have added additional staff.

Collective bargaining over health and safety issues has increased dramatically in the past ten years. Victories have been far fewer than the number of attempts. Because improvement of health and safety conditions often requires the expenditure of capital, and because the issue involves basic questions of worker rights and discipline, management resists concessions very bitterly.

The Basic Steel Agreement of the United Steelworkers and the steel monopolies includes the right to refuse hazardous work with expedited arbitration, and the United Mineworkers members have the right to refuse hazardous work with the permission of their safety representative.

### **Strengthen and Defend OSHA**

OSHA is not simply a law designed to protect public health and safety in the same manner as laws regulating food, drugs, and environmental contamination. It is fundamentally a piece of labor legislation, as important to American workers as other laws which have established fair labor standards or minimum wages, pension rights, or the 40 hour week. Especially for those unions where there is a low level of militancy and activity on the part of the leadership, the defense and strengthening of OSHA and related legislation covering the particularly hazardous industries of mining, maritime and transportation is more necessary than ever.

OSHA affords the rank and file rights which it would be extremely difficult for them to obtain at the bargaining table. Further, it involves the union in an area from which management has traditionally sought to exclude the unions. It also provides a way of judging the effectiveness of union efforts to protect workers. Are OSHA standards being complied with in union shops? If not, what has the union done to insure compliance? Finally, it offers organized workers an opportunity to begin struggles where the union leadership has refused to respond. (One of OSHA's limitations is that it can not be relied on to protect workers from employers' threats of plant closings, blacklisting, or even individual harassment, and these must be fought through other avenues.)

OSHA is under severe attack by industry and the



organized Right wing. Over thirty-five bills have been introduced into Congress to weaken or repeal it. After five years of OSHA administrations with strong industry orientations, new personalities brought into OSHA were more favorable toward aggressive enforcement of the act and the first year of the current Administration saw many improvements. However, in the last two years there has been a virtual standstill because of pressures from Congress. With members of the Carter Administration and industry challenging every newly issued standard in the courts, no new standards have been implemented. Research, issuance of standards and enforcement of the act are under constant erosion. A broad movement must be built by the unions and their allies to defend OSHA.

There are many areas in which OSHA can be strengthened. Standards must be issued at a faster rate, more money appropriated for research, and many more compliance officers are needed to inspect workplaces. The provisions in the law which permit employers to tie up newly-promulgated standards in court and prevent their implementation for years in some cases must be changed; higher fines must be levied against employers who violate the law; and OSHA must be allowed to bring criminal charges against employers who willfully violate the law. The practice of holding regional public hearings on standards, such as was done when OSHA proposed its standard on carcinogenic substances, should be incorporated into the law. The reversal of the Barlow decision, requiring search warrants for inspectors, must be fought for. The right to refuse hazardous work should be more clearly protected under OSHA, and full-time, company-paid, safety representatives should be required.

### **Trade Union Program**

A program for unions to strengthen their efforts around health and safety includes training of stewards, safety representatives, and rank and file members, collective bargaining for health and safety language and enforcement of the contract.

Every union should have full time health and safety representatives, paid by the company. Short of this, it should have stewards specially trained in safety matters. Safety reps must have the right to

pull workers out of unsafe jobs and have access to company information on hazards and any other information necessary to protect workers. Rank-and-file members should have classes sponsored by the union on safety hazards and time taken for training should be paid by the employer. This type of training, by directly involving the membership, in addition to educating the workers on hazards, would obviously strengthen the union.

Collective bargaining goals are specific to each industry and each union, but there are general goals for all unions to work toward. These include the right to refuse hazardous work and to strike over health and safety; the right to get information about toxic substances, such as generic names of chemicals in use; greater power for safety reps to take action on safety on the shop floor; rate retention for workers removed from hazardous jobs due to illness; the right to independent medical opinions in disputes over a worker's qualification for Worker's Compensation or pension; and occupational illness research funds contributed to by management.

Political action on the part of the unions around safety and health is crucial—defending OSHA from industry and Right-wing attack, working for a federal worker's compensation law and improving the state compensation programs; fighting for reforms of the health care system, especially for a national health service. (The National Health Service bill proposed by Congressman Ronald Dellums is the only one that has specific provisions for occupational health and safety.) The fight against runaway shops is directly related to the health and safety struggle and legislative efforts to control this trend in industry should be supported. International exchanges of information and coordinated international efforts to eliminate hazards, such as international bans on certain toxic substances, are important.

### **International Aspects of the Health and Safety Struggle**

The struggle for relaxation of tensions internationally and for scientific cooperation and joint research with the socialist nations is crucial to advancing conditions for United States workers. Job safety and health is not new in the socialist countries. The socialist picture is the reverse of

what workers in this country face. In socialist countries workers can look to a future safer work environment, while workers here must increase their struggle to keep pace with the death and injury rates which even now outpace every other developed industrial country.

The model for the socialist countries' occupational safety and health programs comes from the first socialist country, the Soviet Union. The key features of their system are:

1) Free health services to all citizens; occupational health services delivered at the plant with physicians and technical specialists under the direction of health departments.

2) Thousands of full time federal inspectors with full enforcement powers to close unsafe and unhealthy plants.

3) Thousands of trade union safety and health inspectors who have the same powers as federal inspectors.

4) Trade union departments of labor medicine which must approve all government-recommended standards of worker exposure to toxic substances.

5) Union administered labor safety institutes which focus on such safety problems as machine guarding, ventilation methods, and noise control.

6) Extensive education and training sessions for union shop stewards and officials. These local union leaders have the right to information about hazards and the right to enforce rules and regulations.

7) Finally, and most importantly, constitutional provisions which commit public officials to a full employment economy and safe and healthful working conditions. These constitutional provisions eliminate the choice forced on workers in capitalist countries between jobs and health, and holds that workers in socialist countries will have both.

This international experience provides valuable lessons to U.S. workers. Because these lessons would provide fuel to workers' struggles in this country big business seeks every opportunity to distort and lie about socialist working conditions. While it isn't possible to attain all the rights of socialist workers under capitalism, there are valuable gains to be won in many of the above categories. When workers see for themselves or hear reports on these socialist experiences, it increases their

own demands. Renewal of membership in the International Labor Organization and participation in the meetings of the World Federation of Trade Unions are first steps which will naturally lead toward greater trade union exchanges of information and in person visits. Internationalism is an important part of the health and safety struggle and can help lead to greater international solidarity in other areas of self-interest for workers.

### **The Communists and Health and Safety**

The Communist Party has a 60 year history of struggle for the vital interests of workers and all those oppressed by the monopolies. Not least has been the role of Communist shop workers and trade unionists in defending and improving the conditions of work in the factories, mines, mills and other workplaces.

Today Communists in the shop place much stress on uniting their fellow workers in struggles over health and safety issues on the shop floor, in contract negotiations and in the legislative arena. In addition, there are Communists among health professionals and other sections of the population who assist shop workers in making these efforts more effective.

Communists fight for a consistent approach which says the health and safety of workers, their families and communities come before the profits of the giant monopolies. They seek to raise the level of worker and trade union consciousness and activity on these issues. They seek to build unity among Black and white and other nationally oppressed workers, men and women, younger and older, on the only basis that is just and possible—special affirmative action demands to meet the special conditions of oppression of Black and other minority and women workers. They seek to show the connection between monopoly's drive for maximum profits by cutting health and safety corners and the other major issues of our times. These issues include the fight for detente, passage of SALT II and slashing the military budget, for expanding democracy and against racism and for social progress generally. Communists also point out that whatever gains are won by mass pressure will be insecure until the system based on maximizing private profit is replaced by socialism.

# Crisis of the Mechanism of Capitalist Economic Relations

YURI SHISHKOV

An analysis of the state of affairs in the capitalist world leads one to the conclusion that despite capitalism's attempts to adapt itself to the new historical conditions and intensify bourgeois state regulation of economic and social life, it has been unable to reinforce or stabilize its position as a social system. At the 25th Congress of the CPSU it was noted that the *general crisis of capitalism was mounting*. This assessment has been convincingly borne out by developments over the past few years.

Capitalism's mounting general crisis is seen not only in the weakening of its positions in the competition between the two world systems and in the aggravation of the economic, social and political contradictions in each capitalist country and also between industrialized and developing nations, but also in the increasing crisis of the capitalist world economy as a whole.

For many years this economy has been afflicted by a growing internal illness. Stoppages in its mechanism have become more frequent. Piling up, intertwining, and intensifying each other, they erupted into a severe breakdown of that mechanism at the close of the 1960s and the early 1970s. This is seen in the crash of the world monetary system, the ungovernable inflation embracing the entire capitalist world, the chaos in the international credit system, the increasing instability of balances of payments and the growing conflict between the private multinational monopolies and the national systems of state economic regulation. Small wonder that in this situation the cyclical crisis of 1974-1975 proved to be extremely severe and long-lived and that it drew practically all the capitalist countries into the whirlpool of economic convulsions. It must be noted that this crisis was not the cause of the overall failure of the capitalist world economy. On the contrary, it was this failure that brought about the steep decline of production in 1974-1975.

Consequently, it may be stated that on the bor-

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derline between the 1960s and the 1970s the world capitalist economy entered a new stage characterized by a painful break-up of its former foundations.

Any economic mechanism is a system of instruments regulating the reproduction process on the basis of the objective economic laws of the given social system. The predominance of private capitalist property in the means of production makes it necessary to have a market mechanism. The mechanism of the capitalist economy—both national and international—was therefore first based entirely on market relations between the participants in social production, who were in a state of free competition with each other as sellers of their own goods and as buyers of the goods of others. Under free competition the market was the main and practically sole universal instrument, which not only brought to light the quantitative and qualitative imbalances in social production but also made it necessary—through rises or falls of market prices and profits—to modify the existing correlation between production and consumption, between demand and supply, between Departments I and II of the national and world economy. First and foremost, it regulated the territorial and branch distribution of new investments. Lenin wrote that “the chief organizing force of anarchically built capitalist society is the spontaneously growing and expanding national and international market.”<sup>1</sup>

The subsequent development of the productive forces and the rise of the level of socialization of production led to a certain modification of capitalism's relations of production and the economic mechanism based on them. Particularly significant changes took place after the Great Depression of 1929-1933, which gave the impetus for a further intensification of state-monopoly interference in the reproduction of social capital. This reproduction is today no longer able to function without constant correction of the market mechanism by the

bourgeois state. However, this correction, naturally, can not push aside the market, which remains the basis for the regulation of capitalist reproduction as long as capitalism exists as a system.

Thus, the modern capitalist economic mechanism has two mutually-complementing and, at the same time, constantly conflicting elements: spontaneous market regulation, which, to use Marx's words, operates behind the back of the commodity producer; and state-monopoly interference in the economy in order to attain definite economic objectives. An unremitting struggle takes place between these two different elements, and in the course of that struggle a certain, albeit extremely precarious, balance is established in each country.

But this situation is characteristic only of the economic mechanism operating on a national scale, within the jurisdiction of each bourgeois state. It can partially limit the anarchy of market forces only within these limits. Inter-state relations begin to operate outside national boundaries, and this is where various national sovereignties clash. It is much harder to curb market anarchy in this region.

