

2 5 5 4

ROUGH DRAFT OF INTERNATIONAL MEMO

Introduction

The working people's search for a new way of life, the world over, has created a need for international relations among the working class in every part of the globe from the colonial world to the "Western democracies" to the countries behind the Iron Curtain. A new urgency is imparted to this need by the totality of the world crisis and the inevitable pull by both poles of state capital -- America and Russia -- for world domination through a new world war which puts a question mark over the very survival of civilization.

Never before has there been such a need for working class relations on a world scale not merely on the basis of what you are against, but on the solid foundation of what you are for.

Unless you stand for a society where the workers, to a man, manage production and the state -- and do so from the very first day, never letting go of that control, yielding neither to the capitalists nor to any newly-formed bureaucracy which counterposes itself to the freedom of the working class in order to rule "for" it -- unless you stand for that sort of society of freely-associated individuals, you will only end by capitulating to the old order and putting a noose around the necks of the workers throughout the world.

The tragedy of the Russian Revolution was precisely the fact that the working class to a man did not run production and the state. Lenin's greatness was that, to the last, he tried to affect this and openly stated that without it Russia would slip back to state capitalism. This is exactly what happened and thereby the new stage of world capitalism announced its birth through the First Five Year Plan soon to be followed by Hitler's Three Year Plans, Japan's Co-Prosperty Sphere and the New Deal's Brain Trust in America. Not a single one could solve the world crisis announced by the 1929 crash and each prepared for World War II.

The recent dramatic discarding of the myth of Stalin's invincibility and genius -- assiduously created by the totalitarian ruling bureaucracy over a period of three decades -- has thrown a totally false halo around Stalin's heirs and detractors. It has completely blinded the so-called "vanguard" groupings to the objective situation: the totality of the world crisis in general and the Russian impasse since World War II. World War II ended because the two powers contending for world domination -- Russia and the United States -- were completely exhausted while the masses at home were on the verge of taking matters into their own hands. The two poles of world state capital thereupon mutually agreed to an interlude soon to be known as the cold war.

Not long after the victory, the totalitarian bureaucracy in general and Stalin in particular, were threatened with overthrow. While concessions, such as the general labor amnesty, were made to the Russian working class, Stalin, in his headlong rush for world power without a breathing space, ceased to represent the Russian bureaucracy. As I wrote of the Beria purge then:

"But by 1948, after two decades of undisputed power, topped by a military victory, Stalin, to use a phrase of his own on another occasion, was 'dizzy with success.' I am not using it as a psychological epithet. His exhilaration from success was a sign that he was no longer responsive to the objective needs requisite for a struggle for world power. Stalin failed to grasp the new situation--

Draft Memo - p.2

he had won a war, a mighty one, over Nazi Germany, yes. But he had had yet to face the real contender for world power — the United States. Zhdanov was with him... Malenkov had Zhdanov poisoned.... The bureaucracy whom Stalin had so long and so fully represented began to find him inadequate to the new situation created by the end of a world war which no one won but which left each of the two state-capitalist giants so exhausted that a halt had to be called.... How pyrrhic was Stalin's victory could be seen in the unrest in the national republics which constitute Russia.... The restlessness of the Russian masses knew no bounds.... So catastrophic had been the decline of the labor force during the war years (a drop from 31.2 million in 1940 to 27.2 million in 1945 with more than a third of these unskilled new women workers) that even the amnesty was insufficient to create the labor force necessary.... By 1950 the Russian economy had about got back to normal when Stalin had a brainstorm. He brought Khrushchev in from the Ukraine (where he was Premier) and had him announce the most fantastic scheme yet — the creation of agrogorods, that is to say, agricultural towns.... Instead of 'abolishing' the distinction between city and country, this idiotic scheme brought such chaos to the countryside that even in that land of monolithic planning, the idea had to be shelved in a few short months....

