

SPECIAL SUPPLEMENT: REPORT FROM CZECHOSLOVAKIA

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CZECHOSLOVAKIA INVADED!

As we go to press it is reported that, in the stealth of the night, when most of the Czechoslovak people were asleep, Russian troops invaded Czechoslovakia. In law were the client states of East Germany, Poland, Bulgaria and Hungary, which itself had been invaded by Russia 12 years ago. These are not the actions of "socialists." They are the actions of dehumanized brutes! They must be stopped!

The struggle of Czechoslovakia for independence, democracy and freedom, described in our special supplement, brought about the Communist counter-revolution.

Freedom Fighters throughout the world must show their support for the Czechoslovak Resistance! Demonstrate your protest at all Russian Embassies and Consulates! Demand the release of all those arrested! Demand the withdrawal of all invading troops!

Editorial Statement

All Eyes On Czechoslovakia, All Hands Off!

A new page in the history of freedom is being written in Czechoslovakia. It is vividly described in the report, *At the Crossroads of Two Worlds*, (center supplement) by a participant in the dramatic events. We ask all our readers, here and in Europe, in Latin America and in the Middle East, in Asia as well as in Africa, to spread this analysis of events far and wide.

This is not just a report of what the Czechoslovak press calls "democratization," and the New Left here would describe as "participatory democracy." This is not only a description of the sudden birth of a genuine public opinion (expressed almost totally without censorship in the mass media) in a Communist land which is situated strategically at the crossroads of two worlds. Nor is it only an exciting drama of a people striving for national independence while the "fraternal Communist nations" of the Warsaw Pact are engaged in a game of Russian roulette as they conduct their military maneuvers all along the Czech frontier. This is also, and above all, the depiction of a flood of ideas emanating from a people who have "found their tongues."

Workers are openly questioning their conditions of labor and life. The student youth are expressing their solidarity with East European youth like the Polish, against whom the Communist rulers have struck out with slanders interlaced with a strong anti-Semitic flavor, with firings and outright arrests. And the youth are also expressing their solidarity with the rebels in West Germany and the revolutionaries in France. The intellectuals are demanding not only freedom of the press, but freedom to act, to create, to build opposition parties.

Should anyone in the United States be so obtuse as to imagine that this applies only to lands bound by a single party system, let him take a second look not only at the Tweedledum-Tweedledee character of the American two-party system, which is obvious enough, but at the not so obvious—and when it comes to the field of ideas, far more important—fenced-in pragmatism and arrogance that is summed up in the American intellectual concept of "the end of ideology."

Now compare this ideological barrenness with the concepts of the Czech historian, Milan Hubel, to whom a demand for a plurality of parties signifies a demand for "a plurality which grants freedom to a flow of ideas, competition of concepts, and an outline to get out of quagmire . . ."

We are in two different worlds.

It is all the more necessary, therefore, to emphasize that, in expressing our solidarity with the Czechoslovak people, we are not doing something "for" them; we have a lot to learn from them.

In calling for all eyes to be on Czechoslovakia, and all hands off, Marxist-Humanists have in mind not only Russian state-capitalism calling itself Communism that had dominated Czechoslovakia for the past 20 years. We are also expressing our total distrust of and opposition to American Capitalism which has seen fit to nurture the most notorious Czech Stalinist general who fled the country the moment of birth of democratization.

It is not, however, the escape of one general with secrets of the Warsaw Pact that throws fear into the heart of the Russian ruling class. On the whole, they know how to play those kinds of games better than "the West," as is evident from all the secrets they pried loose from NATO. What they fear most of all are masses in motion.

MASSES IN MOTION

The Russians, for example, have learned well enough how to get along with Rumania. Yet Rumania has officially questioned the whole concept of the Warsaw Pact, which Czechoslovakia has not. Rumania is also flirting with China, which again, is not the way of the Czechoslovak leaders. Rumania displayed its dissidence

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Wallace Fans Fires of Hatred in Bid for National Political Power

By Michael Connolly

The alarming spread of the Wallace movement which had been revealed by polls that gave him between 16% and 20% of the national vote, was well confirmed by his domination over the Republican Convention. Everyone from the man in the street to the pundits knew that, though they eventually selected a Nixon-Agnew ticket, the Republican decisions were based on the campaign of the man who wasn't even there: George Wallace. What is not so obvious, is the significance of that phenomenon.

The air of unreality about the gathering of the rich in their Miami Beach convention was well documented as the TV cameras showed lavish \$500 a plate banquets one minute, and the next interviewed demonstrators from the Poor People's Campaign who were demanding the right to enough food to keep from starving.

"LAW AND ORDER"

The air of reality was brought home by the four-day revolt of black youth in North Miami, determined to protest the lily-white nature of the Florida delegation and show the whole world the hypocrisy of the endless speeches of American society as "healthy and vigorous."

One young black girl, watching the troops come down her street, was asked by a newsman what she felt. "Hate," she said. "Don't we rate as human beings?" If anyone had any doubts what the delegates' constant repetition about "law and order" meant, the tear gas, machine guns and mass arrests in North Miami made it very clear.

The truth of the matter is that both major parties are worried sick about Wallace. They're not worried that he is a racist or that he screams for all-out war. The Johnson-Humphrey administration has dished out racism and war in huge quantities, and Nixon supported them all the way. What worries them is that he represents the breakup of their old coalitions.

Governor Connally of Texas, a Democrat, whose views aren't so far from Wallace's, called him "the greatest threat to the two-party system I have seen."

WALLACE MOVES NORTH

Wallace in '68 is not the same as Goldwater in '64. First, because Wallace has chosen to stay outside the Democratic and Republican parties and build his own political organization. His American Independent Party is to be "not just for 1968, but as long as it takes to win." He is offering an organizational form to those who want an ultra-reactionary solution to the American crisis.

Even more important, unlike Goldwater who could not hide his anti-labor soul, Wallace's campaign, though strongest in the South, is, in fact, deliberately aimed at sections of the Northern white working class. He goes from one northern city to another, making sure his name will be on the ballot in every industrial state.

What worries the politicians of both capitalist parties is the sudden strength among some of the voters they always considered to be in their own hip pockets. Yet they are the very ones who have bred Wallace, because they

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Huey Newton and Panthers Are Facing Police Execution

If you are black and a Panther, California police are seeking your execution in the streets. The latest victims were three members of the Black Panther Party who were shot to death by police in Los Angeles.

In April of this year the police shot down unarmed Bobby Hutton while wounding Eldridge Cleaver, minister of information for the Panthers.

When they fail in their systematic extermination of a portion of the black movement in the street they try and do it in the courts. In Oakland, Huey Newton, Panther minister of defense, is being tried for murder after being shot in the stomach by cops. In the struggle one policeman was killed.

The struggle for liberation by the black community within America, which is fast approaching the point of being transformed into war, gave birth to the cry in the white community for freedom.—Eldridge Cleaver

To protest the imprisonment and trial of Huey Newton, the Panthers are organizing demonstrations and rallies. Thirty-five hundred people demonstrated at the courthouse the first day of the trial. Other rallies are being held both in the Bay area and throughout the country.

The political trial, being held in the criminal courts, has as its background the almost three

years that the Black Panthers have been organizing in the ghettos of Oakland. This has included armed self-defense patrols, the presentation of a political program to the black community, alliances with whites in the Peace and Freedom Party on the basis of "Free Huey" and the ten point program of the Panthers. Recently the Panthers have begun running candidates for political office.

A political trial demands a political defense. Defense attorney Charles Garry has attacked the grand jury that indicted Huey Newton on the grounds that it bars both poor and black people and is therefore unconstitutional.

To be a revolutionary nationalist you would by necessity have to be a socialist.—Huey Newton

Garry has demanded that the police release all material collected on the Panthers by the Oakland Police Department. Such material would document the

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FROM THE AUTO SHOPS

Shatterproof

Detroit—The office workers at Shatterproof Glass went on strike last November—and it lasted four months. Office workers and production workers are in the same union, UAW Local 174, and yet while we in the office walked the picket lines, the brothers in production went right in to work. The company told them that if they stayed out it would mean immediate dismissal.

At the end of July, the production workers' contract expired, and the union said the new contract was ready. Angeluski, the business representative, told them that they'd have to work one day without a contract until the new one started. When the brothers in production heard this they were angry. They stayed out for four days and production was completely shut down.

ONE FAMILY

While the production workers were out on the wildcat, workers in my dept., (in the office) talked a lot about the strike. I was ashamed of my brothers and sisters who said they wouldn't back the production workers now, because they didn't back us in November. That is just what the company wants, to separate us so they can keep us down easier.

When are we common workers "blue collar" and "white collar", going to realize we are one unionized family? Together we can destroy the evil and injustice that prevails at Shatterproof. As long as Shatterproof can make us believe there is a class distinction between shop and office it's easy to make us fight and mistrust each other.

If there's any question about our being one family, compare our contracts and our wages. Shop's contract makes office's contract look sick, and still we both accept two-bit favors and live in constant fear.

The company tells us out of one side of their mouth that office is special, but they showed their real attitude toward both units, with the layoffs that started in August. Isn't it strange that office employees have been cut back because of so called "lack of work" at the same time the shop was given a three-week layoff? This never happened before.

NO CONTRACT, NO WORK

And have you ever wondered why there are so many industrial accidents in the shop? Check the safety standards. Shatterproof is

so busy getting out production that safety does not exist. The company and the union thought that shop would just swallow the new contract.

But it was glorious when shop had the courage to wildcat. No one should ever work, not even one minute, without a contract. Because then we are fair game for any company hunter looking for a worker to shoot down.

When are we going to get what is rightfully ours? Think, and think hard. Then let's unite and fight for the chance to do an honest day's work and get its rewards—the wages we deserve and respect as human beings.