This is a significant circumstance, for at a certain stage it gives rise to a specific conflict between the rising level of international socialization of production and the limited character of state economic regulation. In bourgeois society this conflict is closely linked with capitalism's main contradiction and, as was noted time and again by Marx, Engels and Lenin, is inevitably aggravated with the development of the productive forces. As a result, in the capitalist world economy anarchic market forces prevail over the regulating element to a much larger extent than in the national economic organism.

Meanwhile, the need for greater regulating interference in the world economic process grows steeply under the impact of the scientific and technological revolution. The rapid development of the international division of labor, and of industrial, scientific, and technological cooperation between countries; the swift growth of foreign trade; the intensification of the export of capital; the perceptible expansion and complication of credit relations with the resultant emergence of a vast world market of short-term credits (so-called Eurocurrencies market); and the unprecedented development of international transport and communications represent a qualita-

tive advance in the development of international socialization of production. Most of the capitalist countries, chiefly the industrialized nations, are today finding themselves so closely bound to each other that any significant economic development in one immediately affects the economy of the others.

This mutual dependence is seen, in particular, in the size of the exported national material product (aggregate value of the output of the mining and processing industries, agriculture, forest economy, and fishing, power-engineering, gas and water supply industries). In France it rose from 23 per cent in 1960 to 30 per cent in 1972, in Japan from 25 to 37 per cent, in the FRG from 31 to 39 per cent, in Britain from 38 to 52 per cent, and in Canada from 45 to 73 per cent.<sup>2</sup> This means that in each country the destiny of industry and agriculture increasingly depends on the market situation in the countries buying its products.

The export of capital is another channel of the growing interdependence of national economies. It has been estimated that in 1970 the processing factories controlled by U.S. monopoly capital in Canada, Britain, Belgium, France, the FRG, Brazil and Mexico accounted for nearly 20 per cent of the value of finished articles manufactured in each of these countries and employed approximately 12 per cent of the local work force. The destiny of the national economy and the condition of the working people of these and many other capitalist countries are thus determined to a large extent by the decisions adopted at the headquarters of foreign monopolies.

One more area of the growing interdependence of national economies is the internationalization of the credit and banking system. Any rise or fall of bank rates in the loan capital market of any more or less large capitalist state at once affects the international flow of credits and is followed by corresponding changes in the bank rates of many other countries. Our estimates show that during the past twenty years the rates of the central banks of 15 leading industrialized capitalist countries (the USA, Canada, Japan, the FRG, France, Italy, Britain, the Netherlands, Belgium, Denmark, Ireland, Sweden, Finland, Spain and Switzerland) have shown a distinct tendency to move synchronously. In 1956-1962, the variation coefficient of the bank



rates of these countries was 0.349, while in 1963–1968, it dropped to 0.274, and in 1969–1975 again to 0.244. In other words, despite constant fluctuations the synchronous movement of national bank rates grew more pronounced from time to time. Capitalism's present credit system is increasingly reminiscent of interconnected vessels in which the least fluctuation of the liquid level leads to the movement of the entire mass.

With gold steadily losing its traditional role of world money commodity and with the development of credit-paper world monies the inter-coupling of capitalist national economies increases also along the line of their monetary relations. When gold was the sole universal money commodity, the actual exchange rate of one or another foreign currency depended mainly on the state of the given country's economy and also, to some extent, on its foreign economic settlements. The case is different today. A gold dollar standard, under which only the U.S. dollar was directly linked with gold, was established in 1944 at Bretton Woods. In other words, the U.S. dollar became the sole representative of gold in international exchange, while all the other currencies of the capitalist world expressed their parity to the dollar. This led to a system of unilateral dependences of the national currencies of all the capitalist countries on the state of the U.S. economy, on the policy of the U.S. currency and credit authorities, and on the expansion of U.S. transnational private business.

We all know what the consequences of all this were. The USA took advantage of this situation, buying foreign industrial and commercial enterprises, labor power and scientific and technical cadres for depreciated dollars, paying for the military gambles of governments obedient to Washington and extending so-called aid to them. The world found itself flooded with paper dollars. The dollar became almost the sole means of international settlements and the main reserve currency for most countries. By virtue of the laws of the money market all the capitalist countries therefore had to support the artificially high parity of the dollar as long as that was profitable to U.S. finance capital.

The downfall of the Bretton Woods system in August 1971 did not diminish the interdependence of the capitalist countries. On the contrary, the

emergent tendency towards the formation of a collective currency on the basis of a more or less broad "basket" of national monetary units presupposes the extension and sophistication of the system of multilateral influence of national economies over each other through the monetary sphere.

Last but not least, the increasing interdependence of the capitalist states is seen in the direct production links between them in the form of international production cooperation. These links have been expanding rapidly during the past two or three decades and they consist of relatively stable technological "links" between enterprises of different countries as elements of an integral technological process in the engineering, chemical, electrical engineering and electronic industries. This became possible because during the past few decades the isolated division of labor based on detail and cooperation specialization of the participants in a single technological cycle (which in the past was a characteristic only of production processes in individual factories) moved out of factories, stepped across national boundaries, and began playing a growing role on the world scene.

For many years large international technological complexes in the general and electrical engineering, electronic and chemical industries have been functioning in some regions of Western Europe and North America. Lately, technological links have begun to be established also between industrialized and developing countries. Numerous factories in Singapore, Taiwan, South Korea, the Philippines, Mexico and other developing countries are now manufacturing innumerable components, units and parts for television sets, electronic apparatuses, and other labor-intensive items produced by large U.S., Japanese and West European companies.

A result of the above-mentioned circumstances and also of the growing dependence of various countries on imports of primary materials and energy resources is that the national economies are being intertwined into the single fabric of the world economy, and not one of them is any longer able to function in isolation. This still further exacerbates capitalism's main contradiction and requires modifications in the economic mechanism serving the capitalist world economy. Needless to say, in the course of its history this mechanism has undergone

some modifications, adapting itself to the new situation in the world. In particular, since the war it has begun to acquire elements of interstate regulation of world economic links in order to soften the extremes of the anarchic forces of the market.

However, despite all modifications, this remains a largely market mechanism and the elements of state-monopoly regulation operating in it are much weaker than the mechanism operating in the economy of individual capitalist countries, which has likewise grown hopelessly obsolete and does not cope with its functions. Sooner or later this must shake and wreak havoc with the entire mechanism of the capitalist world economy, as happened at the close of the 1960s and the beginning of the 1970s.

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A glaring manifestation of the illness affecting the mechanism of the capitalist world economy is the crisis of the capitalist monetary system and the accompanying bouts of money fever. The collapse of the Bretton Woods system, which envisaged commitments of national authorities to maintain the official parity of their currencies, led in 1972-1973 to the breakdown of the regulation of currency exchange rates and to the free floating of currencies. In other words, the monetary mechanism of the capitalist economy was thrown many decades back, to the epoch when it rested almost entirely on the market. But it should not be forgotten that formerly the monetary market had a dependable standard—the value of gold, which played the role of world money. Today it has been stripped of that foundation. Floating currencies complicate settlements in foreign trade operations (because the price of goods expressed in floating currencies likewise floats, i.e., it is not constant), lead to a growing number of bank failures, and make it difficult to conclude long-term credit agreements. Moreover, they do not abolish deficits in balances of payments and do not deliver the capitalist world from the menace of invasions by profiteering capital. That is the reason why instability, anarchy, and uncertainty in this important sphere of the capitalist world economy have become more pronounced, despite the fact that the leading capitalist powers endeavor to abide by the “rules of the game” set down in the 1971 Smithsonian Agreements.

The breakdown of the credit system is closely

linked with the convulsions in the capitalist world monetary sphere. This system grew on the basis of commercial credit and was regulated by the laws of promissory note circulation, i.e., it was based on the market mechanism. However, with the swift expansion of the international corporations, which create a huge demand for loan capital in any part of the world, and with the enormous growth of the interdependence of national credit markets, this system proved to be helpless and fraught with serious danger to the economy of individual countries.

Credits torn away from the international streams of material values and existing autonomously have become a formidable anarchic force in recent years. The structure of national and international credit markets is tilting sharply in the direction of short-term funds as a result of the general instability of the market and the floating of currencies. As they moved these funds multiplied over and over again, without expressing any reinforcing real value. The *New York Times* wrote: “The world is filled with gobs of fake money—or credit—equivalent on an exaggerated scale to margin-buying of securities two generations ago: Special Drawing Rights, Eurocurrencies, various theoretical worths of gold.” A particularly large role is played among this fake money by international, to be more exact, extra-national credits initially called Eurodollars. Expressed in the currency of one country but transferred from its national bank to some foreign bank, they have some exceptional peculiarities that enable them to circumvent any currency control and national credit regulations. Emerging in the 1960s, the Eurocredits reached colossal proportions—of the order of 350 billion dollars—in mid-1977. Analogous markets mushroomed in other regions of the capitalist world economy, in particular, the Asia-dollar markets with their centre at Singapore.

While to some extent facilitating the functioning of the capitalist world economy, the gigantically hypertrophied credit-finance sphere engenders ills in that economy. The superfluous mass of settlement instruments inevitably leads to the inflation of prices not only within national boundaries but also in the capitalist market, where formerly this was extremely rare. Huge reserves of maneuverable short-term deposits have become the source of so-

called hot money that wanders from country to country in search of profiteering investment. When this money floods a given country, the credit institutions of that country are reduced to a state of shock. Needless to say, there have been disasters in the past, but they were not directly due to the movement of the economic cycle. Today, any major attack of currency fever sets in motion huge masses of hot money, which, like tidal waves, hit a country with a "promising" currency within hours, putting its credit-finance mechanism out of commission.

Moreover, the present interdependence devaluates the role of central banks as an instrument regulating the national credit-finance sphere by changes in bank rates. If the government of some country raises the bank rate of the central bank in an effort to halt inflation and improve the market situation this may lead not so much to the removal of surplus credits from circulation as to the attraction of such credits from abroad. Conversely, if this government reduces the bank rate in order to stimulate economic growth and diminish unemployment it risks not so much attracting new investments into production as causing a drain of capital abroad. Everything depends on the correlation of the bank rate levels in the given country and in other countries. National measures aimed at regulating the credit-finance sphere and, through it, the entire economy are proving to be less and less effective.

The world system of price formation was also shaken at the close of the 1960s and the beginning of the 1970s. Whereas formerly outbursts of inflation usually took place in time of war and affected individual national economies or groups of countries, which coped with these calamities by themselves, today inflation has become a fixture and acquired worldwide proportions and the character of a self-developing process. "Inflation," wrote *Newsweek*, "is Global Enemy No. 1, an international problem so overwhelming that it is no longer a matter for economists to ponder but a threat to virtually every government."<sup>4</sup>

Indeed, the annual growth rate of consumer prices rose in most of the industrialized capitalist countries from 3-4 to 10-15 per cent, while in some of them (for instance, Britain and Japan) it exceeded the 20 per cent mark in some years. As regards the developing nations, the inflation rate sometimes

reaches 30 and even 50 per cent, while in some of them it goes as high as 100 per cent and more a year. In this situation there can be no question of economic stability, longer regulation or programming of national economies. Even those instruments of state-monopoly regulation are undermined which have been created and tested during the past few decades. The main thing is that inflation brings incalculable hardships to the people and increases social tension.

