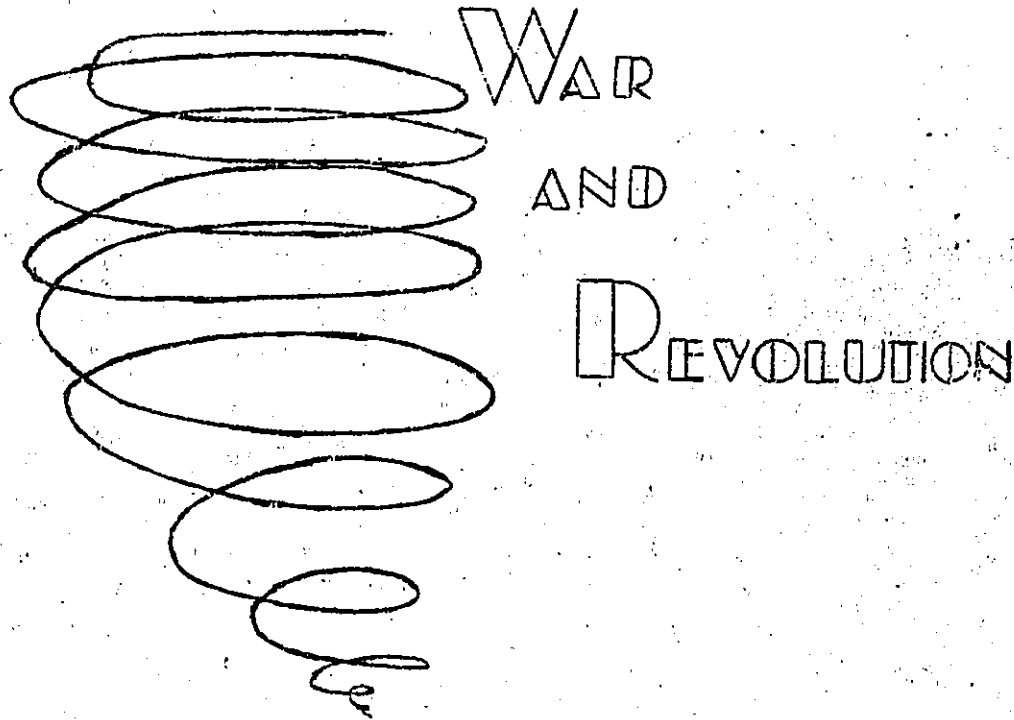


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Draft REB PerspectivesWAR AND REVOLUTION

"Man's cognition is subjective in its abstractness and separateness but objective as a whole, in the process, in the result, in the tendency, in the source."

-- Lenin

Philosophic Notebooks

Lest the dramatic and unprecedented publication of the "Top Secret" Pentagon Papers lead to a diversion not only from the class nature of US's imperialist war in Vietnam, but also from the only path to peace -- social revolution --, it becomes necessary to resist the twin temptations of excessive muckraking and endless talk of "strategy and tactics" as if a proletarian revolution can succeed when not grounded in a Marxist philosophy of liberation. In turning to an analysis of the monumental lies, be they of the LBJ Administration or Kennedy, or Eisenhower or Truman, capped by Nixon presently, let us never leave out of sight the whole -- philosophy and revolution.

I -- The Pentagon Papers and Nixon's Ceaseless Wars at Home and Abroad.

Because the massive Pentagon Papers -- 47 volumes, 7,000 to 10,000 pages, 2.5 million words -- detail not only LBJ's lies, but the governing principle of US policy the world over, the Nixon Administration attempted to stop the N.Y. Times from publishing the documents. It is true that the NYT focused attention, not on the class nature of capitalist intrigue, but only on the LBJ deceptions during the 1964 presidential campaign and directly after. It is true that Nixon thereupon kept his cool for nearly a whole day after its first appearance in the Times on Sunday, June 13. To discern what soon, very soon, changed Nixon's cool to the white heat of his Attorney General bent on stopping the NYT publication, it is not sufficient to point to the fact that the exposure of lies of the Johnson Administration would also extend to his.

Other Administrations have lied -- it is the very nature of the capitalist state to deceive the people -- and got away with it. Why cannot his, especially since he is bringing thousands, tens of thousands of GIs back to the US? There is the chilling fear that he will not be able to "prove" that he is winding down the Vietnam war. Moreover, it is not only a question of lies, his lies -- his extensions of the Vietnam War to Cambodia and Laos. Shocking as governmental lies are, it is not only a question of lies. Every American Administration has lied -- it is the very nature of the beast, i.e., the state-capitalist war machine. What has changed in the continuity of capitalism from Truman to Eisenhower and from

Kennedy and Johnson to the Nixon Administration is the character of the historic period. Or, more precisely put, the people in this specific historic period. So totally have they changed that capitalism, today, must be weighed against the politically and philosophically mature as well as revolutionary nature of today's masses: Black and Proletarian, Youth and Adults, Chicanos, Women, Indians, in the anti-Vietnam War Movement and out. None of these are shocked by such governmental deception; it is those untouched by the movement who are shocked, and they are shocked because the government has no "good goal" to excuse its barbarity, its deception, its "future" headed for World War III. It is for this reason that, as against, say, Judge Rosenman's Memoirs of how Roosevelt railroaded us into World War II (which was highly praised because it was supposed to show Roosevelt's "perspicacity" as to the evil nature of Hitler), the present exposé brings only a chilling fear to the Nixon Administration, which cannot even profit by the fact that the Vietnam War was escalated by the Democratic Party.