"Six months before the death of Stalin the power struggle reached a climax.... One has to take but one glance on how quickly his (Stalin's) whole program was scuttled: 1) the Korean war was stopped. 2) What the 19th Congress, the last which Stalin directed and the first to meet since 1939, had established in trying to widen the base of the bureaucracy. The Praesidium once again consists not of 50 or 25, but 'a less unwieldy one' of 10. 3) And they ran, like rats from a sinking ship, from the grandiose fundamental 'work of genius' — Stalin's Economic Problems of Socialism in the USSR....

"Today, the ruling bureaucracy is not the integrated whole it was in 1938. It is split all ways between Zhdanov men, Malenkov men, Beria men, and — not to be forgotten although little known at present — Khrushchev men. Anyone who, like Nikita S. Khrushchev, has been boss over rebellious Ukraine, comes to Moscow as late as 1950, and by 1953 is in a position to have Malenkov 'ask to be relieved' of the post of General Secretary of the omnipresent Communist Party, and himself steps into that post, is a man to be watched. These power politicians have by now reached a blind alley, not knowing where to turn, and murdering each other....

"We are at the beginning of the end of Russian totalitarianism. That does not mean that the state-capitalist bureaucracy will let go of its iron grip. Quite the contrary... What it does mean is that from the center of Russian production, from the periphery of the satellite countries oppressed by Russia, and from the insides of the Communist parties, all contradictions are moving to a head and the open struggle will be a merciless fight to the end...."

This was written, not in 1956 after the 20th Congress, but in 1953, after Stalin's death. The present urgency to admit the scuttling of Stalin openly became acute during the Asia tour to create a new base — the colonial struggle — to maneuver in. To think that the Communist parties, which took the

2 5 5 6  
Draft Memo - p.3

Nazi-Soviet pact in their stride; which watched the slaughter of the Warsaw Soviet — without a murmur of protest — where they did not directly participate in that counter-revolutionary assault; which boasted of how they could take power in Western Europe simply by using the telephone (but didn't because the Russian army was not within reach) and then stood by while the Russians put down the East German Revolt and the slave labor revolts within Russia itself — to think that these Communist parties would undergo such a transformation through the shedding of Stalin that they would become organs of revolutionary struggle, is deliberately to put blinders on oneself. Such blinders can be put on only if one is organically of the same leadership-planner-totalitarian type as the Russians — but without their power. Those who do so have lost all faith in the workers themselves creating a new world, as have those in the opposite camp who continue to oppose Russia on no more fundamental ground than its bureaucratization.

The experience of the state capitalist tendency in America is of value to any international re-groupment, even as the experience of the Western European groups, which have broken with both Stalinism and Trotskyism and had to confront the new objective phenomena of mass CP's, has value for America. The test came when the state capitalist grouping in America broke with Trotskyism and faced the public with "Correspondence." The break-up of "Correspondence," as any split, came as a surprise, but it revealed the inseparability of 1) Marxism; 2) the anti-war position that is not limited to being against the old powers but is for a new social order in which the workers, to a man, control production and the state; 3) the struggle against totalitarian methods; and 4) the absolutely new phenomenon of workers taking matters into their own hands as against the "big leader."

That is why I am offering this memorandum.

#### Part I. The Plan vs. the New Impulses

The question of plan, that Marx posed theoretically in his greatest work, CAPITAL, had become the actuality during the world of depression. To the despotic plan of capital, Marx had counterposed the cooperative form of labor, of self-associated proletariat. Either we will have that, said Marx, or the laws of concentration and centralization of capital will lead to the concentration of all capital in the hands of one single capitalist or one single capitalist corporation, and the relations in society will then resemble the relations in the factory — of a single master over a mass of workers who have been degraded to cogs in a machine.

