

Chapter 9 - "New Passions and New Forces"

New forces and new passions spring up in the bosom of society...

--Marx, Capital, Vol. I, p. 787.

The negativity which has just been considered is the turning-point of the movement of the Notion. It is the simple point of negative self-relation, the innermost source of all activity, of living and spiritual self-movement, the dialectic seed which all truth has in it and through which it alone is truth; for the transcendence of the opposition between the Notion and Reality, and that unity which is the truth, rest upon this subjectivity alone.

--Hegel, Science of Logic, Vol. II, p. 477.

Let us try to create the whole man, when Europe has been incapable of bringing to triumphant birth. Two centuries ago, a former European colony decided to catch up with Europe. It succeeded so well that the United States of America became a monster.... Comrades, let us flee from this nationless movement where gradually dialectic is changing into the logic of equilibrium. Let us reconsider the question of mankind.

--Frantz Fanon, The Wretched of the Earth, p. 253-4.

Black was the color which made the 1960's an exciting decade. At the very time when the African Revolution ~~was reshaping~~ reshaped the course of history of nearly the whole continent and helped set in motion a totally new Third World, the Blacks in the United States opened a new era of youth revolts, Black and white. The Black student youth in Greensboro, North Carolina in 1960 who, by their sit-in at and refusal to move from a segregated lunch counter, were the first detonators of the new historic stage were striking out against both white supremacy and their quiescent Black elders. The truth, however, is that they were standing on the shoulders of what Black revolutionary adults had achieved, not only in past history, but in the history of the day before, specifically the Montgomery Bus Boycott in 1955-56, initiated by the action of a Black working woman, Rosa Parks, who would not give up her seat to a white man. It is true that the Montgomery Bus Boycott had not caught the national imagination and snowballed, North and South, as had the youths' sit-in, but it was there nevertheless where we saw the first unity of worker and student, and also a new unity of spontaneity and organization. It was the first to pre-

ject a new manner of freedom—self-activity, self-development, self-organization, where in masses in nearly daily meetings, the Blacks decided all questions, from transport to relations between masses and leaders. The new leader propelled forward by the boycott, Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr., was not soon to forget that it was the mass movement that created him, not he the mass movement.<sup>1</sup>

The greatest achievement of all in the Montgomery Bus Boycott movement was its own working existence. This became the ground for all of the developments in the South throughout the decade of the 1960's. This is what was new in this decade of Black revolt. And it is this which had characterized the new stage of freedom struggles in East Europe, occurring during the same period and climaxed by the full-scale revolution in Hungary. Hardly anyone noticed the parallel between these two distant movements. Yet, once the youth in North Carolina in 1960 unfurled the new banner of freedom, and white students began coming South for Freedom Rides, Freedom Marches, Freedom Schools, it was these new methods of struggle which <sup>were</sup> ~~were~~ applied to Northern battles as well. By the time the U. S., in February 1965, unleashed an imperialist war on Vietnam by bombing Hanoi, a whole new generation of revolutionaries was born.

The fact is, however, that at this high point of development, there was a schism in the New Left between Black and white. The mass migration of the white students from the civil rights movement to the newer anti-Vietnam War movement, without so much as a "by your leave" to the civil rights movement, did indeed expose a racist tinge among the white revolutionaries. The fact that they were unconscious of their racism neither made the truth any less

<sup>1</sup> See Stride Toward Freedom, by Martin Luther King, Jr.  
See also the pamphlet, American Civilization on Trial, News & Letters, Detroit, 1963.

feel nor hid the great insensitivity both to the demands, and to the vanguard nature of the demands of the Black masses. This could not have arisen had the New Left been imbued with the historic continuity (which is the life blood not merely of the dialectic but of the very lives of Blacks in racist America) of the Blacks' struggles, from before the Civil War and after, from before the CIO and after, from before the Civil Rights movement of the early 1960's and after.

The fact that Blacks have always been the touchstone of American civilization, its Achille's heel, does not only mean the exposure of the hollowness of American democracy, but also the inherence of racism even among white revolutionaries. That the latter did not know that the bell tolled for them further laid bare the total blindness on the part of whites to the overpowering truth that there never was a period, not even at the zenith of such great movements as Abolitionism, when a Great Divide had not suddenly opened up to reveal that racism held all in its throes. The philosophical-political immaturity, the failure to be aware, down to the marrow of one's bones, that the Black revolution was objectively the point of negation of racism, disclosed the ahistorical, apolitical, anti-dialectical attitude to revolution itself, and, therefore, to the Black masses as vanguard. The whites who thought it was "misplaced concreteness" to fight "only" the Bull Connor as against the Pentagon bombers, disclosed still another form of the Pragmatism which holds the American, be he sycophant or dissident, in its vise.

If we take a second look at the high point in the development of the Freedom Now movement in the South, when school children from seven years on up had to face the Bull Connors with their cattle prods, vicious dogs, high pressure hoses, and guns, we shall see that it was also the point when Dr. King felt he could no longer face these brave masses with non-violence as the only theory. His famous letter from his Birmingham jail cell, addressed

to white clergymen, was in fact an unfolding for the movement of a Humanist philosophy. It is true that, instead of relating Humanism to Marxism, he surrounded it with<sup>1</sup> Hebraic formula of "thou-it." But, by designating segregation as a human relationship, or rather an inhuman one, and not as an "it" question, Dr. King raised also the question of the relationship of underlying philosophy to concrete action, mass action. As it happened, this high point marked the beginning of the end of Rev. King's predominance in leadership of the Black movement.

The proliferation of organizations, from SCLC to SNCC, from Womanpower Unlimited<sup>2</sup> to Freedom Schools, showed the Black youth, ranks and leaders, moving in more revolutionary directions, not only when it came to "actions"<sup>3</sup> but also as related to education, which also had to be totally uprooted. Listen to Robert Moses from the Mississippi Freedom Schools addressing SNCC's Western conference in the fall of 1964:

... We got freedom schools. You form your own schools. Because when you come right down to it, why integrate their schools? What is it that you will learn in their schools? Many Negroes can learn it, but what can they do with it? What they really need to learn is how to be organized to work on the society to change it. They can't learn that in schools ...