After all, Rostow wasn't speaking only for LBJ when he wrote, on November 16, 1964, that "the simple fact is that at this stage of history we are the greatest power in the world -- if we behave like it." In a week, he spelled out this letter to McNamara with the equally infamous one to Rusk: "Even if Hanoi and Peiping (sic) estimated that the US would not use nuclear weapons against them, they could not be sure of this." (NYT, 6/15/71 p. 19). Clearly, neither were nor are the American people sure that the Pentagon won't use nuclear weapons! Some brave moves were made in this month of June, 1971, to counteract US imperialist global moves in Southeast Asia that were by no means limited to the NY Times impressive issues of June 13, June 14, June 15th (before they were stopped by the Nixon Administration, the NYT covered about 5% of the voluminous record.)

The most courageous act was that of Professor Daniel Ellsberg in making the documents available to the press after a 2½ year attempt to get the dovish critic of the Vietnam War, the Chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee, Senator Wm. Fulbright, to make the record public failed. In his TV interview with Walter Cronkite on June 23rd, Ellsberg made it clear that the timing of the release of the massive record to the press was induced by seeing Nixon execute a repeat of Johnson's 1964 lies in Nixon's 1971 misadventure in Laos. And we must of course act as one to stop the attempted hanging of Professor Ellsberg. Any possible victory in the Supreme Court for the NYT will concern freedom of the press and will in no way assure victory for Ellsberg in the courts. This can come only if self-activity in the streets compels such decision.

[Already Senator Ellender, upon receiving the 47 volumes from the Nixon Administration that had made a 180° turn in its relations with Congress only after Ellsberg had made the record publically available, had the gall to spew out his concurrence with the FBI: "I hope Ellsberg is in jail." Having such friends, Nixon made

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Congress the "repository" for the "top secret" data; when the class chips are down, he hopes for the same "concensus" there that LBJ received from the Democratic Congress, even as LBJ did the same for Eisenhower when the latter first unravelled the Dulles mania for Pax America Treaties, from SEATO to toying with the madman Chief of Staff's idea of using the A-bomb to raise the siege of Dien Bien Phu to help save the French imperial domination over Indochina!!! For some startling facts that are now coming out that have nothing to do with the secret Pentagon Papers, see General Matthew B. Ridgway's disengaging and "spontaneous" article, "Indochina: Disengaging" in Foreign Affairs, July, 1971. It is a real eye opener in ways other than those intended by him when he set out to show how he had long opposed a US "land war in Asia."]

No doubt the anti-Vietnam War movement has a right to be proud of the fact that it long ago labelled LBJ's public reasons for US's war in Vietnam one tissue of lies. For the Marxist-Humanist position, see the Political Letter back in 1961 when Kennedy first sent "advisers" to South Vietnam, (The Vietnam-War-To-Be). And, no doubt, the movement can expect to grow as a result of the American people's revulsion at the latest revelations of two full decades of lies. Nevertheless, it would be sheer illusion to propagate the view that, with the Big Lie exposed, we're nearing the end of the imperialistic war. To circumscribe the Movement either to a single issue of "ending the Vietnam War" or to "multiple" issues which likewise are not grounded in a total philosophy of liberation can be fatal.

At this critical juncture when Nixon is desperate enough about the Pentagon Papers (though it is mainly of LBJ's Administration), that he is battling the staid NY Times to the point of wishing to abrogate the first Amendment to the Constitution itself, it is no time merely to gloat over the split within the capitalist class, much less to try to unify "all" for "peace." It would, of course, be easy -- and the NY Times may be ready to do that much -- to show that not only has Nixon, by his invasion of Cambodia and misadventure in Laos, expanded the Vietnam War into the Second Indochina War, but he has always been that type of war hawk.

Who, after all, could forget triicky Dicky's reckless McCarthyism which threw (at President Truman, of all people) the charge of "20 years of treason" -- from Yalta to "loss of China", not to mention the New Deal and its "socialism"? Not even Nixon's present Ping Pong gamesmanship can expunge from the record that it is not only the "other" arrogant nuclear "scholar" who has displayed venom "aimed at China as well as North Vietnam should the Chinese Communists enter the game." For that matter, the cat was let out of the bag by the un-named biggest war-hawks -- the US-Japan Bankers. They are dreaming a fool's paradise of an Asia without China controlling the whole of Southeast Asia where "low

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wage costs" and high profits prevail. In having "experts" draw up a study projecting a decade's "growth", they stated, very nearly just in passing, that even after the Vietnam "ends", even after 1975, Nixon's "residual force" there would number at least 25, 000! (See Le Monde Weekly, February 24, 1971, p. 5) These believers in the "Nixon Doctrine" can be left with their pipedreams and their computers for brains. It is not the war-hawks but the masses, who will sweep them off the historic stage. Toward that end we must instead, concentrate on the fact that every Nixon war abroad means a war against the masses at home.