In the 1930's, the workers of the world recognized the new face of the enemy from within the working class, as well as in the government, to be that of the planner. In opposition to the State Plan, the worker built his own forms of organization — from the CIO in America, to the defeat of the Fascists by the workers in France, to the Spanish Revolution. In America, today, the detestation of the workers for the labor bureaucrat, Reuther, is more than a mere instinctive hatred of the labor bureaucrat. In America, as in Spain, the new way of life workers aimed for was the new theoretic as well as practical opponent of the planner.

The totality of the world crisis today, demands an active relationships among working class groups on a world scale. The unifying thread cannot

5 5 7

Draft Memo - p.4

be merely the opposition to both sides of state capitalism. It must be for a new social order that is completely in the hands of the working class at all times. That is to say, neither state nor party can rule "for" them. The transformation of the first workers state into its opposite -- the totalitarian state of present-day Russia -- with as without Stalin, has of necessity, and correctly, posed as the question in people's minds: WHAT HAPPENS AFTER? Are the workers forever to be confronted with a new bureaucracy who will deprive them of their freedom?

Trotskyism, the outstanding opponent of Stalinism, has proved to be but a variant of it. While Trotsky, who died at the beginning of World War II, cannot be blamed for the policies of the Fourth at the end of World War II, his theoretical principles of identifying workers state with nationalized property, capitalism with chaos and socialism with plan; the duality of being for the world revolution and for the defense of Russia, meant in reality, even while he was alive and had to face the invasion of Finland, the betrayal of the Warsaw Soviet. The double talk of being "for" the Soviet Union "only insofar as" it evoked the world revolution was not only hollow. It was part and parcel of the Stalinist mentality, even as the anti-war sentiments (pre-World War II) of the socialists, liberals, Homer Martins, etc., in America, ended on the same platform with pacifists and America Firsters.

It is true that Trotsky fought the Stalinist bureaucracy and died at the hands of a GPU agent; but at no time was there a solid theoretical foundation which began with where the workers were and at no time deviated from that central force.

At no time did Trotskyism come to grips with the new stage of capitalism made so violently obvious with the 1929 crash and the flourishing of State Plans the world over. At no time did Trotskyism come to grips with the transformation of the CP from a vanguard of the revolution to the leading destroyer of revolutions. The administrator in him, that first flowered in 1920-3 and that Lenin spotted and fought against in the famous trade union debate, had, by 1927 with his plan, anticipated all the capitalist planners. That has always been the fate of Marxists who, by so much as a hair's breadth, veered from the path of the workers as the active force both in the destruction of the old and the construction of the new society. Thus, Rosa Luxemburg, in her Accumulation theory had anticipated Keynes; while Bukharin laid the theoretical foundations for the Stalinist counter-revolution.

World War II split Trotskyism. The first attempt at a solid working class theoretical foundation for the opposition to Stalinism and Trotskyism was the rise of the state capitalist tendency in 1941. The study of the three Five Year Plans, from original sources, by F. Forest in 1942, revealed the economic foundation -- state capitalism -- for the Stalinist counter-revolution, not alone in theory, but in practice: 1) the relationship of capital to labor in a Russian factory was no different than in any capitalist country where private monopolists, instead of the state, control production; 2) the laws of capitalism -- the laws of value and surplus value -- operated in Russia; 3) planned production followed the law of motion of capitalism seen through the preponderant growth of means of production over means of consumption; 4) that even the numerical relationship of the ruling class -- called the classless intelligentsia in Russia -- to the rest of the population was the same as in all other advanced industrial lands; 4) finally, the only thing that was new -- the Plans Russia began ahead of all other capitalist lands and their

Draft Memo - p.5

concomitant, forced labor camps -- was what was new of the ~~Marx's~~ <sup>Marx's</sup> stage of world capitalist development -- state capitalism -- which was predicted by Marx as far back as 1842, and warned of by Lenin in his last years, but analyzed by him as far back as 1917 under the dictum that nationalization solves nothing.

