

REPORT TO THE NATIONAL EDITORIAL BOARD
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IT REMAINS
TO BE DONE

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CHAIRMAN'S REPORT TO THE NATIONAL EDITORIAL BOARD
MEETING SEPTEMBER 2, 1967

I T R E M A I N S T O B E D O N E

I. THE STRANGLEHOLD OF THE SUPER-POWERS

The two most pathetic figures on the international scene are "the red sun of the revolutionary people of the world" -- Mao -- and the apostle of "French grandeur" -- DeGaulle. I say this not because I am an adherent of the reverse of Mao's theory that U.S. imperialism is a "paper tiger", i.e. "China is a breeze" because it is so industrially backward. Or that DeGaulle lives in the 18th century.

On the contrary, I say it with full, oppressive awareness of the capitalistic state-power of both France and China in the 20th century, as their entry into the exclusive world nuclear club proves. And I do not underestimate their efforts, their tireless efforts, to break from the vise-like grip of the nuclear titans.

Nevertheless, these ceaseless efforts notwithstanding, all one has to do to see their constantly diminishing world influence is to compare the influence of these world figures this year to what it was just a few years back. Take DeGaulle's challenge to the U.S. as it looked when he seemed to have succeeded in creating a veritable new world axis -- Paris-Bonn -- in the very heart of Europe, to 1967 when that "third force" in the world has shown itself to be nothing more than a stillbirth. France's attempt to be "neutrally" part of the Four Powers that would mediate the Middle East crisis having been rebuffed, it was left no choice but to follow the line of the other nuclear titan, Russia, and Le Grand Charles himself came up with nothing more world-shaking to announce than an increase in the aid to the province of Quebec in Canada.

Now compare Mao's ringing challenge to Russia in 1963 when the Communist world seemed indeed to be veering in China's direction; theoretically, and actually, too, he was on the verge of creating a whole new world axis -- Peking-Djakarta -- to 1967, when the very thought of any such axis is inconceivable. And far from tangling with that "paper tiger" -- U.S. imperialism -- he leaves North Vietnam to fight alone the gigantic, oppressive, overpowering U.S. might; while theoretically, his strongest contribution -- the art of guerrilla warfare -- is being taken over and transformed by little Cuba where Fidel is strutting about as the new world challenger.

This new vain delusion need not concern us for the moment. What needs to be examined here is this: why do the secondary "great powers" have so little elbow room for independent maneuvering on the world stage

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that DeGaulle sounds gentle while "our most respected, most beloved great helmsman of the ship of state" looks like nothing so much as a classic case of paranoia?

The inescapable and incontrovertible fact is this: the death-like grip of the two super-powers exposes the impotence of the challengers. And when it comes to productive capacity, there is not even two, but only one, super-power.

Here are the cold statistics, which underpin the Gargantuan weight, the hateful arrogance, the sheer barbarism of U.S. capitalism:

Though the U.S. covers only seven percent of the world's land, and six percent of the world's people, it has no less than half of the productive power of all the rest of the world. U.S. annual output was \$740 billion while all the rest of the world put together, including Russia, was \$1525 billion. Not only does Russia not match U.S. production, but no conceivable bloc of nations, no matter how technologically advanced, comes close to it.

In a word, though Russia is second, it is not a very close second. It is second only from the point of view of destructive nuclear capacity and space technology. But if we consider productive power, just eleven states of northern USA, it has been estimated, equal all of Russia (U.S. News & World Report, July 24, 1967): \$350.1 billion as against \$350 billion.

DeGaulle France doesn't figure in this at all. To it, you need to add all the other great industrial West European states in order to equal what 26 states of the U.S. produce: \$535.2 billion against \$535 billion.

As for China with its 700 million souls, California alone out-produces that vast land: \$84 billion as against \$80 billion. While Africa -- East, West, North and even including rich apartheid South Africa-- produces only a little more than the state of Illinois: \$50 billion to \$48 billion annual output.

This does not mean the U.S. is invincible. On the contrary. Where we meet the positive of the post-war world, that is to say, the anti-imperialist struggles for national independence; we see that these struggles for national self-determination won out against U.S. imperialism, against British and French imperialism, and a new, third world did arise. The greatest new energy force here was not nuclear, sometimes not even military, but just a human mass force armed only with the idea of freedom, which made freedom come to be nevertheless.

It is this which has undermined the British and French empires. Where the revolutions had to be violent, they were, as in the Hungarian

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Revolution against Russian totalitarianism. In both its violent and non-violent forms, it shook up also U.S. imperialism. At least it made it impossible for the U.S., despite its military might, unquestioned technological superiority and economic power, to impose a Pax America on the world.

All you have to do to see this is to look at how that Goliath, U.S. imperialism, is pinned down in South Vietnam. In a word, where Mao and DeGaulle look pathetic, a human mass force fighting for freedom not only can stand up to the super-power, but it has that super-power so fearful of anyone starting a "second front", that the U.S. felt compelled to betray its "commitments" to Israel.

On the surface, this seems to support Che Guevara's contention that the way to overcome U.S. imperialism is by creating "more Vietnams". Earlier I said that even theoretically, Mao's China of 700 million souls seems to have fallen on lean days indeed, when little Cuba seems to have moved front and center of the Communist world stage. I should now add that nothing punches more holes in that delusion than the fact that the star of the Organization of Latin American Solidarity show was Stokely Carmichael.

