

WORLD POLITICS

A REVIEW OF THE WORLD'S
TROTSKYIST AND REVOLUTIONARY MOVEMENT

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CONTENTS

- Page 1 The Extension of the Freeze
 By Brian Tyler.
- Page 6 Programme of the Polish Opposition
 By Kuron and Modzelewski
- Page 16 Thesis on the Tasks of International
 Social Democracy
 By Rosa Luxemburg.

Readers should note that from now on, all business and editorial communications should be sent to 'World Politics', C/o. 4, Dane St., Nottingham. This change has been rendered necessary, due to the fact that our comrades in London, who were responsible for launching the journal, have taken on new commitments. We have already built up a production team in Nottingham, and we are confident that regardless of what happens in the rest of the British economy, 1967 will be a year of growth for 'World Politics'.

However, the extent of this growth will greatly depend on the response of our readers. 'World Politics' will come out at the beginning of each month and the annual subscription rate has been fixed at the modest total of 15/-. Readers who have not already subscribed, should do so immediately. But, also, we want new readers, so please help us by soliciting new subscriptions from your friends and contacts, and by ordering bulk supplies on a sale or return basis.

'World Politics' is dedicated to the task of building a Marxist movement inside the existing labour and peace organisations. Therefore, our contents will present a Marxist viewpoint. However, we are determined that our publication will not reflect the sectarian rut, which has hindered the healthy growth of Marxist movements in Britain for so long. 'World Politics' will not be simply a propaganda journal. We will endeavour to carry articles on the current problems facing the British working class and on international events, in such a way that our journal will be of assistance to socialists in their everyday political work.

THE EXTENSION OF THE FREEZE, By Brian Tyler.

To most of us, the extension of the wage freeze, mapped out in the Wilson government's White Paper, of November 22nd, came as no surprise. By now, its details have become all too well known, due to subsequent government actions. However, it will do no harm to summarise its contents:

Referring to the first six months of 1967, the White Paper declares that, 'Increases in incomes during this period will only be justified in exceptional circumstances, where they can be shown to meet the following criteria for exemptions, and even then only on a severely limited scale.' The criteria concerns primarily 'Productivity' agreements. However, for wage increases to be 'justified', there must be a real increase in productivity, which must be of such a nature as to be in the 'national interest'. What is meant by 'national interest' has yet to be determined.

Another exception envisaged concerns the very poorly paid workers, whose wages are controlled by government orders; i.e. those who are so poorly organised and paid, that minimum wages are determined by law. Many workers in such industries are paid above the minimum legal rate, due to local labour shortages. The government has made it clear that where wages do rise in such industries, those workers being paid above the legal minimum already are not to be granted an increase.

As far as the rest of the workers are concerned, there are not supposed to be any wage increases, any cuts in hours on the same weekly pay, and any increased holidays. In other words, the wage freeze is to be maintained in full force.

The White Paper refers to prices in a different way: '... price increases may be justified, where there has been a marked increase, that cannot be absorbed, in the cost of imported materials or costs arising from changes in supply for seasonal or other reasons, or which are due to action by the Government, such as increased taxation or where an enterprise finds itself faced by increased costs, which it is unable to restrain and which is too large to absorb, such as the costs of bought-in-components forming a large part of its total costs.' Becoming even more blatant in its defence of profits, the White Paper continues: 'There may also be exceptional circumstances, in which, without some increase in price, the receipts of an enterprise are not adequate to maintain efficiency and undertake necessary investment.' In other words, if the rate of profit for a firm slips, it will be justified in putting its prices up.

With prices rising probably more steeply than in the last six months of 1966, and with wages remaining static, most workers are expected to tolerate a cut in purchasing power. Meanwhile, the number of jobless is still rising, and at the present rate of increase will soon reach the 600,000 mark, with every prospect of becoming much greater than this figure by the late spring. Also, in a recent speech in the House of Commons, Anthony Greenwood reiterated the sentiments expressed in a White Paper published on December 14th, which announced that local authorities estimated expenditure over the next two years was considered to be too high 'under current economic conditions'. It has therefore been decided that proposed grants will be cut by £25M in 1967/68 and £47M in 1968/69. What this means in real terms was indicated by Mr. J.M. Whittaker, chairman of the Local Finance Committee, when he addressed the executive of the County Councils Association. He said that there will 'either be a reduction in the services or a heavy increase in the rates'.

What the government is attempting to achieve is quite clear. It is quite obvious that British capitalism cannot go on in the way it has for the last twenty years. At the centre of its many problems is its inability to achieve steady economic growth, without chronic inflation ensuing. Because of its slow economic growth, profit rates have declined. Capital investment, i.e. investment in plant and machinery, etc. has constantly been at a low level, compared to the achievements of competitors, increasing the relative technological backwardness of British industry. The consequent fall in competitiveness has, throughout the post war period, led to periodic balance of payments crises and increasing stresses on the position of Sterling. Unlike the inter war period, British colonies have not been available for use, to quite the same extent, as dumping grounds for British products, or as cheap and exclusive sources of raw materials. Neither have trade deficits been covered satisfactorily by income yielded from foreign and colonial investment, as sometimes occurred in the more palmy days of the imperialist era.

Similar to past Conservative 'stop - go' measures, the July package of the Wilson government was designed, in the short term, to tide British

capitalism over a chronic currency and balance of payments crisis. Favourable trade returns in the latter part of 1966, indicate that Wilson may be succeeding in achieving this purely short term aim.