So close is theory to reality these days, that not long after this analysis -- and right in the midst of the war itself -- the Stalinist theoreticians came out with the admission that the law of value operates in the Soviet Union. With that admission came the repudiation of Marx's CAPITAL -- both its categories and its dialectic structure -- as an analysis of capitalist society. The attempt to transform this classic into its opposite was forced upon the Stalinist theoreticians by the working class of Russia who could see no difference between what Marx described as capitalist relations in CAPITAL and what was the Russian reality, as well as by the need to threaten the rest of the capitalist world with its own aim for world domination. The theoreticians attempted, thereupon, to reduce all differences between capitalism and "socialism" to the difference between private and state property. The attempt to hem Marxism into the confines of private property vs. state property was the pull by which they hoped to trap the working class and revolutionary youth and petty bourgeois elements who were moving toward Marxism. Only in America was the counter-blow to this perversion of Marxism so strong, that it did not serve as a theoretical polarizing force (cf. RD in AER, Sept. 1944-5).

Just as the CP never became a mass party in America, so its theory never held dominance among the revolutionary elements. Even when it had won the intellectuals during the 1930's, the American working class rejected it. By 1943, when both the miners and the Negroes came out in strikes and mass demonstrations, its hold on any mass movement was negligible. The whole struggle at the end of the war was over labor productivity on an entirely new plane. To the workers it was a question of a totally new way of life. The capitalists did not misunderstand the post-war mass strikes and, in characteristic capitalistic fashion, looked for a solution outside of labor -- to the machine. Automation was the result. In the 1949-50 miners' strike -- the first automation strike -- the workers moved the question from the fruits of labor to the kind of labor itself.

A Detroit radio poll showed that, next to Russia, what the workers feared most was automation.

It is not Marxists who have compelled society at last to face with sober senses the conditions of labor and the relations of men with each other. As in everyday life on the practical questions of the day, so in every layer of society, the great philosophic battles that matter are precisely those over production, the role of the working class, the one-party state, H-bomb rule. Or, to put it more simply, how to get workers to produce more and, will civilization, as we know it, survive at all. Where the intellectual combatants, as in America, are not professed dialecticians -- as many in Europe and Asia are -- they are won over in the bargain. The seal of bankruptcy of contemporary civilization, including the so-called "vanguard parties," is the bankruptcy of its thought.

Our point of departure must be the concrete stage of capitalist production itself. The crisis is in production. If you see it there you can understand it everywhere else. If you do not see it there, you can understand



Draft Memo - p. 6

it nowhere. The Second Industrial Revolution has begun with automation where automatic technique and authoritarian control are indistinguishable. It is but a few years old, but it could have been, and was, predicted by Marx over 100 years ago.

The 1929 Depression had once and for all destroyed the worker's belief in the rationality of the economic system. The crash split the world mind in two: planners on the one hand and, on the other, workers who were seeking to break out of the capitalist chaos through organizations of their own. In America, this gave rise to the "scientific individual" who administers. Studies on the question of "human relations in industry," mushroomed. From Elton Mayo and the Technocrats, to the New Dealers and private management consultants, to the pure scientific and/or practical engineering planners who have since become automation experts -- all these specific American types of "scientific" individuals had to tie their plans to "human relations." They made a specialty of "plant interviews" and on-the-spot reporting of wildcats. Elton Mayo was the first to discover the production code by which production workers conducted themselves:

- 1) You should not turn out too much work. If you do, you are a "rate-buster."
- 2) You should not turn out too little work. If you do, you are a "chiseler."
- 3) You should not tell a supervisor anything that will react to the detriment of an associate. If you do, you are a "squealer."
- 4) You should not attempt to maintain social distance or act officious. If you are an inspector, for example, you should not act like one.