Nixon's June 22 veto of the Public Works Bill is only the latest in a series of acts directed against labor. It takes place in a country where the economy is stagnating, and where unemployment has become a permanent feature. Not only at the high "average" rate of 6.1%, which is, in actuality, 10% among Black workers, but at a fantastic 30% in the "Inner City", i.e., among Blacks, especially youth. The veto was signed even though wildcats and unrest permeate this "affluent" land.

The regressive moves in the field of "civil rights" -- from schooling to housing, from lily-white employment and black unemployment, to "black capitalism" -- are by now endless. And yet, in the face of new outbreaks, not only in Northern but in Southern cities, from Tennessee to Georgia and from Florida to Texas, Nixon continues to do nothing. Why, when he is so anxious not to be "a one-term" president?

The stagnating economy is a primary reason. So is what has rightfully been called "competative decadence", that is to say, the struggle for world mastery, be it against Russia, or China, or whom ever US capitalism will choose "suddenly" to declare "the enemy", East or West, North or South. The endless "little wars" -- whether like the Korean war and the Dominican invasion they dub "police actions"; or the Vietnam war and the Congo they never bother to declare at all -- as the U.S. continues with its ceaseless preparations for the Big War tomorrow, -- cannot but lead to war against the American masses yesterday, today, and tomorrow.

At the same time that decadent capitalism has brought itself to a standstill, it has placed an overwhelming question mark over all, absolutely all, values. This is the positive in the negative. The rejection of old values raises questions of new values, new foundations, a new outlook on life, love, Nature, men/woman's relation, children, society -- a "new society." One thing cannot be doubted: the hunger of the present epoch for a theoretic expression.

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Not a single old question is put forth that does not suddenly express itself in a new form. Thus, when the billions spent on reaching the moon are contrasted to the overwhelming poverty still extant in our "affluent society", it is not only the poor protesting against the rich; it is the goal of our scientific project that is questioned.

Thus, when an on-going war is being protested and everything from a clenched fist to "fragging" is used to give vent to the criticism, it isn't a mere dialogue that has started, one has put one's life on the line. Thus, even when one "cops out" be it on drugs or in a "commune", it is no longer an individual act, but a social phenomenon.

And, when this questioning comes face to face both with reality and a new mode of existence -- the creation of an anti-war movement and the search for a new way of life itself -- a whole philosophy of liberation becomes an urgent, a practical need. For what they are questioning is not only the powers that be, but the fellow-dissenters. They are refusing to live from hand to mouth, i.e., to be confined to practicing pragmatism. To tell this new generation of revolutionaries to wait till the Vietnam war ends is not to release the forces of revolution but to doom the Movement to impotence. Professor Ellsberg was right when he said that, without U.S. money, U.S. arms, U.S. soldiers, there would have been no Vietnam war. But he was rather cavalier in adding that internecine violence may have continued, within the "left", as witness the Trotskyists being destroyed in Saigon by the Stalinists. He did do more than the Trotskyists themselves who, within the Movement, keep mum on the question.

[Yet, insofar as Vietnam is concerned, every question from that of national self-determination to war and peace, and from the permanent revolution to Stalinism, was fought out in Saigon and Hanoi. It was fought out most savagely before World War II and directly after. This is not the place to go into detail on past history, but in 1947, when I was at a conference of the Fourth International -- and so were the Vietnamese Trotskyists -- it was already clear that even if political independence were gained, and with it, "peace", there would be, in fact, no peace without a social revolution. Clearly, we and we alone had worked out the relationship of self-determination and social revolution.]

It is not, as the Trotskyists claim, for purposes of keeping the anti-Vietnam war movement "unified" against enemy number one, U.S. imperialism, that they keep to the "single issue" of the war. The titling of who is enemy number one consigns one to choose "the lesser evil" rather than go for a totally new, independent actual revolution.

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The truth is not in the need for the widest possible base for "the Movement". None would object to that. The truth is that, despite all criticism of Stalinism that Trotskyists allow in their own party, they have nevertheless always ending up by tail-ending the Stalinists. And it has always been fatal, fatal to the movement. Because this is not just "history", but the way of the present, and because Trotskyism's folded banner has made it impossible to create a new focal point for revolutionary re-groupment since Russia became an integral part of World War II, we must quote from the 1960 War & Peace Resolution, written as the struggle for a "new balance of world power" moved from Europe to Asia. This is exactly where all the contending forces for world power are now concentrating.

In August, 1951, the World Conference of the Fourth International met and abandoned all pretense of being anything else but stooges for the Kremlin and Stalinism. Its manifesto said: "The transformation which the Stalinist parties might undergo in the course of the most acute revolutionary crises may obligate the Leninist vanguard to readjust its tactics towards these parties."

The Stalinists have only to beckon. "But this in no way relieves the proletariat from the task of building a new revolutionary leadership."

