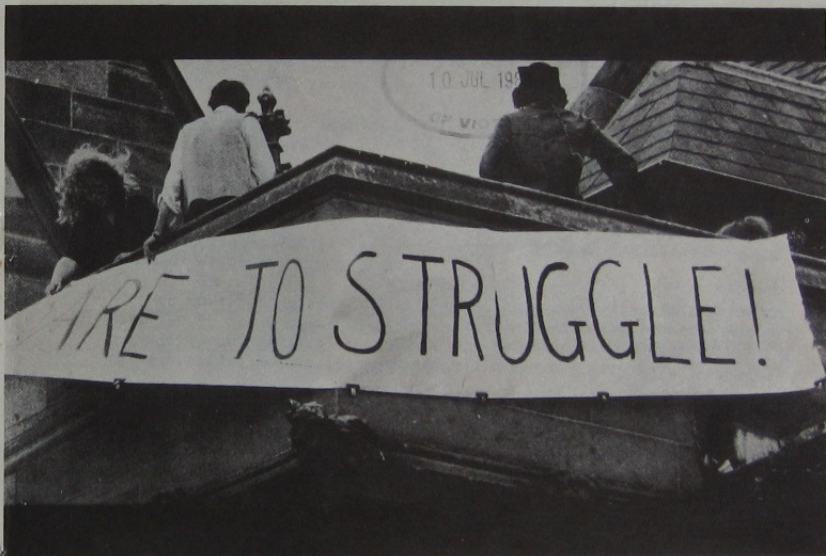


INTERNATIONAL 12

April-May 1970

10 cents

THE STRUGGLE AT SYDNEY UNIVERSITY



**Maurice Najman:
Whither the Student Movement?**

M. Pablo: REFLECTIONS ON LENIN

A.R.: "Mistakes" of the C.P.S.U.

Published by the Revolutionary Marxist Tendency of the Fourth International

Interim ReportOCCUPATION AND AFTERMATH

Judged internationally, the means used were moderate, though the issues raised were radical. Compared to the wave of ten simultaneous occupations in Britain at the end of February over secret files on students - one of these occupations lasted more than two weeks - the 22 - hour occupation of the Administration building at Sydney University was a moderate, cautious action - though it was the longest such occupation in the history of the Australian student movement and it did entail forceful entry through three sets of locked doors.

But the issues at stake are important; at Sydney students challenged the elitist, authoritarian university, subservient to the capitalist state, and raised (though only at the level of propaganda) the alternative of the self-managed, open, critical university in a self-managed socialist society.

Without doubt, a significant "student power" movement has been founded at Sydney University.

The struggle began with the exclusion, under a secret regulation, of Victoria Lee, who had not matriculated to Sydney University but had passed two esoteric first year subjects at Sydney in 1969, while enrolled at another university. Her application to become a full second year student at Sydney was rejected.

Her numerous appeals and student demands for her admission (along with the 30 or 40 students in her position) were also rejected by the university authorities, determined not to relent under student pressure, and determined not to endanger their elitist and privileged university.

University authorities publicly and frankly argued that to admit an unmatriculated student, like Victoria Lee, would be to breach "the entry standards wall" (matriculation requirements plus quotas plus high fees), which keeps out so-called "no-hopers" and prevents overcrowding. To which militants answered: good. Firstly, because "the entry standards wall" is both irrational, and indefensible, being easier for the sons and daughters of the middle class to surmount than for working class students. And secondly, because confronted with a financial crisis - an expression of capitalism's priorities and irrationality - the university authorities shut out students, enforcing capitalism's inadequacies by means of this "wall", rather than fight for adequate finance. A breach in a "wall" which was an instrument of privilege, which was an instrument of capitalist priorities, and which was maintained in a blatantly authoritarian manner, was not something students were going to shy away from.

The eruption of this "student power" movement at Sydney - seeking to curb the hitherto absolute power of the authorities to admit and exclude-

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has taken place in a situation of growing state control of higher education, or what we may call "the nationalisation of higher education".

As larger amounts of "intellectual" labour become more necessary for advanced capitalism so higher education is expanded; but capitalism not only demands that tertiary institutions train this labour but that they also stamp it with a particular character. Capitalism prefers "mutilated", quiescent, intellectual labour - narrow specialists without the ability, confidence, and will to undertake self-management. Universities try to achieve this by encouraging narrow specialisation, by what they teach (e.g. bourgeois ideology) and by what they do not teach (e.g. social responsibility courses in science), by conditioning students to accept authoritarianism, by keeping them economically and socially dependent, by examinations etc... The contradiction flows from the fact that this authoritarian retort is imposed on human beings continuously developing their critical abilities, with free time at their disposal, and to whom capitalism - its nature exposed by the heroic resistance of the Vietnamese people and the American Blacks - is increasingly unacceptable.

At the present time businessmen's Governments are intervening in higher education to ensure it carries out its 'training' and 'socialising' purposes even more efficiently. A second, cheaper, 'safer' university system is being thrown up where 'vocationalism' predominates, and no traditions of dissent or challenge exist. Governments also determine the nature, and extent, of the expansion of the 'older' universities. They also encourage and pressure university authorities - who are only too willing in most cases to be accomplices - to isolate, intimidate, and crush "student power" and anti-capitalist movements on their campuses.

Some Features of the Occupation....

For a time the leadership of the movement was shared with ALP left reformist leaders of the Student Representative Council. Though these types voted for an occupation, they quailed before the necessity of breaking into the Administration building, and subsequently condemned the forceful entry, later joining the university oligarchy, the mass media etc. in denouncing the occupation. They also attempted (unsuccessfully) to get a general student condemnation of the occupation (undertaken by about 200) which would have isolated the militants nicely for the authorities to finish them off...

The mass media, the left reformists, and university Administration went hysterical over the forceful entry and attempted to convince the mass of students that a major act of 'violence' (dead doors, wounded windows etc.) had been committed and must be condemned. The point of this exercise was to put an anathema on action. Initial success of this exercise is only now being cut away as it becomes clear that the authorities will almost certainly admit Victoria Lee next year....

There was amongst the occupiers' a predominance of first and second year students and women. Obviously this augurs well for the future of the

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revolutionary socialist movement of Sydney. For most of these students the occupation not only entailed a clash with university authorities but also with parents, for most Australian students live at home...

Injunctions were used against 6 students for the first time in Australia. Such injunctions can have the effect of decapitating and intimidating a movement, IF THEY ARE OBEYED, as they were too readily by the students at Sydney. As well as these particular injunctions the University authorities applied - as a bluff because there was little chance of it being granted, as they knew - for a general injunction against every student on the Sydney campus, which would have (or could have) denied students their freedoms of association and assembly....

After the Occupation

The Occupation has been followed by an anti-climactic period, as each side manoeuvres and counter-manoeuvers, as each side jockeys to take up new battle positions.