Fleetwood

Detroit, Mich.—Two days after the NEWS & LETTERS story about the lack of any Negro women workers in the cafeteria on the afternoon shift was distributed at the plant, there appeared a black woman worker on the afternoon cafeteria shift.

Guys in the plant were discussing her appearance and were glad. One union official tried to claim that he had brought her in. It turned out that she had been working on the day shift and had been transferred to nights.

I don't know the exact reason why she suddenly appeared on the afternoon shift. But I do think that the company is getting nervous about black power caucuses. They saw what happened at Dodge Main where workers were able to shut down the plant and they do not want that to happen at Fleetwood.

But the problems at Fleetwood go much beyond giving black people a chance to work in the cafeteria, and they won't be solved by merely transferring one person around so the whole plant can see her.

Chrysler Mack

Detroit, Mich.—The Chrysler Corporation has just gone through its model change over. Every model change means more speedup for production workers, though this one at the Mack plant seems to be speeded up more than most others.

All of the workers have not been called back yet, but the call for more production is just awaiting their return. The union leaders repeat what they have kept saying these last years, that there

is nothing they can do since management has all rights to control production standards.

COMPANY CONTROLS

If a worker cannot produce the amount the company wants, it just takes its time and works on the worker for eight hours a day.

The company drives and pushes for the amount of work it has set as standard, every day and all day, using all kinds of threats, including that of firing a worker. This is for workers on stationary jobs.

But these on the production lines have no chance to work at a normal pace, because the company speeds up that line at will. They really put pressure on workers who miss part of their operations on the line.

SCRAP BECOMES CAR

The workers know that many parts lack quality. But they let them pass on, telling no one about it because there is not time to repair it. The end result means that much of the production comes off as scrap, but the company does not scrap it; rather it becomes the automobile.

Some workers say that the company could not give them any of the cars that are made in the first month after a model change over. If Nader wants something to write and talk about concerning auto safety, he should come in a factory the first week after model change and spend a month.

If the worker kills himself to make his quota and have a couple minutes rest before filling the next hour's quota, the company always raises the amount of production required. The pace he works for 50 minutes an hour so he could breathe for 10 minutes becomes the pace that the company demands of him 60 minutes an hour, eight or more hours a day. And model changeover time is always a good time to begin the new, faster pace.

On The Line

The New Industrial Man

By John Allison

The Labor Relations personnel have a new concept of how to make the young worker conform to the way of factory life. To the company there is a new industrial man—he is violent, capable of burning their factories down—and the challenge is to make him accept the factory as it is.

Every knowledgeable person knows we are living in a period of great change. However the factory has not changed. Workers still get discharged. Production remains the same. Shop rules are more than 30 years old. The union and the company work hand in hand on grievance procedures which is the core of the contract.

SELL CAPITALISM

The young worker does not want to go along with the old order. And it is to make sure that this new industrial man does not burn the place down that the company is using advertising gimmicks. They want to sell the worker on capitalism, on the system, like soap is sold on television.

A new breed of supervisors are on the scene acting like they are soul brothers who understand the problem. Supervisors are young college lads who try to use the black power language and the language of the young. They are only trying to do what old time supervisors did with a whip in his hand: get out production.

All supervisors, black or white, do what their capitalist masters tell them to do. The old war cry of getting ahead is being heard. Young workers have never been in the breadline. Money is easy to come by and jobs are going begging for the lack of workers to fill them. The Vietnam War is

causing a labor shortage which management does not speak about. Nor do they speak of the necessity of young women going into factories in Detroit.

PRODUCTION COUNTS

Instead, the new industrial man is being told that he or she is getting a break his parents never got. To discipline the young worker in the factory is all that management wants. He can be for black power or the Ku Klux Klan—so long as he produces in the plant.

The young workers recognize the new supervisors as phoney and are reacting against the factory system which doesn't care what is going on in the world around it as long as production is met. The young worker does not expect to remain in a factory bucking the line all his life. He quits. Or if he gives too much trouble the company discharges him and hires another one. If the company can get a week's work out they are satisfied and ready to hire another one on Monday.

Steel Contract Is a Step Backward

Pittsburgh, Pa.—Most of the men who know anything about the new steel contract are very dissatisfied. Many were saying that the contract sold them down the river. The strike vote, which the union members had for the first time, was a farce, but it gave the union a little more bargaining power.

LESS VACATION PAY

As of Jan. 1, 1969, the men who are not in the senior group in terms of seniority will not be eligible for their 13-week vacation period. If they have less time they will get three weeks pay plus \$30.

The vacation pay will be based on the average of what you made the previous year instead of the three pay periods prior to your vacation period. This will result in less vacation pay.

A fellow worker came up to me and said he was overjoyed with the contract because of the vacation pay, thinking it was based on the old formula of the three pay periods before vacation, plus an extra \$30 from the new contract. He didn't understand and neither did I until I investigated and found out that we will be getting a lot less money.

GRIEVANCES DROPPED

This one concession will pay for the whole contract plus the 20c raise we got which was really only the cost of living we lost in the old contract.

The men are saying that we are going backwards instead of forward.

All grievances that were pending have been dropped with ratification of a new contract. The grievance men are disheartened because they had put a lot of work on some of the grievances. One worker said: "If this is what we get with the union, what could we get without them?"

Some are saying that the union and the company were working together because there was very little preparation for a strike.

Some of the men were hoping for a short strike so they could get a rest.

McLouth Steelworkers on Strike; Speak About Why

Detroit, Mich.—McLouth steelworkers, not covered by the national package negotiated by the U.S.W. and the "Big Eleven" steel companies, are out on strike. Although the exact terms of that contract have not been published, McLouth workers here are sure that the gain will be insufficient, and that they want more—in wages and working conditions.

Two union representatives said that even the local union did not know the terms of the contract, and thus had not framed their own demands. Rank-and-file workers were pretty disgusted by lack of information. When one man asked about a possible change in a job classification, the committeeman replied that he didn't know yet. Someone said that the union "didn't know much of anything" when it came to answering rank-and-file demands.

BURNS THROUGH SKIN

The committeeman told N&L that "local grievances would be the main subject of negotiations", but refused to be more specific. Two workers, however, told about a serious safety problem they wanted on the agenda. The company is refusing to continue to provide protective clothing, saying it's too expensive.

One worker described what happens to a worker without safety clothing who is burned by hot metal or chemicals: it burns right through the skin, even into the bone, and is impossible to stop.

Vacation time—leaving or returning—is another point of dispute. The company wants to be able to fire a man if he leaves a

day early; as it is, they can fire a man if he returns a day late.

As for the wage demands, the men seemed to anticipate a sell-out on this score. Many expressed disgust over the fact that the U.S.W. had never won the same wage gains achieved by other unions. Most glaring, one worker thought, was the difference between wage scales in the UAW and those of steelworkers: "At Chrysler, a floor sweeper gets \$3.21 an hour, while here a laborer makes only \$2.44½ an hour."

When asked how long he thought the strike would last, one man answered: "It could last 10 days or two years, and even if we 'win', we won't really win, because we can't hurt the company enough to make a difference. We can't even shut the whole industry down, because old LBJ would invoke Taft-Hartley."

Someone else mentioned that the company had been stockpiling steel like mad in the past few months in preparation for a strike. "If we go back today, the company would probably lay us off tomorrow because of their stockpile. It would take six months for them to start to hurt."

The union committeeman, when asked why stock-piling couldn't be stopped by slow-downs, replied: "Because I would go to jail, along with the rest of the union officials. Our contract forbids work-stoppages or slow-downs." Asked why the union would sign a contract which forbids its members to slow-down, while permitting the company to stock-pile, the union official said absolutely nothing. The rank-and-filers in the group had a good laugh.

(Watch for more "Thinking and Talking On The Picket Line" in coming issues of N&L)

International Youth Conference

"The scope and nature of the insurrectionary actions taken throughout the highly industrialized countries this past year have initiated a new phase of revolutionary struggle . . ."

We think that at this stage of historical and political development, a dialogue leading to the creation of a coherent revolutionary theory is necessary if we wish to insure the growth of an international movement. We are therefore calling for an International Assembly of Revolutionary Student Movements which will address itself to two main themes: the stage of class struggle in the individual countries and the potential of new revolutionary agents, and the prospects and possible forms of an international revolutionary movement.

For too long the United States movement has isolated

itself from the movement in Europe. The Assembly will meet at Columbia U. from Sept. 17 to 25. It will largely take the form of open, mass meetings . . ."

Individuals and groups in England, France, Canada, Germany, Italy, Japan, Spain, Sweden, Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia, Mexico, and the U.S.—all the industrialized countries where independent student movements exist—have been contacted. Funds are urgently needed to provide passage to the U.S. for people who might otherwise not be able to participate. Contributions and inquiries from interested parties should be addressed to:

Columbia Strike Co-ordinating Committee
P. O. Box 238 Cathedral Station
219 West 104th St.
New York City, N.Y. 10025
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AT THE CROSSROADS OF TWO WORLDS



Czechoslovak Challenge— Spring 1968

The last day of March saw the emergence of an organization unique in the entire East European bloc: thousands of people participated in the founding of "K 231", associating former political prisoners of the present Communist regime, (K for club, 231 denoting the law under which political enemies used to be sentenced to excessive penalties).

Also, an association calling itself "Club of the Engaged Non-Party Members" was founded for the purpose of uniting people not organized in any of the existing political parties. The Ministry of the Interior, responsible for authorizing new organizations refused to issue any license for any of these associations. The Communist Party refused to recognize any political grouping except the existing ones. The debates on this question, however, divided party members.

Young students and workers flocked to public gatherings at which high ranking party officials answered more questions which a few months before were frowned upon or prohibited altogether. There was a feeling of the birth of democracy. On March 4, the presidium of the Communist Party had abolished its 1964 resolution which had introduced sterner censorship measures. Since then Czechoslovakia has practically no censorship.