Under these conditions the bourgeois governments are totally unable to take any effective measures. Such measures could be, in the view of the progressive public, an increase of taxes levied on companies, a reduction of military spending and more effective governmental control of the activities of monopolies, to mention a few. But what bourgeois government will venture to go against the interests of big monopoly capital?

On the other hand, attempts to institute traditional anti-inflation measures (holding up economic growth, wage control, and so on) harbor the danger of speeding up the economic decline, prolonging depression, increasing unemployment, reducing the living standards of factory and office workers, and thereby evoking the growing indignation of the working masses. Indicative in this context is that since the close of the 1960s, when inflation embraced most of the industrialized capitalist countries, the strike movement in these countries rose to a new level.

This tense social atmosphere is fraught with even more formidable inner-political conflicts and convulsions. "For the most part," *Newsweek* wrote, "some harsh political realities lie behind the failure of democratic governments to take firm measures against inflation... They... would risk their political lives by strict enforcement of the austerity measures needed to cool overheated economies."<sup>5</sup>

The situation is compounded by the fact that even the anti-inflation measures that some bourgeois governments manage to enforce are undermined by the transfer of the virus of inflation from other countries together with the flow of goods and capital. The capitalist world economy's present mechanism is unable to cope with inflation and limit its international proportions. It continues to

deform and break up the price pattern in the world market and, at the same time, the balance of the international division of labor.

The crisis of the capitalist world economy's mechanism is adversely affecting not only the economy and population of the industrialized capitalist countries. It is a heavy drag on the new developing nations, which are even more helpless in the face of inflation, monetary convulsions, and the growing difficulties in the world's commodity markets. The external debt of these nations (exclusive of the oil exporting nations) rose from 9 to 250 billion dollars in the period 1956-1977. Their financial position has deteriorated sharply in recent years: their overall balance of payments deficit increased from 12 to 45 billion dollars in 1973-1975, and according to UN estimates, will remain at the level of 30-40 billion dollars in the next few years. This holds up their economic development, depreciates their currency, raises the prices of imported manufactured goods, and brings down the living standard of the population.

Moreover, this deterioration of the economic condition of the developing nations still further aggravates the contradictions between them and the imperialist powers and gives their people a further impetus to put an end to the colonial heritage, to their unequal status in the international capitalist division of labor.

With the support of all the anti-imperialist forces, notably of the socialist world community, the developing nations are pressing for the establishment of a new international economic order. Although imperialism still retains command positions in the capitalist world economy, its domination is no longer absolute. In some key aspects of world relations imperialism has had to go over to the defensive. The right of the new nations to dispose of their national natural resources is becoming a reality.

The struggle of the newly-free nations for economic independence is making inevitable the abolition of the system of neocolonialist exploitation, the break up of the ugly structure of the international division of labor, and the unjust correlation of prices on primary materials and finished products that has been maintained by the international monopolies over a period of many decades. The old

world economic order imposed by imperialism is disintegrating. The birth and formation of the new economic order is sometimes accompanied by crisis situations in the world primary materials and fuel markets. One of these structural crises occurred in 1973 in the oil market.

Fusing with the functional disorders of the capitalist world economy, the structural upheavals still further aggravate the crisis of its mechanism, which has now begun to malfunction in all its main links. This is happening at the most unsuitable time for bourgeois society, when in the competition between the two systems socialism has made new advances and the national liberation movement has grown strong enough to enable the "Third World" nations to start an open and organized offensive against the imperialist powers. The dramatic question of what to do has now become acute for the ruling circles of the West.

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It can not be said that the capitalist world economy had never before felt the symptoms of the impending storm. These symptoms had been seen by the more far-sighted bourgeois ideologues and leaders relatively long ago. For a number of decades capitalism has been endeavoring to answer the challenge of the broadening international socialization of production through greater interference in the world economic processes by the large international monopolies and by the bourgeois governments and inter-governmental agencies. However, all its attempts to reinforce the regulating element in the mechanism of the capitalist world economy are more impulsive and sporadic than considered and purposeful, and have contradictory consequences.

On the level of private business, the main role in these efforts is played by the international corporations with their hundreds of enterprises, design bureaus, retailing agencies, and credit-finance institutions in many countries. Here we observe the operation of a largely autonomous system of the production of mutually complementing items, an exchange of these items at prices that do not coincide with the world market prices, and an independent credit and settlement system. In these corporations economic processes are not only corrected by a single "brain trust" but are organized quite ration-

ally in the interests of the given group of monopolists.

However, the activities of these huge monopoly associations inject disharmony into the functioning of national economies. The latter are split, as it were, into two parts, one of which—a part that is steadily expanding—is in the sphere of the activity of international corporations and, for that reason, is shaking off much of the influence of the national authorities. The role of state agencies is thereby diminished in the regulation of the national economy. Moreover, the international corporations, which are outside the control of any government, nullify the efforts also of those inter-governmental agencies that seek to stabilize the capitalist world economy.

As regards the interference by individual capitalist states in world economic links, this interference somewhat diminishes the influence of the world market on the national economy. On the other hand, due to the colossal international interdependence, any major step taken by one country with the purpose of influencing the development of the capitalist world economy inevitably modifies the relevant economic processes taking place in other countries, confusing and paralyzing the steps being taken by their authorities. The American economist R.N. Cooper writes that “growing interdependence can slow down greatly the process by which independently acting national authorities reach their economic objectives, even when all the targets are consistent and there are sufficient policy instruments at hand to reach them. Thus, in practice, nations may find themselves farther from their objectives than would be true with less interdependence.”<sup>6</sup>

Since in reality the economic situation in different countries is dissimilar at each given moment, while national aims are, as a rule incompatible, the measures of regulation needed to achieve these aims can not be identical. Therefore, it usually happens that by their interference in economic processes the governments painfully hinder each other. Moreover, if it is borne in mind that the mercenary interests of the monopolies of different countries are frequently antipodal, one will not be surprised to learn that “hindrances” of this kind are often a deliberate tactic, a new method of inter-imperialist

struggle, or, to quote Cooper, a competition between national economic policies.

At the close of the 1960s, when U.S. finance capital lost its unchallenged position in the capitalist world and three centers of inter-imperialist rivalry took shape, this competition rose to a new level. The economic policies of blocs of imperialist powers are competing today. This particularly concerns the West European power center. For many years the countries belonging to the European Economic Community have been pursuing a more or less coordinated foreign trade policy, striving to act together in currency problems, on questions relating to the energy and primary materials crisis, and so on. In some cases this has enabled them to pressure their overseas partner. As a result, inter-imperialist rivalry is assuming unprecedented proportions and seriously affecting capitalist world trade, the international movement of long-term investments, the functioning of world credit markets, and so forth.

In this struggle, the rivals break the “rules of the game” agreed upon beforehand, smashing even those few instruments for the collective regulation of world economic relations created by them with considerable difficulty. This is exemplified by the unilateral steps taken in the monetary field by Washington in August 1971. Of course, in this situation it is extremely difficult to work out and introduce new forms of state-monopoly regulation of world economic processes.

The therapeutic methods at the disposal of bourgeois society thus do not heal the sick organism of the capitalist world economy. On the contrary, they only aggravate its illness. The many schools of bourgeois political economy that have, since the day of J.M. Keynes, been trying to produce recipes for the improvement and rejuvenation of capitalism have proved to be helpless. It could not have been otherwise, because all of them proceed from the preservation of the outworn capitalist relations of production and their foundation—private property in the means of production.

Small wonder, therefore, that when the crisis of the capitalist world economy’s mechanism broke out bourgeois theoretical thought could not suggest anything constructive. Characteristic in this respect is the admission of the American economist Edward

J. Morse: "These industrialized states find themselves in an unprecedented web of interdependence whose unscrambling now seems inconceivable. Moreover, no one really understands the dynamics of these interdependent relationships. . . . No one knows how stable these interdependent relationships are. No one has any idea what sort of institutionalized arrangements are proper for handling them. . . . No one has truly explored, however, whether any arrangements can be created that fall short of full political integration but can nonetheless perform the functions of stabilization and coordination." Italian economists likewise admit: "A most conspicuous aspect of the present economic crisis is the total intellectual confusion, uncertainty, and contrariety of the experts who analyze it and chart ways and means of surmounting it. It is striking that none of them any longer refers to the traditional 'immutable laws' allegedly underlying economic mechanisms."

Wherever these experts offer recommendations, they concern only individual aspects of the present crisis of the mechanism of capitalist economic relations. But the point is that this crisis is a complex phenomenon, all of whose aspects are closely inter-related, intensify each other, and make it difficult to find a way out.

Indeed, as we have already noted, the breakdown of the capitalist international credit system is largely due to the deepening monetary crisis. In turn, the credit system, which engenders a huge mass of extra-national liquid means, makes a large contribution to the aggravation of the monetary crisis, periodically flooding one or another national monetary market with "hot money" and thereby giving rise to attacks of monetary fever. Moreover, the confusion of the credit system and the instability of currencies have created favorable soil for the flourishing of inflation phenomena and their spread from one country to another. For its part, through the mechanism of foreign trade the inflationary rise of domestic prices undermines the purchasing power of national currencies and leads to the corresponding reduction of their exchange rate.

We thus see a knot of problems that can not be untied by resolving only one of these problems. But capitalism is unable to resolve all of them. This gives rise to a sense of helplessness and confusion

among the Western ruling circles. "The question of what shore these developments will bring us and other Western nations to remains open," K.M. Hettlage, president of the Munich Institute of Economic Studies, notes with alarm.<sup>9</sup>

Spurred by their anxiety over capitalism's destiny, the leaders of the major capitalist nations are trying to find a way out of the situation by mutual consultations in a narrow circle. The declarations published after such consultations contain the promise that efforts would be made to stabilize the monetary system, avoid protectionist measures, reduce unemployment and inflation, prevent further rises of the price of oil and other primary materials, and help countries that have an unfavorable balance of payments. However, this conclave has not and could not produce anything constructive because it does not have a clear conception of the future.

In this connection one can recall Henry Kissinger's admission, made in 1974 in a somewhat different context. He said: "One of the troubles of the Western societies is that they are basically satisfied with the status quo. . . . I think that's a mistaken conception."<sup>10</sup> Thus, as Kissinger put it, since the West has no theory about how to formulate the new political evolution, it is inclined to let matters remain unchanged.

A society doomed by history has indeed no desire to change anything. Needless to say, this does not mean that the present crisis has brought capitalism, as a system, to the brink of destruction and that it will collapse at any moment. At the 25th Congress of the CPSU Leonid Brezhnev declared: "It is farthest from the Communists' minds to predict an 'automatic collapse' of capitalism. It still has considerable reserves."<sup>11</sup> It may be expected that the present crisis of the capitalist world economy's mechanism is the first stage of further attempts to intensify state-monopoly interference in the world economic processes, to find new "stabilizers" and "shock-absorbers" of the world market.