Now nobody sat down and theorized all this. It's just that you went down there and started to try to do something ... College kids come down, some of the Negroes who have come down, and are now trying to get back in school, can't relate to it. That raises for them the whole question of education. What is the degree? What do I need it for? What can I do with it after I get it!...

Now what the SNCC people have found in a slow process is that they don't have to accept (society's) definition of work. That they can define their own. And that they understand a little better what it means to work. That is to really put energy into something and to make something that's meaningful to yourself.

<sup>2</sup> See Freedom Riders Speak for Themselves, News & Letters, Detroit, 1961, p. 23, for a description of Womanpower Unlimited, an organization of women in Jackson, Miss., formed in 1961 to make life more bearable for the Freedom Riders imprisoned in the county jails.

... The progress we experience is mostly progress in terms of what happens to the people we are working with. It's that they, in many communities, have found a new kind of strength. In their individual acts just going to the courthouse (to register) is a revolutionary act. Given their lives. A community has developed in places because of these acts. Local people have really begun to find a way they can use a meeting as a tool for running their own lives. For having something to say about it. That's very slow, but it's happening.

In a sense, these people have found freedom. They don't have any participation in society but they're free now. They can do things that they've wanted to do for a long time.

They've been able to confront people who are on their backs. They take whatever is dished out--bombings, shootings, beatings, whatever it is. After people live through that they have a scope that they didn't have before. There's a whole new dimension in their lives that wasn't there before.

That new dimension was what the white student youth in the multi-  
 versity whoselikewise trying to reach in the creation of the Free Speech Move-  
 ment at Berkeley. The movement there had gone so far in philosophical awareness  
 as to "accept" the Marxist theory of alienation. At the same time, pragmatism  
 is so total in its hold on American youth, that the FSM was more proud of the  
 fact that it was "non-ideological" than it was of its unique achievement in  
 placing the theory of alienation on a relevant American level. Here is how  
 its best known leader, Mario Savio, expressed it:

I think it would distort the facts not to make it quite clear  
 that the tone from the very beginning and the possibility of success  
 was founded in a new non-ideological radicalism which is expressed  
 most clearly in SHCC. Those people who have been most effective  
 have been those who have made their decisions from a very pragmatic  
 point of view. An activist pragmatic radical view to be sure,  
 but not an ideological point of view.

And again:

Large numbers of students from Berkeley have gone South, so  
 there's constant intellectual ferment. On the other hand, the  
 political issue is a pretext for this rebellion. The real cause

is the alienation that students feel from what is a knowledge factory. Kerr is quite right. You're processed. You become a number on a set of file cards that go through an IBM machine. The terrible dehumanization. The things which are worst about America are most cruelly exemplified here. (3)

And once again, this time in an interview with Life magazine:

America may be the most poverty-stricken country in the world. Not materially. But intellectually it is bankrupt. And morally it's poverty-stricken. But in such a way that it's not clear to you that you're poor. It's very hard to know you're poor if you're eating well....

Students are excited about political ideas. They're not yet inured to the apolitical society they're going to enter. But being interested in ideas means you have no use in American society...unless they are ideas which are useful to the military-industrial complex....

Factories are run in authoritarian fashion--non-union factories anyway--and that's the nearest parallel to the university....

In contrast to this, the point Savio kept driving home about the feelings of his fellow students was that "they are people who have not learned to compromise."

It was not the refusal to compromise that the Blacks objected to. What they objected to was the manner in which the white students <sup>a year later,</sup> forgot all about the South and concentrated on the single issue of the Vietnam war. Insofar as the Black revolutionaries were concerned, [the whites still looked outward, saw the enemy in "foreign policy," whereas they, the Blacks, felt the enemy right at home, directly on their backs.] The unemployment lines were overwhelming them, even as the Army was pursuing them. Nor was this a phenomenon that first appeared in 1965; it has always been present. The fact that Stokely Carmichael could, at one and the same time, raise the excellent slogan, "Hell no, we won't go!" and turn against "whitey," including the white revolu-

(3) Along with excerpts from his interviews, an article by Mario Savio summarizing his views on the FSM can be found in the pamphlet The Free Speech Movement and the Negro Revolution, by Mario Savio, Eugene Walker, and Raya Dunayevskaya, News & Letters, Detroit, 1965.



tionaries, showed that being Black, he did understand the depth of the Blacks' disdain for the whites who had "gone South" but were now back in the metropolises talking, talking, talking before marches, during, after, talking to themselves, forgetting the dialogue and work with Blacks.

The youth were with Stokely when he raised the question of Blacks leading themselves and not letting leadership of their movement stay in white hands. But the masses were not waiting for him "to lead" them either. All over the U. S., they were rising up in new spontaneous outbursts. Anyone who failed to see the new end of patience in Harlem in 1964 could not fail to see it during the next two long years, starting with Watts in 1965, spreading throughout the whole United States, and coming to a climax in Detroit in 1967. Yet the Black leaders were totally deaf to the new distinctive feature in Detroit's uprising, the class aspect of race consciousness.

Detroit opened a new stage of Black revolt. In common with the outbursts occurring everywhere--from Boston to Spanish Harlem, from Tucson to Newark, from Cleveland to Sacramento, and some eighty other cities--the voice of anger, frustration with, and rejection of, their conditions of life was loud and clear. Unlike the other rebellions, Detroit revolted, not against "whiteness" as such, but against racist class society--white foremen, white landlords, white merchants, and of course, white police. When the wrath of the Blacks exploded in Detroit, it was vented not only against the police in their own neighborhoods, or even the police in general, who were the prime targets of the snipers. In Detroit, Blacks made direct attacks on police stations.

Many other things were new in the Detroit revolt. Unlike other cities, here the repossession, as well as the sniping later, were integrated. Unlike Watts, where whites had been pulled from cars and beaten, in Detroit Blacks stopped in the midst of their activities to warn whites away from certain areas where they might run into trouble.

While none could say there was an actual comradeship in the factories, white and Black workers got along on the production line better than they had in years. Here is what a Black auto worker reported about his shop:

A skeleton crew of workers appeared at the Chrysler Mack plant gate for the morning shift the second day of the revolt in Detroit. No production was running and we could look out of the windows and see billows of black smoke shooting skywards, and then suddenly the red flames following the smoke. Every four or five minutes this would be repeated in different areas of the city.