The more the Trotskyists recruit, the more they can bring over to Stalinism.

They are prepared to noblize the workers of the world to join the Stalinist war-camp unconditionally:

"The World Congress of the Fourth International greets the workers, peasants and soldiers of the U.S.S.R. and of the 'Peoples' Democracies.' It assures them of complete and unconditional support by the whole world-wide revolutionary movement in the coming war against the restorationist efforts of the international bourgeoisie. Defense of collectivized property, planned economy and the workers' states, even though deformed and degenerated, is an imperious duty of the world proletariat."

So that the war between the Kremlin and Washington is a war of "classes," and if the Russian state wins, the working-class not only in Russia but elsewhere, has won a victory. No wonder the slogan, "The enemy is in your own country" has become so inadequate to meet the changing times. This is true both where Russia is the direct oppressor as in Eastern Europe, or as China is in Tibet, as well as where these two state-capitalist giants only aspire to rule. Far from creating the foundations of a new society, Trotskyism

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is dragging the movement into totalitarian Communism.

To this day this is precisely what they are doing, and <sup>not</sup> just abroad, but at home, and not against any "petty-bourgeois opposition", but against the most revolutionary force in the USA-- the Blacks. The more they "glorify" black "leaders", the less they work for unity with the Black masses in the anti-Vietnam War Movement. Let us now turn to the crucial black dimension.



II. THE BLACK DEMENSION AND THE HUNGER FOR A SYNTHESIS OF THEORY AND PRACTICE

Such is the daily Black hunger for a philosophy of liberation that would be inseparable from the revolution itself, for a synthesis of theory and practice that would not wait till the day after the revolution but itself be the proof of its total, its human character including the relations between men and women, a global vision that would release the self-activity of the masses that would be a new society, that even a simple letter of subscription manifests this epochal hunger for theoretic expression. Listen to one Black woman:

"I'm not thoroughly convinced that Black Liberation the way it's being spelled out, will really and truly mean my liberation. I'm not so sure that when it comes time 'to put down my gun,' that I won't have a broom shoved in my hands, as so many of my Cuban sisters have."

Those who think this is an accident--Left youth with short memories who think they, not the Blacks, are the true "vanguard" because they are the majority of the big anti-Vietnam War movement, and Trotskyists who work to make them think so by compartmentalizing this struggle, keeping it confined in their one-issue mania, as if unrelated to the ceaseless Black revolt--better take a long look at the decade preceding the birth of the anti-Vietnam War movement in 1965. In that decade of the alleged "end of ideology" and "beat generation", the Montgomery Bus Boycott in 1956 signalled birth of a new revolutionary epoch. Not only was it a new stage in black revolt, but by 1960, the Black youth sit-in ignited new revolt also among white youth, first in sympathy with Blacks, then in their own attacks on the multiversity, till finally it reached the teach-in in opposition to US imperialism's bombing of Hanoi. This high point nevertheless led to forgetting the vanguard role of the black masses both in first inspiring the white youth and--and this above all--in their being a pivotal force in undermining US capitalism. Thus, it was not only their forgetfulness of the subjective role of Blacks, but in the objective needs for overthrowing capitalism.

Nothing so exposes the opportunism of the Trotskyists than the fact that, at one and the same time, they subordinate the role of the Black movement to their anti-Vietnam war activities for "all," and glorify Malcolm X when with Blacks, but keep for themselves, and themselves alone, the role of "vanguard Party to lead." Being presently the biggest loudmouth to keep the Black

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movement and the anti-Vietnam war movement as separate entities is only proof of how ingrained is not only American pragmatism but actual racism in this country even among those who consider themselves "Marxists-Leninists-Trotskyists." The Communists did the very same thing when Hitler attacked Russia and the American Communists told the Blacks to forget their struggle for freedom "until after fascism was defeated"—in Germany! The Communists too hope, with the Angela Davis case, (for whom all the Left is for, despite her being a Communist), to make the Black masses forget their role. The Black masses however, keep away from the self-proclaimed vanguards, the elitist Black organizations included, because, along with confidence only in their own self-activity which is ceaseless, what the masses hunger for is a total philosophy which they get from none. The critical years, 1965-70, are the ones that have laid the foundation and the question mark over the 1970's. 1965 saw the rise of the anti-Vietnam war movement, but also Watts. In 1966, the "Black Power" slogan was launched by Stokely Carmichael and took root—but not on the "blank minds" Mao so extols. Rather it became popular after the masses had both the experiences of all the great battles with the Bull Connors that led nowhere and Rev. King had caught sufficient of the spirit of the masses to raise the question of desegregation not merely as "object" but as a Humanist question, that is an "I-Thou" relationship.

This is what self-proclaimed vanguardists forget or degrade to the point where King seems to have stood only for non-violence while they, "the vanguard Party" are "to lead." But the truth was that they were nowhere around when the Black masses, in spontaneous outburst, reached their high point in the 1967 uprisings. And reached that high point in Detroit not only as racial against "whitey," but bore a class character as well.