Without going into detail, the occupiers have prevented their isolation from the bulk of students despite the efforts of both left reformists and left liberals. The occupiers have also initiated a critique of the capitalist university, and disseminated the idea of a self-managed university. They are now moving to better organise themselves.

On the other hand, the resiliency and support of the left reformists has been confirmed in the current S.R.C. Presidential election in which they have easily out-campaigned the militants....

Also the authorities have laid disciplinary charges against 9 students and managed to entangle them in the disciplinary machinery, which wastes both their and the movement's time and energy. Five weeks after the occupation the hearings have not got beyond procedural questions.

The line of progress for the movement seems clear: our own disorganisation must be overcome; the growing political awareness on the campus (which is partly due to the moratorium) must be deepened; our model of the self-managed university should be more clearly and widely enunciated; militants should begin to concretely arouse the staff and students at the base to campaign for student-staff control; a network of dual power must be developed on the campus; co-ordinating and supporting this movement should be a S.R.C. which, along "Soviet" lines, directly represents the rank-and-file movement.

Obviously such a developing movement could not succeed on one campus alone, or without outside allies. Nor could it succeed without a conviction that it is possible for student socialists to win a majority in action against the capitalist university.

H. G.
30.4.70.

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4.
AS A DEFEATED ARMY WITHDRAWS two tendencies are likely to appear in its command. First those who seek revenge on the victorious people, and second those "irreconcilables" who believe that some last stand or offensive will turn the tide. The intensified bombardment of the South, the increased use of defoliants, special assassination squads etc. are a manifestation of the first tendency, and the absurd attack into Cambodia by the imperialists is an expression of the second. The defeat of imperialism in Indo-China is certain though it now appears that Nixon listens most to the "revenge-merchants" and "irreconcilables", a situation which will make the U.S. withdrawal longer and possibly more murderous. Meanwhile sympathy and solidarity with the heroic Vietnamese will increase.

SCHEDULED FOR HOME SOON is a conference of CP members opposed to the invasion of Czechoslovakia and the subsequent "normalisation". Round-ups of oppositionists still continue, as does what the Czechs call the "permanent purge".

INTERNATIONAL will soon publish an interview with Michel Pablo on the problems of workers control and self-management. Questions range from the struggle for workers' power in advanced capitalist countries to his experiences in Algeria. The interview will also be published in Britain by the Institute for Workers Control, whose quarterly bulletin and other publications can be subscribed to by forwarding 30/- sterling to: 45 Gable St., Forest Road West, Nottingham NG7 4ET, England.

The FIRST NATIONAL WOMEN'S LIBERATION CONFERENCE will be held in Melbourne May 16-18. Details can be obtained by writing to: Women's Liberation, 67 Giebe Pt. Rd., Glebe, Sydney, N.S.W. For 25 cents sent to the same address conference papers will be sent to you prior to the conference. Papers include: Women and Education, Women at Work, Femininity, etc.

NEW YORK HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS have recently endorsed demands for student-staff self-management of their schools. But in Sydney the struggle for democracy in schools is at a much lower level. The ban on discussion in schools of the Moratorium (against the Australian presence in Vietnam) has so far provoked only scattered, individual defiance. Though the Government has withdrawn its ban on the wearing of anti-war badges, individual principals are still suspending students who dare to wear badges. Teachers are also being intimidated out of joining the Moratorium by their principals and government bureaucrats, using threats of suspension etc. Only mass defiance at particular schools will curb this breathtaking authoritarianism and raise the question of power.

SUBSCRIPTIONS TO INTERNATIONAL still cost a dollar for 6 issues. Subscribe through A. McLean, P.O. Box 13, Balmain, N.S.W. 2041.

STILL AVAILABLE: Michel Pablo's REPORT ON THE PALESTINIAN REVOLUTION, 15 cents p.p., from A. McLean, P.O. Box 13, Balmain, N.S.W. 2041. Also available is Denis Freney's The South African Revolution, 25 cents,

DENIS FRENEY AND THE COMMUNIST PARTY.

(This statement is the text of a resolution passed at a meeting of Sydney members of the Revolutionary Marxist Tendency of the Fourth International.)

.....
Denis Freney's decision to seek membership in the C.P.A. stems from his conviction that its dominant leadership wing has given evidence of striving to achieve a revolutionary marxist position and that an objective appraisal of the distance it has already taken the party on this road justifies the view that it is timely for revolutionary marxists to seek admission to further this work of reorientation.

It follows in his view that the existence of the C.P.A.'s national organisation - a potential asset for the proletarian struggle for power - which bids fair to achieve a necessary transformation, must be given its proper importance, and ultra-leftism induced by years of conflict with the Stalinist C.P.A. avoided.

In the general left wing Denis Freney is looked on as the spokesman of his group because of his identification with its publications over the last period. Consequently we cannot escape the responsibility of declaring the group's contrary view of his decision.

In our view the decline of the C.P.A.'s membership and influence in the working class and general left could not fail to impose on a perceptive leadership the necessity of taking some measures to refurbish the organisation's image. Particularly was this necessary because the party was not attracting the revolutionary youth, without whose interest and allegiance the organisation must continue to decline and decay.

These measures took the form of criticism of the "mistakes" of the Soviet leadership on Czechoslovakia and the ruthless suppression and denigration of critics inside the Soviet Union, and the elaboration of a political position giving a place to workers' control and self-management - but the latter is so far substantially divorced from a general orientation consistent with and leading to this revolutionary objective.

This elaboration leaned heavily on an exaggerated conception of the difference between 'neo-capitalism' and capitalism, which cannot but minimise the importance of a critical examination of the counter-revolutionary history of the Stalinist C.P.S.U. and tend to attribute the internal party conflict mainly to the struggle of the progressives who appreciate the 'new situation' requires a 'new approach' and the reactionaries who fail to see this.

On the contrary we assert that on the part of the C.P.A. leadership there has to be indicated not only a consciousness of the absolute necessity of a critical examination of the nature of the Soviet Union, of its privileged anti-socialist, anti-Soviet bureaucracy, but also a determination to proceed with this examination, particularly having regard to Trotsky's classic 'Revolution Betrayed'.

1939-1945

We assert that the C.P.A. leadership has not indicated a glimmering of recognition of the party's betrayal of the Leninist position in the

Second Imperialist World War (1939-1945), when it first supported Stalin's alliance with German imperialism and later his alliance with allied imperialism, and gave its services to the Australian bourgeoisie against the proletariat, earning the latter's lack of confidence and support when the bourgeoisie no longer had need of the party's services.

The validity of the Leninist attitude of opposition to national unity with the bourgeoisie in imperialist war (without which there would have been no successful Russian revolution) is not negated by the involvement of a workers' state on one side or the other. The task of revolutionaries remained to continue the struggle, in accordance with the given circumstances, rejecting abstention from military service, going along with their generation in the conscripted industry or armed forces, developing organisation parallel with that of the bourgeois authority with the perspective of grasping the possibilities indicated by favourable situations of establishing dual power and proceeding through the crunch to self-management.