We didn't know where the foremen were until an hour later, when a Black foreman came up and said they were in conference with the plant superintendent, and that some of the white foremen were frightened stiff. The two he mentioned were the worst in the plant, and hated by most of the workers. He said those two had been in there begging to go home.

The superintendent told them to go out and see what the Blacks and young workers felt toward them. My foreman walked up and said, "You and I have always gotten along O.K. I know we have had minor arguments, but when it was over I always forgot it, and I feel sure you did too. Now I know this riot is not because all colored people are bad; the young whites are just as bad, just as guilty of crimes."

He wanted to know exactly what everyone that worked for him felt about him, especially the young Blacks. While he was saying this to me, practically every foreman had one or two Blacks cornered off asking them the same thing.

The following day those two foremen did not come in. In fact, they stayed away the entire week.

It has been a week since the revolt's been over. Not one foreman in our plant has raised his voice at a worker, and they seem to be leaning backwards to some of the Black workers.

One guy said, "Man, the destruction was unbelievable; but considering what it did for us about changing the foremen's attitude, it should happen every month."

What emerges from the actual struggles of the Blacks is a search for a total philosophy to change society from the bottom, the leaders, self-styled and otherwise, who presumed to speak "for the Blacks," short-changed that into a slogan. And a tactic imposed from above. When a Black said,



"Hell no, we won't go," what he was saying was: we should be fighting the enemies at home--poor jobs, poor homes, "the whole system," not the Vietnamese people. What he was not saying was: as against my home here, I choose to live in China or Cuba, or Russia, or even Vietnam.

Black consciousness, Afro-American roots, awareness of themselves as a people, a nation, a race. Black is beautiful, and it is also revolutionary. Many a youth was memorizing Malcolm X's records; they identified with him, especially after he broke with Elijah Muhammad's Black Muslims, when he was moving toward a new revolutionary universalism. In that crucial year, 1966, when Stokely (on that famous march through the South, alongside Dr. King and James Meredith) first raised the slogan, "Black Power," he signalled more than the end of Dr. King's predominance in the leadership of the movement. It was also the beginning of the division between rank and all leaders, himself included. It is true he electrified the crowd, when he first expounded the slogan:

The only way we gonna stop them white men from huppin' us is to take over. We been saying freedom for six years and we ain't got nothin'. What we gonna start saying now is Black Power... Ain't nothin' wrong with anything all black 'cause I'm all black and I'm all good. Now don't you be afraid. And from now on when they ask you what you want, you know what to tell them.

All answered: "Black Power! Black Power! BLACK POWER!" But as the slogan caught on, Stokely himself was off elsewhere. Neither he nor any other Black militant leader was listening to the voices that came from below, least of all from Black workers.

There was very nearly the same separation of Black leaders from Black masses as there was between elitist white revolutionaries and the Black community. There certainly was the same theoretic void on the part of the leaders. In moving away from Dr. King's non-violence, the new militant Black

leaders did not move away from American pragmatism, did not even attempt to work out a philosophy of total freedom. Nothing shows this more clearly than the manner in which they reduced the revolutionary humanism and profound philosophic concept of the needed "new man" that Frantz Fanon was proclaiming to the world, to a mere question of violence versus non-violence. This was hardly the question which separated them from elitist white revolutionaries. Indeed, it would soon lead them back to unprincipled collaboration under the Maoist slogan, "Power comes out of the barrel of a gun." Because the lack of philosophic grasp has helped bring about an impasse not only in the Black movement, but among all the "new passions and new forces" for the reconstruction of society on totally new beginnings, whether our point of concern is the latest phenomenon--women's Liberation, or the youth, or Chicanos, or Indians, or, for that matter, the whole Third World, it becomes necessary ~~to stay a while longer with the theoretician of the Third World, whom our young Black leaders most often quote and most often misrepresent.~~

Because Fanon has a great deal to say on violence, and that is the only thing many Black leaders took from him, one would think he has nothing else to say. First of all, what he says is absolutely correct, both historically and theoretically. Though the Black Panthers act as if Fanon's thesis is the same as the Maoist oversimplification, "Power comes out of the barrel of a gun," his beautiful first chapter, "Concerning Violence," has nothing whatsoever to do with Mao. On the contrary, it has everything to do with the concrete decolonization of Africa as "a historical process; that is to say that it cannot be understood, it cannot become intelligible nor clear to itself except in the exact measure that we can discern the movements which give it historical form and content." (4)

(4) Frantz Fanon, The Wretched of the Earth, Grove Press, N. Y., 1966, p. 29-30.

While his American followers chose to disregard Fanon's dialectics, they managed to present even those points of Fanon that they quote correctly one-sidedly. Thus, it is true that Fanon has a great deal more faith in the peasants as revolutionaries than in the proletariat. But, again, it is concrete -- the peasantry in the underdeveloped countries is the revolutionary force. The colonizers have tried, and sometimes succeeded, in corrupting city inhabitants: proletariat and intellectuals and leaders of the national movements. Fanon devotes a whole chapter to the "Pitfalls of National Consciousness," and "the laziness of the intellectuals."

History teaches us clearly that the battle against colonialism does not run straight away along the lines of nationalism... It so happens that the unpreparedness of the educated classes, the lack of practical links between them and the mass of the people, their laziness, and let it be said, their cowardice at the decisive moment of the struggle will give rise to tragic mishaps. (p. 121)

Not only does he draw a sharp line between masses and leaders before conquest of power, but he does so after also.

Finally, it is true that Fanon exposes the horrors of Western civilization, rejects it as any model to follow. He tells his African comrades: "Let us waste no time in sterile litanies and nauseating mimicry. Leave this Europe where they are never done talking of Man, yet murder men everywhere they find them..." (p. 252) But it is not true that he has only the Black in mind. He is most specific on the fact that with the disappearance of colonialism and "colonized man," "This new humanity cannot do otherwise than define a new humanism both for itself and for others." (p. 197) Clearly, the dialectics of liberation is not anything pragmatic, nor something only Black,<sup>(5)</sup> much less narrowly nationalistic. It is global as well as revolutionary; it is total

(5) Indeed, he credits Budapest as well as Suez with being more decisive moments of confrontation than the Korean War. See especially p. 62.

as well as historically continuous. It is, as he put it, a "new humanism," no stranger to Marxism; and, above all, impossible of achievement if the leaders isolate themselves from the masses.