It is true that the elitist Black leaders gave the white radicals a ready excuse for keeping the anti-Vietnam war movement and the Black revolt as separate entities by insisting on the separation between white and Black. But the truth is that the Black Power slogan was raised in 1966 after the whites, in 1965, had already moved away from full participation in the Black movement, not to mention their paternalism when they were there. The most damning of all developments against the pretenders to the name of Marxism is that the subordination of the Black movement came along with and precisely because of the failure to work out a philosophy of the American revolution. This cannot be without the Black masses any more than it can be without the white proletariat that still constitute the majority of the labor force.

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The saddest reminder that racism is the issue also among white radicals came at the very highest point reached in the anti-Vietnam war movement when a 100,000 poured out in response to the massacre at Kent, Ohio, where they protested the Cambodia invasion,—but very few arose in opposition to the murders of Blacks in Jackson, Miss., though these too had come out in sympathy with the white Kent students! In a word, not only has oppression always worn a white face in these United States, and not only has imperialism always been white, but ambivalent, if not outright racist, has also been the color of white radicals in the U.S. And this in face of Karl Marx who, in his day, spelled out what it means that "labor in the white skin will never be free so long as labor in the black skin is enslaved"—united labor struggles for full freedom. And Lenin, in his day, hailed nationalism as both a catalyst for proletarian revolution and the forward movement for overthrowing world imperialism. And just as in both the 19th and 20th centuries it was when the Black and labor struggle became a coordinated movement that great turning points in history were established, so in our day neither Black nor white can do it alone, much less without a philosophy of revolution.

It is in this crucial area that we can play a role far beyond our numbers, and also beyond the thousands we reach with N&L as not only edited by a Black, but giving the voice to many new Blacks from the production line. Toward that end we held the Black/Red conferences which had led to the establishment of a new local in SF as well as a column and columnist, Black/Red. Toward that end, the work in the Black caucuses and out of it, and its extensions now to Chicano and Indian, the new Black pamphlet projected becomes crucial for both organization growth and as the transition point to Philosophy and Revolution itself.

Above all, we must battle, day in and day out, the Nixon Administration that has charted a retrogressive course because it does recognize the Black revolution as the breaking point for the status quo. Because it is overwhelmingly proletarian its revolt is indeed the breaking point for capitalism as a whole and directly on home grounds. Were it even possible to stop the Vietnam war short of revolution, the one freedom that is impossible of achievement without uprooting the whole system is Black revolt in general and Black labor in particular.

The New Left's disdain for the role of white labor notwithstanding, all one has to do to see how pivotal labor is, is to look how a few drawbridge workers could bring the whole of New York to near standstill. Contrast this to the half million youth who marched in Washington and, despite their courage and

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their mass, could not immobilize D.C. So it is not "romanticism", but the actuality of the productive system which gives labor the decisive role. Emancipation of labor—and white labor is still the majority in the U.S.—of necessity means the abolition of capitalism, means social revolution, demands united action. The recognition of Black mass as vanguard is not only in opposition to the white vanguardists but also to the Black elitists who remain isolated from the mass.

The Black Panther Party /<sup>which</sup> certainly has captured the imagination, if not the mass following, of Blacks, youth especially, was too busy writing a "New Constitution" with white radicals without being in the least conscious of their isolation. Now that the split between Cleaver and Newton has taken place, Newton has suddenly found his voice on that pivotal question, though he still shys away from the word labor, preferring the less precise term, "black community." Though talk of isolation from the black community is more close to the mark than the fantastic vindictive, personal charges and counter-charges when the split first burst into the open, was that all there was to the split? Isn't the greater truth the simple fact that neither Cleaver nor Newton could rise to the challenge to the quest from below for a total philosophy which could control that "gun"?

But where they at least have that extraordinary Black dimension, the white vanguardists—Trotskyists as well as Communists, "New Left" as well as "white Negroes" who, in allegedly giving up their "white skin privileges" by bestowing the designation of "vanguard" on the Black Panther Party, mean it only as vanguard among Blacks, while "theoretical" leadership continues to remain their prerogative. None of these white vanguardists have the slightest conception of what Marxism as a philosophy of liberation is, either as mass or as Reason.

Take so simple a matter as a raised clenched fist. When a Black GI raises that as a "salute" to a white officer, it is no "spectacle"; he is taking his life in his hands. And the "fragging" wasn't only opposition to a specific war — Vietnam—but to the whole Army system anywhere on earth. Indeed, the very draft, they consider being sent to prison without having committed any crime. They are through fighting the white man's wars abroad; the enemy they recognize is at home. That is why their opposition stops neither in Vietnam nor in Europe, but is carried on right here, as witness the latest (May) outbreak at Travis Air Force base in Solano County, California. The only difference between the "day of outrage" in Hanau, Germany to the latest mass protest here is that it was a daily, not a day's occurrence. And what was truly phenomenal was that when finally they were asked to list their grievances and asked who were their "leaders", the

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answer came back, "We have no leaders."

This indeed marks a new stage not only in Black consciousness, but a new stage of consciousness not yet reached by Old or New Left whites.