Unfortunately, however, the Sterling crisis was combined with another phenomenon. In the early part of 1966, production was already falling, in spite of the fact that employment was remaining at a high level. Selwyn Lloyd and his team never had to face such a combination of disastrous developments. The short term solution to the Sterling crisis acted as a gigantic catalyst on the already present germs of recession. Most bourgeois commentators now feel that the Wilson government went too far with its deflationary measures and are extremely nervous about the year that lies ahead. A comment by William Davies, Financial Editor to 'The Guardian', in an article published on December 28th, sums up the general attitude: '... There are signs that industry has got over the first shock adjustment to the July package, but few people doubt that the measures hurriedly taken to save Sterling went too far. Some still talk of an 'irreversible recession and others claim that the current situation can easily be controlled. Two things, however, are universally accepted. One, industry faces a tough year. Two, the Government does not have a great deal of room for manoeuvre and will need a lot of luck to get us through 1967 without mishap. We cannot afford a major trade war with South Africa or a collapse of the prices and incomes policy. A serious slow down in world trade would be a frightful blow and we are in no shape to accept Common Market membership on painful terms....' Thus, for the first time since the war, there is a possibility that a full scale slump may occur.

Since the government, on the instigation of the City of London, and foreign bankers, is so stubbornly committed to defending Sterling, it will obviously not carry out major reflationary measures, until its position is secure. However, it has already made some attempt to halt the drift towards slump, by increasing 'investment grants' to industry, perhaps hurried into such a move by the speed with which industry reacted to the July measures. According to a recent Confederation of British Industry survey, overall investment plans in British industry for 1967 had been reduced by 12%. Other minor inflationary measures include a reminder, by the Bank of England, to 'priority borrowers' that the clearing banks have plenty of money available. Also, the payment of rebates under the Selective Employment Tax, and the retention of high Government military expenditure, will have similar effects.

Assuming that none of the fears of William Davies materialise and that a major slump is averted, there is a big question mark over the Government's ability to achieve its long term aims. These can be said to be to get British capitalism permanently out of the 'stop-go' cycle by carrying out a widespread rationalisation of the British economy, to facilitate the expansion of its less moribond sectors and to cut out the dead wood. So far, things have gone very badly for the government in this context, the car industry and chemicals hardly being the most ideal pruning sectors. However, for rationalisation to be successfully carried out, Wilson needs two things. Firstly, he needs a permanent figure of unemployed of at least 500,000 to take the impetus out of the bargaining power of the workers, and to act as an ever present reservoir of labour for expanding, or

new firms to draw on. Secondly, he needs a trade union movement, which is submissively tied to government planning. He needs to end 'free collective bargaining' permanently; he needs to do away with 'restrictive practices'; he needs to curb 'unofficial strikes'. The wage freeze and its extension should be seen in this context, so should the Part IV legislation and trade unionists will have to look with a discerning eye at the 'findings' of the 'Royal Commission on the Trade Unions', when they are published. This is not a working class government, 'mistaken in some of its ideas,' nor is the state machinery, on behalf of which it acts, a neutral agency subordinating class interests to a 'national interest'. The whole tenor of government policy is aimed at promoting the interests of the entrenched business and financial minorities of British society, and is, therefore, irreconcilably opposed to the interests of the working class. Presumably, once the power of the trade unions has been tamed, and once the short term difficulties of the government, i.e. Sterling, the balance of payments, have been overcome provided that a slump has not been brought about in the process, the way will be open for the Government to enter the Common Market, which, through 'market forces', would speed up the rationalisation of the British economy.

We have a stark perspective facing us. If the government succeeds in its aim of disciplining the trade union movement and of helping to solve the problems of British capitalism, at the expense of working class living standards, the labour movement will move into an extremely lean period, similar, in some ways, to the situation in Western Germany for many years. The Labour Party will be a thoroughly neo capitalist party and like the German social democrats, will probably lose a large part of its working class membership. The trade unions, tied in to the state planning mechanisms will become increasingly divorced from the interests of their membership, the latter becoming increasingly apolitical.

Obviously, we must strive to prevent this nightmare from occurring. At a glance, the tasks facing us are formidable. The mass of working people are still basically loyal to the Labour government, the harsh realities of the wage freeze and unemployment having, as yet, only been brought home to a minority.

The opposition of the Transport and General Workers Union and the technical unions to the wage freeze, although welcome, has been half hearted and indecisive. Where workers have, on a local scale, reacted against the freeze by strike action, e.g. car delivery men at Longbridge and busmen in Hull, the T. & G.W.U. national leadership has prevented victory, by failing to act to extend strike action. Of all the opposition leaders, Cousins in particular has been most ambivalent. His main argument against the freeze has been that Britain's problems can be solved by increased productivity. He has shown little willingness to put forward anti capitalist demands and fight for them. If the other opposition unions are more coherent in their opposition, it must be noted that they have made no serious attempt to mobilise mass action against the government. Also, the nature of the opposition of the so called left M.P.'s is by now notorious in wide left circles and need not be reiterated here.