By the 1940's, it became quite clear that the American workers were developing a new economic philosophy to replace the capitalistic "production for production's sake." It was not too hard for these planners to sense that the returning ex-GI's, far from separating themselves from the workers, were in the forefront of this destruction of the old economic philosophy. Sure enough, "the scientific individual" got his "plant interviews." Sebastian de Grassi, in The Political Community, wrote, in 1948:

"Many others have documented the impersonalization of the modern scene with specialized studies of the rooming house dweller, the hotel guest, or the marginal man. More or less, they have kept without the bounds of bias. For this reason one must turn to another source -- the modern worker himself -- to find protest against the competitive directive, protest unembellished with symbolism and unrestrained by fear of making moral judgments...."

"Hell, supposing I do get a better job. It will be a nickel an hour more, that's all....That's right. There's no sense in being pushed around by foremen if you don't have to. Mine is a Simon Legree. He jumped a guy the other day for taking too long off to go out to the can. My God! It's drive, drive, drive all day long. No visiting at the bench. No nothing."

"The son of a bitch across the street is one good reason why a lot of men are leaving that plant. Him and a lot like him. He is a foreman. He started a friend of mine running two milling machines

2 5 6 0  
Draft Memo -- p. 7

instead of one. Jesus! Naturally Jack says no, so the foreman calls the superintendent. The superintendent says what's the matter with you GI's, are you afraid to work? Jacks tells him no, I'm not afraid to work, but that's just too much; you know what you can do with your job. The bosses are just laying it on too thick. They expect too much....Just a couple of days ago a GI went out to the can and my foreman tells him he stayed too long. He said the war's over now. Can you imagine that? In another department a GI made a mistake, or didn't get his work done fast enough, or something, and the foreman says -- where have you been? So the guy cracks back, 'In Italy, taking care of you.' That story did my heart good.

"Sure, I think most of us would admit we could double our take-home if we wanted to shoot the works, but where's the percentage? A guy has to get something out of life. Now my little lady would rather have me in a good humor than have the extra money. The way it works out none of us are going to be Van-Asterbilts so why not get a little pleasure out of living together and working together?"

This is the fact from which all contemporary sociology and social psychology begin: the rejection by the workers of all the old capitalist controls and standards. But if, in the 1930's, they discovered "the production code," and in the 1940's, the "production philosophy" of the workers, automation in the 1950's has confronted them with such power that they just collapsed, or as Hegel would say, perished. They dare not call for a "ruler" in production for, although they were the first to recognize unions as a means of disciplining workers, they have since uncovered that the gap between ranks and labor leadership is as great as between management and workers. Wildcatting obeys no "five year contracts." So, instead of "scientific management," "pure science" has taken over and the automation engineers stick to technical descriptions of "unmanned production lines."

World War II helped transform the American labor leadership, in hot-house fashion, into a labor bureaucracy. Reuther is disclosed as the planner who out-planned GM's Wilson with blueprints to transform, overnight, auto plants into bomber plants. Fast as Reuther developed, the workers even faster learned to hate them on a par with management. Here is how one committeeman described how the workers keep, not only the big bureaucrats, but even the committeeman isolated:

"The burning problems in the shops today are centered not around wages so much as around the bitter hostility of the workers to their role in production....The workers, in building their unions, thought that they were creating instruments of organizing and controlling production in their interest. The capitalists, aware of this, insisted that the unions recognize the capitalist mode of production....This is the dilemma that destroys innumerable leaders who have risen out of the working class....It plagues the union leader on the local level constantly....

"For example, a production standard is established. The man assigned to the job refuses to perform according to standards. He is sent to Labor Relations office where he is disciplined...and ordered to produce as required. The committeeman who is there to represent the man can only chime in and tell the worker that on the basis of the contract, he must produce according to production standards or face discharge.

2560

Draft Memo - p. 8

"Another example: Production is set for a whole line of, say, 200 men. The men protest the production that is set and are ready to strike. Either the company or the men call the committeeman. He tells the men that... the company has the right to set the production; that it is illegal to strike; and that the men should accept the standard....