Nor is this stage of Black consciousness characteristic only of GIs. Where Newton is still speaking in elementary terms, as he puts it, "the people see things as moving from A to B to C; they do not see things as moving from A to Z", look how deep are the roots, the quest for universalism, for total freedom among the masses! The simple truth is that the new stage of Black consciousness, including, not unimportantly Black women who have not found in the Black Panthers their freedom, has reached so high a philosophic questioning of method and attitudes, of process as well as goal, of human relations as well as Black relations, that neither Cleaver nor Newton knew how to meet that challenge. Newton maybe right when he says that the split, expressive of contradictions, will lead to greater growth, but this will not be by cutting philosophy into 10 bite-size pieces of a "program." Just as the black masses will struggle to free Angela Davis, not because she is a Communist, but because she is Black, a Woman, an intellectual whom Nixon-Reagan is anxious to destroy, so they admire the Black Panthers as an "equalizer" to racism. But neither support limits their search for a philosophy so comprehensive that it contains a new synthesis of theory and practice, philosophy and revolution, thought and action inseparable for organization. Such an organization they will "join" en masse because it will be their creation that will put an end to the separation of leader and mass, mental and manual labor, the struggle for the new society inseparable from the destruction of the old.

It is here where the role of the "Left", as seen in the anti-Vietnam war movement especially, is playing an actually retrogressive role with their separateness of the issues of anti-war and racism, labor "leaders" vs. rank and file labor, "united front of all" which they, the Trotskyists use as recruiting ground for "the Party to lead." Underlying both the one-issue and the multi-issues as if these were the real alternatives is not only the deafness to the voices from below, but also total paralysis in the face of unfolding a new banner of liberation that sees Reason as inseparable from the forces of revolution, and the forces of revolution—Black, labor, youth, women, Chicano, Indian—as themselves the developers of Reason. By rejecting their Reason (the forces of revolution), today's Trotskyism mistakes its own opportunistic class-collaborationist empty-headed brainstorm-theories of how "to make" revolutions, and thereupon plunges headlong into endless activism as if "practice" could hide the theoretic void.

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Part III -- PRAKIS, RESPONSIBILITY OF INTELLECTUALS  
AND OUR TASKS

The chief defect of all materialism up to now (including Feuerbach's) is that objective reality, what we apprehend through our senses, is understood only in the form of the object of contemplation; but not as sensuous human activity, as practice; not subjectively. Hence, in opposition to materialism, the active side was developed abstractly by idealism... Feuerbach wants sensuous objects really distinguished from objects of thought but he does not understand human activity itself as objective activity. -- Karl Marx

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All serious struggles in a revolutionary movement have always taken place, not over "tactics", but over revolutionary perspectives. But the theoretic void in the Marxist movement since the death of Lenin -- nearly a half-century ago -- has been so great that one is tempted to believe that there has been a void in time itself. Those who claim the name of Marxism have let slip out of their minds, not only this half-century, but also the century and a half since Marx worked out his theory of proletarian revolution, his philosophy of liberation as a philosophy of human activity which is the absolute, dialectic opposite of the alienated labor to which capitalism consigned the working class.

Time does not, of course, stand still. Just as Nature does not like a vacuum, so the human mind rebels against a void, against a "forgetting" of theory, against a retrogression in history, both as "past" and present, and a stifling of what is first to be. Because of this elemental and compelling need from the movement from practice itself, we must expose the current reduction of Marx's concept of praxis to the "practice", i.e., the carrying out, by the rank and file, of the "theory", i.e., the Party line that the leadership, the intellectuals, have elaborated for them. This is not a "translation" of the word, praxis, it is a perversion. The fatal character of this mis-interpretation of "praxis" is more relevant for our day than for that of Marx -- when he was alive to work out a revolutionary alternative and thereby discover a whole new continent of theory -- Historical Materialism. We must consider anew the historic period in which Marx lived as he saw it.

To this day, Marxists are shamefaced about Marx's alleged "glorification" of the proletariat, and do not accept his analysis of the revolt of the Silesian weavers of 1844 as having had a "conscious and theoretical character." Nevertheless, it was this,

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just this type of vision, that led Marx to break, not only with exploitative bourgeois society, but also with "socialists," "communists", and academic materialists who could not do what "idealism" had done -- develop "the active side" (Marx's emphasis) of subjectivity.

Though the class nature of capitalist society is decisive, Marx did not limit his analysis of subjectivity to the difference between petty-bourgeois, egotistic subjectivity and proletarian, social subjectivity. Indeed, he insisted that "human activity itself" was "objective" (Marx's emphasis). Marx defined praxis as "revolutionary, critical-practical activity." Put concisely, Marx's great discovery -- Historical Materialism -- illuminated the whole of society as well as its transformation.

As shapers of history, as "Subject", the workers were becoming whole men and women, achieving a synthesis of mental and manual labor, of theory and practice, of philosophy and revolution. Of course, it is what men do that is decisive in history, but theory remains an active force because ideas are not abstractions. They have a dialectic of their own and are integral to praxis itself. Praxis has many forms and each and every one is dialectical-- develops through contradiction. Thus, even when it is seen as no more than "material activity", i.e., alienated labor, it is this very alienation that produces the "quest for universality" so that class struggles at the point of production lead to political struggles and finally burst out as social revolution.