Since the degenerated workers' state is able to be regenerated by the expanding world revolution it must be defended, firstly by policies based on extension of the world revolution, but also by demanding and fighting for economic and military measures on the part of its allies' appropriate to its defence.

This does not at all conflict with the imperative of maintaining a class position, refusing expressions of confidence in, and political support of, one's own bourgeoisie - the policy of class defence. This is the opposite of the C.P.A.'s policy of counterposing the necessity of defence of the workers' state, and of the Australian workers against fascism borne by foreign invasion, against the necessity of continuing the offensive and offensive struggle of the workers against the dictatorship of the Australian bourgeoisie, thus opposing and sabotaging the class struggle.

Reformist

On the industrial arena the C.P.A.'s policy remains essentially reformist. In common with the more 'with-it' reformists it does not come out in opposition to the atomisation of the proletarian struggle in sectional action, which in conditions of 'euphoria' and expansion certainly pressurises the bourgeoisie and its instrumentalities to concede wage increases, largely absorbed by rising prices which reduce the large sector of non-employees to ever more straitened circumstances.

Coincidentally, any resistance to the increasingly harsh dictatorship of the boss in the workshop, and his preoccupation with isolating and unloading 'dangerous' elements working for militant job organisation and control, arises spontaneously and is seen by union officials as a nuisance interfering with their calculatedly reformist strategy.

The militant who is unloaded is suitably consoled by the all-knowing officials (unless he is too intransigent) and eventually slipped into another job, perhaps to ruminate on whether there is any future in exercising his 'right' to free speech and organisation.

Certainly the workers, lacking the perspective of power that would be rapidly induced by a policy of generalisation of the workers' struggle must proceed with limited and bureaucratically controlled action to maintain their standards.

THE STUDENT MOVEMENT IN SEARCH OF A POLICY

One after another the student movements of capitalist Europe have followed more or less the same path.

Everywhere they were born of the crisis in the education system; everywhere in the universities they have taken on a character of mass revolt; everywhere they posed right away, via the question of reform of the education system, that of the revolutionary transformation of society; everywhere by dialogue with experienced militants they discovered the bureaucratic emptiness of the 'Old Left'; everywhere they attempted the "long march" towards the factories; everywhere the student movements sought to be what they could not become, everywhere they refused to become what they could be.

In France, Italy or elsewhere the questions were all the same:

How to reconcile the mass character of the movement and its revolutionary political role?

How to build the alliance with the workers, despite the barriers of the Stalinist or reformist organisations?

In fact the questions are posed the wrong way; the answers depend on this new set of questions:

From what factors does the student movement derive its mass character? (answering this question entails the most rigorous possible understanding of the student milieu and of the crisis of the education system.)

What questions does the student movement pose for the whole of society? (the answer here enables the movement to establish the function of the movement and its revolutionary character.)

What relationship does the student movement have with the process of restructuration of the worker movement? (answering this question will enable the movement to define its specific political role.)

Finally, what programme must the student movement adopt to carry out its tasks? (the answer to this must allow the movement to preserve both its mass and its revolutionary nature as well as its political perspectives.)

The replies to these questions will also mean the drawing up of a charge sheet against the different 'leaderships' who at best have led the movement into being no more than a 'super-groupuscule'.

An Eloquent Precedent

The trajectory followed by the French student movement since 1968 stunningly resembles that followed by the Italian movement some months later. The comparison is not invalid. The university revolt in France and in Italy broke out, on the whole, in the same context; necessity for the bourgeoisie to confront the galloping crisis of the university institution, strong workers' movement organised and dominated by a hegemonic communist party etc., etc....

In a recently produced student review ⁽¹⁾ a Roman militant outlines three main phases in the Italian movement.

First the development, on the basis of anti-authoritarianism, of a strong mass movement adopting the demands of "student power", giving the movement its mass power and enabling it to "exist". The base of the movement is informal and unorganised, the "leaderships" are co-opted. But this situation does not remain stable.

The reflux phase begins with the period of the "provocation-repression-mobilisation" cycle.²⁾ This phase is characterised by the abandonment of of university terrain where the movement appears as a political force which means to combat frontally the capitalist system. This phase will be marked by some confrontations with the police, the wish for "a link with the workers", organisational strengthening in the form of base committees (equivalent of the French action committees).

Re-assembling for the new university year will see the base committees become the arenas of confrontation between diverse revolutionary groups. A return to the university field is attempted but, remarks the Roman militant, 'this return has always tended in fact to prepare a mass exit from the university. The aim is in itself contradictory, one can come out of the university en masse only in small groups. This way of working in fact severs the movement from the student masses.' This is the phase of utter confusion. Some groups withdraw from the movement, and in the face of the melting away of the base committees, assert their organisational "strength" as an alternate pole of political attraction (the M.L. Union in Italy, the Communist League in France....)

Militants of the French student movement will recognise in this description their own "story". The resemblances are striking: they are symptoms of the existence, beyond its conjunctural expression, of a new social phenomenon, which revolutionary marxist militants have the task of analysing, of endowing with perspectives and a programme, and of providing with leadership.

The Impossibility of Restructuring the University

The crisis of the education system is at the center of a network of contradictions. Spotlighting the fundamental contradiction between the relations of production and forces of production it expresses particularly the crisis in the adaptation of one of the principal institutions of the capitalist system to the development of modern productive forces.

The classical bourgeois university is unable to ensure the training and integration of new proletarianized strata of the working population. The reconstruction of the university, fitting it for these new aims, implies a general restructuring of the whole of exploiting society, at least on the political level (forms of management), the economic level (concentration, planned development, scientific research) and the social level (integration of new strata at the capitalist social foundation).

This restructuring is impossible today because the development of productive forces, far from assimilating the contradictions of capitalism has only added new contradictions, quantitatively (in regard to more and more strata being embraced) and qualitatively (in regard to the issues involved: town planning, leisure time, transport, working conditions.... and in regard to their attainment: self-determination and self-management). Far from postponing the perspective of the Revolution, the development of productive forces brings nearer the day of reckoning, by strengthening

revolutionary motivation and by forming the material foundations for social liberation.

The capitalist state has not the strength (the necessary social stability) to ensure the restructuring of the education system. It acts pragmatically (arbitrary selection, introduction of private capital, reforms and counter-reforms).

In a nutshell: that element (the proletarianized intellectual strata) which could be the instrument and spur for the most advanced bourgeois solutions (e.g. those of Edgar Faure) has not taken the road of capitalist integration.

A Work Force Being Trained

The student movement (like the participation of the white collar workers in the May/June strike) expresses the revolt of these "modern productive forces" against the capitalist society of exploitation.

The function of the university is the training of proletarian intellectual strata, which are not integrated in production but are non-possessing and selling their labour power: e.g. teachers, administrative officers, medical technicians, the importance of whom (28% of the working population in France) shows that one should not confuse them with the "intellectual craftsmen" of the liberal professions.