"The higher levels of the leadership try to solve this dilemma by fighting for concessions outside the process of production. They give the impression of social workers in and out of the plant.... One day a worker was protesting a speed-up and said to me: 'What are you guys going to do about it? I know, nothing as usual. What good is the union? Now don't tell me about the local's grocery store or about being able to get women's clothes cheaper. Do something about the speed-up.'"

More direct, deeper and hostile are the following remarks by an auto production worker:

"After the UAW was organized, one of the worst crimes a union representative could commit was to be friendly to a foreman. I have known stewards to lose their position for being friendly with a foreman....

"In those early days, if a worker had an argument with the foreman, the foreman would try his best to settle it. The foreman never wanted the worker to call the steward. He knew the steward would defend the worker....

"Today, the steward spends practically all of his time in the office of supervision, or walking around with his arm around company officials. They have hardly any time to talk to the workers unless it is election time. They agree with the company on most of the differences between the workers and management.

"When a worker has a difference with the foreman today, the foreman will say, 'Call the committeeman.' He knows how they will act. In many instances the foreman will go get the steward. He uses these against the workers....

"A new sense of solidarity is beginning to show itself among the workers. Under the accumulated grievances piled upon them and under the pressure of both the company and the union officials, workers in the shop are drawing closer together again. It is becoming clearer every day that in order to defend their rights they can only rely upon themselves and each other."

To live among the working class without such a philosophy is useless. to treat workers as if they were just "instinct" is no different from the social democratic treatment of them as just "mass and weight." Unless the philosophy itself has been made so concrete that the movement from theory to practice can meet the movement from practice to theory as a reversible process, philosophy would have proved to be nothing but an abstraction. This is what the experience of "Correspondence" proves.



Draft Memo - p. 9

Part II: The Experience With "Correspondence"

The state capitalist tendency first faced its public test with the publication of "Correspondence." The ideas that were clear were: 1) that the editor be a worker; 2) that the paper be written and edited on a decentralized basis; 3) that what the average worker had to say was important.

The ideas that were completely obscure and confused were: 1) Where in this is the connection with Marxism? 2) What were the contributions of Marxism in general, or the tendency in particular? This obscurity, in practice, vitiated the positive premises. If Trotskyism was incapable of concretizing the truths of Leninism of 1914-17 for the period of state capitalism, the state capitalist tendency, so long as it was part of Trotskyism could not serve as an independent polarizing force. Once it became independent, the philosophic conceptions had to become concrete before it could develop its own relationships with the working class struggles. The death of Stalin, which had signalized the beginning of the end of Russian totalitarianism, by such great revolts as the one in East Germany and in Vorkuta, should have become the link between the heritage of Marxism and the new impulses from the working class. Instead, the analysis of the Beria purge was not made integral to the development of the paper. It was the beginning of the struggle, within the state capitalist tendency, between the Marxist and anti-Marxist elements, which came to a head during the crisis over Formosa in 1954.

War has its own dialectic. At the moment when war clouds gathered over Formosa, Johnson, as the titular head of the state capitalist tendency forced a split and abandoned the co-founder of the tendency to the mercy of the class enemy (cf. communications at the time of the split). Although he has ever been organically disloyal to all his colleagues, there was nothing personal in this. This is clear from the fact that at the very same time he suddenly re-introduced pacifist slogans rejected by Lenin and the entire movement since World War I. "While the struggle for peace," he wrote in January 1955, "at any other time in history is utopian and reactionary, now is the one time we can really stop it / the war /." Whatever reason Johnson had for mouthing phrases about the English opposition to German re-armament and the unconcern of the people as to whether the Russian army would or would not march into West Germany, or even into England itself (this, despite the experiences in East Europe particularly since the suppression of the Warsaw Soviet), his "struggle for peace" sounded not one whit different from the Staline-Bevanite pacifism.

No one can choose a ground on which to make his stand outside of that which is forced upon him by the objective situation. Now, unless you are for the workers themselves as the creators of the new society, you are merely substituting state oppression for "private" oppression. You either begin showing this in your own organization or you show it nowhere else -- Johnson is proof enough of that.