That these basics of the Marxism of Marx could be reduced to "the small coin of concrete questions", as Trotsky phrased it, speaks volumes about the administrative mentality of our state-capitalist age. Thus today's Trotskyists, along with the "New Left" follow Stalinism (be it Russian or Chinese or the "Structural" Althusser variety in France) with their endless discussion of "tactics." Their turning away from the Humanism of Marx, labeling it "pre-Marxist", speaks volumes about our age, but says nothing at all about its absolute dialectic opposite -- the movement from practice to theory. It is as if revolutionary power does indeed come "out of the barrel of a gun" instead of the self-activity of the masses in elemental outburst. They likewise disregard the very nearly continuous movement that began in the 1950's in East Europe and has since covered the globe. Yet this movement, not only as practice, but as elements of theory is far richer than its political expression in any existing party "to lead", including those who are not tied to a state power and do throw around the word revolution with great abandon. Nowhere have theoreticians -- I naturally do not mean petty-bourgeois intellectuals but those who claim the name of Marxism -- met their historic responsibilities.

Everywhere, no matter where we look,-- the challenge from practice has not been met: Look at France in the near revolution of May 1968, or the U.S of 1970-1 where a million poured out in anti-war demonstrations, but quiescent in the face of the "My Lais" committed against Blacks right here. Look at the "New Left" in Great Britain who are tied, not to an actual party, but only to a concept, or look at Japan, where back in 1960,

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far in advance of the mass outbursts in any of the technologically advanced countries, the youth proclaimed their opposition to the U.S. and to their own government, and did so in the face of opposition from Communism which wished to restrict the snake-dancing mass revolt to protests only against the U.S. Or look at Africa, where a new, third world was born, or to Italy, where no less than two million workers joined the Communist Party in opposition to private capitalism. But Italy is now face to face with the rise of neo-fascism because neither private capitalism nor state capitalism could stop the economic crises and total decadence. Again, everywhere, the challenge from practice has not been met.

Indeed, most have even failed to recognize the impotence of ceaseless activism sans philosophy. This failure is certainly not limited to this pragmatic land. Our task, however, will be illuminated by taking a look at Italy. The Il Manifesto group, which was expelled from the Communist party, posed some of the most cogent questions. No one else in the Left has even attempted to face the "why" of the defeat of France 1968 when 10 million workers were out on general strike, when the students, the catalyst for this near-revolution, were the most politically advanced in the world, and revolutionary enough both to recognize the pivotal role of labor and to establish a new form of organization-- the worker-student action committee. This was the highest stage reached-- and reached in a technologically advanced land--in the turbulent 1960's when only the Third World seemed to make history. The Il Manifesto group, both in its own statement and in the interview with Sartre, raised the burning questions of the day on class, on spontaneity, on the masses and the party.

And yet even though they were all intellectuals-- and I don't mean petty-bourgeois but revolutionary theoreticians who accepted the key role of the proletariat in any social revolution--there was no tackling of new economic categories, such as state-capitalism, much less philosophic concepts. Instead, by holding on to loose old terms, like "advanced stage of capitalism", grappling with no philosophic concepts despite the fact that they were moved by a desire for a "revolutionary alternative" to the existing Communist Party which was practicing class collaborationism, they actually were talking on the same level as the "the Party." They were concerned with proving that the need for individual freedom "is

not simply a residue of 'humanism' which antedates capitalism." No wonder that not only were no "answers" forthcoming, but even correct questions seemed to lose their relevance.

Thus, although they caught the revolutionary spirit of the age-- "the subjective maturity of the working class"--they could not spell out any "new form of organization" since this was linked, not with needs emerging from mass practice, subjectively, from below, ( a live "Subject"), but only to "conditions of struggle in the societies of advanced capitalism."

Thus, though they\*\*rightly criticized Marcuse's glorification of "the Great Refusal" as well as Cohn-Bendit's "spontaneity" --

\*\*I'm referring to Russana Rossanda and Lucio Magri of Il Manifesto as both articles and interview with Jean-Paul Sartre are in Socialist Register, 1970.



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as if a "counter-culture" and "negation" of the old, were sufficient unto the day, that is, the revolutionary alternative--they too "elaborate" no new alternatives. It is as if a Maoist tinge to the concept of the Party were the answer to "a new form of organization."

Thus, even where they touch the implication of the need of "the transcendence of the Leninist or Bolshevik model of the party--from its origins to the Popular Fronts", their end result is in the working with old categories as if there is a continuity instead of a discontinuity in capitalism itself. The transformation into absolute opposite of the first workers' state into a state-capitalist society, they attribute to paralysis in thought. To use Satre's phrase, "the mode of existence of the Parties (which) paralyzes their (the intellectuals') collective effort of thought."