One Black worker from Oakland, California, disgusted with what became of the Black Power slogan, wrote:

Black power has become a gigantic reindeer-hat rack with many opposing hats hanging there, including the hat of Black capitalism. The possible unity of Black and white workers to destroy the system of capitalism is a punch at the gut nerve of all middle class intellectuals and elitist groups, Black or white.

The most anti-elitist new force that came on the historic stage in the turbulent '60's was Women's Liberation. It surprised everyone, the New Left most of all, since though born out of the New Left, it was the New Left it opposed. The same women who had participated in every phase of the freedom movements refused to continue being the typists, the mimeographers, the "Ladies' auxiliaries" to the left. They demanded an end to the separation of mental and manual labor, not only within the whole society, but within the left itself, and applied to women. They were not afraid to attack the male-chauvinism in the Black movement; Black and white women joined together to do battle with the arrogance of a Stokely Carmichael, who had said that "the position for women in the movement is prone." So uncompromising as well as adamant was their attack on elitism and authoritarianism that the very structure of the new Women's Liberation groups, the small groups that sprang up everywhere, <sup>were</sup> ~~was~~ an effort to find a form that would allow for the self-development of the individual woman.

Moreover, the women surprised everyone with their militancy because ~~there~~ <sup>there</sup> already was a new women's organization, N.O.W.; but far from attracting them, they considered it too concerned with middle-class and professional

women's issues. Suddenly, "male-chauvinism" became as popular a slogan as "and the war," sexism became as vicious an enemy as racism, and for the women, freedom now meant today, today not tomorrow, today not the day of revolution, much less the day after, today meant Today, this very moment, in this very relationship with "my man."

The women refused to consider the relationship of woman to man to be a "private affair." That was only one more way to make women feel isolated and helpless. The idea of freedom "in the air" quickly spread to thousands of women who had never before been "political," who suddenly saw their own lives in a different light. And once there was a movement--and there was one before the "world" acknowledged it after the mass demonstrations in August, 1970--the whole atmosphere of the country changed. Collectivity and individuality became inseparable, as the heightened consciousness allowed the women to understand that they were "individualized through the process of history."

Here is how one young woman summarized what she thought were the new doors opened by the Women's Liberation movement:

The movement has raised many new questions about women which are both a shock to those who are not attuned to listening for new forces of revolution, and at the same time show the universality of the movement's ideas. These ideas have not always been heard clearly, partly because the best organized and publicized parts of the movement are <sup>the</sup> most middle-class oriented groups, more because the movement has not yet "proved" itself, or fully defined itself through action. Whether this is because it is so young, or because of the theoretical impasse it has reached, or both, the point is that it has already achieved much, precisely because it <sup>represents</sup> is an idea whose time has come.

Thus, on the question of equal pay with men--today nearly everyone, even men who are terrible male-chauvinists in their personal

lives, will agree with you on this. Yet three or four years ago, at the start of the movement, the idea was considered shocking. The change is not because any statistics that show that most women who work do so because they must to support themselves or their families, rather than for "pin money, have changed, but because the beliefs that women should not—and "good" women did not—get jobs, and that women are "worth less" than men, were so ingrained. It has taken much talking and action just to convince men that women are not inherently inferior, and the reality of equal pay is still a long way off.

Thus, in spite of adverse publicity about ugly "girls" burning bras and whatever other nonsense the male-chauvinists play up in order to make the movement look silly, more and more women keep "joining" it. All different kinds of women who had never joined anything before have become "activists" —and thinkers. In addition to those who call themselves members of the movement, thousands more <sup>express the same</sup> ~~express the same~~ ideas, from the welfare mothers' organizations to the new drives to unionize women's industries and fight discrimination/<sup>sanctioned by</sup> existing unions. And the many voices expressing the ideas of Women's Liberation were not the result of women reading Sexual Politics, much less the hundreds of less serious works on the subject, but of the hunger for new roles in ~~the~~ society and new relationships with others.

Thus, the movement brought Black and white revolutionaries together. The Black dimension had been the catalyst for the first women's movement during the Abolitionist movement. [when Black women such as Sojourner Truth and Harriet Tubman were speakers, leaders, "generals," and inspired the white women who were still subordinates to the male Abolitionist leaders.] The suffrage movement arose out of the Abolitionist one, but later when the white middle-class women lost their links with



the Black and proletarian woman, the struggle was narrowed to just getting the vote. The new feminists are learning their history, and concluding that the movement must include Black and proletarian women, and also that women must fight for their own freedom in order to be able to fight for that of others.

Like the coal miners and auto workers who asked, while they fought killing automation, "what kind of work should man do?", (6) the women are asking, "what kind of work should women do?" Must there be a lower standard that says women should only do housework—dull, hard, mindless housework—or its equivalent in the market place? Women are demanding to use their heads, to be human beings instead of just sex objects and household robots. And even more fundamentally, they are asking, "what kind of work should we value?" In addition to the question of equal pay, there is that of being paid at all: the housewife (the movement, which is very sensitive to language that reinforces concepts of male domination, has also pointed out how alienating the word "housewife" is—the wife is not even an appendage to a man, but to a house), the housewife who has no independence because she has no money of her own and must obey her man or she may find herself on the street; the working woman who has to put in a second full, unpaid workday when she comes home, so that she doesn't have a moment to think let alone participate in a movement. This is not even a question of valuing manual work properly, but of valuing "women's work" at all. So long as woman's role is thought to be "inherently" to serve men, we cannot even get to the question of who does mental labor.

(6) See Workers Battle Automation, News & Letters, Detroit, 1960.