That no one can choose a ground on which to make his stand other than that given by the objective situation, is seen not alone in the sectarian evasions such as those by Johnson, the Anarchists, the Existentialists, etc., but in such mighty powers as both of the state capitalist poles contending for world domination. For example, Russia had to shed Stalinism, that is, Stalin's name, which for 1948 to 1953 to 1955, seven years, it had attempted to scuttle

2 5 6 3  
Draft Memo - p. 10

without openly acknowledging it was doing so. When, in 1948, Zhdanov was assassinated, it was both a threat and an appeal to Stalin for a breathing spell.

When he didn't heed and embarked on the Korean war, they went along but awaited and speeded Stalin's death. First, in Stalin's own name, they scuttled his whole policy. When that proved insufficient, they scuttled the name itself. At the very height of the new bureaucracy's triumphs -- the Asia tour -- they made the decision openly to disavow Stalin. There was no other way to create a base for the consolidation and manipulation of the colonial battles for independence, which they think they can do.

Or, take the opposite pole, America, and see how, despite the "brink of war" strategy, the American leaders had to backtrack on Formosa, that is, keep short of war. However, internally, they did move against any and all anti-war groups.

It was at that stage that the deviation from Marxism could no longer be tolerated and led to the break in the state capitalist tendency in America. What appeared as an accidental conjuncture of incidents was in reality the inter-connection of every single aspect: from technology to philosophy, from the purpose of the paper to war, from relations between leaders to relations between leaders and ranks and between national and international. And from any separation of principles one stands for and limitations one has put for himself in the paper to a transformation of the whole principle of the paper into a hollow form.

In opposition to the rulers, the working class has chosen three battlegrounds: 1) in the productive process to demand concrete answers to the question of automation and to refuse to accept abstractions; 2) on the question of totalitarianism to come to grips with it without awaiting the so-called "favorable" opportunities of a war (for example, 1953: East Germany and Vorkuta); and, 3) war (for example, conscript riots in France and German opposition to re-armament).

The now, that is, that the world is in two parts, has erased the distinction that previously made opposition to your own government, in and of itself, revolutionary. Now, unless you are for the workers themselves as the creators of the new society, you are merely substituting state oppression for "private" oppression. And, as Johnson proved, you have to begin showing this in your own organization or you show it nowhere else. A new beginning had to be made. It was made in News & Letters.

#### Part III: News & Letters and the Book on Marxism

With News & Letters two things were accomplished at once: 1) Marxism was an integral part of the paper and an explicit and integral part of the committees; and 2) the objective movement of the workers could hear itself in the paper and was at no time deflected to some unstated purpose.

Thus, the paper began when the wildcats began against the "Guaranteed Annual Wage" auto contracts, and with the commemoration of the June 17th events. At the same time, the summit meeting at Geneva was contrasted to the workers' clear anti-war position. Or, to take another example, the Till murder and the Montgomery boycott were actually anticipated in the paper by the editor's

2 5 6 4

Draft Memo - p. 11

analysis of what was going on down South. As a result, the paper was able to make itself felt down South among the deepest layers. At the same time, the analysis of the 20th Congress placed the paper unmistakably in opposition to both poles of state capitalism as Marxist. Or, to take two entirely different types of example, the analysis of the American economy and the analysis of the eight-hour day, anticipated 1) the current unemployment situation and the feature of permanently depressed areas as the new form of recession and, 2) the struggle over the working day. There is no paper anywhere in the world that had such a completely new and deep working class attitude toward automation, both in the columnist, Angela Terrano, and in the concrete material coming from the most basic industries, notably, coal, steel and auto. This is recognized not alone among workers but also among intellectuals and will become an axis of the book itself.

That one of the most popular features of the paper is "World Outlook" testifies to the international feelings of the American working class. The paper has been able to draw spontaneous responses from rank and file readers all over the world. This has become integral to the paper.