It is now realised more and more, as Marx said: "In order to be productive it is no longer necessary for oneself to do manual work, it is sufficient to be a component part of a working collective whatever function one is fulfilling."³⁾ And again as Marx said (4), "taken as a whole these workers (skilled operatives, engineers etc. who exercise their minds) in so far as they are collective producers form a living machine. Likewise if one considers the whole of production, they exchange their work for capital and reproduce the capitalist's money in the form of capital, that is as value which is valorised, as value which makes profit. The position of each of these people, in particular in relation to capital, remains that of a wage worker, of a productive worker in the specific sense of the term.

The student is therefore this "work force being trained" whose future status will more and more lose its ambiguous character and which will undergo the same constraints, the same exploitation as the whole of the working class. Extreme specialisation in work, technological unemployment, accentuated social restraints: this is what awaits the majority of the student body. This was understood right from the time the student movement was born as a social movement which tried to take control (one of the reasons for its present disarray) of the social field in its entirety.

A New Social Force

It can be easily understood how, in starting with more or less consciously expressed aspirations, the student movement gained a mass character. It affirmed by this a double character: - affirmation of its presence in the university precincts as a mass force: - affirmation of its presence in society not only as a detonator, but, as a group of Italian militants pointed out, as a social group in constant agitation, as a magnet which simultaneously performs two functions:

- (1) it extracts a given object from an area
- (2) at the moment of extraction it creates a disturbance in the

magnetic field which surrounds it.

A total social movement poses questions for society as a whole - questions which concern society as a whole. But a total social group will not, as such, provide the answers.

If the student movement was able to play the role of detonator in May/June 1968, it was because in a particular conjuncture (exacerbation of social struggle, holding of power, anti-working class legislation) it was able to:

- (1) speak the language of revolutionary violence when confronting police violence
- (2) speak the language of the social liberation of self-management.

There is not, among the documents written in the 'May commissions' in occupied faculties, institutes and high schools, any which do not speak simultaneously - in a language often full of illusions and leftist naivete - of the transformation of university and the transformation of society and everywhere it is against the authoritarian, hierarchical, pyramidal and manipulative aspects of the society of exploitation that self-management is adopted as a solution.

Today, 18 months after the revolutionary crisis, the student movement has reunited to ask new questions, often more specific ones. The strike of medicine students, struggles against selection (quotas), struggles against the dismantling of the public education system, have posed, pell-mell, questions of health under capitalism, of professional training, of class barriers in education etc. But what is still lacking is definition of the steps which would allow the translations of these questions into issues for the "worker student alliance".

What Alliance?

The student movement (whatever its internal difficulties) has wanted to renew, without having the means, the revolutionary critique of the reformist and Stalinist leaderships of the workers' movement. The student movement can assume this role, but only with the weapons of its mass presence on university terrain, its program and its will to unify anti-capitalist struggles. The "link" for us cannot simply be the action of isolated individuals; it must be the encounter of social groups in a mass field, in the class struggle, an encounter registered more in the "community of aspirations" than in the community of immediate interests.

The objective basis for a link does not lie fundamentally in the definition of common material needs but in the situation created by capitalist society.

As for the workers' movement itself, it is confronted increasingly by the very questions which are confronting the student movement. May/June 1968, the development of struggles around living and working conditions have led the French workers' movement to define more or less clearly control claims and self-management perspectives. In Italy, the CGIL (Communist Party dominated trade union federation) has adopted as an integral part of its programme workers' control claims and autonomous forms of workers' organisations (general assemblies, shop-stewards.....)

The student movement, as a mass force, has a political role of initiative to play - that of working for the restructuring of the workers

and revolutionary movement, by testing its programme, by activity for control, by its policy of a unified, anti-capitalist front.

We must go forward to constructing the student movement, endowing it with an offensive programme, centred around the "struggle for student rights" (the place and thus the 'power' of the student in the university and in society) and student control in the university institutions and so founding a revolutionary syndicalism which will thus reconcile the mass character of the student movement with its revolutionary character.

Maurice NAJMAN

4.1.70

(The author is a student of the Sorbonne, a well known student militant and one of the founders of the Comites d'Actions Lyceens (French high school action committees).

This is a translation of an article which originally appeared in Sous Le Drapeau du Socialisme, No. 51, Dec. 1969- Jan. 1970.

NOTES

- 1) Cahiers Etudiants Europe ns
- 2) In Europe, as in the U.S., police are called onto the campus frequently and precipitously, to suppress any challenge to the capitalist university (Trans. note.)
- 3) Capital, vol. 1.
- 4) Histoire Besc Doctrines Economiques
- 5) Re this, the Maoist fantasies about integrating into the United Front, without distinction, students and small shop-keepers, "the anti-capitalist strata", under the leadership of the working class are enough to make one weep. How dare they equate the university revolt, sign of new social phenomena, with the "revolt" of the petit bourgeoisie, the expression of the death of a social strata without a future.

.....

FIGHTING FUND

The students at Sydney University have incurred big expenses in their struggle. As well as thousands of leaflets, they have published 6,000 copies of their broadsheet HE LIBERATOR and are planning another issue soon.

Donations needed now. Please to:

Margaret Grenland
c/- Box 68
The UNION
Sydney University
N.S.W. 2006

REFLECTIONS ON THE WORK OF LENIN

(On the Occasion of the 100th Anniversary of his Birth)

This year (in April) we celebrate the 100th anniversary of Lenin's birth.

How many books have been written already on the man and his work, each with a particular interpretation of "Leninism"?

The variety of appreciations arises from a whole complex of reasons: the existence of a very abundant literary output by Lenin, which few of his interpreters have had the necessary time and training (theoretical and practical) to understand and study in its totality; the handicaps arising from their own social and political position influencing their way of understanding and interpreting "Leninism"; finally the complex richness of the subject which could not in any way be reduced to simplistic schematisation and codification in the way of Stalin in "The Questions of Leninism" of sad memory.

As to Lenin himself, he is still to be defended from having developed some or other specific "Marxism", rather than simply the Marxism of Marx and Engels, revolutionary Marxism as applied to his epoch and, more particularly, to the Russian context.

As was the case with Marx, so also with Lenin there was a profound unity connecting his whole work, from his youth to his death. But this unity, this same profound logic, was constantly maturing, and, as is natural, certain fundamental ideas outlined since his youth having been taken up during his life and constantly investigated further.

From this point of view it would be erroneous to judge them in a way fragmentary in time, but rather to grasp them in their dialectical development from beginning to end.

By MICHEL PABLO

(Translated from Sous le Drapeau du Socialisme, No. 51, Dec. 1969-Jan. 1970).

Whoever wants to draw up a balance sheet of Lenin's thought, assuming he knows it thoroughly, has been able to study it in its totality and has possessed the theoretical and political qualifications for such a study, must grasp it in its global historical development.