The disappointment of Marxists in the performances to date, of the

oppositional trade union leaders and their parliamentary colleagues should not provoke dismay or sectarian denunciations. Fundamentally, our left wing social democratic comrades do not agree with us in our characterisation of the Wilson government as a force completely alien to the interests of the working class. Cousins, Jenkins and the rest are not conscious traitors of the working class, as some ultra lefts would have us believe. There are no doubt many pressures upon them to keep the trade union opposition under control, to prevent it from completely wrecking the policies of the labour government, which they still have some loyalty to. For them, socialism is a goal of the distant future, to be achieved through the passing of edicts in Parliament, after C.L.P.'s have replaced the Wiatts and Stewarts, by the Heffers and Foots of this world. The concept of leading masses of people in a militant struggle for an anti capitalist programme is foreign to them.

However, we cannot afford to dismiss the importance of the official T.U. opposition. We should give all the support we can to local strikes against the freeze, redundancies and attempts to erode trade union rights. Workers Solidarity Committees should be formed for this purpose, as has been done in Hull, for example. Such committees can distribute pamphlets to publicise the case of the strikers; they can call mass meetings of support; they can assist in the collection of donations, and work to extend the strike.

Limited or local struggles, however, even if victorious in certain cases, will not bring the government's prices and incomes policy crashing down in ruins. Only determined national struggles, with the resources of official union support behind them, will accomplish this. The more local victories there are though, the greater will be the pressure on national union leaders, to help bring such national struggles about.

We can help to build up such pressure in other ways. We should help to convene, with other socialists and with the maximum trade union participation, local and national forums, through such organisations as C.S.E., where precise anti capitalist but non utopian programmes, hostile to government economic policies and all they stand for, can be hammered out. Such programmes must then be fed back to the T.U. branches, the factories and the C.L.P.'s. In order to assist in this process, 'World Politics' will, in the near future, be putting forward some detailed drafts, to act as a basis for discussion, where necessary.

In adopting the course it has, the Wilson government has moved onto shaky ground. If it is brought to its knees, as a result of working class action, around anti capitalist policies, the ominous defeat, which is at present staring us in the face, will have been turned into a magnificent victory for the socialist cause.

PROGRAMME OF THE POLISH OPPOSITION

by Jancek Kuron and Karol Modzelewski

The following is an English translation of Chapter 10 of the French text of Kuron's and Modzelewski's Open Letter, entitled "Programme". Kuron and Modzelewski are young Polish communists who are presently serving prison sentences for the circulation of this document. They were expelled from the Polish Communist Party in November of 1964 and wrote the Open Letter as an explanation of their views. It was addressed to members of the University of Warsaw sections of the Polish Communist Party and the Young Socialists. Kuron and Modzelewski were tried in July 1965 and are serving three, and three-and-a-half year sentences, respectively.

The present text is based on a copy of the Open Letter which was received by the French Trotskyist movement late last year. A translation of the complete work is in preparation and will be printed by Merit Publishers this Spring. It will also include an introduction by Pierre Frank, a member of the United Secretariat of the Fourth International.

We have shown that revolution is the grave digger of the old society. At the same time, it is the creator of the new. The question now before us is whether the working class, which by its very nature is the principal and leading force of revolution, is capable of offering a valid programme.

This would be true if the programme is advanced by the social class whose particular interest is most in accord with the needs of economic development and the satisfaction of the needs of other classes and social layers- in other words, whose programme permits the realization of the interests of society as a whole. The class interest of the workers requires the end of bureaucratic ownership of the means of production. This does not mean that the workers' wages must be equal to the total value of the product of their labour. The level of development of productive forces in modern society creates the necessity of a division of labour permitting the existence of nonproductive sectors supported by the material product of the workers.

Under workers democracy it will also be necessary to deduct a part of the labour product for accumulation to sustain and develop health services, education and culture; still another part will be allotted for social benefits, administration and government. But all of this will be carried out only to the extent that the working class considers it necessary in its own interests. In reality, exploitation does not consist, in the fact that workers' wages represent only a part of the value produced, but in the fact that surplus product is taken away from them and used for ends that are foreign and antagonistic to them; the nonproductive sectors serve to maintain and reinforce the domination of the bureaucracy (or the bourgeoisie as well) over production, over society and the life of the working class. The end of exploitation means the creation of a system where the organised working class will be the master of its labour and its labour product; where it will determine the goal of social production; where it will determine the division of the national product. It will manage the extent and direction of investments, of expenditures for social benefits, health services, education and culture, the budget of the

government apparatus, and the actual duties of this apparatus. Then the working class will exercise economic, social and political power in the state.

I. The present level of productivity implies a social division of labour in which the function of production is separate from that of management. There must be workers and managers. In the process of production, the working class is not destined to manage but to produce. In order to manage, it must organise itself and be organised by the state.

If there is no workers democracy in the factory, there can be still less in the state. In fact, it is only in the plant that workers are in their own element; it is there that they exercise their essential social function. If the workers are slaves to their labour, then freedom outside work is only "freedom on Sundays," that is, fictional freedom. The working class cannot be master of its work and of production if it does not have control over the conditions and goals of its work in factories. To this end, it must organise itself in the plants by forming workers councils to manage the factories. It must make the manager a subordinate functionary to the council, supervised, hired and fired by it.