This freedom—"let a hundred flowers blossom"—became a thorn in the sides of Polish, Soviet and East German Communists. Despite this and despite repeated attacks from some party quarters taken over by higher officials of the party apparatus, no restrictions were reimposed. Any regulation or party resolution containing restrictive measures, any official pronouncement that failed to respect the newly-won freedoms came under attack in the press and/or radio. Television was suddenly discovered to be of immense power if any personality or idea was to get a wide hearing. Thus politics got "democratized" anew after 20 years.

This first act of the democratization process drew slowly to a close without as yet exerting a real impact on life in Czechoslovakia. The changes seemed all to be merely at the top. At the beginning of April, the presidium of the Central Committee was newly elected, the National Front—comprising every existing political party and "social organization"—got a new chairman, Alexander Dubcek, who seemed to bring some fresh ideas about the co-operation between Communists and non-Communists; a new government was formed, the National Assembly chose a new chairman, the Supreme Court had a new president. Although these changes were only on the surface, they did seem to give people the assurance that the ruling party was actually throwing away both old methods and the people associated with these methods. Dubcek and many minor officials after him took every opportunity to stress the merits of the lower level officials.

"We all know and, in particular, each worker knows that in practice the workers did not decide anything . . . While many workers thought that they ruled, the rule was executed in their name by a specially educated group of officials of the party and state apparatus. In effect, they took the place of the overthrown class and themselves became the new authority."

From "2000 Words," June, 1968

Through the maze of speeches what could be seen clearly enough was the concern of the apparatus that it be kept intact against the assaults of men like the philosopher Svitak and those who signed manifestoes like the "2,000 Words." In the case of the "2,000 Words"—a later development—the chorus of criticism from the Czech Communist Party was joined by quite vicious attacks by the leaders of the Russian, East German and Polish Communist Parties, who were beginning to issue

ominous warnings about how "counter-revolutionary" elements were threatening "the socialist achievements."

What aroused their ire were these words: "We can assure the government that we will back it, if necessary, even with weapons, as long as the government does what we gave it the mandate to do." In the case of Ivan Svitak, who is a lecturer in philosophy at the Charles University and is attempting to establish a relationship not only with rebellious students but directly with miners, it was his description of the Czechoslovak system as one of "totalitarian dictatorship" that aroused them.

The greatest achievement of the Czechoslovak experiment in democratization, however, is that for the first time in 20 years (actually 40 years if you consider the theoretical void since the death of Lenin) Marxists are debating fundamental questions openly. Here is how Professor Svitak expressed it:

"Workers and intellectuals have a common enemy—the bureaucratic dictatorship of the apparatus . . . And it is for this reason that in the interests of socialist democracy we have to strengthen the unity of those working with their hands and those who work with their brains against the apparatus of the elite which has been, is, and remains the main obstacle in the unique experiment of our nation with socialist democracy."

Prelude to Spring

The prelude to the spring events actually began the year before. First, the economic conditions were very grave and there was all sort of talk in the ruling circles about the need for "economic reform." Then, the Writers' Congress, in June, 1967 came out with a cry for freedom. This reflected, not only their position, but the restlessness in the whole country among all strata of the population. Finally came the student demonstrations in the autumn, and the attacks on them brought home to every citizen an acute awareness of the Stalinist tinge of the Novotny clique. The scene was set for the meeting of the Party Central Committee, in October, 1967, to consider "the position and role of the party."

The economic and social crisis affected deeply the party as well. Wide-spread passivity of its rank and file had been a long-standing concern, very often mentioned in party newspapers. An undercurrent of dissatisfaction and criticism of the discrepancy between hollow claptrap of party officials and the reality was growing ever stronger.

At first sight the outcome of the October session seemed to be no more than one other lengthy document reaffirming the leading role of the Party. However, it was at this session that a point was made on a significant question which helps to illuminate the internal crisis of the Communist Party: Alexander Dubcek—who was to become First Secretary of the Party after January, 1968, the first Slovak to hold this crucial post—had come forward with a strong criticism of the Party "solution" of the national question which Lenin had considered critical.

The clash of Dubcek with Novotny, the previous and long-standing First Secretary of the Party, was at first not altogether clear, especially since the October, 1967 session had to be broken off to celebrate the anniversary of the October Revolution which involved Novotny's going to Moscow. He promised, however, to allow the work of the "central authorities, above all of the government" to be analyzed at the next session to be called in December.

The presidium of the Central Committee that had to prepare the plenary session was called as late as December 11, just before this session had to begin. The clash with Novotny continued, the presidium being unable to unite on a proposal to be presented to the plenum. Some of its members pressed for the functions of the president of the republic and the party's first secretary to be separated. (Novotny combined both of them in his hands.) At the plenary session Novotny's report on a new division of governmental responsibilities was rejected. This was something unheard of, it had

never happened before and was a clear sign of mistrust towards the most powerful man in party and state.

After stormy debates, some echo of which came to the knowledge of a wider public, individual members of the presidium as well as Central Committee secretaries, were called upon to report on their personal views. This quite unusual procedure made it impossible for them to hide behind a collectively accepted "resolution" and to ponder over their standpoint. The discussions dragged on too long for the sessions to end before Christmas and everyone was happy to agree to a woman member's proposal to break up and come again at the beginning of January, 1968.

The December plenum decided to constitute a consultative group that had to propose to the January session—in agreement with the presidium—how to solve the "cumulation of the highest functions" and, if need be, to put forward an alternative proposal as to who should be the first secretary. Two problems came into play here. The first was, of course, the economic crisis. The second was the national question.

The authoritarian regime had proved incapable of dealing with the economic crisis that had broken out as far back as 1963 when national production decreased and economic growth stagnated. A few figures for illustration: One crown of national income between 1956-1960 to two-and-a-half crowns of investments; during 1960-1965 the proportion rose to one crown to nine-and-a-half crowns. In 1938, a flat could have been bought for 1392 work hours, in 1964, for 1720 hours. While agricultural production in Western Europe increased roughly by half between 1961 and 1963, Czechoslovak agriculture reached only its pre-war level at this period.

Some half-hearted attempts were made at "industrial reorganization," but these were insufficient to stop the downward trend of the economy. By 1967 the economists' demands for decentralization and the extreme political centralization exploded into the open. Still, some of the members of the

"Marxism is a program of human freedom, and if it is not this it is not Marxism."

—Ivan Svitak, in *Socialist Humanism*, 1965

presidium hesitated to stand up against Novotny. A few of them were linked to him by years of their "common" rule. And none of them had a clear concept of what was to be done if Novotny were overthrown. The older among them who had been party members since before the war had spent their lives in serving the idea of Stalinism. They were unable to develop any new idea: they might have sensed the need for a change, even a profound change, above all in the economy—but as subsequent events were to demonstrate, they simply could not follow the January developments once the latter quickened their pace.

Novotny had doubtless his own thoughts on the intended changes. During the days of the January session, People's Militia—special armed workers' units consisting entirely of Communists, with a tradition of dogmatic membership very loyal to the party—had maneuvers in Prague and around the capital where some extra police units were concentrated as well. Also, the most loyal follower of Novotny in the army command, General Sejna, tried to convince a group of officers of their duty to stand up against the intended change in the person of the first secretary—but the letter they sent came just one hour after the election had taken place.

Nor was there any consolation for Novotny in the visit of Brezhnev whom he had invited as early as December, 1967. The Russian might later have felt very grieved for his earlier non-intervention, but by then the situation had changed more than all three of them, Brezhnev, Novotny and Dubcek, could have foreseen.

Now the second sequel of the December session followed, beginning with January 3. After three days

of heated debates, with a great part of the Central Committee members rather hesitating and undecided for a long time, a majority of the Central Committee supported not only the proposal of the presidium to separate the functions of the first secretary and head of state but also elected four new members of the presidium, three of which at least belonged to those who had criticized Novotny since Autumn, 1967. The resolution approved on January 5 and published together with a short communique on January 6, still linked Novotny's "personality" with important successes of socialist construction.

The attempt to paper over the differences between the "economic reformers" and the majority of the Central Committee could not, however, hide the clash between Dubcek and Novotny on the national question, which had become one of the central issues in dispute between the two Communist leaders. In order to fully understand what is involved, we must here roll the film of history backwards to the period between the end of the Second World War and the Communist take-over in Czechoslovakia in 1948. (For space considerations we must omit the question of other national minorities such as the Ukrainians, Hungarians and Germans).

A Short Pre-History

1. 1944-1948

The Slovaks, for centuries oppressed and exploited by the Hungarian gentry, remained the least developed part of the Czechoslovak Republic, established in 1918. What made things still worse was the theory that there was but a single "Czechoslovak" nation. In spite of all evidence to the contrary, the "theory" kept maintaining that the Czechs and the Slovaks were not two different nations.

What may seem a play on words is, unfortunately, for Czechoslovakia and its working class, a vital question; denying the Slovaks their own nationality meant denying their self-determination. Together with the depression that hit Slovakia in the thirties far harder than the rest of the country, a strong nationalist movement developed there, entered into agreement with Hitler, thus helping to destroy Czechoslovakia in 1938. Whereas the western parts of Czechoslovakia became a German "protectorate," Slovakia emerged as a "free state" allied with Germany.

Though prospering relatively, the majority of the Slovaks detested the Nazis and after Hitler's assault on Soviet Russia, when the Slovak government sent its troops to help the Germans on the eastern front, the anti-German feeling came to a head. In collaboration with other national anti-German elements, the Slovak Communist Party organized a broad political union on the eve of 1943, and counting on Soviet help and cooperation once the Red Army stood on Slovak borders, prepared an armed uprising. Let's note that most of the Slovak troops that were to fight along with the Germans crossed to the Soviets and became part of the Czechoslovak armed units fighting with the Red Army.