However, the whole history of bourgeois society convincingly shows that by virtue of the character of its relations of production capitalism is unable to create an economic mechanism conforming to the development level of the productive forces. This history makes it plain that capitalism has labored in



vain to adapt itself to modern conditions by promoting the state-monopoly mechanism of regulating social reproduction within national boundaries. Can it be expected that the use of the method of such regulation on a world scale and the formation of inter-state instruments of joint interference in world economic processes will yield some cardinally new results? Hardly.

Marx' famous thesis that international relations of production are "secondary and tertiary, generally derivative, transferred, nonprimary relations of production"<sup>12</sup> gives a deep insight into this problem. This means that despite their specific character, international relations of production only repeat (in less mature forms) what capitalism had produced on a national scale. Therefore, even the most perfect interstate mechanism for the regulation of world economic processes can not claim to be better and more effective than national mechanisms. The capitalist world economy is doomed to chronic instability and inevitable periodic convulsions.

These problems can be resolved radically only through society's socialist transformation. This is evident when we compare the chaos reigning in the capitalist world with the confident and balanced development of the socialist community, which moves steadily from one planned stage to another. The decisions of the 25th Congress of the CPSU and the Guidelines for the Soviet Union's economic development for 1976-1980 approved by it show developed socialist society's vast internal strength, its confidence in the morrow, and its clear conception of the ways and means of building communism.

The capitalist world's economic and social calamities are not so much the consequence of miscalculations by one government or another as a general

phenomenon of capitalism as a system. The trouble lies not in the party composition of a bourgeois cabinet of ministers but in the very nature of capitalist society. In that society we observe the polarization of class forces, the weakening of the class foundation of monopoly rule, the growth of the political consciousness of the working class and its allies, the strengthening of the internationalist solidarity of the proletariat, and the growth of the influence enjoyed by the Communist and Workers' parties. In the capitalist countries "the struggle of the working class—the main force in social development, and which represents the interests of the whole mass of working people, the interests of social progress, and overall national interests—and the struggle of the other democratic and anti-monopoly forces are developing with increasing strength. These struggles are directed against the foundations of rule by monopoly capital. Ever broader sections of society are realizing the historical necessity of replacing capitalist society by socialist society, which will be built up in accordance with the desires of each people."<sup>13</sup>

#### NOTES

<sup>1</sup>V.I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Moscow, Vol. 27, p. 238.

<sup>2</sup>*Overseas Business Reports*, July 1974, p. 20.

<sup>3</sup>*The New York Times*, October 30, 1974.

<sup>4</sup>*Newsweek*, September 2, 1974.

<sup>5</sup>*Ibidem*.

<sup>6</sup>R.N. Cooper, *The Economics of Interdependence. Economic Policy in American Community*, New York, 1968, p. 157.

<sup>7</sup>*Foreign Affairs*, January 1973, p. 377.

<sup>8</sup>*L'Europeo*, October 19, 1975, p. 17.

<sup>9</sup>*Stern*, September 11, 1975, p. 80.

<sup>10</sup>*The New York Times*, October 13, 1974, p. 35.

<sup>11</sup>*25th Congress of the CPSU*, Moscow, 1976, p. 48.

<sup>12</sup>K. Marx and F. Engels, *Works*, Vol. 46, Part I, p. 46 (in Russian).

<sup>13</sup>"For Peace, Security, Cooperation, and Social Progress in Europe". *Conference of the Communist and Workers' Parties of Europe*, p. 27.

# The Denunciation of Reason

HERBERT APTHEKER

A significant manifestation of the intensifying general crisis of capitalism—notably, of capitalism in the United States—is the mounting assault upon reason itself. I do not now have in mind the commercialization of superstition and vice, which has taken on unprecedented dimensions in the United States, nor the moronic level of what passes for “entertainment” in the so-called mass media. These are important symptoms and intensifiers of accumulating social decay; they have been commented upon, however, with some frequency and, in any case, are manifest to anyone whose sensitivity has not yet descended to Nixonian levels.

I do have in mind increasing evidences of an attack upon reason from those who operate under the guise of scholars, or are held to be serious authors and whose works come from supposedly reputable presses. Some of the leading intellectuals servicing dominant political parties—including speech-writers for leading office holders—also occasionally attack reason.

Much of this outpouring reminds one of that which accompanied the appearance and rise of fascism after World War I, notably writings in Mussolini's Italy and Hitler's Germany. Fascism is the institutionalizing of irrationalism; it is the ism appropriate for the death rattles of capitalism's “last stage.”\* Its coming to power, however, is by no means inevitable, of course; observing signs of the appearance of the repudiation of reason alerts one to the machinations of the enemy.

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Christopher Lasch is correct, I believe, when he writes in the preface to his *The Culture of Narcissism* (Norton, N.Y., 1979): “Bourgeois society seems everywhere to have used up its store of constructive ideas.” He adds: “It has lost both the capacity and the will to confront the difficulties that

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\*For evidence of attacks upon causality and other manifestations of the repudiation of science in the United States, particularly during the Cold War and McCarthy years, see my *History and Reality* (1955), esp. pp. 17-48.

threaten to overwhelm it.” Further along, he continues: “Events have rendered the liberationist critiques of modern society hopelessly out of date—and much of an earlier Marxist critique as well.” The subsequent two hundred and thirty pages of text, however, while substantiating the inadequacy of the so-called “liberationist” critiques, say nothing further about the “failures” of the Marxian. Indeed, the book—like so many similar works in the United States—is innocent of any reflection of Marxian criticism, or any reference to any writing by Marxists in the United States.

Earlier I referred to intellectuals servicing the monopoly parties in the United States and allowing themselves to explicitly attack reason; this says much not only about the intellectuals but also about the parties they serve. An example occurs in *The American Condition* (Doubleday, Garden City, N.Y., 1974) by Richard N. Goodwin, who was one of the speech-writers for Senator Edmund Muskie, Robert F. Kennedy and Presidents John F. Kennedy and Lyndon B. Johnson. Mr. Goodwin's rewards included appointment as head of the Peace Corps and Deputy Assistant Secretary of State. With this background, a reader is slightly startled to find Mr. Goodwin writing (p.363) that “scientific reason...is orderly, precise and systematic” and that, therefore, “it leaves little space for the irrational and chaotic which, in the present and future state of knowledge, are essential to human freedom.”

Mr. Goodwin's grasp of the “irrational and chaotic” apparently explains how confident he is as to not only the nature of freedom but conditions essential for its existence, in the present and in the future. Those who find it difficult to rationally grasp the irrational will be excused if their ideas of freedom are not the same as Mr. Goodwin's; from the Bay of Pigs to the Dominican Republic to Vietnam, the presidents he served offered some clues as to what that “freedom” was.

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One of the leading "in" authors today is Joan Didion—whose essays and novels regularly vote for John Wayne and Barry Goldwater while dropping borrowings from Ayn Rand. Since her *Slouching Towards Bethlehem* in 1968 to her *A Book of Common Prayer* (1977), Simon & Schuster, Dell and Bantam have made a mint—as the Madison Avenue hucksters would say. The gross individualism and cynicism of Didion's books are normal for today's market but "her revulsion against the struggle for meaning" is extraordinary even in the nihilistic outpouring that characterizes "serious" literature in the United States today.\*

In political theory, the main method of avoiding rational inquiry into social phenomena is to transform them into matters of subjective, psychological analysis. Leading lights among the professors in that area—like William Kornhauser, Ted Robert Gurr, Seymour M. Lipset and Daniel Bell—through what has been called "mass political theory" have striven above all to present "radicalism as abnormal or deviant development constituting, in essence, a simplistic emotional reaction to personal frustration and solitude."\*\*

Anyone familiar with dominant tendencies in U.S. history-writing will recognize this as describing the manner in which that literature presents Left-wing personalities and movements, as for example, Nat Turner and John Brown and the movement to abolish slavery.

Professors at Yale and Harvard—Charles E. Lindblom and David K. Cohen—have collaborated on a brief work, published in 1979 by Yale University Press, entitled *Social Science and Social Problem Solving*. Basing themselves, no doubt, on their own work and that of the colleagues they know, Messrs. Lindblom and Cohen report that "social science" seems to have been unable "in fact to produce and confirm generalizations"—with very rare exceptions, which they do not particularize. They have come to the conclusion that analysis can even be an obstacle to valid generalization; they think,

\*The quoted words are from Barbara Grizzuti Harrison's persuasive and devastating critique of Didion, in *The Nation*, September 29, 1979, p. 279.

\*\*Quoting a critique by Alejandro Portes in *American Sociological Review*, October, 1971, 36:832. See the important book by Sandor Halebsky, *Mass Society and Political Conflict* (Cambridge University Press, 1976).

now, that solving a problem "does not require an understanding... but only an outcome." What they recommend, in fine, is to "substitute action for thought, understanding, analysis." What they want, above all, is "practical judgment." Apparently, the less the study, the less the analysis, the less scientific methodology is brought to bear, the better for the outcome—i.e., it will be "practical."

They close by suggesting that perhaps a research project into why social science has been so ineffective might be in order! On the basis of their preceding views, it would be best, no doubt, if Gerald Ford and Ronald Reagan headed this research team.

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The boldness and frequency with which bourgeois history writers are rejecting scientific examination and the concept of causation would have pleased the late Charles A. Beard, who, in his final years, adopted similar stances.

Reflections of this tendency appear in the proliferation of volumes in psycho-history, with books "proving" that Woodrow Wilson's interventionism stemmed from the alleged tyranny of his father and others demonstrating that Daniel De Leon's moving towards a radical politics and a class-oriented analysis of contemporary society reflected really his unconscious desire to achieve the stability and the sense of belonging that he had lost in giving up his Jewishness.

The surge toward econometric historiography is part of a general tendency in bourgeois social sciences to exchange counting for thinking; one of the best-publicized products of this form of obfuscation was able to make chattel slavery in the United States about as heavenly as the more old-fashioned openly chauvinist U.B. Phillips did in the "good old days" some fifty years ago.

Even more explicit attacks upon reason are recurring in recent history books coming from presses of the "free world." Some examples:

The second volume of Theodore Zeldin's massive history—*France: 1848-1945* (published in 1977 and being part of the *Oxford History of Modern Europe*) rejects any idea of the relationship between intellectual and artistic developments and those of a socio-economic nature. Mr. Zeldin presents personages within purely subjective conditions,

omitting the societal problems that both shaped and confronted them. He rejects causation for what he calls "juxtaposition"; thus, not only is social development missing but even chronology is lost. The author justifies his rejection of causation by stating that "to talk of causes means to talk of proof and it is difficult to prove motives, character or interpretation" (p.1157). To label a book devoid of causation and proof, a work in history seems strange; one must believe this would startle the Queen of Sciences.

Lionel Kochan's *The Jew and his History* was published in 1977 by Schocken publishers, a leader in this area. The point of this "history" is an explicit repudiation of critical or scientific historiography in favor of an allegorical one. Mr. Kochan's ultimate and undisputed authority is the Talmud, whose authors regarded facts as irrelevant and who were creating not history but theology.