Today, all key administrative decisions in the factories are dictated by the central government. Under such conditions, workers councils lack any power in practice. The manager is linked by his very nature to the leading bodies and therefore to the central apparatus of economic administration. Under these conditions, the workers councils take on the character of secondary managerial bodies, comparable to the Autonomous Workers Conferences. In order for the councils to be able to manage the factories, workers must make them independent of the factory. This would establish the preliminary conditions for workers democracy and, at the same time, give new directives for the realization of the true class goals of production. (As we have already shown in Chapter 3, centralization is necessary for the organization of the means of production sector, while the production of consumer goods requires decentralization.)

In this way, the working class, by taking the first steps of its programme, would realize in passing what is quite progressive in the programme of the technocrats: the independence of factories. However, the working class and the technocracy give totally different social contents to this concept. For the technocrats, independence of the factories places all power in the hands of management. For the workers, it means independence of the working class. This is why they cannot limit themselves to the management of the factories through the intermediary of councils. It would only amount to carrying out the programme of the technocrats and thereby submitting the workers to a new yoke.

Major decisions concerning the division and use of national revenue by definition have a general economic character, that is, they are made at the level of the national economy - they can be made only by a central government. If decisions made by the government remain outside the control of the working class, it cannot direct production and consequently its own labour. Workers autonomy limited to factories would inevitably become a fiction to mask the power of plant management and the domination of a new bureaucracy politically linked to the technocracy in the state

apparatus. Then exploitation would continue and the old disorder would repeat itself in a new form.

II. This is why it is necessary for the working class to organise, in addition to workers councils in factories, delegations from plants throughout the country. That is it must organise councils of workers deputies with a central council of deputies at their head. Under this system of councils, the working class would set the goals of social production, would make the necessary decisions, and supervise carrying out the plan at every step. At each level the councils would become the instruments of economic, political, executive and legislative authority. They would be truly elective bodies for the voters, organised on the basis of factories. Voters would be able to recall their representatives and replace them at any moment, without regard to regular election dates. Workers delegations would become the framework of the proletarian state.

III. If workers delegates in the central council of deputies had before them only a single project for the distribution of national income presented by the government or by the leadership of a single party, their role would be limited to that of a perfunctory vote. As we have shown in Chapter I, monopolistic power cannot have a proletarian character. That automatically becomes a dictatorship over the working class, a bureaucratic organization serving to atomize workers and keep them and all of society in subjection.

In order for the system of councils to become the expression of the will, of the thinking, of the activity of the working masses, the working class must organize itself into more than one party. What does a plurality of working parties mean in practice? The right of every political group recognised by the working class to publish its own newspaper, to present its programme via the modern information media, to organise cadres, to carry on political campaigns - in brief, to be a party. The existence of more than one workers party requires freedom of speech, press, assembly, the end of preventative censorship, complete freedom of scientific research, of literary and artistic creation. Without freedom of expression for different currents of thought in the press, in scientific research, in literary and artistic experimentation, without complete freedom to create, there is no workers democracy.

With the existence of more than one workers party, the different parties would present their proposals for the division of the national income in the central council of deputies; then the conditions would be created which would permit the real elements of an electoral programme to emerge; it would benefit both the central representatives of the workers, and the masses, who elect and recall delegates. A plurality of workers parties does not however imply that access to these parties would be limited to workers alone. The proletarian character of the parties would reflect the nature of the state power organised on the basis of councils. Then parties seeking to exercise influence on the political power could not do so except by winning over the working masses.

For the same reasons, we oppose parliamentary regimes. The experience of the last twenty years shows that they are no guarantee against

dictatorship and that, even in the most perfect forms, they are not governments of the people. In the parliamentary system, the parties fight only to be elected: The moment the vote is cast, the electoral platforms can be thrown into the wastebasket. In parliament, the deputies feel themselves bound only to the party leadership which named them as candidates. Voters are grouped in arbitrary election districts according to purely formal criteria. This atomizes them. The right to recall deputies is a complete fiction. Participation of citizens in political life amounts to nothing more than reading statements of the leaders in the press, listening to them on the radio, and seeing them on TV and, once every four or five years, voting to choose the party to govern them. The result takes place by virtue of a mandate, without the voters participation. Furthermore, parliament only exercises legislative power. The executive apparatus holds the only real power, the power over those who control the material force, that is, the power over surplus value.

Therefore the parliamentary system is one in which the working class and the entire society finds itself deprived of all influence on government - by virtue of voting. To formal voting every four or five years, we counterpose the permanent participation of the working class, organised in a system of councils, political parties and unions: Workers would assume the correction and supervision of political and economic decisions at all levels.

In the capitalist system, the bourgeoisie, which controls the surplus value, is above parliament. In the bureaucratic system, the untrammelled rule of the central political bureaucracy lies behind the parliamentary fiction. In the system of workers democracy, if representation of the entire body of citizens takes a parliamentary form, the working class will be above parliament, organised in councils and controlling the material base of the existence of society, namely the product of labour.

IV. The working class cannot decide on the division of the labour product directly, it can only do so through its central political representation. Furthermore, the working class is not absolutely homogeneous in regards to its class interests. Conflicts between the decisions of workers delegations and the interests and tendencies of workers in particular factories and particular sectors of the working class are inevitable. The mere fact of separation between management and production holds within it the possibility of the development of an elected power with a certain amount of independence, and this holds true as much at the factory level as at the state. If the workers were deprived - above and beyond the right to vote - of the possibility of self-defense against the decisions of their representational system, the system would degenerate and act against the interests of those it is supposed to represent. If the working class were deprived of the possibility of defending itself against the state, workers democracy would become a fiction. The possibility of defense must be guaranteed by trade unions absolutely independent of the state with the right to organize economic and political strikes. The different political parties would fight to maintain the proletarian character of trade unions in seeking to exert influence over them.