This is not necessarily to denigrate Carmichael's role. Rather it is to question why Castro, the Premier of Cuba, about to address the first conference of Communists of 27 Latin American and Caribbean countries -- the Organization of Latin American Solidarity -- and, in fact, prepared to issue a challenge to world communism, both the Russian and Chinese variants, on the central question of achieving state power -- should feel he needs Carmichael? And what is Carmichael getting in turn?

In order to be able to answer both these questions, we must first turn to the Negro Revolution in America, and then to Castro's world panaceas.

II. THE NEGRO REVOLUTION

In announcing that the former Chairman of SNCC, Stokely Carmichael, had gone from Havana to Hanoi, H. Rap Brown declared that August 18, 1965, the day of the Watts Revolt, will be celebrated as the blacks' "Declaration of Independence" because "blacks stopped moaning 'We shall overcome' and started swinging to 'Burn, baby, burn.'" He should have added that SNCC was nowhere in sight then, though today they are trying to get credit for all the action as if the "Black Power" slogan, instead of the spontaneous action of the Negro masses, created the new stage of revolt.

SNCC is wrong also in denigrating the battles for freedom in the first five years of the 1960s. The truth is that without these battles, first initiated by Negro youth in Greensboro, North Carolina, that in-

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spired Northern white youth to take those Freedom Rides to Mississippi, and the Negro masses to reach the high points in 1963-64 in the Birmingham and Selma marches, the confrontations with the Bull Connors, the electric cattle prods and vicious police dogs and water hoses, there would have been no SNCC, but then Brown might have had to admit the unity of white and black in these battles -- and the creation of SNCC itself by others than those who now head it.

What did happen that was new in 1965 was that the real vanguard -- the Negro masses -- pointed out a truth, that the methods of struggle in the South achieved nothing for the Negro ghettos of the North; that it was time for the leaders to start listening to the voices from below, here and now. In pointing out that all self-styled vanguardists, black as well as white, were nowhere around when Watts burst into revolt, we addressed ourselves especially to the white radicals, stating that it was absolutely criminal for them to have left the Negro liberation struggle for full concentration on the anti-Vietnam war movement when, in truth, the most objectively rooted, indigenous, and most revolutionary struggle in the U.S. is the Negro movement itself. I added: "Earlier I spoke of my opposition to absentee leaders. Let me now assure you things are worse when they are present." They are all there now. And it is worse. So let us look at 1967 as we see it and as they see it.

As the Draft Thesis and the Editorial in the August-September issue of News & Letters expressed it:

"Detroit has opened a new stage of Negro revolt. In common with the outbursts occurring throughout the land -- from Boston to Spanish Harlem, from Tucson to Newark, from Cleveland to Sacramento, and some 80 other cities -- the voice of anger, frustration with, and rejection of, their conditions of life was loud and clear. Unlike the other rebellions, Detroit revolted, not against "whitey" as such, but against white class society.

"This does not mean that the black worker is not as conscious of his race as of his class. Nor does it mean that the black worker has any illusions about the lack of prejudice among the ordinary white workers. And it certainly doesn't mean that he himself overflows "love" for his fellow white workers. But it does mean that there is sufficient class consciousness to want to fight him in a different way. It is this class awareness that distinguishes the Negro revolt from all others now covering the length and breadth of the land.

"Today the vitality of the Negro people, full of purpose, has attacked only the symptoms of oppression -- the white landlord in the slums, the white merchant, the white middleman.

"This is not because they do not know who Mr. Big is.

"Rather it is because they do not see white labor ready to join them in their determination to undermine the whole system. They know better

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than the elitist leaders, that, without white labor, the system cannot be torn up by its roots.

"To try to deny this, to make the revolt appear purely racist, the power structure - from Democratic Vice-President Humphrey to Republican Governor Romney, plus the liberal Establishment -- have had to quote Stokely Carmichael. He, however, was in Havana; the action was in Detroit. He was talking, not acting. Those who were the actual participants in the revolt made their actions stark and clear: Down with the black slums. Let's not have two nations, one filthy rich and the other miserably poor. Let's have one nation with totally different, truly human relationships."

Now, supposing for the sake of argument, this is not the truth of the new stage of Negro Revolt, that, instead, the SNCC reading of it as violence, and only violence, violence against whitey, as such, including white labor, is the one and only direction for the Negro Revolt.

There are those who are all too ready to concede them this point. But SNCC itself, as its leaders travel abroad, is making it quite clear that it is not any and all violence but a very special brand toward which they are moving -- guerrilla warfare.

Moreover, it is not, after all, whitey as such that they oppose -- that is for the U.S. But abroad they bow quite low to the superior white practitioners of guerrilla warfare -- Fidel Castro, Che Guevara and their alter-ego and theoretician, the young French philosopher, Regis Debray. In a word, when the speech is not aimed at the US, the black-face routine comes off. These new fast-paced "globe trotters" (to borrow an expression from DeBray, who applies it derogatorily to those who talk rather than do) suddenly begin to use "Marxist-Leninist" (or what they think are "Marxist-Leninist") anti-capitalist categories. The trouble here is that they have learned their "Marxist-Leninism" from those who have perverted that philosophy of liberation by the masses themselves into one of an elite leadership "making" it "for" the masses. Therefore, in turning to the theory of guerrilla warfare, we must issue three warnings.

III. THE GUERRILLAS WAR ON SOCIAL REVOLUTION

One is to stress from the start that guerrilla war is not -- is NOT -- a pseudonym for social revolution, of a genuine uprooting of capitalist class relations, but merely a substitution of state capitalism (calling itself Communism) for private capitalist relations.