For our part we insist on four characteristic stages of the historical work of the man, which appear to us, in their unity, to disclose both his specific contribution to Marxism and the innermost structure of his revolutionary genius.

These stages are represented by "What is to be Done?", "Notes on the Dialectic", "State and Revolution" and finally, by the whole of his writings since the seizure of power in Russia, particularly in the last period of his conscious life (1921-3)

In "What is to be Done?" Lenin elaborated his conceptions on the "Party", indispensable instrument in the struggle for power in a given national context, in a given historical conjuncture.

Already in that he was faithful to an eminent principle of the dialectic which he thoroughly understood and cherished: truth is always concrete, which puts us on guard against misleading generalisations, extrapolations, degenerating fatally into schematism and dogmatism.

During his whole life Lenin did not cease to work theoretically on his conceptions of the "Party" elaborated in 1902 and to practise them.

Thus whoever wishes to grasp the "Leninist" conception of the

Party must not simply refer to the original version of "What is to be Done?", but to the totality of Lenin's writings on this subject, and to the way he understood practically, before, during and after the Revolution, the functioning of the Party he founded.

In "Notes on the Dialectic", lecture notes written at the beginning of the first world war, Lenin, who for the first time is systematically studying the dialectic and the philosophy of Hegel, gives the measure of his vast general culture, of the depth of his thought, including his truly dialectical finesse, compensating by a long stretch for the limitations with which "Materialism and Empiric-criticism" may be tarnished.

It is in no way correct to judge "philosophical Lenin" on that single work written before the circumstances of his militant life had permitted him the systematic study of Hegel's philosophy, and to refine his conception of the dialectic.

But up to now, who among those engaged in the daily preparation of the Revolution has taken the trouble to make such a study, and attained such results as those contained in the famous "Notes" of Lenin, and on which no serious elaboration yet exists?

In "State and Revolution" Lenin gives the measure of his real conceptions on the goal to be attained by the Revolution begun in Russia and which he considered as "one of the links of the chain of proletarian socialist revolutions provoked by the imperialist war"(1).

He added: "Thus, the question of the attitude of the socialist revolution of the proletariat towards the State does not acquire solely a practical political importance; it assumes a character of burning actuality, because it is a question of enlightening the masses on what they will have to do in a very near future, in order to liberate themselves from the yoke of capital." (2).

As do so many other works of Lenin, "State and Revolution" treated a subject in relation to the actuality of the Revolution, and not in relation to remote historical situations and aims.

Finally, in the whole of his writings from 1917 to 1923 Lenin revealed not only his tactical genius, but his way of understanding Marxism, which served him as method of analysis and guide to political orientation (towards a defined end in relation to which the means are chosen and determined), both dominated, in the final analysis, by the complex, moving, constantly creating reality and by experience.

By this attitude he remains faithful to the conception he developed of the theory of knowledge (and which is also that of Marx and of all authentic Marxism) according to which it is a question, through elaboration of increasingly profound, refined concepts and through the whole of the mental process (of logic and of dialectic) to grasp better each time the complex, infinite richness of life, without ever exhausting it; and whilst inevitably, constantly committing errors, "stupidities" as he loved to stress.

Thus he did not erect Marxism into

- (1) Preface to "State and Revolution" of August, 1917.
(2) Ibid.

a universal panacea giving us the keys for a total assimilation, for an exhaustive knowledge of reality: but as the best method we now have to go further than others in understanding the directing lines of the social movement and its phenomena.

From this point of view Lenin would be the first to understand that "Leninism", that is the whole of the concepts, ideas and analyses elaborated by him as specific developments of revolutionary Marxism applied to his time, is not a fixed dogma, but that, necessarily, it must become superseded.

That is to say, a continued enrichment conserving certain achievements and, with the aid of a new illumination furnished by experience, rejecting or modifying other elaborations in a perpetual work of synthesis, with new elements produced by life, reality in evolution, endlessly.

In that consists the essence, the destiny of Marxism understood above all as critical, creative method of the largest and deepest possible mastering of social reality in our epoch.

Lenin and the "Party"

"What is to be Done?" sums up the experience Lenin draws from the ideological struggle led by Leksa between 1901 and 1902 against the "economists" and preaches the necessity of a "democratic-centralist" organization composed of "professional revolutionaries".

In his preface to his edition contained in the collection "Twelve Years" published in 1907, Lenin stated with precision that "What is to be Done?" "is a polemical work intended to correct the errors of 'economism', and it is incorrect to examine the contents of the brochure in isolation from this task."

According to him it was a question of "straightening the line" which the "economists" had "distorted in a way" by "twisting it in the opposite direction". But he denied having wanted in any way to "erect the formulae used in 'What is to be Done?' into something 'programmatically' constituting a body of principles".

This does not alter the fact that the incriminating phrases which "What is to be Done?" contains have fostered an abundant polemical literature among Marxists, centred on the actual leading question of the reciprocal relations between the class and the Party.

The famous subject of the controversy is well known:

Lenin writes in "What is to be Done?" that the history of all countries attests that, through its own forces, the working class can reach only trade union consciousness.

As for the socialist doctrine, it is born of the philosophic, historic, economic theories elaborated by the cultivated representatives of the possessing classes, by the intellectuals.

...The spontaneous development of the worker movement legitimately leads to its subordination to the bourgeois ideology, because the spontaneous worker movement is trade-unionism, and trade-unionism is rightly the ideological subjection of the workers by the bourgeoisie.

That is why our task, that of the social-democracy, is to combat spontaneity, to divert the worker movement from this spontaneous tendency of trade unionism to seek refuge under the wing of the bourgeoisie, so as to draw it under the wing of social-democracy.

According to the literal interpretation of "What is to be Done?",

the workers who tend spontaneously towards the bourgeois ideology, the dominant, the prevalent ideology, nevertheless have the faculty of also easily assimilating socialism, which is a doctrine elaborated by intellectuals and a policy applied by a distinct organization of the class, in a word a "consciousness" brought from outside.

Flekhanov, Rosa Luxembourg and Trotsky intervened against this conception in 1904. They attempted to define the dialectical bond between "spontaneity" and "consciousness", between class and party.

According to Flekhanov the Marxist doctrine reflects the spontaneous growth of the worker movement, without which it could not have been able to elaborate and develop.

He calls in question, then, that the limits of the "consciousness" which the proletariat can attain may be those of "economism" and of "trade-unionism" because "it is clear", according to him, "that at a certain stage of social development, the workers of the capitalist countries would have reached socialism even if they had been abandoned to their own forces".

The term socialism is used by Flekhanov in the sense of the social revolution which, in a way, synthesises spontaneity and consciousness with a view to a radical change of the social order.

With Rosa Luxembourg the polemic is both widened and raised higher, to superior levels.

For her, "socialist consciousness" and spontaneous movement of the class are not external elements the one to the other which must be connected, but grounded in a dialectical unity.

"Social-democracy is not joined to the organization of the working class, it is the working class' very own movement."