V. In order that the organs of workers democracy shall not be turned into a facade behind which all "the old crap" will reappear, it is necessary that the forms of democracy correspond to the vital content of the activity of the working masses. For the administrators, specialists and politicians, public affairs is a profession. They have the time and knowledge necessary for it. The worker is an agent in the process of production. His profession is attending to a machine. In order for him to be able to take part in public life, it is indispensable to give him a minimum of time and education.

To this end, several hours per week taken out of the regular paid work must be devoted to the general education of workers. In these hours, the workers, organised according to the units of production, would discuss the variants of the national economic plan, the regional plans and the factory plans proposed by the different political parties. These affairs are only too difficult, if not unintelligible, when attempts are made to hide the class meanings of the division of national income. The representatives of the different political parties taking part in workers education periods would bring the working class closer to their programmes and their programmes closer to the working class.

VI. Under a workers democracy, political police and regular (standing) armies cannot be maintained in any form. The anti-democratic nature of the political police is obvious. However a plethora of myths has been created around the concept of a regular army of the dominant class, myths accepted to a certain degree by all of society.

What is a regular army? It is an organisation within which hundreds of thousands of young men torn from their natural surroundings are isolated in barracks, where all independence of thought is driven out of their heads by brutal methods, teaching them to carry out mechanically any order coming from the hierarchical and professional command structure. It is this organisation which is the basis of the armed force of the state. This force, separated from society, is conditioned to come into conflict with it at any time. And it is for this reason that it is not enough to change the officers: the regular army, like the political police, is in its very essence an instrument of anti-popular dictatorship. As long as it is maintained, a clique of generals can always elevate itself above any party or council.

It is said that regular armies are indispensable for the defence of nations. This is true under an anti-popular dictatorship where it is difficult to force the great masses to fight to defend a state which does not belong to them; this can only be attained by intimidation and terror supported by the regular army. Arming the masses outside the framework of this organisation represents a mortal danger to the system; it is why regular armies are the only way dictatorship can organise the armed forces.

However the examples of the revolutionary wars in Vietnam, Cuba and Algeria show that armed workers and peasants - when they know why they are fighting and identify their interests with those of the revolution - are in no way inferior to regular armies. This is true above all for small countries prey to counterrevolutionary aggression of foreign powers: when they are attacked by a regular army they can only defend themselves effectively by the methods of peoples war. Regular armies are necessary

to the aggressors for their colonial wars and interventions; they are necessary for anti-popular dictatorships to keep the masses in subjection. This is most obviously the case in Latin America where armies play the role of internal police. But it is equally true everywhere armies exist, and it is the same in Poland, as the Poznan events show. Regular armies, whether clashes occur or not, are instruments of brutal domination over the working class and society, just as a bludgeon is an instrument for beating whether or not its owner uses it. In a workers democracy, the regular army would not impede counterrevolution. On the contrary, it might become a counterrevolutionary force itself. Consequently it must be liquidated.

In order to make it/^{im}possible to overturn its democratic rule, nevertheless, the working class must be armed. This is particularly true for workers in mass industry who must everywhere be organised into workers militias subordinate to the councils. Military specialists must act as instructors responsible and subordinate to the councils. In this way, the military repressive force of the state will be linked closely to the workers who will always be ready to defend their power and their revolution arms in hand.

For technical reasons, it is important to maintain permanent specialised units (missiles, air forces, a fleet, etc.). However soldiers from these units must be recruited from workers in given factories in mass industry and during their service they must remain in contact with the workers of their plants, and keep the rights due workers.

VII. Agricultural production and the peasantry play too important a role in the economy and in society for the workers programme to neglect the question of the countryside. Unquestionably, the future of the peasantry resides in large industrialised and specialised state enterprises. The technical base of this organisation of agricultural production necessitates rural industrialisation; it requires substantial investment only realisable over a long period of time. Under present technical and economic conditions, any attempt at/^{general}collectivisation would mean the expropriation of the peasants which must be carried out against them by a police dictatorship. It would result in a drop in agricultural production and a return to a system of police dictatorship against the working class. Such a collectivisation would be consonant only with the bureaucratic system. For workers democracy it would mean death; it is unacceptable.

The present agricultural structure, in which there is private land ownership, results in the establishment of farms of the capitalist type, provided the laws of the market operate freely, without any limitations. Because they are scattered these small holdings have small investment resources although investment is essential to their development, and consequently the major part of investment comes from the largest farms. Rationalisation of agriculture would therefore signify a profound crisis: bankruptcy of the poorest peasants and a lack of opportunity and declass-ment of the small peasantry.

For the factory workers, this would mean an increase in basic-necessity prices and unemployment. Such a development is acceptable to the technocrats (the natural partisans of the tendency toward concentration in agriculture), but is unacceptable to a democratic workers state.

VIII. The productive goal of the working class is to develop the consumption capacity of the immense masses who have nothing today but the bare minimum. As we have already shown in Chapter 6, the bureaucracy lowers the consumption of the majority of peasantry below the bare minimum; it deprives the peasant economy of its surplus and the peasants of opportunities for development because it tends to reduce the real cost of labour power as much as possible and treats social consumption as a necessary evil.