Mankind has evidently reached the end of something when the richest and most powerful military might on earth shouts to the heavens, not about the wonders of its production, affluence, or nuclear gigantism, but about the "strange spirit of malaise throughout the land." This isn't all due to "spirit." It has very deep economic roots. All one has to do to see this is look at the latest figures on the state of the economy. By the government's own standard, twenty-five and a half million people lived in poverty in 1970. More than 13.5 million Americans receive welfare assistance—one out of seven people in New York and San Francisco, one out of four in Newark. Unemployment has risen to 6.2 per cent, and that figure is meaningless when it comes to the Black community, where unemployment runs to no less than 25 per cent in the "inner city." The rate of poverty for Blacks was 32.1 per cent, about three times the rate for whites, in 1970. This is during a period of so-great growth that Nixon hurried to announce we had reached the trillion dollar level! The trouble with his "unparalleled prosperity" is that, first and foremost, both the constantly rising number of poor and the army of unemployed have become as permanent features of the economy as militarization and ongoing wars.

Thus, though the United States heads the list of the major world powers in its expenditure for the military, it is also at the head in its number of unemployed. According to the U.S. Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, the percentage of the gross national product for military purposes is 8.5 per cent, as against 5.8 percent spent by Great Britain, 4.1 per cent by West Germany, and only 1 percent by Japan. At the same time, <sup>in</sup> the United States ~~is~~ unemployment <sup>was</sup> 3.6 percent, Britain 2.5 percent, West Germany 1.6 percent, Japan 1.2 percent. These are 1969 figures and are given here only for purposes of relating the military expenditures to the unemployment figures. For as we saw above, ~~unemployment~~ <sup>unemployment has</sup> actually doubled.

So decadent has capitalism become that even the ruling class itself—and ~~with~~ with state intervention at all levels, from war to "welfare" for the benefit of the capitalist class—considers the \$30 billion annually poured into the Vietnam war as being insufficiently profitable! Even for them, it is "the wrong war." Moreover, the inflation which makes the dollar stand up in the international market only with the crutches of full state backing plus outright "industrial helotry" (to use ex-Prime Minister Wilson's phrase), ~~which~~ ~~it~~ helps lead the way to the first serious, full, war-time recession. Not all the tricks in Nixon's bag, from the state planning learned during World War II to the nuclear overkill, can ~~possibly~~ get the country out of its malaise. It is sick, sick, sick.

Rampant racism, which makes all these economic burdens fall heaviest on the Blacks, has yet to be fully grasped by the white revolutionaries. This is why the Blacks keep insisting that not only is the oppressor class racist, but that racism remains the issue also ~~in~~ in the country as a whole, including the white revolutionaries.

Thus, as late as 1970, at the very moment when the Black students were coming out in solidarity with the murdered white students at Kent State University, the experience with whites, not bigots but revolutionary whites, was shattering. In contrast to the mass outpouring of protest all over the country to the Kent killings and the Cambodian invasion, there was very nearly total silence on the part of whites to the happenings in the South, the murder of Blacks by police and the planned and massive gunfire poured out at the Black women's dormitory at Jackson State. All the Blacks, no matter what strata, avowed that racism was in fact so deep and ingrained and irreversible as to hold all whites in its throes.

Thus, the Black G.I.'s, the very ones who are still in Vietnam,

experience the same discrimination as in the South, and as a two-year survey<sup>(8)</sup> revealed, they hail the Black Panthers as what they call "an equalizer. The beast (the white man) got his Ku Klux Klan. The Black Panthers give the beast something to fear, like we feared the KKK all of our lives."

Thus, a Black worker in an auto shop said: "There is no middle road any more. The days we accepted, 'we have to take the lesser of two evils,' are gone. You have to go to the extreme now. Racism is the issue here, and for that we need a revolution." The conclusion on the part of everyone interviewed in another survey--and none of these surveys were taken by revolutionaries--was: "Racism is the issue. Nixon's Southern strategy is not what the white liberals say it is, not caring about Blacks because of the wide-spread yearning for law and order. Everything Nixon does says: I don't need you. Blacks are dispensable."

(8) The survey was made by a Black journalist for the New York Times, , 1970.



In 1968 all eyes had turned to France for it was there that the highest point of development for all new passions and new forces had ~~erupted~~ <sup>erupted</sup>. The vastness and expansiveness of the spontaneous mass outburst, the <sup>range and</sup> multiplicity of the actions from barricades in the Latin Quarter to occupation of factories to mass marches marked a turning point <sup>of</sup> in the turbulent 1960's in a historic dimension. For the first time a near-revolution upsurged in a technologically advanced country. For the first time since the birth of the new generation of revolutionaries did the student youth and the workers unite in mass activities. For the first time did the Worker-Student Alliance show itself to be not only a new form of struggle but an overpowering force as thousands of students in revolt became a million marching feet of workers and students and housewives and oldsters as well as youth became a near-revolution undermining de Gaulle. Yet the fact, that it was only a near, not an actual, revolution; the fact that the French CP, through the OIT, could keep the workers confined to reformist demands which made it unnecessary for de Gaulle, once he organized the counter-revolution, to need a bloodbath to keep the mass revolt from becoming social revolution, naturally put a question mark <sup>not only</sup> over a revolution "vanguardists" like the ~~but~~ Trotskyists who, though they fought the CP counter-revolutionary activities, held on to the same concept of a "vanguard Party to lead the revolution."<sup>(9)</sup> Daniel John-Bendit <sup>(10)</sup> was absolutely right when he said that the movement was beyond the small parties which wanted to lead. But he was wrong to hold on to so abstract a view of a philosophy of liberation as to think that theory can be picked up "en route."<sup>(11)</sup> Without theory the road to revolution led "en route" to nowhere; the revolution-to-be was a still-birth. Which only increased the endless output of books on it. As one young/revolutionary who was a ~~participant~~ <sup>American</sup> participant in the events put it: "At no time, 1848 to 1968, have there been more analyses, more solutions, more answers thrust upon the revolutionary actions of the Polish, the German, the Czechoslovak, and most specifically the French masses that what we are witnessing today."

"For Sartre, the barricades of France and the general strike had a certain resemblance to the Castro type of insurrection. For Marcuse, the May revolt was Maoist like, i.e., there were aspects of China's Cultural Revolution. For the Trotskyists, it was a revolution minus one ingredient -- a 'real' vanguard party. For some existentialist-anarchists it was a collective madness which proudly had no goal, no definite aims, no alternative.... For Cohn-Bendit and others their role is that of 'planting seeds.'..(But)going from the possible to the actual is not only a task of the workers. It is a task for



theoreticians."<sup>(12)</sup>

Different as France, May, 1968 was from Cuba, January, 1959, the underlying philosophy of the New Left remained one or another form of "guerrilla warfare" that became most famous under the title, Revolution Within Revolution.<sup>All came under its spell,</sup> Even those who did not accept the view that only the countryside, only in technologically underdeveloped countries seethe with revolution. To self-proclaimed "urban guerrillas", the point of attraction <sup>(more so in the US than in France)</sup> was its newness, unburdened by the past.