Two recent books in the philosophy of history reflect this tendency to deny the relevancy of truth. One, in the instrumentalist tradition of Thomas Kuhn's *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, is Larry Landau's *Progress and its Problems: Towards a Theory of Scientific Growth* (University of California Press, Berkeley, 1977). As part of Landau's insistence upon science's nature as self-contained and self-propelling, with its social context and function being inconsequential, one finds him writing that "determinations of truth and falsity are irrelevant to the acceptability or the pursuitability of theories and research traditions."

The bourgeois tendency to strip science of any value judgment is one of long standing. It probably is now dominant in leading academic establishments in the United States, but the denunciation of critical historiography and the announcement that truth or falsity is *irrelevant* is something new here.

There is one further step possible and that, too, is now appearing in books coming from university presses in the United States: this is to affirm not the irrelevance of truth but rather its non-existence. This is an essential theme of Peter Munz's *The Shapes of Time: A New Look at the Philosophy of History* (Wesleyan University Press, Middletown, Connecticut, 1977). Munz's relativism and subjectivism are extreme, reminding one of the writings of Michael Oakeshott. History's subject, he insists, is

not objective reality but ideas held in the past and interpreted by others, so that there is no real difference between history, fiction and myth.

Explicitly, Munz's main adversary is Marxism; while Lenin insisted upon the reality of truth and the accumulation of knowledge as the way towards that truth, Munz, on the contrary, holds that "the real reason why it [truth] must forever elude us is that it is not there" (p. 221)—which seems to be Munz's truth! Clearly, I think, this leaves those who study history and try to master it with no real choice as to what they read or what they write—unless the purpose of the former is entertainment and of the latter, profit and/or position. If reality is a figment and truth a delusion, then clearly reason is a snare and science a hoax.

\* \* \*

This cult of irrationalism is not confined to the United States, of course. The cult is itself a reflection of imperialism's decay and that is as widespread as the system itself. The Hungarian historian, Béla Köpeczi, recently published an illuminating study of similar developments in contemporary France—many of those responsible for these are authors formerly connected with the so-called New Left and/or Maoist groups.\*

Köpeczi writes that his authors "claim that reality does not exist, that it is essentially discourse, therefore talk about something; that history does not exist either, for it would presuppose reality." Indeed, he remarks: "Their basic tenet is that reality does not exist, and consequently there is no point in trying to know the world and especially to change it." Logically, their "chief enemy, of course, is Marxism."

Similar themes marked the prestigious Reith Lecture of 1978 delivered via the British Broadcasting Corporation's network. This recently has been issued as a book, *Christianity and the World Order* (Oxford University Press, 1979), by the Rev. Edward Norman, dean of Peterhouse College at Cambridge. The author, in his ecclesiastical guise, was directing his fire mainly against the theology of liberation sweeping through the colonial world. Revolution is the work of Satan's agents (or the  
*(continued on page 32)*

\*B. Köpeczi, "The French New Philosophers," in *New Hungarian Quarterly* (Budapest), Winter 1978; 19:134-41.

# What Are Trade Unionists Taught?

S. SHAW

Estimates of the number of trade union shop stewards in the United States run as high as 700,000. Training these stewards and other trade union leaders to perform their role representing workers' interests on the shop floor is the task of labor education. Today, in the U.S., trade unionists receive training in union halls, at training centers operated by unions and in college classrooms.

How are these unionists taught? More important, *what* are they taught? Is labor education preparing these union activists to provide class conscious leadership geared to the needs of the rank and file—or, is it a method of indoctrination in class collaboration?

While not all labor education programs are class collaborationist, the overwhelming trend is that of teaching *accommodation*, Daniel Bell's vision of trade unionism as "the capitalism of the proletariat." Sometimes this is extremely explicit, as in the George Meany School of Labor Studies in Washington, D.C., which is the AFL-CIO's main training center for staff and higher functionaries. In other cases, such as the Georgetown University labor program, or the University of Wisconsin's School for Workers, the Central Intelligence Agency plays a clearly defined and active role.

The CIA, incidentally, runs its own labor school under the aegis of its front, the American Institute for Free Labor Development (AIFLD) at Front Royal, Virginia. Here, trade unionists from Latin America are bought in for rather intensive training in what the CIA styles "labor leadership." The lucky graduates are then shipped back home with a hefty stipend to carry their new-found knowledge into practice.

Coinciding with the CIA's efforts are those of Social Democrats USA, a Right-wing group favored by AFL-CIO President George Meany and American Federation of Teachers President Albert Shanker. This group is the most active and vicious

S. Shaw is a rank-and-file union activist who is also involved in labor education.

exponent of class collaborationism and anti-Communism in the labor movement. A SDUSA membership card is almost a guarantee of employment in many labor education programs. At the Steelworkers education center just outside Pittsburgh, SDUSA members play a role in its program, teaching the benefits of class collaborationist ideas like the Experimental Negotiating Agreement, the political splendors of a Henry "Scoop" Jackson, the need for a military build-up and the evils of SALT II. After class, the unfortunate students are often solicited for membership in SDUSA. SDUSA's hand is felt throughout the labor education field. Albert Shanker, for instance, went to great lengths to seek to destroy Workers Education Local 189 of the AFT, eventually expelling it. This has been combined with a rather determined effort to build up the more conservative University and College Labor Educators Association.

Gus Hall once said that the system of collective bargaining and the mass of labor laws in the United States are the most complex and demanding in the world. A trade union leader has to have a lot of knowledge. Over 22 million workers in the United States are represented by trade union organizations. Their interests in the workplace are defended, in turn, by a broad system of shop stewards. Just how many shop stewards there are is a matter of discussion. Given an estimate of one steward for every 100 workers, there may be a minimum of 225,000. Other estimates, based upon the 170,000 collective bargaining agreements in existence, run that figure as high as 700,000. (Al Nash, *The Union Steward: Duties, Rights and Status*, New York School of Industrial and Labor Relations, Ithaca, N.Y., p. 7.)

Under the specific conditions of collective bargaining in the United States, the role of the steward tends to vary from union to union, shop to shop. What is common is that the role of the steward requires a great deal of skill and knowledge of contract administration, labor law, health and safety regulations and other matters.

Although the official attention devoted to steward training has increased over the years, the union movement is still reluctant to utilize it fully. It is not a high priority. One labor educator has commented that "the cultural lag in the labor movement with respect to leadership programs is frightening. No other institution in American society is so careless of the intellectual preparation of its staff and the retraining of its leadership." (Russell Allen, "The Professional in Unions and his Educational Preparation," *Industrial and Labor Relations Review*, October 1964, cited in Nash, "Labor Education, Labor Studies and the Knowledge Factor," *Labor Studies Journal*, Spring 1978.) This is particularly true in relation to more advanced courses. Stewards' classes explore only the barest bones of the grievance procedure.

The role of steward has undergone sharp changes over the decades since the 1940s under the impact of the Cold War, the corporate offensive against labor and the resulting system of class collaboration that prevails in most unions. Among other things, this has meant that the power of the steward to settle grievances at the local level has greatly been diminished.

Nonetheless, the steward remains the most important element in representing the interests and aims of the workers on the shop floor.

### **The Role of Education**

Obviously, the job of steward requires an enormous amount of practical knowledge and training.

What kind of job is the labor movement doing to elevate the skill levels of stewards, and most importantly, to raise their ideological level so that they can provide genuine class-conscious representation?

About 60 international unions (out of about 120) maintain union education departments. The efforts of these departments may range from very thorough to extremely slipshod. Much of union education department work consists of one or two-week seminars during the summer. Some state AFL-CIOs also provide summer seminars.

The most important addition in the past decade has been the expansion of university and college-based labor education programs, employing about 200 labor educators in 43 colleges and universities. The work of these programs also varies from short

courses given for local unions to full-fledged four-year programs leading to a degree in Labor Studies. Two institutions now offer advanced degrees in labor studies. Such university programs exist because the labor movement fought to have them.

Despite these efforts, only a small fraction of union stewards ever receive any formal training. Few hard data exist but it is safe to assume that the vast majority of stewards never receive more than the most superficial acquaintance with the vast body of skills required to become effective.

The problems in labor education thus boil down to two major ones: The number of unionists who receive training, and the quality of the training they receive.

### **Education for What and by Whom?**

The education programs developed by the union education departments themselves work within the strict policy guidelines of those particular unions. Thus, the political content is greatly circumscribed. In the case of some of the more progressive unions, these programs may have a fairly progressive content. In the case of the Right-wing, Meany-type unions, the answer is obvious.

The picture is more cloudy in the university programs. They too tend to be bound by the policies of the unions in the area they attempt to serve. Additionally, the university itself is subject to pressures from the big corporations, donors and state legislatures whose interest in genuine labor education is slight. Little is known about the background and credentials of many who teach in the university programs, save that their orientation is academic and not shop-floor directed. Needless to say, the number of Left and progressive educators is very small.

One of the more progressive organizations of labor educators, Workers Education Local 189, was driven out of the American Federation of Teachers in 1976 by Albert Shanker. Local 189, founded in 1922 by A.J. Muste at the Brookwood Labor College, represented an honest Center trend whose views found great disfavor with the AFL-CIO hierarchy. It would be safe to say that most of L 189's membership tend to favor the view of the labor movement held by Michael Harrington's Democratic Socialist Organizing Committee.

Thus, the quality and content of many labor edu-



cation programs, whether in the unions or on the campus, tend to be unsatisfactory. This is not to say there are not a number of notable exceptions, but the dominant trend reinforces a class collaborationist view of the labor movement.

A few examples: The grievance and arbitration procedure is taught as a fixed and given process. While it is important that stewards know how to operate within the system as it is, little discussion is given of alternatives and progressive reforms of these procedures, like rank-and-file activity at the shop floor, the right to strike on grievances rather than to arbitrate, the elimination of "guilty until proven innocent" in discipline cases. Everyone knows that the further a grievance proceeds up the ladder, the less impact the rank and file will have on its outcome. Yet little attention is devoted to how rank-and-file action at the shop floor could win these cases.

Even less attention is devoted to how the shop leader can overcome pressures from above within the union to pursue grievances less aggressively. The accession of top union leaderships to an increase in management prerogatives mean that many stewards face discharge for pursuing the rights of their members too aggressively.

The example of labor history is also revealing. Few labor history courses and few labor history texts used in these courses give any sense of the role of the rank and file and the Left in U.S. labor history. Few steelworkers, for example, are ever taught that William Z. Foster ever existed, not to say that he led the 1919 steel strike or the role he played in organizing the Steel Union in the 1930s. The split in the CIO in 1949 is usually taught as the salvation of American workers from the clutches of Moscow. The role of minorities and women is also given short shrift—although these groups are now the leaders in demanding greater access to labor education. To this writer's knowledge, no labor education program, outside the United Electrical Workers, uses the fine text, *Labor's Untold Story*, by Boyer and Morais, nor do any use Philip Foner's many works, including his *Organized Labor and the Black Worker*. Only a few now use Barbara M. Wertheimer's *We Were There: A History of American Working Women*, although this text is lacking in many respects.