Secondly, it is not that which emerged out of the African Revolutions which came about, not as the result of guerrilla warfare, but of mass actions on the political and class struggle front. The

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only instance that bears any resemblance to a guerrilla type of war were the Mau Mau battles for freedom. They were a precursor of African Revolt. They certainly did shake up British imperialism. (And I might add for those who are not acquainted with our pamphlet on the Mau Mau revolt-- Kenya People Speak For Themselves -- we alone gave that revolt voice; we didn't have to wait for SNCC's belated finding of the Mau Mau in 1967; we published in 1953!) But since that form of revolt failed, the next form of revolt took a more winning shape--masses in motion armed with nothing but an idea of freedom that their creativity made a reality.

In a word, precisely because the underlying philosophy of liberation was a new Humanism, it was, though centered around Negritude -- blackness, or Africanization -- not racist, but a self-determination openly aligning itself; not with Communism, but with Marxism.

Thirdly, Guerrilla Warfare was not the panacea it is made out to be. It is not the "guaranteed" way to achieve state power, though those who embark upon that road think it is. Above all, it is not a short-cut but the long protracted road. It has often failed -- from the Philippines to Burma, from Malaya to India, not to mention Japan. The post-war world is full of guerrilla wars which have not succeeded.

There is no "magic" to guerrilla war. Take the most classic example of its success--China. The road to power, the very long protracted road to power, was not a straight line. Mao won mass adherents only after he came down from the Yenan Caves to fight with Chiang's troops against the foreign invader--Japan. And even when he broke with Chiang and resumed the road to State power, he had help--grudging help it is true--since Stalin opposed at first, but nevertheless, substantial help at a time when China lay in ruins. I am not saying that Mao did not win through his own forces. He most certainly did. And he won against Stalin's advice and by putting into practice his own theory of guerrilla warfare as a road to power. What I am saying is that it is neither "magic" nor a shortcut.

Finally, -- and it is this which interests us most, since it is this which attracts Carmichael, who wishes to foist it upon the Negro Revolution here -- let's look at a "pure" example of a successful Guerrilla War: Castro against Batista's Armed Forces.

Here, too, as Castro's guerrilla army moved to final triumph, it had to be coordinated with the aid of the city proletariat who had used other forms of class struggle, such as the general strike. Though the City had to subordinate itself to the guerrilla army, Fidel's triumphal entry into Havana was made possible because the proletariat had identified itself with his revolution. Moreover, though he had achieved power by his own forces, once state power was gained, he soon enough followed the Communist Party line and soon landed in the Russian orbit.

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This, (added to the fact that his particular experience did not entitle him to leadership over the African Revolutions which won by their own strength and by a different road which allowed them to emerge non-aligned) was behind the refusal of the third world to accept Fidel's pretensions to leadership of that world when he first (in 1961) tried to convene a conference in Havana.

And now that the glow of Fidel's victory has worn thin because it has yet to lead to other revolutions in Latin America, and Fidel's theories and practices must compete also with other views within the Communist world -- Russian, Chinese and even Trotskyist -- Fidel thinks he can answer all doubters if only he could latch onto the Negro Revolution in the United States and confront US capitalism at its weakest point, right at home. Because he thinks Carmichael is the way to capture the direction of the Movement, Carmichael is made the hero -- of the Organization of Latin American Solidarity. Carmichael, it is true, is ready to give Cuba leadership over the Negro Revolution. But the Revolution is not his to give.

Let us now look at what attracts Carmichael to Castro. Our post-war world, as against the post-war world following the 1st World War, lacks magic, the true magic, of the Russian Revolution which set the world aflame, and even today -- a half century afterwards when it itself has been transformed into its opposite -- its vision still remains the greatest force for World Revolutionary development.

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

This, then, is our Marxist heritage, the past from which Castro's theoretician wishes "to free the present" (See Regis Debray's Revolution within Revolution? See also my Letter to the PEB-NEB in pre-Plenum Bulletin #3) To achieve this "miracle", the following "details" are set forth:

1. In place of social revolution--the masses taking destiny into their own hands, creating their own organs of power such as Soviets, Workers' Councils--Castro proposes the establishment of guerrilla bands, bound to a Leader Maximum.
2. In place of any urban leadership of the movement, Castro proposes "to surround the cities", which he calls "The graveyards of revolution."
3. In place of an elemental outburst, he proposes the secretive, methodical, planned and controlled guerrilla taking of power, irrespective of the readiness of any subjective, or for that matter, objective conditions. As Armando Hart, the head of the Cuban delegation at the recent OLAS conference expressed it openly enough:

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"If we were to abide by what Lenin called a revolutionary situation, we would come to the conclusion that such a situation does not exist in the continent." But, he goes on to assure us, "we can create revolutionary situations." These specialists in guerrilla war think that it is enough for Castro to order the objective conditions "to be created" for them to appear. What grand illusions!

4. Finally, in place of the insurrection coming as the culmination of the revolutionary process, Castro proposes beginning the process that way. He decries any "waiting for" mass elemental outbursts. Again, fiat suffices; the fiat was the keynote of the entire conference, and read: "It is the duty of revolutionaries to make revolutions."

What gives the slogan, "to free the present from the past", partly at least, the appearance of freeing us from the old, and showing something new, is the humor that is all directed against Castro's contenders for "new" theories of revolution. Thus, the Trotskyists are all "globe trotters" who are "everywhere and nowhere", "medieval theoreticians" leading masses "to suicide, singing hymns to their glory." The Maoists are "scatterbrains" whose "noisy opportunism..." and so on.