The uprising broke out in August, 1944. The Red Army helped as little as possible, for the Soviets had their own military plans. Thus, the uprising, in spite of heroic battle, was crushed. It is against this tragic background that one must see the heroism also of the Prague uprising in May, 1945.

"It was high time for these boring monologues of unending self-praise to end; it was high time for those who had been ruled, and who were and still are the weaker ones, to speak. I believe it's essential in a democracy that the greatest possible variety of society, associations, and clubs whose origins are free and spontaneous be permitted to exist, allowing every interest its natural representation and an unrestricted right to be heard."

—J. Jesenski, in *Kulturny Zivot*, April, 1968

Few in the world outside of Czechoslovakia know of either uprising and fewer still understand them. There are those who are all too ready to speak about the ease with which the Communists were able to take over in 1948, claiming that it proves the "passivity" of the working class in accepting Communist leadership in Slovakia in 1944 and in Prague in 1945. What they forget is that it was the Nazis, not the Communists, who held state power during the War; that the six years of Nazi occupation and terror had been preceded by a disastrous depression, caused by private capitalism not Communism; and that the Communists, once the Nazis invaded Soviet Russia, became the most militant resistance fighters.

It is true that, despite the fact that the proletariat played the leading role in the 1945 uprising, the workers let control slip from their hands, that the trade union organizations as well as the political ones came under the rule of the *appartchiki* and were at no time subject to control from below. Moreover, the Communists promptly created an

amalgam of bureaucracies. State capitalism, or what the Communists were pleased to call "a mixed economy," was established and established from above.

One important outcome of the 1944 uprising was the resolution of the Slovak political parties to unite

"There is a real danger that workers' self-management can become camouflage for the manipulation of the workers by the management. Our own experience has shown this (for example, what became of the unions!) as well as the experience of Yugoslavia and Poland. In order to prevent this from happening here, thought must be given right now not only to forms of workers' self-management but also to forms of workers' self-defense."

Zybnek Fiser, in *Nova Svoboda*, June, 1968

with the Czechs and to build a common state again as soon as Germany was defeated. The only condition was to be an autonomy for Slovakia. This was solemnly promised in the first Czechoslovak post-war government declaration issued in the East Slovakian town of Kosice in April, 1945. Though it met with some resistance on the part of the adherents of the idea of a "Czechoslovak" Nation, the agreement was being carried out.

The political system of Czechoslovakia between 1945 and 1948 was that of a bourgeois democracy with civil liberties rather strictly observed and political parties united in a National Front. The Communists smashed it as soon as they took over: they made other parties mere puppets, first by purging them of "reactionary" elements, and then severely restricting their membership.

The Social Democratic Party that could have become the only contender of the Communists for the working class vote, preferred fusion with the Communist Party in June, 1948 by the very leadership that had closely cooperated with the Communists long before 1948; indeed, just as soon as the Communists showed they could control state power. After the fusion the only political organizations allowed to exist in factories and in offices were the Communist cells. The trade unions that united in the Revolutionary Trade Union Movement in 1945 were then made a tool of the party. A consequence of this monolithic domination was that it became impossible for any genuine workers' leader to appear during twenty years of the Communist reign.

Needless to say, the behavior of the Communists was a perversion of Marxism, both in the political field and in the establishment of its command in the economy. It was not the means of production that were expropriated from the bourgeoisie in 1945, but only the so-called key industries. The bourgeoisie that collapsed was not removed but was driven into the position of a petty-bourgeoisie. The power and positions of the latter rose accordingly. It increased also by the recolonization of the border districts from where the Germans were expelled to Germany; by the land reform that made the rural proletariat petty-bourgeois as well; and by price increases of stocked goods which overnight added to the shopkeepers' wealth. Between 1945 and 1948, the reins of the economic power which the bourgeoisie lost, fell to the civil service apparatus, one more bureaucracy.

2. AFTER 1948

After the February coup of 1948, the civil service bureaucracy, soon "purged" by the party and refilled from the party ranks, fused with the Communist Party apparatus. This amalgamation became the backbone of the Communist Party. In the short period between 1945 and 1948, the Communists based their public policy on the record of their resistance against the Nazis, their large intellectual following and stressed friendship to the Russian liberators. They presented the program for the first Czechoslovak post-war government. Gottwald, the chairman of the Communist Party, summed up his party policy in the immediate post-war period in the slogan "No Soviets, no socialization."

Naturally, this could easily be agreed upon also by other, even non-socialist parties. A mixed economy was established and a kind of planning was introduced. Full employment, achieved soon after the economy recovered from the worst war losses, prevented misery on a massive scale.

In this mixed economy it was the biggest trusts — in spite of their nationalization — which could retain their significant role and bear upon the economic policy. After the Communist take-over, this tendency gained strength since the Communist planning put an ever-increasing emphasis on the production of production means. One of the arguments put forward at the time — quite plausible at first sight — was the stepping up of the cold war, embargo on goods for Czechoslovakia and the socialist bloc, as well as the need for strengthening relations with the U.S.S.R.

Stalin's pressure for shipments of final products, above all of the engineering industry, met the

"needs" of Czechoslovak steel and iron industry and heavy engineering. The basis of the vicious circle of Czechoslovak economy can be found here. Besides, these tendencies were intensified by a planning system since 1952 copied from Soviet example. An advanced industrial country, Czechoslovakia was gradually falling behind both in industry and agriculture and increasing production for the sake of production.

For the first few years, the immense waves of investment seemed to bring growing welfare. Social security, so dear to the generation which had in mind the dreadful years of unemployment, was assured. Living standards rose partly—not by rising wages, however, which were far less than in the neighboring capitalist states of Austria and Western Germany, but by employing more members of the same family.

Under this surface, economic problems and contradictions accumulated and moral disintegration set in. Czechoslovak society as it has emerged from the war had a strong sense of national values, since solidarity had been a weapon against the Nazis. Soon after the February coup, however, leading Communists in Prague, helped by some Slovak Communists planted in the offices of the Slovak party branch, ousted the resistance leaders, accusing them of "bourgeois nationalism". The constitution of 1960 then sealed the fate of Slovakia, making it a mere province of the central government whatever might have been the outward signs of autonomy. Novotny only made things worse by openly offending the Slovaks during his visits to Slovakia as head of state.

The Communists pretended to give the working class a leading role and systematically denigrated all other social groups. The contradictions between demagogical, pompous words and the oft-repeated but never fulfilled promises, the contradiction between the rosy picture of would-be socialism and the drab and ever-worsening reality of day-to-day life led to a deep seated scepticism and distrust towards "intellectuals". A very special role in the corrosion of moral values was played by the trials.

The first of them took place at the beginning of June, 1950. In the dock stood the woman, M. P. Horakova, a former socialist, with twelve co-defendants. Horakova and three others were sentenced to death. Included was Z. Malandra, eminent Marxist, whose actual "guilt" was that he had strongly opposed the Moscow frame-up trials. The biggest of these frame-up trials—prepared with the assistance of Soviet "specialists"—was that of Rudolf Slansky (former Communist Party secretary general) in November, 1952. Eleven of the fourteen accused were executed.

In the two-month period between January 1 and March 1, 1951, recent research points out there were 391 public trials in Bohemia alone. Of these cases, 14.8 percent concerned charges of "anti-state" activities, 27 percent "economic criminal offenses". Workers represented 39.1 percent of the defendants.

At the same time, the party forced tens of thousands of "white-collars" — artisans, shop keepers and what they called "bourgeois elements"—to go into production. A single campaign in 1951 was organized under the slogan of "77,000"; it took that many to replace those driven to the plants. The pretense that the Slansky trial was needed to stop "the nationalistic road" was belied, by the frame-up character of the trials not only against the leaders, but above all against the thousands of workers.

It was all part and parcel of what has since become known, during de-Stalinization, as "the crimes of Stalin." Fraudulent lies and vulgar insults spread wildly, were accompanied by hate campaigns with a strong pogromistic flavor. Far from clearing the road, as the officials then claimed, for "history-making social layers" — resistance members, soldiers who had fought abroad during the war, the proletariat — the distinctly anti-Semitic line pursued in connection with Slansky's trial and the terror in the country, reached its height for all layers of the population in that period.

Point, Counterpoint: Back to the Main Drama

The irony of the situation in 1967-68, as the "economic reformers" and those who were fighting for a certain amount of self-determination for Slovakia were continuing their behind-the-scenes struggle, was the coincidence that it was triggered by the anti-Semitism which flowed from the Communist position during the Arab-Israeli War. The rebelliousness at the Writers' Congress in June 1967 and the totally different debate in the Central Committee of the Party in October which was climaxed by the replacement of Novotny by Dubcek, suddenly seemed to be related not to a mere personality fight between top Communists. Instead, people rightly felt that this held special importance for everyone. Somehow, everyone felt that the change in personalities did signify a change in the operation of the system itself. A change in the composition of the presidium, quite surprisingly, put emphasis on the concept of "democratization".

The lack of information was strongly criticized even afterwards. As a continuation of the old policy

of not telling the membership the whole truth, the inauguration of a new policy of democratization seemed rather ominous. It was as much one of the convincing proofs of the power of the conservatives, as the men around Novotny came to be known, as it was a proof of the same attitude towards "lower" levels of membership both on the part of the old clique and new guard. It was a first confirmation that the January changes were no experiment — as deeply as these might cut — but simply a change within the system.

The one important new phenomenon emerging in consequence was, however, the creation of a real public opinion. Press, radio and television seized the opportunity offered by the dismissal of their enemy, Novotny, and began to pound at particular features of the "previous" system. It took some time before the new leadership grasped the significance of these allies. For it was only with the assistance of the mass communications that the crack opened in January widened into a real breach. Their newly won freedom to report, their "daring" attitudes to controversial points of domestic policy got the public at large into a mood of expectant impatience and sustained an atmosphere of dissatisfaction with the old methods and ways.