The proletarian core in the paper, and the intellectual core, who first gathered around "Correspondence," remain constant to the ideas as expressed, concretized and developed in News & Letters, even as its international impact has broadened.

The culmination of the year's existence is the collective working out of a book on Marxism. Every generation of Marxists has to interpret Marxism for itself. What the experience of the duality in the state capitalist tendency has shown, was that at this stage an economic analysis alone is insufficient. Lenin could have kept his Philosophic Notebooks private in 1915. In 1956 that is no longer possible. Nothing short of the perspectives of a total reorganization of society, of the creation of a new social order without capitalists, without bureaucrats, without a hierarchy in the process of production itself, without any and all elite, so that the creativity of the workers themselves can expand unhampered -- nothing short of such a total perspective can possibly act as the polarizing force for a new re-groupment at a time when the A-bomb and the H-bomb and automation are equally the property of both poles of capitalism whose stranglehold on the workers the world over is backed up by the labor bureaucracies and the intellectual planners.

#### Indications for the Future

This experience with a paper, which is not a party, indicates what a party must develop into under the present circumstances:

- 1) A new unity of theory and practice, both of which aspects are integral to the worker himself who has gained the confidence that he alone can unify theory and practice.
- 2) The new relationship of leaders to ranks and ranks to leaders, where not alone the ranks do many of the functions traditionally assigned to leadership, but where they bring in their shopmates and workers who are not members to discipline the organization itself.
- 3) Where all established organizations, whether trade union or radical political party, are considered not the "vanguard" but the brake upon

2 5 6 5  
Draft Memo - p. 12

the spontaneous organization of the working class to run its own life.

4) Where bureaucracy is fought, not as an abstraction, but concretely as a) the government bureaucracy, b) the labor bureaucracy, c) any leader who would refuse to submit to the discipline of his own ranks.

5) Where the colonial struggle, far from being "over there," is seen in one or another form even in the most developed lands, as the national struggle of the Negroes here.

6) Where the rank and file production worker is the key to the reorganization of the production process. To look for a "vanguard" in the established parties or in the skilled workers or in the committeemen, is to fly in the face of the experience of three decades which show that only the lowest and the deepest layers within the proletariat are the most revolutionary.

While only those on the spot can analyze the mass Communist parties in Western Europe, it is obvious that the youth is central to the disintegration of those parties. That is to say, where, directly after the war and the national resistance movements, the youth flocked to the CP's, they were the first to leave them. The CP's themselves have openly admitted that they are unable to control the youth. There have been some serious studies by those who left the CP's only to associate with another pole of capital, (e.g., Rossi, The Communist Party in Action) which shows the changing social composition of the CP. What is needed is such a study by a Marxist. Everywhere, from Nairobi to Spain, the youth has been integral to the revolutionary movements. At this moment, no established movement can claim them and certainly the established order cannot. It is no exaggeration to say that there can be no revolutionary movement without the active participation of the youth. We know the restlessness and the hunger that youth feel in their lives today, the signs are on every hand. If that hunger is to be satisfied and the gap in their lives filled, it will be done by Marxist interpreted for our age in the process of forging the new society.

Finally, the need is to erase the distinction between the "inside" and the "outside" -- as News & Letters has done and is doing. Not alone is one third of the paper written by people who are not members of the committees, but they have full rights to participate at all meetings including the convention.

When Lenin saw the bureaucratization of the Communist Party in power and the "communities" which characterized so many of the leaders, he worked out his most profound writings. What runs through all these is a) the analysis of the social formations in the party which reflect the social formations in the objective movement and, b) that it was necessary to "check the work of the party by the non-party masses." Never was it more necessary to have that as a guiding principle than in our age.

I offer this as a contribution to the discussion to be carried on by all, over the next year, as the necessary preliminary for any sort of gathering.

\* \* \* \* \*

July 1956

2565