Please, hold your laughter. The real joker in the carload is this: the glorification of guerrilla warfare is supposed to achieve not only quick and guaranteed revolutions, but also to achieve nothing short of "ending the divorce of several decades duration between Marxist theory and revolutionary practice."

His disdain for theory and "perfect Marxist education" turns out to be only disdain for Marxian theory. But his own, i.e., the particular Cuban experience, he intends to elevate to nothing short of a new universal applicable first to all of Latin America--then the world.

As for internationalism, that has long since been degraded by Stalin to Russian nationalism all the international was to bow to, then by Mao that this center of the world should, instead, be China, and now Castro, ostensibly talking only to Latin American countries, is, in fact, offering himself as the new challenger for leader of world Communism.

Messrs. Castro-Guevara-Debray are not "freeing the present from the past"; they are freeing the past and the present from the Marxian concept of social revolution as the self-liberation of the masses, be it in 1871, 1917, or 1967. Instead of having Marxism give these actions a direction, the Bolivers and other 19th century national bourgeois revolutionaries do.

Why?

Well, (1) Fidel Castro knew Bolivar's views of "encircling the cities" long before he had read Mao on the question. And (2) "it isn't necessary to have a "perfect Marxist education" -- after all Castro didn't have any such.

Does he now? Even imperfectly?

Though he has declared himself a "Marxist-Leninist" he still feels closer to Bolivar, without once saying that Bolivar could proclaim such a view as "encircling the cities" precisely because he had no use for the city proletariat whom he feared.

If anything else gives the illusion to the readers of Debrau's pamphlet that Fidel is out "to free the present from the past", it is, of course, that Stalin's concept of the vanguard party cries out for replacement.

The trouble is that it is not Stalinism Castro is replacing. It is Marxism. It is not Stalin's theory of the party he is throwing overboard; it is Lenin's. The one and only thing Castro is replacing in the Stalinist concept of the elite is that, for Stalin's concept of the elitist party, he is substituting a concept of the elitist army.

Never, for a single moment, is he giving up the totalitarian concept of One Leader. On the contrary, that one has reached a new form of authoritarianism by virtue of the fact that he is the military leader, a "physically fit" Leader Maximum.

Castro accepts one emendation -- Carmichael's brainstorm, Negro urban guerrillas in the U.S.!

Let us make no mistake about it. The attraction of Fidel's magic formula for "making revolutions" by little guerrilla bands or even by a single leader with a few guerrillas following him is, precisely, because it is a road of taking power oneself.

It is this which has brought about the affinity of ideas and practices between Castro and Carmichael. Carmichael has graciously declared Castro to have been the inspiration for the Negro struggle in the U.S. And, in turn, Castro has magically declared Carmichael to be the representative of the American Negro. Anything is achievable by those who think that revolutions are achievable by fiat. Of course they are prepared to accept some direction from World Communism. Provided Castro's "detail" wins, they are prepared even to accept a little dash of anti-Semitism -- courtesy of the unholy alliance of feudal monarchy and "socialist countries" of the Arab World.

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IV. THE ARAB-ISRAELI COLLISION

This being an age of state capitalism, state planning, the single state party, its pull on the petty-bourgeois intellectuals toward state power is very nearly irresistible. Insofar as the Middle East is concerned, as I pointed out in 1961 when I analyzed the break-up of the union of Egypt and Syria:

"The Communist parties began to experience a growth from the post-war intelligentsia that were seeing in post-war Communism the road to becoming the ruling power in their own countries. This rhymed with their own ambitions and the objective pull of the new stage of capitalism --state-capitalism. Moreover, "Anti-Westernism" would get aid from Russia ...

"What Khrushchev achieved with his "deStalinization" and his "war is not inevitable" doctrine at the 20th Congress of the Russian Communist Party was the recognition that there were "other paths to socialism." That is to say, the neutral zone, the underdeveloped countries, the national revolutions, the progressive bourgeoisie -- all these would unite with a single objective -- anti-Western imperialism.

"The CPs there are too weak to rule without the "co-leadership" of the ruling classes as presently constituted. In the case of the present coup in Syria, Khrushchev is confronted with a divided Middle East. But then even a Khrushchev cannot have everything he wants.

"The jockeying for position in the UN will pale before that which will take place in the Middle East itself over the next period."

In view of the actual convulsions that have taken place there since, the last sentence may sound like the understatement of the year 1967, but not of 1961. The analysis made then of the objective pull of state capitalism on the Middle East, as well as the role of Russia, hold to this day. For example, though Israel was not part of the 1961 picture, I pointed to the deep anti-Semitism not only in the Middle East, but in Russia. Indeed, long before that day, the ramifications of the Hitler-Stalin Pact into native Communist politics in the Middle East had most bizarre aspects.

Thus, when the Rashid Ali coup d'etat took place, in 1941, just a few months before Nazi Germany turned against Stalin's Russia, the leader of the CP in Lebanon greeted the abortive pro-Axis coup enthusiastically:

"I think I shall not be exaggerating if I say that this movement is the first strong, serious Arab movement aiming at the liberty and independence of the Arabs, and the strengthening of their common existence." (Principles of National Conscience, Beirut, 1941, Arabic, p. 91) (quoted by Tony Cliff, Middle East at the Crossroads.)