Debray's Revolution in the Revolution? burns with missionary zeal "to free the present from the past." A greater deception than either that contained in the title of this pretentious little booklet, or in the alleged narrowing of the "terrain" of guerrilla war to Latin America, underlies the contention that, as against the abstractions of theory, this essay is based solely on "experience," facts, "the concrete." Under the guise of this untheory, the most pretentious theoretic declarations are asserted which indeed change the course, not of details, but of theory and fact, history and "a new dialectic of tasks." Dominating this "new dialectic" is the need to set up "military focus, not political focus." Poor dialectics, what crimes have not been committed in thy name!

Debray pulls out from his fertile style a new expression--"the equivalent substitution" (military command). This is the end result of the Army replacing the Party, replacing the Proletariat, replacing the Peasantry, only to be replaced by the know-it-all, see-it-all, "Equivalent-Substitution," the military command, which consists mainly of intellectuals of bourgeois extraction:

One finds that a working class of restricted size or under the influence of a reformist trade union aristocracy, and an isolated and humiliated peasantry, are willing to accept this group, of bourgeois origin, as their political leadership. (9)

No factionalism of any sort is permitted. This old chestnut of Stalinist totalitarianism is passed off as "The theoretical and historic novelty of this situation."

(9) It would be impossible to list all the books, pamphlets, articles on Spring, 1968. In any case, they are easily available not only in France but a great many in English translation. I am limiting myself to the very few directly related to the aspect of

under discussion here. The graffiti played a specially prominent part, and therefore it is important to list its theoretician, Guy Debord's Festival. The New Left Review likewise called its special issue (#52, Nov.-Dec, 1968) devoted to France, 1968, "Festival of the Oppressed". While it printed the whole of Andre Glucksmann's "Strategy and Revolution" which it labelled "the fundamental theoretical document of the younger generation of students and intellectuals who launched the movement of May," it included also the Trotskyist, Ernest Mandel, and, of course, pointed to its specific views, Tom Nairn's The Beginning of the End, (Panther Books). Also by English socialists The Struggle Goes On by Tony Cliff and Ian Birchall (IS) and Paris May 1968 (Solidarity Committee). See also Worker Student Action Committee by Paulman-Grainger.

(10) Obsolete Communism by Daniel Cohn-Bendit

(11) France Spring, 1968 by Eugene Walker

(12) Regis Debray, Revolution in the Revolution? (Grove Press, NY)

13304

-22-

The "proof" of "perfect understanding" lies in the acceptance of (1) insurrectional activity as "the number one political activity," and (2) the conclusion that "there" is no longer a place for verbal ideological relation to the revolution, nor for a certain type of polemic."

Outside of the penchant for monolithism which characterizes the booklet, its 115 pages are one never-ending paean of praise to the guerrilla. So supreme is the military as means and end, as strategy and tactic, as leadership and manhood itself, that it also swallows up theory and the political party. According to Debray, "the staggering novelty introduced by the Cuban Revolution" is this: "The guerrilla force is the party in embryo." The fact that he could not merely assert, but had to attempt to prove Cuban originality on the question of guerrilla war, made difficulties from the start.

The first Marxist theorist of guerrilla warfare was Mao Tse-tung, not Fidel Castro. Furthermore, the thesis of "freeing the present from the past" had come face to face with the simple reality that it was Vietnam, not Cuba, which was presently engaged in guerrilla warfare on a massive scale against the biggest of all the world's imperialisms, that of the United States.

Under the circumstances, Debray could not attack General Giap frontally. Our philosopher thereupon hit upon the idea of beginning with an attack on the Trotskyists (always a safe bet for Communists); only after that could Debray attempt to move cautiously to a criticism of other concepts of "self-defense":

In Vietnam above all, and also in China, armed self-defense of the peasants, organized in militias, has played an important role...but...in no way did it bring autonomous zones into being. These territories of self-defense were viable only because total war was being carried out on other fronts....

Castro's total war includes a war on Marxist theory: first, Marx's own theory of revolution as the objectively produced elemental outburst of the masses; and second, Lenin's dictum that there can be no revolution without a revolutionary theory. Che Guevara, when he spoke, not "through" Debray but in his own words, was

open enough about it:

This is a unique Revolution which some people maintain contradicts one of the most orthodox premises of the revolutionary movement, expressed by Lenin: "Without a revolutionary theory there is no revolutionary movement." It would be suitable to say that revolutionary theory as the expression of a social truth, surpasses any declaration of it; that is to say, even if the theory is not known, the revolution can succeed if historical reality is interpreted correctly and if the forces involved in it are utilized correctly. ( )

Debray will have nothing to do with this open declaration of a deviation, much less an actual theoretical argument; instead, there is his devious diatribes, first against "Trotskyism," then Maoism, and only then "theoretically" against Giep. The way he explains Castro's "heresy" leaves out the question of theory altogether. "Fidel Castro," he writes, "says simply that there is no revolution without a vanguard." That this is not the point in dispute among Communists, all of whom are passionate "vanguardists," does not seem to disturb our master of substitution, as he reduces theory to a literature of the absurd, by finding "a close tie between biology (yes, biology!) and ideology."

To save us from "the vice of excessive deliberation," and the fraction-alism which is "a dead-end street," Debray points "a warning finger...to indicate a short-cut." It is a short-cut to nowhere. It is a long road to tragedy.

Far from being a short-cut, much less the "guaranteed" way to achieve state power, guerrilla warfare is a long, protracted road which has more often failed than succeeded. Our post-war world is filled with guerrilla wars, from the Philippines to Burma, from Malaya to Indonesia, not to mention India and Japan, that have failed. That there is no "magic" to it has been bitterly driven home by Che's tragic death. Our post-war world, as against the post-war world following the first World War, lacks "magic," the true magic, of the Russian Revolution which set the

( ) Che Guevara, Notes for the Study of the Ideology of Cuban Revolution,

world affairs. Even today--a half century afterwards, when it has been transformed into its opposite--the original perspective remains the greatest force of world revolutionary development.