The case of political action is also an example. No available text even suggests that a labor party might

have some salutary effect, nor do they mention the fact that the United States is the only industrial nation in the world (save racist South Africa) where the workers don't have their own political party. Instead, such courses concentrate on "getting out the vote," educating along the mildest lines of the AFL-CIO Committee On Political Education.

### A Few Alternatives

During the 30s and 40s, there were a number of alternate centers of labor education that provided training along rank-and-file lines. These included the San Francisco Labor School, the Jefferson School of Social Sciences, the Highlander Folk School, Commonwealth Labor College in Arkansas and a few others. Today, organizations such as the National Committee for Trade Union Action and Democracy and Labor Research Association have made some successful attempts to provide seminars for workers, but these efforts have not been consistent.

The problem of labor education can not be ignored by those who wish to change the labor movement. Emerging rank-and-file groups, especially those which have met with success in winning union leadership positions, often find that they are not adequately prepared to deal with the problems they face. Sometimes this lack of preparation is overcome in struggle and by the steadfast support of the union memberships for militancy, but this can not be said to be a satisfactory situation.

Marxist education among workers has also increased in recent years, particularly among Communists, who have brought the teachings of Marxism-Leninism to a greater number of trade unionists. But even here, the efforts remain insufficient in the number of workers reached and the ability to relate Marxist theory to shop floor problems.

How is labor education in the United States to be improved? Obviously, pressure comes from the growing rank-and-file movement which demands that education programs be expanded to serve many more members and that their content reflect the needs of the workers. This pressure also has its impact in the university programs, where the additional task of making common cause with student and community organizations to reform the university system is also present.

But, most importantly, more attention needs to be

paid to the development of on-going rank-and-file labor education, sponsored by the rank and file itself. The creation of centers of rank-and-file workers' education is undoubtedly a major part of this process. In this effort, it is likely that many Center forces in all levels of the labor movement may be enlisted. Expansion of Marxist-Leninist education among workers and trade unionists must similarly be expanded with more attention to developing a more

fully-rounded approach to its application to shop and union problems.

Lenin once said that to have a revolutionary movement one must have a revolutionary theory. A growing, developing rank-and-file movement needs to have theory—and a way to educate workers in the theory and practice of militant democratic trade unionism. It is a task too important to leave for another day or to spontaneous developments.

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*(continued from page 28)*

Kremlin's, which is the same thing) and human beings fall for this devilry because "human nature properly understood... is corrupted and partial." True religion insists on "the ultimate worthlessness of human expectations of a better life on earth"; in any case, "the wise aspirant to eternity will recognize no hope of a better social order in his endeavors, for he knows that the expectations of men are incapable of satisfaction."

The theory of feudalism—that system which the young capitalism overthrew—is called upon to serve capitalism now that it is as backward and ana-

chronistic as was the order it destroyed. The most regressive religiosity joins hands with the most "modern" of the modern philosophers—the ultrasophisticates—in a New Holy Alliance against science and reason and, in particular, against the most principled and consistent champion of both—Marxism.

The system of imperialism menaces human existence even as its ideologists announce the meanness and the meaninglessness of that existence. The latter mistake the demise of the system they serve with the human beings whose labor it has plundered. The plundering is terminating; that end means the birth of a New Humanity.



# BOOK ENDS



## 'The Politics of Cancer'

AL STONE

Samuel S. Epstein, M.D., *The Politics of Cancer*, Sierra Club Books (cloth), Anchor Press—Doubleday (paper), 1979, \$12.50 (cloth, \$6.95 (paper)).

Although cancer is not the leading cause of death (number two after arterial diseases), nor the leading cause of loss of "working" (i.e., before 65) years (number three after accidents and arterial diseases), it has become the leading disease concern of the U.S. public. It is increasing as a percentage of deaths, and its incidence is also increasing, so that by the year 2,000, it is estimated, 1 out of 4 of us will get it and 1 out of 5 of us will die from it. It is a disease that causes vast trauma and from which no class or age is immune. Public concern is due, in part, to the public relations campaign carried out by the largest "disease organization" in the world, the American Cancer Society (ACS). Concern is due also to the prevalence of the disease and to the fact that cancer treatment and death is almost always a protracted and traumatic process that stresses families and friends of the patient. It is the most expensive disease, a conservative cost estimate being \$30 billion a year for treatment and work time lost.

In 1970, Richard Nixon declared his phony "war on cancer" and promised that a cure would soon be available. By 1976, wiser heads began to prevail, and it was admitted that miracle cures were not around the corner. Many criticisms have appeared offering reasons for the

Al Stone holds a doctorate in molecular biology and is a cancer researcher.

"failure" of the "war on cancer."

Two analyses have attracted popular attention. One (embodied in articles in such glossy magazines as *Penthouse*) is a ridiculous misdirection of public anger. The other, elaborated in Sam Epstein's book, is an approach that the working-class movement should understand and support.

The first approach (which has been supported actively by the John Birch Society), is that the "Cancer Establishment" (medical centers, ACS, researchers and government) is tied closely to the monopoly drug corporations, and, in their interest, is suppressing existing "cures" such as Laetrile or vitamin therapy. The second approach says that cancer is caused overwhelmingly by toxic agents added (intentionally and unintentionally) to our environment by industry, which has made human health (as Engels originally observed in his *Conditions of the Working Class in England in 1844*) part of the costs of production for which the working class pays.

The first approach offers panaceas of no more value than snake oil. A single or a few remedies are proposed to deal with the 100 or more different diseases that go under the heading of cancer. These agents are less noxious than many of the therapies which the medical establishment uses (some of which do indeed cure cancer, others which give some extension of life, and others, sadly, which are ineffective and probably shouldn't be used any more), but they have no more effectiveness

than such appeals to divine intervention as trips to Lourdes. A certain very small percentage of cancers seem to be spontaneously cured, even without any treatment.

The second approach offers a chance to politically struggle to reduce our own and our children's chances of getting cancer (as well as birth defects). It recognizes that cancer is largely a preventable disease and that cleaning up the environment is one sure way of reducing its incidence, perhaps by as much as 80 per cent (the World Health Organization has stated that 60-90 per cent of all cancer is environmentally induced, though most causative factors are as yet unidentified).

Furthermore, the approach that Dr. Epstein outlines is one that can unite the working-class and public interest movements. Epstein correctly recognizes that it is in the interest of the industrial workers first of all to have an environment with a low cancer risk, because the highest cancer risk arises in the workplace environment and spreads from there to the general environment.

In 11 chapters and some excellent appendices the author describes the real politics of cancer—the politics of the class war (though he doesn't use the term) which results from the drive for profits by the ruling class from production and sales of materials that can cause cancer and losses to the working class (and all other classes in society) from those cancer causing materials. In these pages we have quotes directly from the ruling class' scientific and medical hangers-on that demonstrate the essential immorality of the capitalist system. For example:

"People are talking about a cancer hot spot here. They are blaming industry. They are blaming everybody but themselves." (Frank Rauscher, former director of the National Cancer Institute, speaking in Rutgers, New Jersey, p. 427.)

"Cancer in its many forms is undoubtedly a natural disease. It is probably one of nature's many ways of eliminating sexually effete individuals who would otherwise, in nature's view, compete for available food resources without advantage to the species as a whole." (F.R.C. Roe, British journalist, p. 299.)

"A regulatory program based on experimental screening models to evaluate new chemicals prior to their introduction into the environment, however, will hinder the better documentation of this correlation (between the potential for chemicals to cause cancer in animals with their potential in humans) than we have presently. When a carcinogen is prevented from entering the environment on the basis of screening results (causing cancer in animals), there can be no data regarding that exposure in man." (Vaun Newill, Medical Director of Exxon, p. 59.)

Epstein doesn't fall for simplistic scenarios of the heroic individual scientist or doctor (like "Quincy") who single-handedly fights the system and usually wins. He instead emphasizes throughout his book that "Over the last decade, virtually all regulatory actions against carcinogens in the workplace, in consumer products, and in the environment have been developed only at the initiative of public interest groups or organized labor. The scientific community has been largely indifferent..." (P. 78.) Epstein consistently gives credit where credit is due—to those trade unions and consumer groups, as well as to individual scientists and doctors who have allied themselves with such groups, who have been the chief fighters against cancer.

Better yet, in tables and appendices the author gives addresses and phone numbers of groups for the interested activist to hook up with. Included is a list of trade union and labor publications that have published materials on occupationally and environmentally caused cancer.

The book begins with a discussion of the scientific principles and methods involved in determining the causes of cancer. Without sacrificing scientific accuracy, the author gives an excellent popular account of the methods of epidemiology (the science of disease statistics), and especially how human epidemiology has been used to determine the causes of human cancer since 1775 (when Percival Pott correctly identified chimney soot as the cause of scrotal cancer in English chimney sweeps). Epstein also explains the limits of human epidemiology. It can not always determine elevated risk in populations (unless a chemical causes an unusual type of cancer in people, or causes an extraordinarily early appearance of a common cancer in a large number of people, it is almost impossible to show elevated risk due to exposure to some agent).

He then discusses the science of toxicology and describes how animal experimentation can be used to prevent human exposure to cancer causing agents. He also describes the arguments industry and its scientists use against animal tests. He explains why one has to use a large dose of a chemical on a small group of animals to compensate for human exposure of millions at much lower doses. Epstein points out that it would only cost about \$200 million to adequately test all the chemicals (about 700) that enter mass production in one year. This would be only 0.2 per cent of chemical industry sales in a year or less than 3 per cent of the declared after-tax profits. It seems a small price to pay to drastically reduce the annual cancer toll.

Epstein then goes into detailed case studies. Under the heading of *Workplace Studies*, Epstein discusses asbestos, vinyl chloride, bischloromethyl ether (BCME) and benzene. In each case, the author documents the many positions industry and its paid consultants take to minimize risks, over-emphasize benefits (to society, not to their profits), deny the feasibility of engineering controls or technological substitution, and magnify the costs of cleaning up. The bottom line industry always resorts to, as it does in any environmental fight, is that jobs will be lost if industry has to pay for cleaning up. Although Epstein nowhere acknowledges the possibility this position could be fought, the story he tells makes an excellent case for breaking the power of the monopoly corporations to profiteer, cause disease, and then leave human wreckage behind.

Epstein's best points come in exposing how industry's captive scientists lie. This sort of information will enable all of us to read a newspaper article on a cancer issue (such as saccharin) critically. For example, cancer is a disease in which there is always a considerable lag time between exposure to a cancer causing chemical and appearance of disease (as much as 20-30 years in adults). Many industry studies showing the "safety" of chemicals or drugs or workplace agents (like asbestos) are based on looking at all workers who are exposed, whether they have just started work or have been working for a long period of time, and at the same time not looking at the retirees from that work exposure. This sort of statistical fiddle was used by an industry-supported scientist to "prove" the safety of Canadian asbestos as opposed to South African asbestos.

Furthermore, industry's hired scientists often argue that evidence of animal cancer can not be used to certify that something poses a cancer risk to humans because one can not extrapolate from animals to man. On the other

hand, some people argue that the human evidence that benzene causes cancer is invalid, because it does not cause cancer in the animal studies so far reported.