"We are astonished why the grand Axis power did not officially recognize independent Iraq and its government, notwithstanding the power's help, which demands our thanks, as official recognition is of particular value." (Ibid, pp. 23-24).

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As against the shameful glorification of the "grand Axis", the Negro masses in the U.S., both before and after the Hitler-Stalin Pact, knew how to fight fascism without aligning with the state power, and how to break from the Communist Party -- in those days many Negroes held membership cards in it -- when it, too, told them not to fight for their rights "now", but, instead, fight Nazis by enlisting in the Army. They tore up their membership cards and said that was the story they had always heard -- it is always later, never now. They took matters into their own hands and the so-called riots of 1943 proceeded without "leadership" of the Communists, even as in 1967 they took place without "leadership" of SNCC.

As you see, I'm approaching the 1967 Arab-Israeli war in what appears to be a roundabout way. In fact, it is only in that manner that we can approach the subject both historically and objectively and show that to try to inject anti-Semitism into the Negro Revolution, as SNCC is doing now, is neither accidental nor new, and has always been alien to the movement because the Negro masses understand that the dialectics of liberation move in a direction opposite from racism, and opposite from elitism, white or black.

Take the claims of both Israel and Arabs that all 20 years of Israel's existence have been an unvarying tale of war, and if you are an Arab leader, you add: it will always be so until we "annihilate Israel." The truth, however, is that those dates of "proof" -- 1948, 1956, 1967 -- do not tell one and the same tale.

Thus, the 1948 war came after the Jew drove out British imperialism from Palestine. In some of these battles, the Arab masses were with the Jews, including one general strike. In opposition to such a phenomenon the Arab rulers -- all then feudal kingdoms -- opened a War against the UN decision to recognize establishment of a State of Israel. Again, differing from both the Israeli and Arab claims, the creation of Israel was only in appearance a "Zionist triumph".

In fact, though the Zionists had dreamed of a "national homeland for the Jews", since the mid-19th Century and were all too eager to conclude pacts with British Imperialism for such a creation, it was not via these alliances that Israel came to be. On the contrary, in opposition to these alliances, the influx of new immigrants caused by Nazi extermination of six million Jews and the fact that all the Jews in Palestine, non-Zionist and anti-Zionist as well as Zionists, atheists and Communists, as well as Labor and even the bourgeois, fought against British imperialism, relying solely upon mass action as the way to achieve freedom was the way Israel was established.

In a word, the new dimension of anti-imperialist struggle, the new dimension of national liberation, the new human dimension, as against the oil that had always heretofore dominated Middle East

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politics, was first made a reality in the Middle East by the Jewish masses. It was precisely because of this that the struggle caught the imagination of the world. Stalin, too, cast his vote for the creation of the State of Israel. As I pointed out in the Political-Philosophic Letter on the Arab-Israeli Collision, the best proof of the correctness of this view of the 1946-48 struggles of the Jews in Palestine is Nasser himself, who, in his Philosophy and Revolution openly admits that he engaged the Israeli truce negotiators, not so much in talks of terms of the armistice agreement, but in talks of how the Jews succeeded in driving out British imperialism. And precisely because that was then his preoccupation, Egypt alone of all the Arab countries, then proceeded to a true national liberation struggle, getting rid both of King Farouk and British imperialism.

But, though Israel wasn't an "outpost of British imperialism", it was in collusion with Anglo-French imperialism in the 1956 war that fought Nasser's nationalization of the Suez Canal and the deepening of the Egyptian Revolution. Nasser then stood alone in the Arab world, but this time the masses of the whole world were on his side. It is the mass demonstrations in opposition to this war in England and in France that stopped the hand of Anglo-French imperialism and the Israeli attack. To the extent that Khrushchev and Eisenhower also opposed the Suez War, it was for their own imperialist reasons, no one then said it was for "revolutionary reasons." Again, what prevented Khrushchev from taking on the mantle of liberator was that true freedom fighters -- the Hungarian revolutionaries -- exposed his counter-revolutionary role in his own empire.

It was altogether different in the 1967 war. Here Nasser did not stand alone, but was in an unholy union with the reactionary feudal oil sheikdoms for the "extermination of Israel." Here Russia's obscene references to Israel fighting for its life as similar to Nazi atrocities helped create an anti-Semitic offensive, the like of which hadn't been seen since the Stalin days. Here Nasser was parroting the most anti-Semitic statement of a Shukeiry who thundered, in answer to a question as to what would happen to any Israeli "not driven into the sea": "Those who survive will remain in Palestine. I estimate that none of them will survive." (6/1/67)

The point is not only that each war was different and each one has to be analyzed concretely to find out what is the true position for Marxist-Humanists. The point, above all, is: what has happened to the Arab national revolutions? Therein lies the real tragedy, the incompleteness of national revolutions when there is no release of creative mass energies which alone can complete it, and, therefore, there is a rebirth of racism which accompanies every retrogression in history.

The fact that Israel is not blameless, that it, too, is a capitalist country with the same exploitative class relations, which, however, the Jewish masses, not an external force (much less a feudal

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one) can overcome; the fact that this is not what they are preoccupied with when engaged in a war for their right to exist; and the fact that one of the poles of world capital fighting for single world mastery, calls itself Communism -- all these combine to befuddle the issues. This is the easier to do because of the impatience of radicals to "get it over with" via shortcuts to revolution. Or, as Hegel put it, not too philosophically, and sounding very todayish, "getting to the Absolute like a shot out of a pistol."