This, then, is the Marxist heritage, the past from which Castro's theoretician wishes "to free the present." He will not succeed. If it were merely the writing of a young French philosopher, it could be easily dismissed. Unfortunately, he speaks for a state power, one which pictures itself as revolutionary. Because short-cuts to revolution look attractive, it was necessary to counter-pose reality to Debray's nimble-penned panaceas.

The only "magic" is that of Social Revolution--a great mass in motion, in spontaneous, forward movement, propelled by a philosophy of liberation, a Marxist theory of proletarian world revolution in which the masses are not only mass and muscle, but also passion and Reason.

The New Left, not having built on this, just this, the many aborted and soured revolutions continue without any new vantage point from which to see the new roads ahead. This doesn't mean that the "correct" theory, if not objectively and fully aware of the might of the counter-revolution grounded, would have brought the millenium. No new stage of cognition can be "made" where the conditions for a new plunge to freedom have not arisen. What the fragmentation of the New Left, the proliferation of all types of shortcuts to revolution disclosed was that no new attempt had been made to relate these new, new "theories" either to the rigors of Historical Materialism that is at the same time a theory of social revolution or to any new objective conditions, must less to the movement from below, the praxis of the masses. Empiricism in thought has wreaked its vengeance also within the Black dimension insofar as the self-proclaimed vanguard leadership is concerned. K

More shocking that the mindless activity of the Weatherman faction of the SDS, its "Days of Wrath" and "bomb factories" that succeeded only in blowing up their own activists, was the split within the most radical and most popular Black Panther Party. The mindless accounts for the split between Huey Newton and

Eldridge Cleaver from both sources<sup>(14)</sup> may be accounted more rationally by the facts that both were isolated from the masses, both eclectic in their hybrid, shifting "theories" of Black Nationalism, Maoism, and a rather original form of Lujppen urban guerrilla-ism. But this cannot lessen the shock of the Black youth who may not have been members of the Black Panthers but nevertheless were glad the Panthers were there--and these youth/numbered by the thousands as against the membership that can only be numbered by the hundreds, and that only for a brief period. A representative report from one of the major campuses--Michigan State University--reads:

"The issue of the split between the Black Panther leadership has left many black people disillusioned with that group. The battle between the New York group and the Oakland Central Committee has long been evident. The feud between Newton and the nine Blacks he expelled from the party added more fuel to the fire. Most shocking of all, however, is the domestic quarrel between Eldridge and Kathleen Cleaver in Algiers, illustrated in the Panther paper a few weeks ago.

"The support, if any, that the Panthers still get emanates, not from the Black masses' espousal of their ideology, but from the communal solidarity of Black and oppressed people everywhere. This same is true for Angela Davis. Everybody may not care for 'Communism', but they care for Angela because she is a Black woman. One sister, pointing to a such-Orientalized picture of Angela that appeared in the Chinese press and was reproduced in Muhammad Speaks, told me that this shows how even the Russians and Chinese are racist. as

"The internationalism of Blacks is/alive as ever. Last Friday they had a China Day up here. Robert Williams came in from Ann Arbor to speak, along with William Hinton, author of Janshen. There were two films on China shown that night to an overflow audience that was at least one-third Black. Of course, the Trotskyist Maoists plus SDS had a field day trying to sell literature. But the crowd wasn't about to buy those Mao buttons though they did buy books on China. People I've talked to are pretty much fed up with the pragmatic, elitist philosophy most vanguards express. We're looking for a total philosophy. Pan-Africanism, American style, is cliché. It is being used as an escape hatch and commercial fad by whites. True Pan-Africanism like true brotherhood, is a beautiful ideal that is worth fighting for. But now that the cat has been let out of the bag, we see, or are beginning to see, that Black, too, can be corrupt.

"Black youth are looking for something, something total, something that would, once and for all, end the division between the real and the ideal."

Whether or not what that Black student says is a manifestation of the Hegelian concept that the transcendence of the opposition between Notion and reality rests in subjectivity alone, it is clear that, for the black masses, black consciousness, awareness of themselves as Afro-American with a dual heritage

(14)

(14) Black Panther,

1970; for Cleaver's statement see



and special pride, a continuity of revolt, in a drive toward wholeness, so intense that it ~~cannot~~ believes it can overcome the separation between objective and subjective. Moreover, this is characteristic not only of/college youth but of Black workers who had not finished even elementary school when they were compelled to seek factory jobs. Whether ~~among~~ the shop papers issued by a Black caucus in an auto shop in Detroit called openly for "revolution"<sup>(15)</sup>, or limited itself to the concrete demands for upgrading of Blacks, and of lily white departments, more representation in the highest caucuses of the union, they all participate in wildcats which show they are as ready to tear the labor bureaucracy up by its roots as to rid itself of managements. Even one of the moderate workers recently expressed himself as follows: "The most popular word in the shop these days is: revolutionary. In the past, even when we didn't parrot the ~~labor~~ union leadership and call workers 'Communists', we would shy away from any worker who declared himself to be a 'revolutionary.' Now we say to him: 'Why be for foreign revolutions? We need one here, right here.'"<sup>(16)</sup>

<sup>(15)</sup>DEUM, EIRUM, FRUM. For a critique of these papers and an analysis of shop papers like Stinger and shop caucuses in general, see Black Caucuses by Charles Denby, New Politics, Vol.VII, #3, Summer, 1969/

<sup>(16)</sup>The whole struggle against Automation, from when it first started in the mines in 1949 reached auto shops and steel factories in the mid-1950's, and listen to the workers speaking for themselves in Workers Battle Automation, which the Black production worker, Charles Denby concludes with: "When there is a crisis in production--and with Automation, there is always a crisis in production--there is a crisis in the whole of society. Yes, it is true that not only the workers, but all are affected. However, far more mutilated than the privileged are the unprivileged. The plight of none is worse than the millions of unemployed. They are the true forgotten men and women and children of these phony 'soaring '60s.'..."