"Profound thoughts arise only in debate, with a possibility of counterargument, only when there is a possibility of expressing not only correct but also dubious ideas."

—Prof. Andrei D. Sakharov, in "Thoughts About Progress, Peaceful Co-existence and Intellectual Freedom"

Gradually citizens began to understand that the change at the top might really mean more this time. It was not until the end of the month, however, that one of the new men who had been very instrumental in the fall of Novotny, Josef Smrkovsky, published a letter called "What is at Stake Today?" in the trade union paper and stressed democratic principles as the basis of decisions.

At the end of January, Dubcek, up to then also first secretary of the Slovak branch of the Communist party, ceded this post to Vasil Bilak. The latter had no clear "democratic" record and his advance was taken as a sign that in Slovakia the "democratization process" was not to become even as "radical" as in the western parts of the state. Only two or three of the most prominent representatives of the Novotny regime were changed in the Slovak capital. Not only were new men emerging in command posts there very slowly but some of the newcomers soon proved to have attitudes hardly distinguishable from those of their predecessors, merely shielding themselves with the magic word "federalization", i.e. federal status for autonomous Slovakia.

Indeed, at the Congress of Agricultural Cooperatives that met on February 1, Dubcek stressed the limitations of the changes. "We do not change the general line, neither of the domestic nor in foreign policy. The starting base of a more rapid socialist development lies in the field of politics. In the development of socialist democracy . . . we have to make more room for the activities of all social groups of our society."

Nevertheless, further personnel changes began to indicate some new developments: Mamula, the almighty head of the 8th department of the Communist Party Central Committee (to which army, security forces and intelligence services were subordinated) was replaced by the head of the army's political administration, Lt. General Prchlik. Mamula was one of the most faithful followers of Novotny and almost as great an evil-doer as his master himself.

The second strong man pushed out of his post was Jiri Hendrych, for years the ruler of the ideological section of the party regimenting arts and literature. His furious banging at the rebellious writers at their 1967 congress brought him into special disrepute at this time.

In the presence of Communist leaders of the neighboring "socialist" countries, assembled at the occasion of the 20th anniversary of the February coup, Dubcek stressed the wish of the workers and peasants: "by decisive actions to indeed radically change the state of affairs." "The discussion dur-

May 4 rally organized by young people in Prague, Czechoslovakia in support of greater democracy.



ing our drawn-out sessions in December and January, for which we hardly could find any similarity in the last 20-30 years," he continued, "touched on every essential issue of our party's policy."

At this time the movement of hope seemed to be in full swing. Letters were pouring into the newspaper offices as well as to radio and television networks as the public grasped genuine democracy. At about the same time the president of the Union of Fighters against Fascism, which united resistance members and survivors of Nazi concentration camps, put out the winged word of "rehabilitation." As far as resistance fighters alone were concerned, there were 40-50,000 men afflicted with unjust measures during the fifties, he estimated, and asked for an act rehabilitating these people as well as other victims of repressions and discriminations.

The popular rage, roused every day by some fresh revelation of the crimes perpetrated in a Nazi-like style during the Novotny era, was climaxed in the first days of March by the Sejna affair.* Since Sejna had been a close friend of the president's son, and an intimate of the head of the state himself, Novotny was rightly seen as the embodiment of all evils of the preceding period. He belonged to the top hierarchy ever since 1951. By March 8, Communists from the Army GHQ demanded that all accomplices and protectors of Sejna, including the president of the republic and Mamula, be called to account. To the surprise of the Central Committee, the campaign against Novotny was so strong throughout the country that it led to his resignation on March 21 and to the election of General Svoboda for president on March 30.**

The manner of the election was, however, fresh proof that the old practices were continuing. The problem, in this case, was that, though a majority of the public approved of it, the candidate was imposed on the country, since no other candidate was put forward, and the preparations and the procedure were all carried through in a single week.

The dramatic March developments would not be stilled by this concession. The cry for the representatives of the old order to leave the scene became so loud and was supported by mass communications to such an extent that heads began to fall at last: on March 12, the chairman of the Trade Union Congress resigned, the National Assembly gave a vote of no confidence both to the Minister of Interior and Prosecutor-General. Also, throughout February and March the pressure for postponing the general election due to take place in May, grew and found some support at the party district conferences so that the presidium of the Communist Party Central Committee "recommended" at the end of March to postpone the election to the end of June.

* This General's secretary of the head committee of the party organization at the Ministry of Defense — and, as such, independent (sic) of the Minister himself and subordinated to the 8th department of the Central Committee—and head of the Minister's secretariat, was involved in a swindle. But, due to the connivance of civil and military investigation officers as well as members of the presidium of the national assembly, he was able to flee with his son and mistress. The details of the affair known so far reminds one of "the good times" of any bourgeois society.

** Svoboda had organized the Czechoslovak army in exile in the U.S.S.R. and had been something of a popular hero since his victorious return in 1945. As Minister of Defense, his support of the Communist coup in 1948 had been one of the main conditions of its success. Dismissed soon afterwards, he was sent to an agricultural cooperative as accountant clerk and was also otherwise a victim of the regime.

On April 5, the first day of its session, the Central Committee of the Communist Party accepted an Action Program. On 27 closely printed pages — in chapters called: Czechoslovakia's Road to Socialism; For the Development of Socialist Democracy; For a New System of Political Management of Society; National Economy and Living Standards; Development of Science, Education and Culture—it presents a program the Communist Party has not known for many decades. The program proclaims that: "The party cannot enforce its authority, but has to obtain it anew by its deeds. It cannot enforce its line by ordering, but by the works of its members, by the veracity of its ideals."

"No one was the object of such lethal hatred or such terrible police and political persecution as the independent left wing or any Communist or communizing movement critical of Stalinist practice and dogma . . . From time to time the press could publish statements by bourgeois politicians, but this was unthinkable for activists of the non-Stalinist left."

—Leszek Kolakowski, in *History and Responsibility*

As we see, the Communist Party has no intention of resigning its "leading role" — all it wants is to change the form in which it would carry on with its leadership. It is, however, changing its methods of operation and even proposing the establishment of "Workers' Councils". A careful reading of the "Development of Socialist Democracy" will show, however, that what they mean by Worker Councils is not workers' control, but workers' discipline. Here is how the program reads:

"The economic reform will make more and more the whole labor collectives of socialist enterprises face a situation in which they will directly perceive the consequences of either good or bad management of these enterprises. The party considers it, therefore, inevitable for the whole labor collective that bears the consequences also to influence the management of the enterprise. A need for democratic authorities in the enterprises arises which would have limited power towards the management. It is to these authorities that the directors and leading officials of the enterprises would be responsible. They would be appointed to their functions by these authorities. These authorities must be an immediate part of the managing mechanism of enterprises; they cannot be a social organization (for this reason they cannot be identified with trade unions). These authorities would be formed partly by election of representatives of the labor collective, partly by representation of some organizations from outside of the enterprise that would assure an influence of the interests of the entire society at an expert, qualified decision level. It is necessary for the representation of these organizations to be also subject to democratic forms of control."

Further discussion showed there might be several interpretations of the proposed formula, one of them tending to emphasize more the need of "managerial experts" because of the economic misery that has to be overcome, the other one stressing the necessity for the workers to decide as much as possible on what they have to produce and how their product is to be distributed. For the present, it seems that the more "practical" point of view prevails, and the composition of the workers' councils will represent only partly the workers: a third of the council will probably be elected directly by the workers, a third might be nominated or elected from among "outside experts", the last third may be chosen otherwise.

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"Since it no longer has the possibility of imposing its hegemony on the rest of society, the bureaucracy has no ideology of its own; nothing has replaced the official Stalinist doctrine which was shattered in 1956-1957 . . . The Bureaucracy will not willingly give up to the working class even one Zloty and, in conditions of economic crisis and lack of reserves, it has nothing to give up under pressure. In this situation, any large scale strike action cannot but transform itself into political conflict with the bureaucracy. For the working class, it is the only way to change its situation. Today, at a time when the system is going through a general crisis, the interest of the working class lies in revolution; the overthrow of the bureaucracy and the present relations of production, gaining control over one's own labor and its product, control over the production goals—the introduction of an economic, social and political system based on workers' democracy."

—Jacek Kuron and Karol Modzelewski, An Open Letter to the Party,
(written in a Polish prison)

We see here that there are plenty of loopholes in this to permit the same ordering from above which killed the trade unions as independent organs of the working class. At best, they point the way to the Yugoslav example of "Workers' Councils" which bears little resemblance to factory committees controlled by the workers themselves. And behind it all there is the ubiquitous Communist Party. Yet, to the extent that it is breaking away from the Russian model, and is resisting Russian, Polish and East German pressures to return to the old methods of Novotny, it has the popular support of the overwhelming majority of the people of Czechoslovakia.

"The end has come for martial law over thoughts and men. Thus, under conditions of the disintegrating power structure of Stalinism, there is no other more important and urgent task of the workers' movement than to renew in full force the trade union movement for defending the workers' fundamental rights. . . . 1. the right to strike. 2. elections of managers by the community of producers. 3. defense of workers' rights by free trade unions."

Ivan Svitak, in Student, 1968

The first phase of what is called "democratization" may be assumed to have ended by the end of April. The Communist Party tried very hard at this time not only to take the lead (highest officials kept repeating that the party would not renounce its leading role) but emphasized its wish to "enlarge and deepen" democracy and to offer "real partnership" to other political parties in the National Front; it therefore had to turn — no matter how hesitantly — against its most conservative wing.