V. THE SHOT OUT OF A PISTOL PHILOSOPHY

This is the philosophic problem of the day. Without a theory of revolution, there can be no successful revolution. That, and that alone, can illuminate the dialectics of liberation as against the opportunism, suicidal alleged shortcuts and the tendencies to outright counter-revolution within the revolution.

Enter the so-called independent radicals committed to revolution "by any means." The problems are both new and complicated. There are no precedents for such problems like Israel which did not exist at the time of Marx or Lenin or Trotsky. There is a dialectic, a Marxist methodology and with hard "labor, patience, seriousness and suffering of the negative," you might be able to work it out. It is much easier, however, to slash the Gordian knot rather than to unravel it.

We will return to this point later. For the present let us look at an organization as new as SNCC, unburdened with any past. How easy it is then to fall into anti-Semitism -- "little Jew shops in the ghettos" -- especially if one thinks that that might go over big in the "Negro community."

When a reporter called Featherstone's attention to the fact that the June-July issue of the SNCC Newsletter on "Israeli atrocities in the Gaza" is not only a piece of Arab propaganda, (and the deliberately blurred picture accompanying it was from 1956, not 1967) but sounds exactly like what appeared on the very same subject in the current issue of the Thunderbolt, The Whiteman's View, the white supremacist paper published by the National States Rights Party, Featherstone had a ready answer:

"The positions of the two organizations (i.e. SNCC & NSRP) may look the same, but I think that you have to probe deeper and look at the philosophical content behind the positions." (NYT, 8/16/67).

O.K. what, pray, is the philosophic content of SNCC anti-Semitism? Never short for an answer, the SNCC official said that the organization is taking the Arab side because it aims for a "third world alliance of oppressed people all over the world -- Africa, Asia and Latin America."

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But Africa did not, as a whole, take the Arab side, and even those who voted with the Arabs in the UN did not kowtow to Nasser's view that "Israel's existence in itself is an aggression" much less repeat the anti-Israel atrocity stories. And I am not referring to the Africa where "neo-colonialism reigns." President Jules Nyerere of Tanzania spoke for a great many of the African states when, though he warned Israel against joining any "Imperialist adventure to topple President Nasser" made it clear that "Tanzania accepts Israel's claim to existence."

Cuba, on the other hand, not only parroted the Arab-Russian line but embellished it with the wild accusation that Israel's victory was due to the fact that the Israeli army was led by "Nazi Generals."

No, the answer doesn't lie elsewhere -- in Africa, Asia or Cuba. The answer lies here in the US, and SNCC's "philosophy" runs counter to both the history and the aspirations of the Negro.

The Negro has always been the touchstone of American civilization precisely because he could both expose its Achilles heel -- its racism -- and because he was always in the vanguard of its forward movement. It was so in the struggle against slavery when he fought together with the white Abolitionists. It was so during the birth of imperialism when the Negro stood alone in his opposition, sensing the racist repercussions of its brilliant white conquest of Latin America, the Philippines and forcing open the gates of trade with the Orient. It was so, when with white labor, he reshaped the industrial face of America through the creation of the CIO. And it is so now when the Negro Revolution has reached the crossroads between nationalism and proletarian internationalism.

There is a philosophy of liberation. There is no "philosophy" to anti-Semitism. Racism, whether it comes from Thunderbolt or SNCC's Newsletter, is the ideological spewings of a decaying class society that, as the SNCC Newsletter shows, has infected even those who fight against it.

Moreover, this line, begun by Communism for its own purposes, was first tried out by the magazine Freedomways. That series of articles smelled so foully of anti-Semitism that one of its editors, who is proudly a Black Nationalist and even more proudly anti-chauvinist -- Ossie Davis -- wrote the editors, "here is where I get off", adding that in his last years "Malcolm X specifically renounced racism; can we do less?" And James Baldwin, in his letter of protest, asked whether they must copy everything the whites do: "I think it is most distinctly immoral to blame Harlem on the Jews. Why, when we should be storming Capitols, do they suggest to the people they hope to serve that we take refuge in the most ancient and barbaric of European myths?" (Winter 1967)

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When Carmichael, Featherstone and Brown spew the Arab line of anti-Semitism, they are hurting, not the Jew, but the Negro. When the only thing "original" in SNCC's repetition of the Arab anti-Israel line, is the addition, "and the little Jew shops in the ghettos" they are bringing into the Movement a racism that ill behooves anyone claiming to stand for "freedom" from racism.

And when SNCC tries to rewrite the Negro's history at this critical juncture of its development in order to detour it, give it a direction alien to its dialectic self-development, he is playing an opportunist Communist game. Moreover, it is a white opportunist game. And the first ones to recognize the black face routine will be the Negro masses.

VI. IT REMAINS TO BE DONE

One event this year which played a decisive role in the world, and therefore in News & Letters, was not mentioned at all in the Draft Thesis. This is the so-called Cultural Revolution in China. This is not because we underestimate its role, nor have we forgotten that, much more important for future development than the Arab-Israeli collision is China's explosion of the H-bomb during the very same period. Indeed, this was one factor which emboldened the Middle East, that now knows that if Russia "betrays" them, they can go to China.

Rather, the reason for failure to single out these events, above the more immediate one of the Arab-Israeli War, was because these events had nothing new that we hadn't analyzed previously, whereas, the additive of anti-Semitism was a new feature in the events of the past year. What is ironic in this new additive is that a man of the stature of Trotsky was ready to admit, in 1937, that the previous Marxist concept, that assimilation would solve "the Jewish question" was "not confirmed . . . decaying capitalism has everywhere swung over to an exacerbated nationalism, one part of which is anti-Semitism . . . one must therefore reckon with the fact that the Jewish nation will maintain itself for an entire epoch to come."