"The workers organizing their own thinking is a good way to begin the solution of the crisis...Only those who are totally blind to this great movement from below, to the actual practice of workers' battle against Automation--Automation, not as it 'ought' to be, but as it is in fact--only those totally blind, I repeat, can believe there is an unbridgeable gulf between thinking and doing. Thinking and doing are not really as far apart as appears to those who are out 'to lead.'"(p.62)



No one is saying that we are on the threshold of revolution. The fact that the idea of revolution, however, is in the air even where we are not in a pre-revolutionary situation; that this idea is by no means limited to the young in the anti-Vietnam war movement, but is present also on the shop floor among the "quiescent" labor, speaks volumes about the philosophical-political maturity of our age. We may have no Hegel or Marx or Lenin. What we do have, however, is what no other age had--the movement from practice that does not stop at praxis, that is itself a form of theory. Three kinds of revolutions have marked our age--the East European against Communist totalitarianism; the Afro-Asian against Western imperialism; the technological that, far from making us all into one-dimensional men, caused workers to pose questions about the kind of labor men should do; the why of the division between mental and manual labor, the need for revolutionary change <sup>among</sup> ~~between~~ men at the point of production. The fact that the color, Black, created that new revolutionary dimension and that that will also intensify the contradictions within labor, and not only with capital and the labor bureaucracy, cannot undermine what is: the ~~new~~ revolutionary idea that is in the air and will objectively compel white labor "to take sides"; as a whole, white labor has not failed ~~to take sides~~ to be with Blacks in the labor struggles. In any case, it is alive; it is in serious class battles and this is the period of economic crisis and deep unemployment that refuses to budge in the age of Automation.

The ones who are ~~at~~ <sup>the</sup> the Idea are not the masses, but the elitist leadership which has arrogated to itself the "making of revolutions", or, more correctly put, the ordering of "making revolutions". It is no accident that these turn out to be the absolute opposite: counter-revolutions. This is true not only of the CPs armed with state power who crush revolutions, nor of CPs ~~still~~ still out of power who use their control of the trade unions who use that power and reformist ideology to stifle the revolutionary urge, as the class-collaborationist French CP did in May, 1968. The uniqueness of the dialectic ~~which~~ in uprooting the counter-revolution within the revolution is what made

Hegel so alive to Lenin, 1924-1923, is that which caused Stalin to order the exclusion of "the negation of the negation" from the "laws" of the dialectic as if, by fiat, state-capitalist tyranny could indeed change the course of history. The relationship of theory to history as a historical relationship compels a critical look also at academic Marxists who, even though independent of any state power, are perverted to the narrow of their bones with the capitalistic concept of the backwardness of the proletariat. Lack of confidence in these masses is the common root of all objections to "idealistic, mystical Hegelianism."

The one element of truth that all these detractors of Hegel express is the need to break with bourgeois idealism, including that of Hegel. For, without Marx's unique discovery of the materialist foundations of history, Hegelian dialectics remained imprisoned in an idealism that was abstract enough to allow for usage as apology for the Prussian state. Had Marx not broken with bourgeois idealism in its philosophic form as well as its class nature he would not have been able either to disclose the algebraic formula of revolution inherent in the Hegelian dialectic, or to recreate the dialectic that emerged out of the actual class struggles and proletarian revolutions, and sketched out that self-movement into "permanent revolution."<sup>(17)</sup> For our age, however, what is immediately more relevant than the Prussian state's prison house for the Hegelian dialectics, is, first, Social Democracy's, and, today, Communism's perversions of the Hegelian-Marxian dialectic. That academic Marxism is also engaged in tugging away at "Hegelianism" is only proof that there is no "third way" in the mode of ~~bourgeois~~ thought than there is in the class struggle. Petty-bourgeois subjectivism has always ended by holding on to ~~the~~<sup>some</sup> state power, and never more so than in our state-capitalist age so ridden through with the administrative mentality of Planners.

(17) I'm naturally not referring either to Trotsky's theory that bypassed the revolutionary peasantry, nor to Mao's theory which has by now degraded to the superstructure of culture, but to Marx's original promulgation of permanence in his Address to the Communist League, 1850.

intellectuals.  
Furthest from the minds of elitist/leaders in particular, is the self-development of the masses who themselves would master the principles of the dialectic. Yet all the new beginnings for theory, for philosophy as well as for revolutionary reconstruction of society on totally new human foundations, has come in our age from the spontaneous outbursts, the world over. "Self-determination in which alone the Idea is to hear itself speak" was heard by those fighting for self-determination, be that national, or "individual." Here, too, however, there are two kinds of subjectivity. On the part of The Leader it is voluntarism that rests on ordering the masses to work hard and harder, long and longer hours, <sup>however,</sup> make "1 day = 20 years". At the opposite pole, on the part of the masses --and that does include revolutionary intellectuals, youth especially along with workers and peasants, Black and white--it is the type of Subjectivity which, aware of the totality of the world and national crises, that works to overcome the opposition between objective and subjective, theory and practice, Notion and Reality. It is this which has made Hegel so contemporary. It is this which has freed Marx from the confines of Communism by <sup>turning</sup> ~~reinterpreting~~ his original theory of revolution, philosophy of liberation, "thoroughgoing Naturalism or Humanism" into the "energizing principle" of today's revolutionaries. And it is this which has brought unto the historic stage Lenin's/break with his own <sup>1914</sup> philosophic past that led him to declare "Cognition not only reflects the world, but creates it."

It is true, of course--and indeed there would be something fundamentally amiss if it were otherwise--that Marx and Lenin solved the problems of their age, not ours. Strong foundations have been laid for us once we recognize that the leap from necessity to freedom cannot be done otherwise than, as Marx put it, on "positive Humanism starting from itself." Any other basis, any other basis, whether that be the state as "collective property", or Party as "representative of the proletariat, instead of the population "to a man" <sup>interferes</sup> ~~being~~ that "individuality, freed from all that ~~interferes~~ with its universalism, i.e., freedom" would only lead to still one other tyranny. The inherent logic of present-day revolutions, their

-30-

subjectivity as against the petty-bourgeois subjectivity of the Party, or  
the Leader, or the mindless "subsumption" of philosophy, is the only  
foundation that can "realize" philosophy, i.e., achieve total freedom,  
create whole men and women. It remains the task of the age.

May, 1971

-- -- Raya Dunayevskaya

13313