The working class has an interest in eliminating the type of relationship which exists between the state and peasantry. The interests of the workers demand rational development of agricultural production (the basis of consumption) by the development of small and middle individual holdings and the corresponding increase of their investment and consumption possibilities. It is precisely this that makes the working class the spokesman of the interests of the majority of the peasants and at the same time establishes the basis of a real alliance between them. To realise the common interests of the workers and the immense majority of peasants it is necessary:

First, to close the price scissors artificially maintained by the bureaucratic regime depriving the small and middle-size peasant holdings of the material basis for their development; and in addition, to establish a progressive tax on the most powerful enterprises.

Second, to utilise that part of the peasant labour product appropriated by the state in the form of taxes or any other form (deducting the peasants' share in the maintenance of the administration), in order to return to the countryside the social and cultural investments and economic and technical assistance necessary in the first place to increase the productivity of the small and very small peasant holdings.

To this end, the peasantry must organise itself in accordance with its economic bases, and provide itself with political representation. It must create its own producers organisations. This is key to opening up opportunities for the 60% of the peasantry which is vegetating on small holdings and which represents a surplus labour force; at the same time, a glut of industrial investments must not be permitted.

This requires that this excess labour force be used for supplementary intensive production: husbandry, truckfarming and fruit growing. But this is very difficult, and it is impossible to create an industry capable of carrying out this transformation with the dispersed forces of the small peasant enterprises. Prerequisite to success is the creation of associations of small and middle-sized enterprises which would have a sufficient labour force. These associations, as a result of the land they would have at their disposal, of the cooperative work which they would permit, and with state aid (low interest rate loans, state participation in small investments, state transport, etc.), would put in service small transitional enterprises and would organise distribution and sale. This is the most economic way of increasing the production of food products which are lacking today, of overcoming the underdevelopment of the consumers goods industry, and of increasing the productivity of small and very small holdings, employing the surplus labour on the spot.

The conditions must be created on peasant enterprises for specialised production, without which economic rationality is impossible. At the same time, in their contacts with the state purchasing bodies, the peasant producers must organise themselves to be defended against any artificial lowering of prices. The isolated peasant who concludes "free" contracts with the state, is powerless in the face of its monopoly of the market. This is why, independently of the creation of producers organisations, the peasants must create their own general organisation for distribution and sale. With relationships like this existing, the strongest enterprises, which are few in number, but which play an important role by reason of their size and their economic power, would no longer have the opportunity of transforming themselves into capitalist farms; they would lack the labour and the cheap land resulting from the ruin of the weakest enterprises. But the strongest enterprises could increase their production by virtue of their own investment resources or to the extent they succeeded in replacing the labour they lack by mechanisation.

Since industry is the decisive sector of the economy, the directions taken in the development of industrial production set the general lines of development for the entire economy. In controlling the product of its labour, the working class will determine the general framework of the development of other sectors and consequently also of the peasant sector. But in the general framework of the whole economy, determined by the level, the organisation, and the development of industrial production, the peasantry must have control over the product of its labour. Plans for the development of the countryside, the use of rural social and cultural investment funds, cannot be presented unilaterally to the peasantry by the state. In this case, in fact, power over the peasantry would be exercised by a well-developed separate apparatus, which in practice would be exempt from the control of the working class and might even impose its own control over it.

The convergence of the interests of the working class and the majority of peasants permits the political autonomy of the peasantry, autonomy which is also a necessity of workers democracy. The economic organisations of the peasantry we spoke of above will not be adequate to assure control of that part of their product which is delivered to the state and which must be returned to them in the form of various kinds of immediate financial investments and economic aid. This can only be accomplished by a political representation of the peasant producers at national level established with the aid of the economic organisations and of peasant political parties. Consequently the working class is profoundly interested in an independence of the peasant movement permitting representation of the interests of the majority of peasants rather than only that of the narrow layer of the most powerful proprietors.

IX. We do not consider the anti-bureaucratic revolution to be an exclusively Polish affair. The economic and social contradictions which we have analysed have ripened in all the industrialised bureaucratic countries, in Czechoslovakia, in the German Democratic Republic, in Hungary and in the Soviet Union.

Nor do we consider the revolution to be the exclusive affair of the working class of the bureaucratic dictatorships. The bureaucratic system, identified with socialism by the official propaganda of the East and West, comprises socialism in the eyes of the popular masses of the developed capitalist countries.

The international bureaucracy and its leading force - the Soviet bureaucracy - fears all genuine revolutionary movements in the world because they threaten the monolithism of its system on an international scale as well as the internal monolithism which permits it to exercise its dictatorship over its own working class. Desiring international and internal stabilisation on the basis of the world division into spheres of influence, with capitalism, the bureaucracy smothers revolutionary movements on its own territory, and by means of its influence on the international Communist parties, holds back the development of movements in Latin America, Africa and Asia. The anti-bureaucratic revolution is the affair of the international revolutionary movement and of all the movements in favour of colonial revolution, in Africa, in Asia and in Latin America. It is part of the world revolutionary movement.

Like all revolutions, it threatens the established order and it is menaced by the forces which defend this order. The international bureaucracy, to the degree it is strong enough, will try to smother the victorious revolution in the first countries where it occurs. Western imperialism will try to profit from our revolution by replacing bureaucratic dictatorship with a dictatorship of the capitalist monopolies, which is hardly an improvement.