How could it be otherwise when suddenly intellectuals, who joined to fight the status quo, must now express, not the mass struggle for freedom, but a state ideology, a State Plan, a State Economy? Intellectuals (and not only where state-power and outright exploitation of labor is practiced as in Russia and China, in East Europe and Cuba, but intellectuals of our state-capitalist age who do want to uproot capitalism as they see it and work for emancipation of labor) have completely and totally forgotten, (because it is not organic to them as it is to labor) what Marx meant by a class-less order. It is not just a dialectical "principle" which is at stake; it is a life and death struggle. It is what Hegel called "individualism that lets nothing interfere with its universalism," i.e., freedom, and Marx called labor's "quest for universality" which underlines alienated labor's struggle to abolish the old exploitative society, and creates a new, class-less one where "the freedom of the individual is the basis of the freedom for all."

It is for this, and for no other reason, that Marx felt compelled to break with the bourgeoisie also on the very concept of what theory is. He saw theory coming from labor and only labor because labor is not only muscle but Reason. It is this which "disciplined" Marx. Historic responsibilities of Marxist intellectuals begins with listening to the masses, and not being caught in the delusion that it is the intellectual brain wave which produces theory. Once you can hear and do listen to the voices from below as if your life depended on those voices--because it does--then, and only then, can you elaborate theory, not because you become a mere recording machine, but because, having recorded these voices, your task, far from ending, has just begun. That defines not only intellectual responsibility but our tasks, and the key work remains projection--projection of Marxist-Humanist ideas.

First and foremost, of course, is the concretization of the Perspective on War and Revolution in a manner which will determine not only our activities in the anti-Vietnam war movement, but in all class struggles, Black struggle, Women's Liberation, Chicano, Indian. The determinant for all activities as well as writings, talks as well as relations--all without exception--is the concept of social revolution. We must free our mind from thinking that this is exhausted in the anti-Vietnam war activity as if that is the equivalent of a social revolution. There is no equivalent when there is no uprooting of class relations in one's own country, no ending of racism, no making inseparable the forces of revolution from their

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Reason. And there can be no social revolution when one, like the Trotskyists, hang on to one or another group of state-capitalist societies calling themselves Communist. Nor can there be a spontaneous, elemental mass uprising when one is concentrating on "short-cuts". No matter how great the martyrs like Che who "lead" it, there can be no social revolution when one substitutes himself for the masses, or when the method used in the projection of ideas repeats the capitalistic division between mental and manual labor, with intellectual "prerogatives" blotting out workers' thoughts. One must practice theory by uniting the two daily in every struggle, in every human relation, be it Black and white, youth and adult, men and women, actual class struggle or merely the manner of writing them up so that the story itself projects philosophy and revolution. In a word every single act is a theoretic preparation for revolution the day before, the day of, and the day after revolution. This must be done both within a national and international context. Look at so great an event as the Polish uprising in the last week of 1970 and the first of 71, when everyone had thought that Poland was the one country that would no longer arise since "it" had been with Russia in putting down the Czechoslovak revolt. The one thing that was forgotten was that "it" was "the party", its leadership and not the masses, who directed those tanks, as well as the anti-Semitism in crushing the revolution. The ideas of freedom and the rebellion against the capitalistic conditions of labor released the creativity of the mass upsurge. Be it in East Europe or in Drew, Mississippi, the projection of Marxist-Humanism means the elicitation of mass creativity.

Once the Perspectives becomes the ground of all our activities, there is no division in any of our work. 1971-72 is the year of the completion of Philosophy and Revolution, not merely as "book", but as the foundation for the perspectives and what will follow from them. Thus, this is also the year that Marxism and Freedom has become an international phenomenon. It is true there have been other editions—in Italian, in Japanese (one one chapter in Chinese), but the French edition is pivotal because it came spontaneously after the near-revolution of 1968 did not go to completion and youth were looking for the why. The British edition is the first introduced by a Scottish Marxist-Humanist, a revolutionary to the very marrow of his bones, who came to philosophy because he had been in more than a half century of near-revolutions, and, from experience, knows there is no way to have a successful revolution when it is separated from a philosophy of liberation. And, above all, this gives us the opportunity not only to once again become sellers of M&F as founders, but in fact to have an ongoing class in M&F in which not only the contents but the method which produced it, first now permeating all with Philosophy and Revolution, is projected.

Thirdly, (but first insofar as Philosophy and Revolution will not be a book until it is published) comes the new Black pamphlet. Again, it is true it was projected between convention and this plenum, and a special Black-Red conference with SF was held in Detroit, it is no accident that it will become fact soon after we adjourn. Then comes the projection of this both as a concretization of P&R and as new, expanded activities with all minorities.

Fourthly, each local will need to reorganize itself and spell out its outside activities as well as its internal ones. There can be no division between them once projection of ideas are inseparable from organizational and class struggle activities.

Finally, there will be a national spring tour that, though it will need to be related to University lectures to pay the fare as well as to reach those audiences, will this time be above all organizational.

Were it necessary to summarize the whole of the thesis in a single sentence, it would be that, just as philosophy and revolution are inseparable, so are thought and action from organization, for the organization of thought determines organizational life even as the concept of social revolution determines the final confrontation with exploitative capitalism and its barbaric wars at home and abroad. There can be no peace anywhere without a revolutionary uprooting of the old.

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