The "Party" is nothing other than the most advanced ideological layer of the proletariat organically tied to the other surrounding layers of the proletariat involved in class struggle, through which their class consciousness unceasingly grows.

Setting out from this conception Rosa rejects "rigid", "mechanical" "super-centralism" delivering the workers to a "group of intellectuals" who corner the leadership of the Party, and through the intermediary of the "Central Committee" and its "absolute power" fetter, deform and limit the free development of the revolutionary movement of the class.

Trotsky developed his criticisms of "What is to be Done?" in this general direction speaking of the "political substitutionism" of Lenin, whose conception of the Party substitutes this latter for the class. In the extension of this logic the "Central Committee" would substitute itself for the organization of the party and "finally a dictator" would substitute himself for the Central Committee.

"The system of this political 'substitutionism'", Trotsky asserts, "just as the system of 'economist simplification', arises, consciously or unconsciously, from a false, adulterated understanding of the relation between the objective interests of the proletariat and its consciousness. Marxism teaches that the interests of the proletariat are determined by the objective conditions of its existence. These interests are so powerful, and it is so vain to struggle against them, that they finally constrain the proletariat to transfer them into the domain of its own consciousness -- that is to say, to transform the

success of its objective interests into its subjective interest".

Trotsky persisted up to the end of his life (3) in considering that Lenin's theory according to which "the worker movement, left to itself, inevitably takes the road of opportunism" and that "revolutionary consciousness is brought to it from the outside by Marxist intellectuals" has a "one-sided and therefore erroneous character."

He conceded also, on the same occasion, that the "tendency of Bolshevism for centralisation revealed from the Third Congress (of the Russian Social-Democratic Party) its negative aspects" favouring the rise of the "bureaucracy" of the practically uncontrolled "comitards".

At nearly the same time Trotsky considered (4) that the banning of the tendencies in the Bolshevik Party, occurring at the Tenth Party Congress, "was one of the points of departure of the degeneration of the Party".

However, considered as a whole, Lenin's conception of the Party, such as was materialised in practice in his lifetime, makes other characteristics stand out which predominate by far over its "negative aspects".

For Lenin, the Party is an instrument of the struggle of the proletariat in a historic period dominated by the reality of the Revolution, with a view to assuring the victory of the latter.

Lenin, more than anyone else, gave primacy to the revolutionary

activity of the masses which creates revolutionary situations and begins revolutions.

On several occasions Lenin had emphasised the slowness of the Party in relation to the masses' organically, instinctively launching out into revolutionary struggle, more audaciously and radically than the conservative "leaderships", caught unexpectedly by the Revolution, which never assumes "pure forms", never follows a calendar or a "foreseen" road.

Lenin conceived the Party in the function of its political role, of its capacity to interpret correctly political reality in permanent interaction with the movement of the class, to accelerate the movement and to orient it towards the objective: the seizure of power.

The organisation of the Party is subordinated to its political function in a given context. For this reason it is elastic and evolves according to the exigencies of the struggle for the revolution and according to the acquisition of experience.

"A form of organisation that has been useful for precise objectives, in a particular case, plainly can become an obstacle in different conditions of struggle", Lukacs wrote with justice in his "Lenin" of 1924.

He added: "Because it is of the essence of history to always produce new." This "new" cannot be calculated in advance thanks to some inflexible theory -- it must be identified in the struggle by its first sprouts and be made to progress towards clear consciousness.

The party does not have for its task to impose on the masses any type of comportment abstractly elaborated but, quite the contrary, to permanently study the struggles and methods of struggle of the masses.

The Party, that is to say the indispensable political organisation of the vanguard of the class, makes up for the fluctuations of the revolutionary movement of the class by maintaining a high level of consciousness enriched by the experience of all the struggles of the class.

"Revolutionary instinct" and "revolutionary spontaneity" characterise the permanent but irregular movement of the class, whilst lasting "revolutionary consciousness" is the attribute, on principle, of the organised vanguard.

However, the "proletarian" and "socialist" purity of this "consciousness" is not acquired once and for all by the "Party" making use of the name of Marxism, but this is the function of its truly proletarian composition, of its affective, democratic connection with the class, of its internal regime, of the theoretical and political quality of its leadership.

The "Party" can very well evolve into a spokesman of bureaucratic forces or groups, differentiating itself, through the creation of interests proper to such forces or groups, from the proletariat and from its historic interests as a class.

From this point of view, besides the composition of the Party, its internal regime and the quality of its leadership are determinant factors in its evolution.

Every political organisation cannot be otherwise than at the same time "democratic" and "centralist".

Otherwise it would not be an "organisation", but a queer, loose association, a nebulous and ineffectual movement.

The term "democratic centralism" used by Lenin was aimed at expressing the changing dynamic of this dialectical unity, according to the circumstances of the struggle.

For example, in the case of prolonged and rigorous illegality the "centralist" element tends to restrict democracy in the Party.

On the other hand, in the case of wide and lasting "bourgeois-democratic" legality, the democratic life of the Party expands freely.

The "Leninist" practice of the Bolshevik Party demonstrates that under Lenin's personal impulsion, this Party always assured to all its elements and all its tendencies a very democratic internal life before, during and after the Revolution.

It is sufficient to remember the very large degree of liberty that existed at least up to the Tenth Congress of the Party in the multiple internal and public discussions that took place between the cadres of this Party and the equivalent of which is not to be found in any other Party since that time.

In its organisational functioning the Party corresponded to the political style of Lenin, of his thought, of his way of conceiving Marxism, of his morale also.

"Leninism could not be conceived without theoretical power, without a critical analysis of the material bases of the political process. It is necessary to unceasingly sharpen and apply the arm of "Marxist investigation," Trotsky will write in 1923 ("New Course").

He added: "Leninism is in the

(3) See his "Stalin" written in 1939.

(4) Letter of Leon Trotsky to the French Workers and Peasants' Socialist Party (P.S.O.P.) of July 25, 1939 (see No. 42 of "Sous le Drapeau du Socialisme").

first place realism, the best qualitative and quantitative appreciation of reality from the point of view of revolutionary action. It is also irreconcilable with the flight from reality, with passivity, with the arrogant justification of yesterday's faults on the pretext of saving the tradition of the Party.

"Leninism is orthodox, stubborn, irreducible, but it does not imply either formalism or dogma or bureaucratism.

"It does not allow of either fiction, or bragging, or pseudo-grandeur."

The experience of Bolshevism has also demonstrated how the best "design" of a political organisation

indispensable to the vanguard, both democratic and efficacious as Lenin certainly wanted, could become the victim of adverse historical circumstances and could be bureaucratised beyond recognition -- the very opposite of its archetype.

But what we can be certain of is that this work of destruction could not have been achieved with Lenin but against Lenin.

For, as we shall see, it was Lenin who was the first among the Bolshevik leaders to react, to be sure empirically, against the new element of bureaucratisation, destructive of workers' power, and to terminate his conscious life in pathetic efforts to contain this monstrous evil.