Next Epstein discusses consumer products, such as tobacco, food coloring dyes, saccharin, acrylonitrile (formerly used to make plastic Coca-Cola bottles) and female sex hormones given as drugs. The author describes how the materials were initially tested, how their use was promoted by monopoly marketing techniques, and how the evidence developed that they caused cancer. He then discusses the fight to regulate the materials, and how industry and its allies tie things up in the courts, often winning the right ("freedom") to continue exposing us to cancer causing agents. For example, the drug Premarin has been actively pushed by the drug companies upon the medical profession, who in turn have pushed it upon women undergoing menopause. "Nobody has shown a cause-and-effect relationship between Premarin and cancer. It does not cause cancer. It just accelerates it," said a Vice President of Ayerst Laboratories, Nov. 23, 1977 (p. 212).

Not until there was substantial human exposure were these powerful drugs looked at for their human cancer causing potential (even though animal studies in the 1930s suggested they increased the risk of cancer). Similarly, food coloring dyes derived from coal tars (along with 9 pounds of other food additives we consume every year), were not adequately tested in animals, or, if the evidence of animal tests (paid for by the company marketing the product) did show a risk, the data were often "reinterpreted" or even suppressed.

Epstein discusses contamination of the general environment by cancer causing pesticides and herbicides and nitrosamines. In all these cases, Dr. Epstein acknowledges how trade unions and/or public interest groups,

supported by independent and courageous scientists and doctors, had to take on a massive corporate apparatus that wished to continue making profits at the expense of human lives.

Epstein then discusses what is to be done. He emphasizes that the fight to control cancer is a political fight, and that it has been and must be led by the mass organizations of the people, and especially those of the working class. He begins by discussing how to make industry data better. He opposes the present system, in which industry chooses who to pay for studies to determine the "safety" of the agent it wishes to market, and then submits these data to the appropriate government agency for review.

These studies are either done by industry's own laboratories, or else are awarded to labs which survive on industry contracts. The incentive to overlook hints of danger (only 1 out of 24 industry-sponsored animal studies on pesticide carcinogenicity that were reviewed by a scientific committee had any scientific value) supports Epstein's idea that industry should pay the government to contract for studies on a product's safety, and thereby remove its direct control of the data (this alone, of course, is no protection from development of an "old-boy" network).

Epstein even wants to offer industry incentives to use such a system, absolving them of responsibility if their products later cause damage to humans because the testing wasn't sensitive enough. However, he does point out that "Homicide or assault by chemicals is a serious variant of white collar crime... The recognition and social stigmatization of those involved in these crimes is long overdue." (P. 314.)

Epstein discusses the governmental and non-governmental policies concerning cancer, including the workings and misworkings of the regulatory and research agencies, the misdeeds of industry, the courageous fight of unions and especially the rank and file,

and a good discussion of the public interest movement (Nader-type groups), and the weaknesses of the American Cancer Society in fighting for the prevention of cancer.

He concludes with a section on "What You Can Do." While discussing those things one can do in choosing an individual lifestyle (avoiding tobacco, living and working in environments not exposed to carcinogens, avoiding junk food, avoiding carcinogenic consumer products, and even how to sue or bring other legal action in each area and type of exposure), Epstein avoids the mistake of leaving it to individual action. He begins and ends with emphasis on how exposure to carcinogens is not our fault, but is due to capitalism (although he doesn't name it as such).

Modern industrial society offers most people little opportunity to choose freely where to live, where to work, what air to breathe, what water to drink, what food to eat, and what advertising to read or hear. Only organized political action will lead to a significant reduction in exposure to environmental carcinogens (p. 430).

Furthermore, Epstein says, you have only two realistic options for effective political action—either working with the relatively new (and organizationally still very weak) public interest movement, or by working with organized labor.

There are a number of problems Epstein does not address. One is an additional way trade unions might guarantee, from their own resources, more accuracy in testing. He only proposes that government should somehow guarantee the protection of the workers by developing a sympathetic scientific and regulatory program. This is short-sighted.

Epstein recognizes trade unions need to have their own experts. But today only the United Mine Workers has its own doctor to advise on occupational

safety and health and only a few others have even an industrial hygienist or toxicologist. Furthermore, for more research sympathetic to labor, trade unions, like industry, should endow their own research programs in universities. The Rubber Workers won money in their last contract to endow a professorship in occupational health. Unfortunately, they allowed industry to have a decisive say in who got the chair.

A second problem is how to prevent shops from "running away" from environmental controls. Epstein recognizes this as a problem but offers no solution. I would suggest that political and mass action could get legislation to prevent runaways or at least make the cost of running away greater than the cost of cleaning up.

Both of the above omissions are rooted in Epstein's lack of a Marxist framework for analysis. He tends to see a number of institutions (universities, government) as basically inde-

pendent of class interest. Thus he fails to understand why Carter's appointment of some activists from the public interest movement to regulatory agencies has in part served to weaken the movement and moderate the position of those individuals. He doesn't emphasize the importance of movements continuing outside of the government regardless of what positions and influence they may obtain. He didn't foresee the current offensive to dismantle the entire occupational health and safety apparatus.

Epstein states that "industry, like labor, represents a heterogeneous array of interests and objectives. Such diversity, however, tends to be replaced by a common front of intransigence in response to proposed regulation of toxic and carcinogenic chemicals." He doesn't recognize, however, the root of this common front: the fact of common class interest. Thus his recommendations tend to appeal to industry's "long range interest" in

workers' health rather than recognizing that profits and exploitation are industry's long and short range interest. Health considerations must always stand last under capitalism.

While Epstein also acknowledges Soviet (he calls them "Russian") studies that anticipated health effects of many substances (e.g., vinyl chloride and red dye #2), he fails to see how the class bias of the state makes the difference. The Soviet Union has had chronic toxicity testing of all workplace substances since World War II, and it has an extensive network of occupational health and safety institutes. This might be one factor explaining why their cancer rate is only 75 per cent of ours.

Despite these criticisms, the book is well worth buying. The factual information, the selected quotes and the explanations make it a valuable tool of political struggle around all health care. I highly recommend it.

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# A Soviet View of Churchill

CONRAD KOMOROWSKI

V.G. Trukhanovsky, *Winston Churchill*, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1978, 390 pp., \$9. Available through Imported Publications, 320 W. Ohio St., Chicago, Illinois.

For \$9 you can hold the life of Winston Churchill in your hand, analyze and assess it with the help of this first and only full-length Marxist study in English of his life and career. Those who do so will gain much, for it is a masterly study of a man who played an important role throughout the period of imperialism.

First published in 1968, the study has been revised and brought up to date to include information brought to light since then. It provides not only a valuable analysis of stages of British history, World War One and Two, and the Cold War, but insights which bear on today's events.

The role of the individual and of personality in the making of history is an especially interesting subject, one which it is essential for Marxists to understand. In bourgeois society, the role of the individual in history is exaggerated to conceal the class forces at work, to divert the working class and mass of people from the basic issue. The Churchill legend, for instance, has been "assiduously propagated by the Establishment," as the author points out.

It has been propagated not only in Britain but also in the United States. The 1974 Churchill centenary was an orgy of uncritical, lavish idealization of a "legend" which was used to distort history and perpetuate lies concerning not only Churchill but history itself.

In Dr. Trukhanovsky's study, the

reader will find an analysis which throws light on the role of the individual and personality in history, particularly because Churchill believed himself to have been born to rule and make history. How much of the result was Churchill and how much the operation of the overall forces which shape history is illustrated in this book.

There is another particularly important subject which emerges in this study. It throws light on the issue of "realism" in policy. We speak today of those elements of the ruling class which have a more "realistic" policy towards detente and the new balance of forces in the world than other elements of the ruling class. It is important to understand the basic significance of this situation in order not to make a wrong assessment of the subjective content or the objective role of this development.

Churchill—and the legend built around him—offer important insights into this matter. The historical phenomenon of a crusty Tory—one who had often been to the Right of his associates—rising to leadership in his own land in an anti-fascist war and to partnership in an alliance which included the Soviet Union, which he had fought all his life to destroy, has an endless fascination.

It compels curiosity and impels study. It excites desire to dig to the essence of this situation and illuminates questions about how history is made.

There is no doubt that Churchill rose to his "finest hour" as prime minister of an embattled Britain. But he was also the man who declared that he had not become prime minister to liquidate the British Empire. He was realistic enough, however, in the terms of that

time, to recognize that an alliance—however uneasy—with his "Devil," the Soviet Union, was necessary. Furthermore, the British people impelled Churchill and the section of the ruling class he spoke for at that time to do battle. It was the British people's "finest hour," and they who made Churchill's "finest hour" possible.

It is important to draw this distinction, for Churchill was not ever before or again so "realistic" in his choice of action and judgments. He was a life-long reactionary, who used troops against strikers at home, courted Italian and Spanish fascism abroad. He was a racist and colonialist.

As a foremost exponent of Britain's imperialist class, he boasted: "I am strongly wedded to the Zionist policy, of which I am one of the authors" (in a letter to then President Franklin D. Roosevelt, Aug. 9, 1942). It is to be hoped that in a future edition of this book, Trukhanovsky will deal with this matter, which is missing in the book under review.

Churchill was marked by a deep, sustained, lifelong hatred of socialism, which was linked to his fierce antagonism to working class advance. The class struggle was part of his life at all times. This led to critical mistakes. As Trukhanovsky writes: "He was sustained by his hatred for socialism, the revolutionary movement and the struggle for national liberation. This hatred was so great that it often prevented Churchill, a man of uncommon intelligence, from acting in accordance with the requirements of logic and common sense."

This class bias led Churchill to resist "Nazi Germany and fascist Italy not so much because of their fascist regimes as because of their interference with Britain's imperialist interests." In brief, history, not Churchill as an individual, made Churchill's "finest hour." He was a Tory and remained a Tory, and became a leading figure in bringing the Cold War into being.

# An Answer to Critics of Marxism

WILLIAM WEINSTONE

Boris N. Ponomarev, *Marxism-Leninism: A Flourishing Science*, International Publishers, New York, 1980, 121 pp. Forward by Gus Hall. \$1.75.

B.N. Ponomarev, alternate member of the Political Bureau of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, has over several decades written illuminating articles on contemporary developments from the standpoint of the teachings of Marxism-Leninism, explaining the changes in the international scene, particularly in the confrontation of the two world systems, capitalism and socialism.

This latest work available in English is a welcome addition to that ideological arsenal. It answers, in nine succinct, tightly and persuasively argued chapters, some of the most widely leveled charges against the applicability, integrity and timeliness of Marxism-Leninism. In a Foreword which is itself worthy of study for the contemporary political framework in which it places the ideological struggle, Gus Hall describes this work as "a substantial and an important contribution to the fight against [bourgeois ideological] pressure and to establishing the present, and ongoing, validity of Marxist-Leninist ideology for charting the course of the working class and the peoples of the world."

Ponomarev, noting the ferocity of present attacks on Marxism-Leninism, accounts for this unparalleled massive assault by the fact that socialism and the revolutionary forces have attained preeminent influence in the world.

Ponomorov gives four main social sources of the onslaught against Marxism-Leninism. Central is the big bourgeoisie—the monopolists, particu-

larly the most active, reactionary sections, who make their attack "incessantly and loud" and will maintain this ideological battle until they are undermined and destroyed.