Our ally against the intervention of the Soviet tanks is the Russian working class, the Ukrainian, the Hungarian and the Czech. Our ally against the pressure and threats of imperialism is the working class of the industrialised West and the rising colonial revolution in the underdeveloped countries. Against the collusion between the international bureaucracy and the international imperialist bourgeoisie, we raise the historic slogan of the proletarian class struggle: "Workers of the World, Unite!"

The working class must carry out all these revolutions in all domains, political, economic and social, in order to realise its class goals: to control its own work and the products of its own labour. Is its programme valid?

In taking the first steps to realise it, that is, in giving autonomy to the enterprises, the working class creates the necessary conditions for adapting production to needs, the end of waste of economic surplus, the utilisation of the intensive factors of economic growth. The technocrats would do the same. But the productive goal of the working class is consumption on the broadest social basis and not the luxurious consumption of privileged layers. This is why the rule of the working class over production assures in the most decisive way the overcoming of the principal economic contradiction which today stands in the way of economic and social progress: the contradiction between the productive potential already developed and the actual low level of social consumption. As a result, the relations of production based on workers democracy open up the broadest perspectives for the development of the economy and society. By their unique class interest, the workers represent at the same time the economic interest of the mass of the

poorly paid white collar workers and the small and middle peasantry, in other words, the overwhelming majority of the rural and urban population.

The enslavement of the working class is the principle source of the enslavement of other classes and social layers; in liberating itself, the working class liberates the whole of society. In order to liberate itself, it must do away with the political police, thereby liberating society from dictatorship and fear; - it must do away with the regular army, thereby liberating soldiers from the brutalisation of barrack life; - it must institute the plurality of parties, thereby giving political freedom to all society;- it must eliminate preventive censorship, introduce total freedom of the press, of scientific and cultural creation, of the creation of diverse currents of social thought, thereby liberating the writer, the artist and the journalist, and creating the conditions under which the intelligentsia can realise in the fullest way its proper social function; - it must subject the administrative apparatus to constant control by, and permanent responsibility to its democratic organisations, that is to change the prevailing relationships inside this apparatus, thereby liberating the simple functionary from feudal and humiliating dependence on the bureaucratic hierarchy; - it must guarantee the peasantry control over its production and economic, social and political autonomy, thereby freeing the peasants from their lot of being eternally powerless subjects of every government, to become active citizens, organised and participating in the conditions which determine their life and work.

In the process of production, workers occupy the most ungratifying position. That is why the working class more than any other class in society needs democracy: any denial of democracy rebounds first against the workers. Workers democracy is socially the broadest form of government and creates the best conditions for the full development of society.

The specific class interests of the workers then corresponds best to the needs of economic development and consequently represents in the most complete way all the interests of society. The programme of the working class is therefore valid. Will it be realised ?

That depends on the state of ideological and organisational preparation of the workers at the moment of revolutionary crisis and thus on what those who consider the programme of workers democracy their own do today.

THESES ON THE TASKS OF INTERNATIONAL SOCIAL-DEMOCRACY

by ROSA LUXEMBURG

(One of the problems that has bedevilled the creation of a coherent Marxist left in Britain is the chronic myopia and parochialism that characterise much of "British Socialism". A continuing theme of World Politics will be the need to replace this limiting approach by its converse - Internationalism.

The following article was written just before the formation of the "Sparticists" at a time when the Second International had degenerated into an irrelevance in the struggle for Socialism. In later issues we will return to and develop these arguments put forward and to examine the need for an International in present conditions.)

A large number of comrades from different parts of Germany have adopted the following theses, which constitute an application of the Erfurt programme to the contemporary problems of international socialism.

1. The world war has annihilated the work of 40 years of socialism: by destroying the revolutionary proletariat as a political force; by destroying the moral prestige of socialism; by scattering the workers International; by setting its sections one against the other in fratricidal massacre; and by tying the aspirations and hopes of the masses of the people of the main countries in which capitalism has developed to the destinies of imperialism.

2. By their vote for war credit and by their proclamation of national unity, the official leaderships of the socialist parties in Germany, France and England (with the exception of the Independent Labour Party) have reinforced imperialism, induced the masses of people to suffer patiently the misery and horrors of war, contributed to the prolongation of the massacre and the increase in the number of its victims, and assumed their share in the responsibility for the war itself and for its consequences.

3. The tactic of the official leadership of the Parties in the belligerent countries, and in the first place in Germany, until recently at the head of the International, constitutes a betrayal of elementary principles of international socialism, of the vital interests of the working class, and of all the democratic interest of the peoples. By this alone socialist policy is condemned to impotence even in those countries where the leaders have remained faithful to their principles: Russia, Serbia, Italy and - with hardly an exception - Bulgaria.

4. By this alone official social democracy in the principal countries has repudiated the class struggle in war time and adjourned until after the war; it has guaranteed to the ruling classes of all countries a delay in which to strengthen, at the proletariats expense, and in a nonstrous fashion, their economic, political and moral positions.

5. The world war serves neither the national defense nor the economic or political interests of the masses of the people whatever they may be. It is but the product of imperialist rivalries between

the capitalist classes of the different countries for world hegemony and for monopoly in the exploitation and oppression of areas still not under the heel of capital. In the era of the unleashing of imperialism, national wars are no longer possible. National interests serve only as the pretext for putting the labouring masses of the people under the domination of their mortal enemy, imperialism.