(End of Part 1 - to be continued in future Internationals.)

In this issue we have reproduced the first part of Michel Pablo's essay on Lenin's life and work.

This first part concentrates on Lenin's theory and practice in relation to the revolutionary party.

In future issues we will reproduce further parts of this essay which will deal with Lenin's philosophical work, with "State and Revolution" and with Lenin's "practice" during the Revolution and up to his last struggles against bureaucratisation.

MISTAKES THE C.P.S.U. DIDN'T MAKE by A.R.

The day is long past when, disconcerted by Khrushchev's "revelations" about various legal murders, mass deportations and high-level paranoia, Palme Dutt of the British C.P. could try to sweep the dirt under the rug with a bland observation that there appeared to be "spots on the Soviet sun".

Outraged party members retorted that crimes should be called crimes, and that no organisation or individual can secure exemption from moral judgment by claiming that history is all in all, on their side.

Their stand was certainly right, as far as it went, whether it is a matter of interrogators for the secret police, informers on their workmates or flatterers of the big Stalin or the little Stalins, there is no reason why we should express gentler opinions of them than of the stand-over men, "top-offs" and crawlers to the boss that we meet in daily life.

But Marxists cannot leave the question at the level of a moral verdict. There is an enormous deterioration from the Russia of 1918 to the Russia of 1938-in, for example, the level of confidence and strength of the working-class, and in its social and political power. A transformation so vast needs to be explained in terms of the social forces at work, in class terms-individual criminality is never a satisfactory explanation for events on an historic scale like these.

It is not the point of this article to give such an explanation. We will simply refer to the work which first applied Marxist analysis to the Stalinist era, and which still has no equal as a scientific study of the period-a period still continuing, we might add: Trotsky's "The Revolution Betrayed". (It is a criticism of present day Marxists, we believe, that none of us have taken advantage of the wealth of new data and fresh developments to produce a book which would make obsolete this pioneer work of 1936.)

Some of the theses in Trotsky's analysis are now well-known. For example; The working class power which succeeded capitalism after October 1917 was itself replaced by the power of a new ruling social stratum; the bureaucracy. This stratum was composed principally of Party functionaries, state officials, industrial managers and so on, together with their close subordinates and their privileged hangers-on.

Definitely consolidated, by the 'thirties', as a social group, which was conscious of common interests opposed to those of the masses, the bureaucracy succeeded in changing the C.P.S.U. from a proletarian party into an instrument of their arbitrary social and political rule.

In various forms, the concept of a Soviet bureaucracy is now widespread among the membership of the communist parties. But rough ideas of this kind are not the same thing as a grasp of the full analysis involved. This article is intended as a comment on a particular approach to the history of the international Communist movement, which allows much of the class content of this analysis to be evaded; the approach which acknowledges "mistakes" allegedly made by the C.P.S.U. leadership.

Certainly the C.P.S.U. - whether in 1918, in 1938 or in 1968 - made some mistakes. But some of the policy decisions made since 1930, which are sometimes called mistakes, are actually nothing of the kind; and to call them mistakes is to reveal a seriously inadequate appreciation of the real forces at work.

For a Marxist, a discussion of what constitutes a "mistake" can profitably take as its starting-point Marx's important principle, that an historical movement must not be taken at its own evaluation, Marx warns, in "The German Ideology", that we should not be deceived "if an epoch imagines itself to be actuated by purely 'political' or 'religious' motives, although 'religion' and 'politics' are only forms of it's true motives." (page 50, Moscow edition). He stresses the need "to distinguish between what somebody professes to be and what he really is ..." (p.64)

Now, leaders of social or political movements are not infallible, and they can pursue policies or make decisions which embody errors of judgment, which hinder rather than advance their goals and interests. But before deciding that such a "mistake" has been made, a Marxist will take care to see that he has ascertained correctly what these goals and interests are; he will certainly not take the leadership's own version as necessarily a true account.

There is a familiar current example which brings out this point vividly. The "liberal" wing of the advisors to U.S. imperialism often bewail the "mistakes" involved in the intervention in Vietnam. "We intervened to defend the cause of freedom in South Vietnam, to protect a nation's independence against external aggression; but the massiveness of our intervention has stifled democratic development and, indeed, threatens Vietnam's very existence as a nation."

Now, can we really accept this account? Was such a "mistake" actually made? Of course it wasn't. To agree that such a mistake occurred, we will first have to agree that U.S. intervention had the aims of defending freedom, democracy and independence in Vietnam - in other words, we would have to take the State Department's propaganda at face value. But once we recognise what the aims of the intervention really were, as distinct from what they allegedly were, then certainly the massive destruction in Vietnam - whether material or social - appears more as a fulfilment than as a frustration of those aims. No, there is no mistake here! And anyone who seriously poses the question in these terms is showing that what unites him to Lyndon B. Johnson may well be more important than what separates him.

What, then, of the "mistakes" made by the C.P.S.U.? Take, for example, its policy towards the revolutionary movement in Spain during the Civil War (1936-1938). The scope of this movement, with its seizure of land and widespread setting-up of collectives in industry as well as agriculture, is well documented; so is the implacable opposition of the communist leadership; Stalinist leadership of the C.P.S.U. and its agent, the Communist Party of Spain. (For a recent review of the extent of the Stalinists' counter-revolutionary role in Spain, which was complete with the deployment of police and assault guards, see part 2 of the essay "Objectivity and Liberal Scholarship", in Noah Chomsky's "American Power and the New Mandarins", published in Penguins.)

Argument with those prepared to deny this counter-revolutionary activity would be as irrelevant to the point of this article, as argument with those prepared to defend it. What we are concerned with is the view that acknowledges the harm done to the world revolution, and indeed to the interests of the Soviet Union, by this brutal obstruction of the possibility of a Spanish Workers State; which acknowledge all this, but regards the policy as mistaken.

This view may even go so far as to recognise the C.P.S.U. leadership's cynical use of the Spanish C.P. as an agent of the Soviet Foreign Office. They may say (and correctly) that Stalin's anxiety at the time for diplomatic alliances with the 'democracies' (particularly Britain and France) made any revolution in Spain unwelcome, as likely to "frighten off" the British and French bourgeoisie. And they might criticise (still correctly) the Popular front" policy responsible for this, which rejected the perspective of another Worker's State in Spain in favour of the possibility of alliance with capitalist powers. Even from the narrow viewpoint of the Soviet Foreign Office, the existence of another Worker's State would have broken the isolation of the Soviet Union and strengthened its position enormously, so the conclusion follows: the Stalin leadership made a mistake.

It is important to see that this final conclusion is just wrong. It rests on an incorrect and dangerous illusion about the interests and goals of the Soviet bureaucracy - namely, that its interests are identical with the interests of the U.S.S.R. Only this illusory belief can justify the chain of argument: "This particular policy was actually against the interests of the U.S.S.R., so its adoption by the C.P.S.U. was a mistake".