A second source, and in a sense the main protagonist of ideological warfare, is social democracy, which has often been the pacemaker and initiator of the slogans of the bourgeoisie. Its chief originator was Eduard Bernstein, "the father of revisionism," who in 1898 declared that Marxism must be revised as unsuited to the new conditions of capitalism, to imperialism, which he described as a fundamentally altered system—more democratic in the distribution of shares of corporations, more democratic in politics. He called for the rejection of the dictatorship of the proletariat on the grounds that the working class was outnumbered by office workers and professionals, whom he regarded as a new middle class, and because he believed crises were no longer in the cards. Bernsteinism has poisoned sections of the working class movement for decades. Today Social Democracy continues in the main to follow on the heels of Bernsteinism, repeating the distortions and outright lies of the bourgeoisie. Their Right-wing leaders serve as class collaborators of the dying system, which it seeks unavailingly to reform.

Ponomarev notes another social source of doubts of the validity of Marxism-Leninism among those he calls democratic-left elements. They want a restructuring of capitalism, but, ignorant of the essence of Marxism-Leninism and prejudiced by the monopolies, who control the channels of information, they are unable to correctly assess the advance of socialism.

He believes they will move to Marxism-Leninism under the pressure of the erosion of capitalism and the mighty growth of socialism, and should be aided in this direction by the Communist forces.

A similarly interesting view by Ponomarev pertains to some elements in the Communist movement who doubt the relevancy of Marxism-Leninism. Ponomarev attributes this phenomenon to "the complexities of life, to the multiformity and rapidity of the changes of the conditions under which Communists function." "It sometimes happens," Ponomarev states, "that the difficulties give rise in the minds of individuals, even of sincere fighters against capitalism" as a crisis "of the Marxist-Leninist philosophy itself." This may lead those who do not know the history of the class struggle to "going beyond its framework," "rejecting some of its basic features and propositions." To this Ponomarev counterposes Lenin's advice that when new changes arise a revolutionary must make use of them. "He must not allow himself to drift helplessly with the stream, he must not throw out the old baggage, he must preserve the essentials in the forms of activity and not merely in theory, in the program, in the principles of policy." Has not this dialectical view been justified in our own history, when at one time new circumstances misled some Communists into throwing away the established successful forms, in favor of those long-unsuccessful positions advocated by Social Democracy and bourgeois intellectuals?

The prime cause of the present attack, writes Ponomarev, is the fact that we live in the epoch "of the steady crumbling and decline of capitalism, of the last exploiting social system, of the aggravation of that system's general crisis, of the successful offensive of the working class and its allies in the positions of monopoly capitalism." Moreover, "it is the epoch of the downfall

of imperialism's colonial system, of the forceful upswing of national liberation revolutions and of the emergence of Asian, African and Latin American peoples on the high road of independent social, economic and political development."

Lastly, states Ponomarev, "it is the epoch of radical change in the alignment of forces in the world, of the mounting influence of existing socialism in the course of social development, of its successful drive to rule out a world war from the life of society."

Despite these historic facts, which developed on the basis of Marxist-Leninist teachings, of the powerful influence of the great Russian Revolution, the bourgeoisie depicts Marxism as "fossilized, dogmatic teachings." They refuse to acknowledge the powerful advance of socialist ideas embodied in the reality of a large group of European, Asian, Latin American and African countries.

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The bourgeoisie and their Right Social Democratic henchmen claim that Marxism-Leninism is outdated because capitalism is no longer capitalism, nor the working class an independent force. But the fact is that though capitalism today is not the same as it was a hundred years ago, nor even as it was before World War II, yet it remains a system of exploitation and oppression—dominated economically and politically by a handful of monopolists, by a financial oligarchy, as described by Lenin in his work on imperialism. "despite the far reaching modifications, the deep lying foundation of the capitalist mode of production, distribution, exchange and consumption and capitalist exploitation remain unaltered," writes Ponomarev.

"Has bourgeois nationalization altered the private capitalist character of property," asks Ponomarev. "Does not the general law of capitalist accumulation and the pursuit of maximum profit, pointed out by Karl Marx in *Capital*, still operate and lead to the

accumulation of wealth at one pole and to mass insecurity at the other; i.e. the growing polarization of bourgeois society?"

Do not the conclusions of Lenin on the nature of imperialism, that it represents monopoly capitalism, is parasitic or decaying capitalism, is moribund capitalism hold true? Ponomarev illustrates the qualitatively higher level of this process on a national and international scale. He cites figures of the huge capital in the hands of the mammoth corporations, not only in the U.S., which occupies first place, but in other capitalist nations as well.

Further, despite the efforts of the capitalists to overcome the contradictions among them, the imperialist rivalry has been reduced to three main centers, USA, Western Europe and Japan. If the inevitable rivalry does not lead to imperialist war, it is because imperialism has irretrievably lost its supremacy, because it fears the Soviet Union, which works for peace, because the working class has irrevocably established itself as the main force in the world.

The aggravation of the principle contradiction, that between socialism and capitalism, increasingly influences all the main processes in the part of the world ruled by the financial oligarchy. Lenin witheringly criticized attempts, particularly on the part of the Social Democrats, to depict state monopoly capitalism as a sort of "state socialism." State monopoly capitalism, as it has developed historically, has created the preconditions for socialism. But, wrote Lenin, this is not an argument "for tolerating" the repudiation of a social revolution and is not an argument in favor of "efforts to make capitalism look more attractive, something which all reformists are trying to do." Lenin defined state monopoly capitalism as a merger of the power of monopoly with the power of the state for the utmost oppression of the working class.

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Ponomarev tackles the nature of socialism, particularly developed socialism. What is real socialism, developed socialism, is a question which must be answered, since the bourgeoisie and Social Democracy challenge the nature of the world socialist system. In essence, socialism is "a system of social justice in which all members of society are equal in what is basic, namely ownership of the means of production."

Socialism is a system that has established full democratic rights affecting all phases of the rights of the people. This includes a democratic solution of the national question. Socialism is a society which "enriches the national consciousness with an internationalist and ultimately socialist content."

Mature socialism is a society with highly developed productive forces, a powerful advanced industry and a large-scale, highly-mechanized agriculture.

Ponomarev discusses the nature of the state under socialism. At the outset, confronted by the resistance of the big landowners and bourgeoisie in the villages and cities, the Russian workers, under Bolshevik leadership, established the dictatorship of the proletariat, which overcame the resistance and civil war. It began the establishment of socialism, in accord with the specific conditions in Russia, and later in the lands that had been oppressed by czarism and the bourgeoisie.

It wiped out the exploitation and oppression of man by man and, after the achievement of this historic goal, ended the dictatorship of the proletariat and developed the state of the whole people. It was, as Lenin, stated, a transient period.

With the new stage, socialism vastly expanded democracy—a socialist democracy which demonstrated its vast vitality as a system in sharp contrast to bourgeois democracy. It involved the masses of people on a broader scale to participate in the administration of the affairs of state and society. Such ad-

ministration is specifically provided for in the new constitution of the USSR. Millions of working people through local soviets, through the trade unions, Komsomol, through all types of social and public organizations, run the state. The hallmark of socialist democracy is the political activity of the millionfold masses, in economic and social affairs as well. Is this like bourgeois democracy, where the working people play no role, outside of casting a ballot, in the decisive affairs of state? In the USA, there is not a single working-class representative in Congress, not to speak of industry, agriculture, schools, hospitals.

Of course, socialist citizens who enjoy rights and freedoms do not allow their rights to be prejudiced by others, but this is not "a restriction on democracy, as bourgeois agents claim" but an expression of the democratic will of the people.

Due to the broad participation of the people through elected organs, socialist democracy is not only a parliamentary right. What is coming into being in developed socialism is a program of social self-administration. As Leonid Brezhnev stated, "our state is gradually being transformed into communist self-government. This is a long process but it is proceeding steadily." While the state must continue to exist to defend socialist society's security from imperialist bandits, and serve to regulate the various aspects of political and social rights, the state is not independent of the people, as in bourgeois society. It is interacting with voluntary social organizations, which grow steadily and as communism develops. This is the answer to those who call for *democratic socialism*.

This development increasingly influences world development.

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Ponomarev places the question of war and peace early in his discussion. The capitalists, and particularly the warhawks, accuse Marxist-Leninists of

regarding war as the source of revolution and as being inevitable. But in reality Marxist-Leninists stress peaceful coexistence and the noninevitability of war.

Neither Marx, Engels nor Lenin ever regarded war as the source of revolution. Revolution arises from the class struggle, from the social and economic contradictions developing within each capitalist country. Imperialist war indeed creates barbaric conditions for the working class, severely worsens the living conditions of the people, raises the feelings of the working class and the masses of the people against the war, but it does not automatically generate revolution.

This was evident in World War I, when a revolutionary situation did not exist in the U.S. or in England, while in Germany it did topple the Kaiser, bringing to power bourgeois and social democratic governments, and in Russia a proletarian revolution occurred. No matter how bad the conditions of the masses are, if the working class is not organized, class conscious, lacks proper leadership, no proletarian revolution will develop. Revolution does not come spontaneously, automatically. It arises through organization and leadership. That is why the capitalists arrested the fighters against war, as in the case of Debs, C.E. Ruthenberg, Alfred Wgenknecht, large numbers of IWWers and other militants.

The Soviet Union and the other socialist countries, the world Communist movement, following World War II placed the question of securing peaceful coexistence as the main task facing the people of the world. They realized that it is possible, because of the great strength of the revolutionary forces of the world, to do away with war even before imperialism, the main warmaker, is abolished.

The fact of the matter is that for 35 years no world war has broken out. On the contrary, under the pressure of the

socialist world the capitalist nations have been compelled to move toward peaceful coexistence and detente. This is despite the fact that they have hampered socialism's development in every way possible, despite that U.S. imperialism is militaristic, has spent more than one trillion dollars in arms since World War II, intensely continues the arms race and has amassed so vast an arsenal as to threaten the survival of mankind.

The war hawks and the bourgeois intellectuals hirelings claim that the Communists are not sincere in their aim of detente and peaceful coexistence because they do not forsake the class struggle. But the class struggle has been in existence for as long as class society. And the fact is that the greed of the monopolists for maximum profits from armaments stimulates the class conflict.

The bourgeoisie, especially the Carter Administration, has put forward the slogan of defense of "human rights." The slogan of "human rights" of "dissidents" is a pretext to cover the dangerous proposal for stationing in Europe missiles especially designed to attack the Soviet Union.

The Soviet Union aids the nationally oppressed people, the nonaligned nations. What a contrast to the hypocrisy expressed in support by U.S. imperialism of a Shah who tyrannically ruled Iran and enriched himself with billions at the expense of the Iranian people!

It is impossible to do complete justice to Ponomarev's already condensed argumentation within the confines of a review. For reasons of space, I have made no attempt here to summarize the content of the booklet on a number of vital subjects, including "The General and the Particular in the Revolutionary Process" and "The Integrity of the Marxist-Leninist Teaching." The reader will be well repaid by what he acquires in absorbing these firsthand.



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