Thus, at the end of April, when the first leaflets appeared denouncing the new leadership as "revisionists" and slandering the more progressive elements, the Dubcek leadership had to rely on public opinion. Ironically, the authors of these leaflets made their appeal to the workers, asking them to defend "their achievements" — in spite of the obvious facts, known to everybody, and in spite, too, of what the press was now revealing. These revelations concerned not only the bureaucratic methods of the old guard, but also showed that the relative standards of living of the working class, even in the neighboring capitalist states (which had to start from scratch after World War II) was far higher than those in "socialist Czechoslovakia."

There has been much talk throughout the years about a "workers' policy" and this slogan appeared again during the past few months. Yet those who used it most often were, in practice, the workers' worst enemies. We have seen where they have brought the working class: working and living conditions, wages, living standards, basic freedoms are not only below those of the capitalist countries, but, as we have shown, the whole economy has been stagnating since 1963.

Yet, the old-guard leaflets with the brand new slogans intensified their campaign. These leaflets appeared at every railway station, were released by time bombs, scattered by planes in the surroundings of the capital, and so forth. Moreover, this was done without any visible effort on the part of the police to identify the offenders. All this pointed to the continuing strength of the Novotny wing of the party, and followed the line set by the Russian, East German, and Polish press attacks upon the democratization in Czechoslovakia.

Obviously, the joint "ideological struggle" was backed up by the Soviet troops remaining in the country after the maneuvers of the Warsaw Pact nations were over. At the same time, a campaign was unleashed in Pravda about "counter-revolutionary elements", not stopping even at Stalinist-type of inventing amalgams, such as suggesting that the democratization movement is infiltrated by "CIA agents". Finally they demanded a confrontation between the Czech leadership and the Russian Politbureau, as well as with the Warsaw Pact nations. In this they succeeded after compromising with the Dubcek leadership that these be held, not in Russia, but on Czech soil.

Even before this, the Communist Party Central Committee, on May 29 to June 1, struck up a compromise between the "progressives" and "conservatives." All that the progressives achieved was a temporary expulsion of Novotny and some of his worst companions who took part in the organization

of the political trials during the fifties (all of them have been expelled "until final results of the inquiry commission are known").

The same session decided to call the extraordinary party congress for September 9. A real battle preceded this decision since the progressives called for it against the resistance of Dubcek himself (who, at the moment, is very popular among the population in spite of the evidence of his being rather a middle-of-the-road man). But, as the conservatives were becoming an acute danger in view of their positions of power which they retained, Dubcek understood that his own position, and that of the progressives, could be held only if the Party Congress gave its consent.

Essential freedoms are guaranteed for the time being: freedom of speech, freedom of the press. With the free flowing of ideas, the Communist spell is being broken. There are difficult struggles ahead which the workers will have to fight. There may be two fronts on which particular dangers loom: one is concealed in the words of a high official, a member of the Ministry of Economic Planning, to a French journalist: "Full employment is a fiction we have created, to which we are accustomed and which has become an obstacle today for a solution of our problems."* The second front is the danger to freedom just now very intensely demonstrated by the Soviets and their allies.

The maneuvers announced as "command and headquarters maneuvers" might, indeed, have been planned months before. However, though Premier Cernik told the public that all foreign troops would go by June 30, they did not do so. Contradictory explanations by the Minister of Defense and his speakers could not calm public opinion. Gradually the public learned the true facts of the situation — that the High Command of the Warsaw Pact consisted exclusively of Soviet officers, and that commanders of other bloc countries were mere liaison officers. So the Czechoslovak army command had no power to tell the Soviets when they had to leave. When the troops did begin to move it was done in a curious manner; some of the units that crossed into Czechoslovakia from East Germany were now to move east, across the whole of the country, to cross into the Soviet Union.

The troops were still in the country when the "Warsaw letter" of the five Communist parties arrived in Prague. The Bulgarian, East German, Hungarian, Polish, and Soviet Communists told the Czechoslovak Communist Party "hostile forces" were "threatening to break Czechoslovakia away from the socialist community." "A situation has arisen that

* L'Express. No. 881.

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is absolutely unacceptable to the socialist countries," the letter declared, and it issued an ultimatum to Czechoslovak Communists: either follow our line or we will unloose a campaign about "counter-revolutionary forces."

All these threats had the opposite effect than that intended. The overwhelming majority of the Czechoslovak people came out in support of the leadership in its resistance to the Russian threats. At the same time, the West European Communist Parties, as against those from East Europe, rallied behind the Czechoslovak Communist Party, as they saw the intransigent Soviet gesture as a threat to any Communist Party outside the Soviet or Chinese blocs. If the Soviets feel so imperilled by these modest changes—and, indeed, what they keep stressing is the fear that the Communist Party might lose its dominant role—then they make it clear to everyone that Russian Communists are the worst enemies of freedom. They have demonstrated this more than once. The case of Czechoslovakia underlines this lesson. There was, after all, no armed uprising here.

The Czechoslovak experiment, therefore, is merely testing the Russian willingness to allow its most obedient disciple to make a few variations in the Russian type of Communism. Why then, should Russia feel that Communism is doomed? Why should the Polish order feel that it means the disintegration of Communism? Why should the East German regime, seemingly the most stable, feel itself endangered as if it meant the break-up of the whole East European system?

What the Czech and Slovak Communists are trying is, after all, only a change within the system. Let's have no illusions on that score. Whatever freedom the "democratization" movement may have brought about, no basic structure has, so far, been changed. There has been no fundamental change in the life or role of the producers—the working class.

What Now?

As these lines are being written, only the first act seems to have ended. The second act has hardly begun, and the third act is not yet in sight. We are told very little about the compromise worked out with the Russians and the East European hard-liners at their confrontation. Supposedly, the latter will not interfere in the "internal affairs" of Czechoslovakia. But will the great new force — public opinion — be allowed to develop without any interference? The mass media — radio and TV — more even than the press itself, are thus far keeping up their criticisms of individual politicians, discussing each one's share in the crimes of the past, and dissecting the present windy rhetoric. The non-Communist newspapers of the Czech Socialist Party and the People's Party — Svobodne Slovo and Lidova Demokracie, respectively—published letters from their readers pointing out the guilt of the Communist Party, not only that of its individual members.

We have found our tongue, none more so than the youth. Two student weeklies, Student in Prague and Echo in the Slovak capital of Bratislava, appear to be the most consistent critics of the regime. They offer their pages most readily to Rudi Dutschke or Svitak and go far in their criticism of the Soviet Union.

The most crucial issue, however, remains — the condition of the working class and its role in production. The workers themselves complain that they have been de-politicalized; though it is constantly hammered into their heads that they are "the masters" of the country, only their self-styled "representatives" speak for them. There has been no possibility for a non-Communist to become anything like a leader, whatever his capacities. Genuine workers' organizations have been destroyed; the trade union movement changed into a government-supporting body whose only function was to whip up and intensify labor efficiency. They neglected entirely workers' and employees' interest. Only Communist Party cells could exist in plants and offices.

Yet there are those who now give the Communist Party credit for initiating the process of change, as if it did so from the goodness of its heart, rather than because it was forced to do something by the economic crisis, the restlessness in all strata of the population, as well as by the rebellions the world over. Some workers, no doubt, had been corrupted by being included in the state or party apparatus. And, no doubt, there is "apathy" among the workers regarding the "workers' councils". There are those who see in this lack of enthusiasm for the councils only apathy, and not a justified distrust of them because they were initiated by the very forces that have kept the lid down on workers' initiative. Indeed, the Communists themselves almost admit as much. Thus, Vaclav Velek from the Modrany Engineering Works said in a group interview with the trade union paper Prace: "I think the self-government will fulfill what we expect from it; as regards production democracy, self-government seems to put it at the right place and make it effective. It will no doubt be useful for the workers to have a maximum of influence on who will manage the plant and who will guide the work at their place."

That is the whole point. The working class is yet to have its say. This drama will not be completed until it does.

August 4, 1968

Wallace Fans Fires of Hatred

Continued from page 1
 have created a crisis in America so total and so terrible that many can see no solution. It is a perfect time for a demagogue.

THE RAW NERVE

He does not say he is a racist. He can even afford to deny it, since everyone takes it for granted. He does not attack "communists." The enemies he chooses are "the anarchists and pseudo-intellectuals." As a solution to the conflict in the cities and in Vietnam he suggests, "We ought to turn this country over to the police for two or three years and everything would be alright." Or he promises: "If anybody ever lies down in front of my car, it will be the last car he ever lies down in front of."

His philosophy is one of the concentration camp, but his demagoguery has struck a raw nerve in America. For when Wallace talks about "throwing out the bureaucrats," "turning the government back to the people," and "giving a voice to the little man," he is appealing to those segments of the working class who are disgusted with the hypocrisy of both the old capitalist parties.

What he forgets is that their rejection of a Humphrey as well as a Nixon, means the exact opposite of his.

Wallace must believe that the white workers he wants to reach are really stupid. He must think that they have forgotten that he was Governor of Alabama right up until 1967. Alabama, the state where no union may legally have a union shop agreement. Alabama, the state where the per capita income is only \$1700 a year, the third lowest in the country. Alabama, that preserve of Wallace's "law and order," where labor organizers as well as civil rights workers were murdered and nothing at all was ever done about it.

Wallace thinks workers have forgotten how he has helped garment and electrical shops to "runaway" to Alabama so they could avoid paying union wages. The thousands of workers who lost their jobs won't forget.

THE HOUSE OF LABOR

Yet his success in making inroads in the North, even with a section of the white working class cannot be denied. That fact alone is an indictment of the hypocrisy and racism of the labor bureaucracy, which must bear its own responsibility for helping to nurture Wallacism, by creating the conditions on which he hopes to capitalize.

So war-hawkish and reactionary is George Meany, president of the AFL-CIO that his policies are hardly distinguishable from LBJ's. He has denounced unionists who called for negotiations on Vietnam as "dupes of Hanoi," boasted that he never walked a picket line and never called a strike, and insisted that there is "no racism in the house of labor."