It is important to get this clear. The history of the last forty years is full of instances of Stalinist policies and actions that have weakened or actually imperilled the U.S.S.R. as a state power. Some of them are much more startling than the crushing of the Spanish revolution; Stalin's attempts, for instance, to stop The Chinese C.P. from winning power or the purging of more than 70 of the top 80 of the Soviet military and naval brass - on the eve of an openly threatened Nazi attack. If all

such actions were mistakes, the sheer frequency and magnitude of such mistakes would itself pose a serious historical problem for Marxists! How could one explain such consistent failure by a leadership to advance the interests it is supposed to be representing?

Of course, this pseudo-problem vanishes, once it is recognized that the Stalinised C.P.S.U. is the political leadership, and advances the social interests, of a particular social stratum within the U.S.S.R. - not of the U.S.S.R. as a whole. This stratum, the bureaucracy, naturally finds its interests served very often by actions which strengthen the Soviet state; very often, yes - but not always! And when the bureaucracy's interest in its own self-preservation conflicts with the interests of the Soviet state, it sacrifices those interests without a qualm. In such cases, it is simply a misunderstanding of the social forces at work, if we accuse them of making a "mistake".

The Stalinist policies against revolution in Spain in 1937, in Yugoslavia in 1944, in China in 1945-1948, are not just a bewildering series of "mistakes". They are expressions of a general counter-revolutionary policy dictated by the interests of the Soviet bureaucracy, and they only become comprehensible as such.

The bureaucracy are not moved by any consideration of proletarian internationalism - they are not proletarian, and are nationalist in the extreme. Enjoying the fruits of their privileged status, they are conservative and anxious to see the status-quo preserved. Their dominating positions in the world working-class movement can only suffer from the emergence of new centres of revolutionary authority and prestige. These are, in brief outline, some of the reasons for their hostility to revolutionary developments throughout the world.

Of course, the aggressiveness of U.S. imperialism can force them, however reluctantly, into limited support of some revolutionary movements that are well established - as in Vietnam, for instance. But this does not alter the characterisation given above. If this characterisation seems harsh, or insufficiently substantiated, perhaps an acid test can be suggested.

The attempts by the Stalinist leadership to suppress revolutions have had two notable failures: Yugoslavia and China. Now, the Yugoslav revolution led, within five years (1944-1949), to the establishment of a rival centre successfully defying the monolithic leadership in Moscow - and thereby weakening the Soviet bureaucracy's grip both externally and internally. The Chinese revolution has shattered that monolith forever, and the Maoist polemics have dragged the whole question of bureaucratic control out into a limelight which it can with difficulty survive.

With these actual developments in mind, it might now be considered whether the C.P.S.U. leadership - the voice of the Soviet bureaucracy - was really so mistaken in opposing the Yugoslav and

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With these actual developments in mind, it might now be considered whether the C.P.S.U. leadership - the voice of the Soviet bureaucracy - was really so mistaken in opposing the Yugoslav and

Chinese revolutions! On the contrary, it seems more reasonable to say that, in the light of the further developments, Stalin was a true custodian of the interests of his social base when he tried to stifle these revolutions.

All of this is no mere academic analysis of past squabbles, or finicky quarreling over words. The bureaucracies are still with us, still an enemy, still to be overcome if the revolution is to take the path humanity needs. We cannot afford to misunderstand them, and in particular we must not play with illusions about their political leaderships. It is an historical accident that their organisational and administrative instruments often have the same name as Lenin's proletarian leadership, the Communist Party. This accident should not deceive us into accepting them as working-class parties who just happen to make a lot of "mistakes". A revolutionary who wants to advance the interests of the working class is falling into a dangerous trap if he clings to this attitude; he is in fact making a mistake.

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Lenin, Freney and the Communist Party (cont. from page 6.)

But the question we are considering is the need to assist them to get on to the road of action as a class, to realise the destiny of the class to rule - on the way to the abolition of classes.

The oft repeated objective of the left-wing leadership of the A.C.T.U. - a fair share for the workers - is conclusive evidence of their acceptance of the status quo. A C.P.A. leadership which does not openly and unmistakably declare this position to be contrary to the interests of the working class shows no conception of, and no allegiance to, Leninism in this all-important sphere.

Some of the C.P.A. leadership faction realise the reformist nature of their post industrial practice but remain vague in their criticism of present-day reformism.

Monolith

We appreciate the forward development in the C.P.A. - especially when contrasted with the relative failure of other Communist Parties to begin to face the issues raised by their isolation from the militant Left.

However, we consider that Lenin exaggerates the degree of forward development of the C.P.A. as a whole and of the leadership in particular and that this development is not adequate at this stage to attract potentially revolutionary - marxist cadres.

We consider that the leadership is hog-tied, not only by its own failure to make a thoroughly marxist analysis of the nature and legacy of Stalinism, but especially by its elevation of "conservationist" tactics over revolutionary strategy.

24.

These tactics mean rep^eated refusal to confront the real issues for fear of breaking with the mass of half-hearted supporters who are at present not a part of the open "opposition" of Ross-Watt-Brown but little different in their ideology or day-to-day conduct.

The tactic of "conservationism" has meant the refusal of Tribune at any time to support Soviet opponents of Kremlin oppression (beyond asking the oppressors not to be so hard on them). It has meant the continuance in top positions of individuals with a long history of Stalinism - including hatchet men from the purges of 1956-58 and would-be hatchet men who tried to suppress the W.A. rebellion against Stalinism in 1967 - who have never subjected their record to the slightest public self-criticism. It has meant passive acceptance of continuing calumnies against revolutionary marxists, one of the latest being a slanderous attack against N. Origlass by two reactionaries from the Maritime Branch, at the 1970 Sydney District Conference. It has meant the refusal of the leadership to commit themselves over an attempt to have the 1970 Congress attack the counter-revolutionary role of the Soviet bureaucracy.

Sections of the leadership are prepared to break with the most intransigent elements of the Stalinist wing over functional and organisational questions but not yet on grounds of principle which threaten the patchwork unity of the "majority".

These tactics are among the immediate reasons why the leadership continues to soft-pedal on all the questions of principle to which we have drawn attention.

We consider that a cadre force of even as few as 500 revolutionary marxists, uncompromising towards Stalinism and reformism and fully committed to revolutionary strategies, tactics and methods of organisation, would be inestimably more valuable to the Australian workers than the present C.P.A.

While "conservationist" tactics continue, Denis' joining the C.P.A. for any purpose other than an openly-avowed one of developing a revolutionary wing in opposition to the leadership's "conservationism" can only serve to endorse the leadership's compromises with reactionary forces and reformist ideology.

In conclusion, let us say that should Denis' estimation of the degree of the development of the C.P.A. prove more correct than ours we will be happy to recognise it and to fall in line.

Meanwhile we must speak the truth as we see it.