Earlier I spoke of how much easier it is to slash the Gordian knot instead of unravelling it. Now contrast the anti-Semitism creeping into today's Trotskyists as against Trotsky's position in 1937. Not only did he, as we now, speak on the Jewish Question in capitalist society but in what to him was still a workers state: "the Thermidorian Moscow trials, for example, were staged with the hardly concealed design of presenting internationalists as faithless and lawless Jews who are capable of selling themselves to the German Gestapo."

Where a Trotsky felt compelled to admit that the protracted existence of capitalism, along with the degeneration of the Russian Revolution, created anew the "Jewish problem", the spigones

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of today have happily fallen into the trap of Stalinist-Maoist-Castroite-Arab anti-Semitism.

The uniqueness of the Marxist-Humanist method is this: when an intra-Arab struggle between two so-called "socialist" Arab countries in 1961 broke up the Egypt-Syria Union, we saw that the entry of Russia into the Middle East would re-establish the point of unity there through the retrogressive path of anti-Semitism. Not that the Arab countries needed any prodding on the question, but it gave them a totally new "face": Arab nationalism is "revolutionary," no matter what.

On an entirely different plane, with different contestants, the developing Sino-Soviet conflict revealed still another nationalism--Chinese--trying to pass itself off as a "new universal" by proclaiming, of all things, the existence of classes after the revolution -- a decade of a 100 years after! -- to be "a principle of Marxism Leninism." You will recall that in Marxism and Freedom (p.321) we wrote that "Surely no more deadly deviation has ever been proclaimed a principle of Marxism-Leninism." We called it, instead, "the most sinister of all retrogression theories."

And now we have Castro making guerrilla war the sum and substance of it all, for which he is willing to sacrifice a few principles to try to gain world Communist recognition for his "original" contribution.

Finally, we see still another variant of nationalism proclaiming itself to be "internationalism" and, far from recoiling at anti-Semitism, applying that racism to the Negro Revolution!

We must combat it, not for the "Jewish Question", but for the Negro Revolution's development into a dialectics of liberation rather than a shot-out-of-a-pistol retrogression.

For this reason, it is necessary also to return to our original point of departure. We began, you remember, not with the latest event on the world scene -- the Arab-Israeli confrontation -- but with the stranglehold of the super-powers, from which Mao and DeGaulle, respectively, could not escape, but a human force fighting for freedom could. We added that if this gives the impression that Che Guevara's slogans of "more Vietnams" appears to be correct, the fact that Castro needs a Carmichael proves the appearance is false.

Now then, the fact that the Negro Revolution is the answer and could become the Achilles' heel of the mightiest imperialist power on earth depends on many "ifs" -- if it undergoes no detours from its primary purpose of freedom into the channel of another global power fighting only against U.S. imperialism and not for the proletarian liberation; if the Negro Revolution forces the white proletariat, which in this country remains

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the majority force, unto an active anti-capitalist road; if it raises the banner of Marx's Humanism where the self-development of man asserts itself as the highest, and totally new energy force the world has ever seen, thus connecting the fight of the masses from the underdeveloped countries and those of the technologically developed countries.

We have no small role to play in transforming these "ifs" into "existents", to use an existential term as the existentialists have never seen fit to use.

In a word, it isn't merely for a narrow organizational purpose that our growth becomes imperative, but for the deepening of the revolution in uprooting the old, and establishing totally new human foundations. Take the Negro pamphlet we are projecting. The concrete aspects of this are not for us to discuss here. This will be the burden, or one of the burdens, of the Organization Report. But this much must be stated here: (1) If it is of the essence for the Movement that the Marxist-Humanist viewpoint on the Negro Revolt be known, this is naturally not an academic question. The best way to let it be known is in action. Yet (2) mass action is no substitute for philosophy; one goes with the other.

We cannot let an alien class philosophy gain the leadership of the movement by its pretense that it is interested only in the concrete, the detail, where the action is.

We must say: if you tell me, spread out from the ghetto to "Fashion Row", this is not detail. This is philosophy, the wrong philosophy not because you shouldn't have what is on fashion row, but because you would still be restricted to the consumer field. You must, instead, be in production, at the source. And we say: let's go from the ghetto to where we, in fact, are all day -- in the factories.

If they say, let's get whitey, we must say yes, but not merely the white merchant, but, above all, management. And, precisely, because that whitey is the one you want, we must have white labor with us; we must work out ways to get him over to our side, and because this is so, it must be done in the factory where he, too, fights management.

If they say, don't get the whiskey stores when you "burn, baby, burn", but go get the guns, we say: That is good, but not good enough. Getting guns instead of whiskey will not solve all of the problems if we remain isolated from the overwhelming majority. Going to the "third world" to feel strength in being a majority there will not solve the problem here. On the other hand, if we solve the problem in the U.S. that will help the third world.

There is no substitute for doing one's own thinking. Nor can you reach full freedom by a shot out of the pistol, philosophically or actually. You can only get it by uniting philosophy and action, making

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the philosophy of freedom a reality. Let's start right now to link up thought to action by discovering the meaning of our actions. Here is a pamphlet that tries to do just that.

This, then, is the uniqueness of Marxist Humanism -- its methodology in analyzing an event as a totality allows the projection of a possible future development, the singling out of a tendency as an inherence of the future in the present.