And Walter Reuther, though he tries to pass as a "liberal" and took the UAW out of Meany's AFL-CIO, calling for new drives to organize the unorganized and social justice for all, is hardly better. Workers in the auto shops laughed out loud when they heard the Reuther "program," because they know first-hand how Reuther has traded away their control over working conditions and destroyed rank-and-file democracy in the UAW.

As for "social justice," Reuther has simply looked the other way while the Big Three auto companies practiced racism in hiring, firing and promotion.

Reuther has also been good at looking the other way at the racism in his own union. One worker reported that he has even seen several cars with "Wallace for 68" stickers in the Solidarity

House parking lot, adding, without too much surprise, "I haven't heard that they were expelled from the UAW yet."

BLACK-CAUCUSES

In opposition to the undeniable racism in the shops, black caucuses have been springing up in dozens of locals, demanding an end to racial insults by foremen, demanding non-discriminatory promotion practices by the company, and a fair representation of black workers in the union leadership.

Strikes in Detroit and New Jersey (see March N&L) over racism have worried Reuther so much that he finally allowed the election, last month, of Marcellus Ivory as Regional Director of the UAW for the West Side of Detroit—the first black regional director in a union that represents nearly half a million black workers!

The labor bureaucracy's utter disregard of the relationship in this country between racism and class struggle has been its greatest failure ever since World War II broke the momentum of the rank and file union builders. Those workers, black and white, who lived through the '30's, know that without the Negro, the CIO could never have been built.

The ceaseless black revolt, in fact, has not only saved this country from the road South Africa took, but has been the touchstone of all American history. It is no accident that the first appearance of trade unions paralleled the greatest of the slave revolts and the emergence of the Abolitionist movement; or that the "first fruit of the Civil War was the agitation for the eight-hour-day."

Without understanding the black revolt, the white worker cannot possibly fight, and win, his own class struggles.

THE SOUL OF CAPITALISM

That is why the soul of capitalism in time of crisis is racism. Those who reap the profits of American economic might know that they can never be forced out of their privileged positions as long as the workers are divided.

The polls and elections may show which way the wind is blowing in the land, but workers do not vote only by pulling down a lever in a booth.

In Mahwah, New Jersey, this past March, black workers walked out in protest over racial insults by foremen. Some white workers supported the wildcat, some did not.

One black worker said: "I don't care about the ones who stayed in the plant. I care about the ones who are out here with us. They're the ones who count." He pointed in the direction of the Ford factory. "It's quiet, see, it doesn't matter whether those others are with us or not. We already voted."

Those white workers who walked out were showing everyone that it you don't fight the struggles against racism, you can never win the struggle to abolish capitalism and all the horror and alienation that goes with it. It is not enough simply to be against Johnson, or Humphrey, or Nixon, or Meany, or Reuther. It is not enough simply to try to destroy the old. All you may wind up with is a Wallace—who is just another, far worse, form of the old. The point is to build something new.

The task that everyone who is in revolt faces—whether he is worker or intellectual, black or white—is the task of posing the alternative to this society. This alternative can be nothing less than a total philosophy of liberation, unifying black and white, mental and manual labor, theory and practice. It must reveal, right within the fight against the old society, the form of the new.

Huey Newton

Continued from page 1
 continuous harassment of the Panthers as well as many illegal searches and seizures.

The trial is now taking place in Oakland. In a sense it is the trial of many black people, for the police are attacking the Panthers as the means for attacking the whole black community.

PANTHER PROGRAM

1. We want freedom, we want power to determine the destiny of our black community.
2. We want full employment for our people.
3. We want an end to the robbery by the white man of our black community.
4. We want decent housing, fit for shelter for human beings.
5. We want education for our people that exposes the true nature of this decadent American society; we want education that teaches us our true history and our role in present day society.
6. We want all black men to be exempt from military service.
7. We want an immediate end to police brutality and murder of black people.
8. We want freedom for all black men held within federal, state, county and city prisons and jails.
9. We want all black people when brought to trial to be tried in court by a jury of their peer group or people from their black communities . . . as defined by the constitution of the United States.
10. We want land, bread, housing, education, clothing, justice and peace.

Only Mass Action Can Stop War

The measure of the massive anti-war feeling throughout the land is not only the tens of thousands converging to demonstrate at the Democratic Convention in that armed camp, Chicago. It is also the company of reservists filing legal suit against their call-up, who sent shock waves through a Pentagon that has become used to massive demonstrations, but was unprepared for this unprecedented protest right within the Army itself.

The outcry against the war has been heard everywhere. It spoke at even the Republican Convention—in the person of a youth from Ohio who got up, ostensibly to nominate the "peace candidate" Stassen, and delivered a denunciation of the war in Vietnam before he sat down.

PEACE TALK FAKERY

Indeed, the opposite is so great throughout the world that even LBJ has had to pretend he is listening to the voice of his allies, and really wants peace. Nothing more thoroughly exposes the hypocrisy and fakery of the so-called peace-talks in Paris than the hard line set at the meeting of LBJ and Thieu in Honolulu. Yet the fact that mighty U.S. imperialism allowed an impotent puppet like Thieu to appear to be setting the line, shows how desperate is LBJ to coverup his backtracking on the peace talks.

It was, of course, not Thieu's arrogant statement that "I will not go to Hawaii to surrender to Communists, to sell the nation, to concede territory, or to accept a solution involving coalition with Communists, imposed by the United States" that LBJ was listening to. The joint communique and hard line issued after the meeting sounded like Thieu's only because that was also LBJ's line.

LBJ would like nothing better than a cessation of bombing before the November elections. It would also provide an excuse to resume total war if there were no "immediate results." But the reality of the situation was that LBJ's military would not allow it. Thieu's arrogance provided the cover-up that LBJ welcomed.

THIEU CRACKDOWN IN SOUTH VIETNAM

It is a sign of the deep anti-war feeling that Thieu fears in his own country that almost immediately after he returned from Honolulu he launched a vicious crackdown on his opponents. Truong Dinh Dzu, the peace candidate who ran second in the presidential elections last fall was charged with "actions which weakened the will of the people and army of South Vietnam to fight against the Communists" and sentenced to five years at hard labor. The National Police ordered the student leader, Nguyen Dang Trung "to report within 48 hours to enjoy lenient measures." The 23-year-old editor of anti-government and anti-American student magazine was sentenced to five years at hard labor for "disseminating printed matter aimed at promoting neutralism, false peace and Communist propaganda." Twenty Buddhist novices in Cholon were arrested for "storing illegal political documents."

The elections in the United States will affect what is happening in this country almost as little as the farce that passed for elections in South Vietnam affected the conduct of affairs in that tortured land. The only thing that will stop the barbarous war is the movement within each country. The only thing that will be decisive is the constant activity of a mass movement.

Columbia Cafeteria Workers Win Union

New York, N.Y.—On July 23, history caught up with Columbia University. On that Tuesday, Columbia's cafeteria workers voted overwhelmingly for Local 1199 of the Drug & Hospital Workers Union in an election supervised by the State Labor Board—the first such free election ever held at Columbia.

Food Service boss MacDonald had individually threatened workers by telling them (in his private office) that if they voted for Local 1199 they would be fired, but if they voted for Local 241 (Columbia's company union) the university would pay their dues. But, the workers could not be frightened or bribed: 50 of the 72 votes cast in the election went to 1199.

STUDENT ROLE

In 1964, students from Columbia's CORE chapter picketed the university dining halls for five months, hoping their student boycott would force the university to grant an election to the cafeteria workers. This year, several of the students who had been on those picket lines (some N&L members) helped Local 1199 and the workers in their organizing drive.

The cafeteria workers never forgot the student support they got in 1964, and most of the workers supported this year's student strike. The student Left at Columbia always knew that it didn't have to search very far to find evidence of exploitation by Columbia. Thus, unionization of Columbia employees had been an important issue pressed by both SDS and the Columbia Strike Committee.

One effect of the student strike was to open the university to un-

ionization. The workers drew strength from the militancy of the students' example and the workers sensed they could win this time.

NEW CONFIDENCE

The same workers who two months ago were afraid to talk to me when a supervisor was watching them now tell that supervisor to "Go and do your own work!" Eliseo Vargas, the dishwasher who led the organizing from the inside, had told 1199's organizer at their first meeting to "Maybe come back next September and try then." On the night before the election, Eliseo Vargas was reassuring the same 1199 organizer that "This time we're going to win. Don't worry!"

The cafeteria workers' victory opened the university to unionization of its thousands of white-collar workers. Right now, a widespread drive among Columbia's clerical and library

workers to unionize is being pushed by Local 1199.

Contract negotiations begin on Aug. 12, for the cafeteria workers, and Local 1199 is demanding a \$100 weekly minimum wage for the cafeteria workers. This wage demand represents a \$35 per week increase, but what pleases the workers most is that their own elected bargaining committee will be able to talk directly with Columbia official. As one worker said: "MacDonald didn't want 1199 because he didn't want to have to look into our faces!"

A NEW ERA

A new era has begun at Columbia—workers who had been non-persons to the university throughout its history have fought Columbia and won their rights as workers and as persons. And, in so doing, the cafeteria workers have opened up Columbia for unionization by the rest of its thousands of exploited workers.

Blacks and Poor Whites Have Same Problems

The black power fight here has taught many people what the white leaders have done against many nations of people. This war that the United States is fighting against South Vietnam is an example. The United States wanted to show the Vietnamese people how the US can take them over in a few weeks. But they found out a little different.

They thought that they were strong enough to whip a little country like Vietnam and be ready for the next war with some other country. But the Vietnamese people are teaching the United States a lesson that they will never

forget. They are tired but they just won't stop.

The black people's problem is almost the same thing. They just won't stop fighting long enough for the white man to put the black man under him again.