6. The policy of the imperialist state and the imperialist war cannot give to a single oppressed nation its liberty and its independence. The small nations, the ruling classes of which are the accomplices of their partners in the big states, constitute only the pawns on the imperialist chess-board of the great powers, and are used by them, just like their own working masses, in wartime, as instruments, to be sacrificed to capitalist interests after the war.

7. The present world war signifies, under these conditions, either in the case of "defeat" or of "victory", a defeat for socialism and democracy. It increases, whatever the outcome - excepting the revolutionary intervention of the international proletariat - and strengthens militarism, national antagonisms, and economic rivalries in the world market. It accentuates capitalist exploitation and reaction in the domain of internal policy, renders the influence of public opinion precarious and derisory, and reduces parliaments to tools more and more obedient to imperialism. The present world war carries within it the seeds of new conflicts.

8. World peace cannot be assured by projects utopian or, at the bottom, reactionary, such as tribunals of arbitration by capitalist diplomatists, diplomatic "disarmament" conventions, "the freedom of the seas", abolition of the right of maritime arrest, "the United States of Europe", buffer states, and other illusions. Imperialism, militarism, and war can never be abolished or attenuated so long as the capitalist class exercises, uncontested, its class hegemony. The sole means of resistance, and the only guarantee of the peace of the world, is the capacity for action and the revolutionary will of the international proletariat to hurl its full weight into the balance.

9. Imperialism, as the last phase in the life, and the highest point in the expansion, of the world hegemony of capital, is the mortal enemy of the proletariat of all countries. But under its rule, just as in the preceding stages of capitalism, the forces of its mortal enemy have increased in pace with its development. It accelerates the concentration of capital, the pauperisation of the middle classes, the numerical reinforcement of the proletariat; it arouses more and more resistance from the masses; and leads thereby to an intensified sharpening of class antagonisms. In peace time as in war, the struggle of the proletariat as a class has to be concentrated first of all against imperialism. For the international proletariat, the struggle against imperialism is at the same time the struggle for power, the decisive settling of accounts between socialism and capitalism. The final goal of socialism will be realised by the international proletariat only if it opposes imperialism all along the line, and if it makes the issue: "war against war" the guiding line of its practical policy; and on condition that it deploys all its forces and shows itself ready, by its courage to the point of extreme sacrifice, to do this.

10. In this framework, socialism's principal mission today is to regroup the proletariat of all countries into a living revolutionary

force; to make it, through a powerful international organization which has only one conception of its tasks and interests, and only one universal tactic appropriate to political action in war and peace alike, the decisive factor in political life; so that it may fulfil its historic mission.

11. The war has smashed the Second International. Its inadequacy has been demonstrated by its incapacity to place an effective obstacle in the way of the segmentation of its forces behind national boundaries in the time of war, and to carry through a common tactic and action by the proletariat in all countries.

12. In view of the betrayal, by the official representatives of the socialist parties in the principal countries, of the aims and interests of the working class; in view of their passage from the camp of the working class International to the political camp of the imperialist bourgeoisie; it is vitally necessary for socialism to build a new workers' International, which take into its own hands the leadership and the co-ordination of the revolutionary class struggle against world imperialism.

To accomplish its historic mission, socialism must be guided by the following principles:

1. The class struggle against the ruling classes within the boundaries of the bourgeois states, and international solidarity of the workers of all countries, are the two rules of life, inherent in the working class struggle and of world historic importance to it for its emancipation. There is no socialism, without class struggle. The renunciation by the socialist proletariat, in the time of peace as in time of war, of the class struggle and of international solidarity, is equivalent to suicide.

2. The activity of the proletariat of all countries as a class, in peacetime as in wartime, must be geared to the fight against imperialism and war as its supreme goal. Parliamentary and trade union action, like every activity of the workers movement must be subordinated to this aim, so that the proletariat in each country is opposed in the sharpest fashion to its national bourgeoisie, so that the political and spiritual opposition between the two becomes at each moment the main issue, and international solidarity between the workers of all countries is underlined and practiced.

3. The centre of gravity of the organisation of the proletariat as a class is the international. The International decides in times of peace the tactics to be adopted by the national sections on the questions

of militarism, colonial policy, commercial policy, the celebration of May Day and, finally, the collective tactic to be followed in the event of war.

4. The obligation to carry out the decisions of the International takes precedence over all else. National Sections which do not conform with this place themselves outside the International.

5. The setting in motion of the massed ranks of the proletariat of all countries is alone decisive in the course of struggles against imperialism and against war. Thus the principle tactic of the National Section aims to render the masses capable of political action and resolute initiative; to ensure the international cohesion of the masses in action;

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to build the political and trade union organisations in such a way that, through their mediation, prompt and effective collaboration of all the sections is at all times guaranteed, and so that the will of the international materialises in action by the majority of working class masses all over the world.

6. The immediate mission of socialism is the spiritual liberation of the proletariat from the tutelage of the bourgeoisie, which expresses itself through the influence of nationalist ideology. The National Sections must agitate in the parliaments and the press, denouncing the empty wordiness of nationalism as an instrument of bourgeois domination. The sole defense of all real national independence is at present the revolutionary class struggle against imperialism. The workers fatherland, to the defense of which all else must be subordinated, is the socialist International.

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