For each of us to be able to do it on his own -- and again not for academic reasons, but because philosophy is an imperative for revolution's success. The classes by "the Materialist Friends of the Hegelian Dialectic" -- or whatever you will decide to call yourself as sponsors of that series of lectures -- thus become not only a part of a book-to-be, but above all, the sure-to-develop dialectics of liberation.

Finally, the third point about organizational growth. Again, the discussion on this point belongs under the Organization report, but it is important to state here that it is of the essence to realize that the rejection of the Vanguardist conception of the so-called Vanguard party does not mean a failure to appreciate the uniqueness of our theoretical contribution, without which the practical actions to realize freedom now will forever remain an unfinished revolution. It is so in Russia, 50 years after conquest of power; it is so in China, 18 years after conquest of victory. It is so in Cuba, 8 years after a new chapter of Latin American revolution has not been followed in any other country on the Continent.

First and foremost, our rejection of the Vanguard party was due to the appreciation of the vanguard role of the proletariat, rather than the Party. Moreover, this means especially the Negro proletariat. But it does not mean that we are not as much part of the objective movement as is the mass movement; each has its historic validity, and there is no reason to be self-conscious on the point just because we insist that it is the masses, and they alone, who can uproot the old; that it is the masses and they alone who can establish the new; that this double rhythm of uprooting the old and creating the new can be done, not by a vanguard "party", but only by the masses in action.

How can that possibly change the fact that we and we alone (if even we restrict ourselves only to our birth as News & Letters Committees) in 1953-6:

(1) insisted that the wildcats against Automation, and the Montgomery Bus Boycott, on the other hand, showed the masses as self-activity and as reason for they raised questions of a new Humanism on a philosophic level far beyond those raised by the intellectuals.

The youth may not remember that placing the Montgomery Bus Boycott on the same philosophic level as the Hungarian Revolution raised eyebrows not only among "reactionaries" but also among radicals. But we nevertheless included these three headlines of the day directly into the

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fundamental work -- Marxism and Freedom -- because they flowed naturally and logically from the summation of man's struggle for freedom for 200 years and, therefore, re-established the Humanism of Marxism for our day, which, then, was 1957.

(2) That, in 1958, we and we alone, said that the new revolutions opened in Africa showed the masses as creativity, that is to say, how the masses, when fired by the idea of freedom, can achieve miracles and open a whole new world?

Who else, pray, had written that in 1958?

(3) That, in 1960, we and we alone, said that the newest stage of Negro Revolt by the youth in North Carolina, in firing the imagination also of white youth who had been referred to as "the beat generation" signified, instead, birth of a new generation of radicals.

Again, remember this, we did not wait for 1965 and the FSM to proclaim this. Just reread the contribution of the youth we chose to insert directly into Workers Battle Automation, and trace what we mean by a dialectic method of elicitation.

(4) Finally that each of these, and all that has happened since, is documented in a pamphlet written by workers as well as intellectuals, Negroes as well as whites, youth as well as adults -- in a manner that is uniquely us, that is to say uniquely Marxist-Humanist, because it does not separate theory from practice, the actions that we are always engaged in and will continue to do.

Who else practices self-development while participating in mass self-activity? Who, who else insists, nonetheless, in establishing no blueprints, but instead, projecting these as things that still remain to be done? Who, who else simultaneously throws out any and all elitist vanguardist conceptions of party, functioning only as committees that proclaim loudly, clearly, and persistently that these are but challenges, that only in unity of theory and practice, and only by the masses can revolutions be made.

Yes, we do not reject the past, not only not the Marxist past, but even the Hegelian one, for the greatness of Hegel, the reason why his philosophy became foundation for proletarian revolution, though he was a bourgeois, was his full recognition that even his ultimate -- the Absolute Idea -- is not ultimate so long as theory and practice remain separated, for both Idea of Theory, as well as Idea of Practice, remain one-sided; only in unity can they achieve completion.

Now, the Absolute Idea is, simply, for us, for our age, absolute, total freedom, the totally new human dimension.

It, and it alone, can keep revolutions from souring. It, and it alone, is the dialectics of liberation which extends national revolutions

into world revolutions. It, and it alone, is the preventative for "shot-out-of-pistol" theories of revolution with their inevitable retrogressions, be they the persistence of class struggles in "socialist societies", or the diversion of national liberation to chauvinist channels, or transformation of social revolutions evolving from below to guerrilla attacks planned from above.

We better begin by stopping the capitalistic fragmentation of man from being foisted upon us in the "new societies". The full development of all the inherent and latent talents of men is no small aim and is not an overnight job. It requires a great deal more than are in this room, or for that matter in any "party". It requires the participation of the population to a man, every man, woman and child taking destiny into his and her own hands.

This is why it is not, and cannot be, squeezed into a blueprint. This is why it must remain a task to be done.

We have met here to work out collectively, today, just a few of the things that we can do for the year ahead and, while always conscious that only the masses can make revolutions, we do not shift upon their shoulders those responsibilities and tasks that are ours. The masses will do what they will do. We have our job. The more we continue with our work, the more we refuse to let theory be separated from practice, the more we insist on the concrete, the concrete tasks at hand, the more we will be sure to have our ears so close to the ground that we hope to catch each emerging new tendency, so that we, in turn, can "join" it as it becomes the elemental force of reconstruction of society on totally new, Humanist foundations.

Let us begin the task of liberation and of theory that still remains to be done.

-- Raya Dunayevskaya
September 2, 1967