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(ill-advised)

An anarchist answer to the CPGB pamphlet:

"The Ultr Left in Britain"

and to other fake left arguments

published L.O.
35 Natal road
CRL.8QH

The Pseudo-Left in Britain

a reply to Betty Reid and others

"Thus alone of all the Trotskyist organizations, except the tiny fundamentalist Socialist Party of Great Britain, International Socialism with extraordinary frivolity brushes aside the conquests of the October Revolution and characterizes the system of society in the socialist countries as "state capitalist". The role played by the Soviet Union in the defeat of fascism is ignored as irrelevant. The enormous gains from the establishment of socialism which has transformed a weak and backward country into one of the two major powers in a space of fifty years are similarly written off."

Betty Reid: "Ultra Leftism in Britain"
C. P. pamphlet

"The Revolution of 1917 gave control of a major country to a workers' government for the first time in history. To millions throughout the world, locked in a futile and savage war, it offered new hope. In the period afterwards people everywhere turned from the grim alternatives of declining capitalism - unemployment, poverty, fascist barbarity, the threat of new wars - to place their hopes for the future in the regime that the Soviets (councils of ordinary working men) had put in power in Russia".
Preface to "Russia - How the Revolution was Lost", by Chris Harman, a recent IS pamphlet.

"...while Stalinism may become the same as state capitalism (by which one understands Beeching within the British state, for instance) it is not so now. The State Capitalist position is not an anarchist analysis but the alibi of the Marxist, beyond Trotsky, for the degeneration of State Communism."
An elderly "fourth form humourist", writing in Freedom - the Anarchist weekly - "There is a difference".

If fighting a war against Nazism is proof that a country is not capitalist does this mean that the USA regime of Roosevelt or the Britain of Churchill were socialist?

If rapid industrial advance are proof of socialism what goes from the Britain that Marx described and the America of Ford's day, were they socialist?

"For in the Russia of the twenties, the working class was the class that less than any other exerted pressure upon the party" (communists).

page 14, Harman, ibid.

So soon after a workers' government had taken power!

At the beginning of this year, COGITO, the YCL "theoretical" paper, published the first part of a book by Monty Johnstone attacking Trotsky, giving, in the context, a remarkably objective analysis. The second part of this was to appear in April, and the book as an whole in the Summer. No sign of either is apparent by the middle of October - and this may be in part because the editor of COGITO has promised to carry a reply by a member of the SLL in the second issue, and may possibly have made similar promises to other Trots. (He had certainly promised to carry a contribution from an anarchist viewpoint - by the present writer -). The CPGB is not in the habit of supplying money for the publication of objective articles on Trotsky - let alone answers by Trots or anarchists.

But though it has not been possible to publish the April, July or October issues of COGITO, (and the issues of the April issue where - even after delay - certainly ready in July,) the CPGB has - surprise, surprise, - been able to rush out as a pamphlet a work of fiction, written not earlier than May by Betty Reid, on a related topic. This is entitled "Ultra Leftism in Britain". It is in fact only marginally concerned with the revolutionary left - which is what is presumably meant by Ultra Left. In just over 54 pp., Trotsky and the Trotskyists take up 23, the French May Days with attention to Trots & Maoists rather than to the Cohn Bendits, VSC and the ramifications of Vietnam solidarity merit 11, IS 4, Maoists 4, and the Anarchists and Solidarity 1½ with a further mention of the latter's "The Rape of Vietnam". No mention of the ILP, the Marxist Humanists, CW or any other left of Trot grouping except the quoted misleading reference to the SPGB.

It is perhaps a "happy" coincidence that at about the same time IS should have brought

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for the views of the real left in Britain,

~~Read: Freedom, an anarchist weekly~~

and Anarchy monthly

84b Whitechapel High St., London E.1.

Solidarity (separate North and South London editions)
and Direct Action pamphlets all obtainable from Freedom,
or 34 Cumberland Ave. E.17

out a pamphlet on the degeneration of the Soviet Union, from which it would be impossible that that group goes beyond the normal Trotskyist position of holding Russia to be a Degenerated Workers' State, and that they hold it to be a class-divided society. Also perhaps coincidence that some clown saw fit (writing in Freedom) to claim that anarchists do not believe Stalinism to be state capitalism and do not think that the Stalinists have preserved (let alone recreated) class divisions, based on economic differentials; and that in the fifty years since Trotsky led the "Red" Army into the Vyborg (a working class) Quarter of Petrograd, to destroy the Petroleum and Mining Workers' Soviets, wresting control of these industries and the railways from the workers in them, emasculating the street commune-soviets, and sacking the anarchist offices, the Soviet Union has not evolved a new class system; so that apparently in all this time a state has existed consistently exploiting workers and terrorizing their families, but that this state has not had the backing of any exploiting class.