And the poor white people have been learning something, too. They have been put in the same class as the black people. They have been told they are not as good as the rich white man because they are poor. Now those whites who don't think they are better than the blacks are beginning to show black folks we can all work together.

Ethel Dunbar
 Detroit

All Eyes On Czechoslovakia, All Hands Off!

Continued from page 1

before Czechoslovakia embarked on her democratization experiment. Yet none of the threats against the latter have ever been pronounced against the Rumanians. Therein lies the true tale which illuminates the capitalist class nature of present-day Communism.

The Rumanian "deviations" have all been handed down from above. No freedom has been allowed the masses. The lid is kept firmly down on any free expression. Though the Rumanian nationalists, like the Russians themselves, no longer bow to the name of Stalin, as China does, Rumania remains completely totalitarian. Hence, the Russians and the Rumanians understand each other perfectly. They can horse trade in capitalistic fashion, practice class compromise and can turn the full state-military fury against intellectuals who would demand freedom of expression and workers who would demand control of production.

Czechoslovakia, on the other hand, though it is a long distance from allowing the exercise of workers' control of production, has released public opinion from censorship. The result has been that not only are intellectuals raising existential questions, and returning to their origin in the Humanism of Marxism, but masses also are in motion. The Russian and East European hard-liners' attacks on the Czechoslovak leadership have only solidified the nation, including those far to the left of the Dubcek leadership.

TWO DECADES: PHILOSOPHY AND REVOLUTION

East Germany is vying with Russia as to who can be most Stalinist in its vitriolic attacks on Czechoslovakia. With its Berlin Wall and unchanged Stalinist leaders, it has reason to fear the fresh air of Czechoslovak democracy. By contrast, Yugoslavia, which was the first to break from Stalin's empire in East Europe, seems the model of "democracy" and that, indeed, is the most the present moderate Czechoslovak leadership plans to allow.

It is all the more essential to remember the true facts. One is that Yugoslavia remains a single party system that continues to jail Left opponents. The other relevant fact is that it was not the nationalist breakaway of Yugoslavia in 1948 which inspired serious rebellions against Stalin's Russia. Rather it was the proletarian revolt in East Germany in 1953, shortly after Stalin's death. The general strike on June 17, 1953, against speedup and low wages, and for "Bread and Freedom," put an end to the twin myths of the invincibility of Stalinist totalitarianism and the alleged incapacity of the working class to rise in revolution in a Communist land. At the same time it inspired the revolt in the Vorkuta forced labor camps in Russia itself.

It is against similar inspiration emanating from Czechoslovakia today that Russia and East Germany are trying to insulate the masses. All in vain. Already there is clandestinely circulating in Russia a 10,000 word essay by the Nobel prize-winning Russian physicist, Prof. Andrei D. Sakharov, which states: "We must, without doubt, support their (Czechoslovak) bold initiative, which is very important for the fate of socialism and the whole of mankind." Furthermore, Prof. Sakharov condemns the imprisonment of Russian writers who oppose the regime, Andrei Sinyavsky and Yuli Daniels, and others. The latest group of rebellious writers who were sentenced to labor camps include Yuri Galanskov, Alexander Ginzburg, Aleksei Dobrovolsky and Vera Lashkova.

No wonder the Russian ruling clique worries about the consequences, for Russia, of Czechoslovak democratization. No doubt Brezhnev and Kosygin remember that deStalinization did not begin in Russia from above, but in East Germany, from below. Moreover, Bertol Brecht's winged phrase, "to think is to change" notwithstanding, the intellectuals did not lead, and at first were in no hurry to follow, the spontaneous revolt of the East German proletariat. For the most part, the intellectuals then stood on the sidelines.

It took another three years plus Khrushchev's open declaration for deStalinization before the intellectuals in Communist lands would rebel in such massive numbers as to bring about not only a revolution in philosophy, but a philosophy of revolution. But once the intellectuals and workers did finally unite in a struggle against repressive Communism, they did indeed initiate the beginning of the end of the Russian empire in East Europe. What the Polish intellectuals and youth pioneered in 1956 as they turned from purely economic to existential questions—and with it the humanist character of genuine Marxism—the Hungarian Freedom Fighters brought onto the historic stage in open revolution.

THE PARTY, THE PARTY

Without engaging in revolution, the Czechoslovak New Left did touch the raw nerve of Communism—in this case, Czechoslovakian as well as Russian Communism. They did this by questioning the concept of the vanguard, not to mention omniscient, role of the Communist Party. Here Dubcek refused to budge. On the contrary. He was not only adamant about the "leading role" of the Party. He not only claimed total credit for the new road of "democratization." And he not only opposed the creation of new opposition parties. He also staked out the claim that "the greatest majority of the best creative minds in the country is in the Party."

This, then, defines the next battleground of ideas. Hence, the importance of the fact that the philosopher, Ivan Svitak, and others, who raised the question of opposition parties, the role of the Communist Party, raised them as inseparable from their philosophic foundation, on the one hand, and the needed unity of worker and intellectual, on the other hand.

In raising the fundamental question of philosophy and revolution, the party and spontaneity, the unity of worker and intellectual, they have indeed laid the foundation of a new relationship of theory to practice. Thereby they have gone far beyond anything raised by the New Left in "the West."

The reporter from Prague whom we print in this special issue of News & Letters rightly stresses that the events he describes are but the first act of a live drama whose ending cannot possibly be known in advance. Show your solidarity with Czechoslovakia!

August 4, 1968

Raya Dunayevskaya

Readers' Views

WHO ARRESTED THE FRENCH REVOLUTION?

The last number of NEWS & LETTERS is very interesting, and I liked very much the articles on France. Certainly it's true that there's been an almost complete dearth of ideological development on the part of the left, but I can't agree that one should stop calling the Communists traitors.

In a country where around 30 per cent of the people vote Communist, one has to make it understood that this party is interested only in its own power, is planning to work within a capitalist framework, and has no intention of making any real revolutionary changes in the political, economic and social structure.

Correspondent
Italy

Ed. Note—We said it was insufficient merely to call the Communists traitors.

* * *

The "Morning Star" tells us how the Communist Party of France "has been campaigning day in and day out for years" to unite the forces of the working class. The Communist weekly journal "Comment" goes much further in its effort to give credit to the French Communist Party. It did say, however, "although there was an element of spontaneity in the Left Bank student demonstrations and the factory sit-ins, the upsurge was contributed to by ten years of toil by the French Communist Party."

The factories were occupied by the workers but the stage of developing to the necessary organization to get production going was not revealed. There is a lesson in the French uprising for the Anarchists as well as the Vanguardists.

There is also a lesson in it for Marxist-Humanists. Practice has confirmed theory in such a way as to show the necessity for the spreading of our viewpoint. More than any other field of thought our outlook has been vindicated. There is no saying how the immediate struggle will end, but it will be the kind of end that will serve as a beginning.

Harry McShane
Scotland

* * *

PEACE AND FREEDOM PARTY

The Peace and Freedom Party held their convention simultaneously here in Southern California and in the northern part of the state, in Oakland.

It started Friday night when Eldridge Cleaver spoke, sponsored by the Black Student Union at the USC campus. It is the first time I ever had a chance to hear him. What a beautiful man! The Peace and Freedom state elections seemed far away from his mind. What he talked about was the building of a revolutionary party.

But the greatest thing to me in his speech was his humanity for the whole human race—that is, its international character. There wasn't a racist word in his whole talk.

Dick Gregory gave a very smart speech. He spoke for the party, not the man, etc. The tally of votes showed Cleaver, 626; Gregory 492 in L.A. and Cleaver 665, Gregory 158 in San Francisco.

Though both the presidential nominees were black, blacks were almost absent from the convention. Of the 1000 people present at the Cleaver speech,

about 30-40% were black, but they did not come to the convention.

The Peace and Freedom Party does seem to have succeeded in establishing a relationship with the Panthers, at least from on top—that is, with Cleaver and Newton. The Panthers feel, out of great necessity (three more Panthers were killed today in L.A.) the need for allies, and white radicals are the only ones willing.

But the white radicals seem to be looking for a mass party on a "minimum and practical" program and have been working around the clock to create one, with no great results. Unfortunately, the basic thinking that motivates these people seems to be the "backwardness" of the American workers, who, they think, just will not go for a revolutionary party.

Marxist Humanist
Los Angeles

* * *

CANADIAN LABOR

The upcoming September trucking strike looms as possibly the most violent in recent Canadian history. Several truckers have told me that they will demand parity or close to parity with U.S. pay and work standards. Rank-and-file sentiment is explosive in this area, and the union bureaucracy is sure to adopt these demands as part of their priority contract terms.

The company yielded to teamster pressure for substantial increases the last time, and now they openly reject anything more than a token increase. They have announced "unofficial" government support as part of a "cooperative effort" to reduce inflation.

Armed with a public man-

date to establish his "Just Society", Pierre Eliot Trudeau may launch open war on the unions and attempt to forcibly put down all existing strikes. One dangerous event has already sent shock waves throughout Ontario, the fining of wild-cating members of the Bailer Workers Union. Fines of \$200 a man were levied by the union when several hundred members ignored a union back-to-work order.

Although the resistance was later broken by the government, worker bitterness has resulted, making an explosive confrontation between the union and the government more likely now than ever before.

Observer
Canada

* * *

WAR AND PEACE

David Harris of the Resistance says that our strongest political weapon is our lives. That is why opposition to the draft is so important to youth like myself. More than anything else it confronts us with how we wish to live our lives, to accept the system or confront it with our own values.

The C.O. says he will not kill but will build rather than burn. The non-cooperator goes farther by refusing to accept the privilege of a deferment and denies the draft any part of his life, courageously accepting prison.

To stay out of the army thru any means is good, but non-cooperation, though only a few can accept it, is the most important because it provides the seeds of a new and decent society. "Human brotherhood", says David Harris, "cannot be put behind bars".

Student
Wisconsin

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