It may be coincidence. But as this is rather less likely than pigs flying, the sensible man looks for a more plausible reason. There has of late been an upsurge of neo-Stalinism, Maoists, Guevaraists, Hoists, apologists for the invasion of Czechoslovakia, all vying to be considered revolutionary; and though mostly obvious in their anti-working class prejudices, all loud mouthed in their claimed commitment to revolution. In these circumstances, instead of emphasizing their working class arguments, and exposing the stalinists, a number of revolutionaries have chosen in a most opportunist fashion to tone down their criticisms of Stalinism in the hope of making recruits. It is of course hardly surprising that even non-Stalinist members of the Communist Party should also go easy on anti-Stalinism, and when the author is an old time party hack who accepted both the crimes of Stalin and their denunciation, without murmur, one can almost excuse her.

Trotsky

The introductory section of a pamphlet, purporting to depict and refute Trotsky might well have resembled what Monty Johnstone wrote in Cogito - not that this was entirely accurate, but it appeared to try so to be. The present piece obviously makes no such attempt. Whether it is the product of abysmal ignorance - perhaps induced by a lifetime's Stalinist conditioning - or whether it is a deliberate falsification is hard to judge. It is hardly worthy of answer.

So anxious is the C.P. to pretend that no one to their left fought in any real struggle that, quoting the Transitional Programme of the FI (published Sept. 38); "the causes of these defeats is to be found in the..." that Mrs Reid has to take exception even to the obvious fact that the rise of fascism constituted defeats for the working class, however gallant the fight and however much other victories may elsewhere have been won. She comments: "Trotskyists are alone in this view of a period which all serious students of history must find complex".

Why it should be assumed that to acknowledge that victories of Mussolini, Hitler, and Franco constituted defeats for the working class, and that the proletariat was led into incredibly stupid tactics by blundering social-democrat and stalinist leaderships; means that one denies the complexity of the period one does not know and she does not say. Perhaps the accession to power of the Third Reich was a victory then - Thaelmann's after Hitler us, was perhaps not just foolishness, but Adenauer was "us" in disguise! The complexity lies at least in part in the question why the defeats, why did the workers follow foolish leadership, and why was that leadership given; posed this way, what strikes revolutionaries is not that Trotsky was alone, he wasn't; but that Trotsky's analysis of Stalinism was inadequate, and so he acted as a left cover for Stalinism. For he held the defeats to be merely the product of foolish or perfidious decisions emanating from a pusillanimous bureaucracy, which had arisen from the degeneration of the revolution. Revolutionaries hold that the mistaken policies were deliberate, chosen sensibly to forward the interests, economic and other, of a new ruling caste in Russia, determined at all costs to prevent a revolution in the West which would have spread back into Russia; and revolutionary voices saying this in the thirties may have been few but they were not entirely lacking.

The late twenties and early thirties, when the Communists were attacking all other socialists, when the CPGB was saying that the Maxton (later the ILP) left of the Labour Party was the major enemy of the working class; is depicted in the pamphlet as a period in which the Communists internationally worked for an united front against the new capitalist offensive, - an united front which was rejected by right wing social democrats. It concedes, it is true, that the Tenth Plenum (July 29) of the Communist International, saw that to call social democracy social fascism served the bourgeoisie; but does not mention that the German Communist party was still doing this in 1932, thereby confusing workers as to the distinction between real fascism and half baked reformism. The Plenum warned that this fostered

sectarian attitudes within 'individual' communist parties, but B.R. does not tell us of any individual party which was not marked by this attitude.

Though she concedes that the use of the term persisted until 1935 (it was certainly in fact used later than that) Mrs Reid still pretends that at that period the Communist party comprised apostles of unity, as against sectarian ultra-lefts, and conveniently forgets to mention the Red-Brown Referendum. She points to the fact that the Trotskyists called for a Dictatorship of the Proletariat based on soviets as proof that they were incorrigibly sectarian and sabotaging all attempts at left unity, alienating the social democrats. But in those days, the Dictat of the Proletariat (that is the predominance) was still understood for what Marx meant - not what Stalin meant and was an integral factor in both social democrat and anarchist programmes; and Trotsky saw in Soviets the highest form of the united front, which may - indeed undoubtedly was - have been to underestimate the role of the soviets, but which was hardly to erect sectarian barriers to unity.

It is claimed that no evidence is forthcoming for the argument that the Popular Front succeeded in canalizing and damming, at least temporarily, the revolutionary stream. Apart from recommending B.R. to read: Spanish Labrynth, Spanish Cockpit and/or homage to Catalonia there is little else one can do about this but gasp. (Of course she tells the normal stalinist lies about Spain, and ignores the fact that the workers in 1936 did intervene directly in the conflict, in a way every bit as significant as the Russian revolution of 1917, and that the Republican parties managed to push the workers' organizations off the stage and pave the way for Franco; - just as the Morroccan independence fighters were shunned and the one chance of subverting Franco's army deliberately neglected by the Madrid Government.) But even if no other evidence on the Popular Front was available than the record in this country, where the C.P. called for a Popular Front behind Eden and Churchill, (that is what they got during the war!) was obviously a slogan liable to divert the workers from struggle for socialism, at ~~the~~ a time when the working class had both the power and the militancy necessary to have achieved power in its own right.

In attempting to disprove Trotsky's claim that a revolution was possible at least in France in 36 and 37 reference is made purely to the voting figures and no mention is made of the wave of strikes that shook the Blum Government. Nor is it mentioned that it was ~~that~~ this popular front that capsized three years later and

made its peace with Hitler, with very little resistance, and no attempt to go into exile; - though since Hitler was then Stalin's ally, this may have been one of its progressive acts! - so that even if the C.P. claims that the defence of Bourgeois national Democratic states against fascism was the first aim, they chose a remarkably poor instrument for the purpose.

Mrs Reid quotes with horror, Gerry Healy, to the effect that: "The Trotskyists were the ~~only~~ international tendency to state that the war could not put an end to fascism or imperialism, and that it was a capitalist war, which would resolve nothing as far as the working class was concerned." We might, indeed, share the horror if her objection lay to the blatant lie that the Trots were the only such group, but her reasons are other: - "Thus in a struggle between the fascist powers ranged against the first socialist base and those countries in which the fight of the organized workers had wrested certain democratic advances from the ruling class, Trotskyists were indifferent to the outcome." Sounds bad doesn't it? Perhaps Mrs Reid might be readier to excuse the Trots if she remembered that at the beginning of the war at least the fascist powers and 'the first socialist base' were allies against 'those countries in which...'

Of course the real answer is other, the fact that one says a war will not end fascism is not the same as saying that there is no distinction between the fascists and those who fight it, and unless Mrs Reid is extraordinarily stupid she must be aware of this. Nor indeed is it to say that one is indifferent to the outcome. The fact which Mrs Reid's party is always stressing quite paranoically in other contexts is that even in Germany fascism still survives, so the war did not eradicate fascism there. In several South American countries fascism achieved power at the end of the war, - which did not prevent such fascist regimes for their own safety declaring war against Hitler, - in Spain and Portugal fascism persisted and the latter was one of the Allies. ('one of those countries...') Imperialism also persists. This is certainly not proof that the war could not have abolished them but it is proof that it didn't and there was a sufficiency at the time of arguments designed to prove such impossibility.

Internationalists argued that though the possible outcome might be a lesser evil, only a socialist international struggle was capable of eradicating the evil for ever. That there was too much ~~xx~~ at stake to make it sensible to go on fighting the same battles every few years, and that therefore fascism must be abol-

ished for all time, not temporarily set back. That support for the war diverted effort from the struggle for socialism, and indeed ran directly counter to it, and therefore in order to attain a partial palliative of the evil it was preventing its cure. It would be possible by different activity to get not just a lesser evil but a positive good. Posing international socialist revolution rather than victory for one or other capitalist power is hardly mere indifference.

In opposition to ^HHealy, Mrs Reid quotes - without mentioning the source, and that the passage was written in answer to a particularly stupid German Communist leader who insisted that there was no difference between Social Democrat government and Nazi rule - Trotsky: "As if the masses could help but feel the difference at every hand" but apparently cannot understand the difference between saying that A is worse than B, and saying we must abandon fighting for socialism in order to support A against B - this is of course a distinction that present day Trots all are also apt to fail to understand - and in the particular case of Germany, in the context of which Trotsky wrote, and the attempt to get the Communists to accept a call by Social Democrats for joint anti-Nazi struggles and demonstrations, supporting A against B involved pushing A into fighting for socialism; while it is ~~xx~~ unlikely that even Mrs Reid believes that supporting Churchill meant pushing Churchill into struggling for socialism!

In high amazement Mrs Reid also says "according to the Trotskyists just as the French and Spanish workers could have taken power and established a workers' government if only a "revolutionary leadership" had been in existence, so in France and Italy after the war...., the workers were waiting and ready for socialist revolution, and lacked only leadership. (Two passages are omitted above with the probably well-founded accusation that the Trots thought that they themselves were that ideal but absent leadership.)

Whether she does not know that Togliattis was flown back to Italy to prevent a revolution and to get the C.P. to vote for the return of the Monarchy, when even the Christian Democrats were supporting the call for a socialist republic; or whether she is deliberately concealing the matter is unclear. But whether she is merely ignorant or a liar, her qualifications for writing would appear to be minimal.

Equally it is unclear whether she knows and has conveniently forgotten for the moment that the French workers rose in arms in 1946, forming workers' committees and were disarmed by the C.P. - some little of the facts of this were later published

by Andre Marty (formerly the butcher of the international left in Spain), when he broke with the P.C.F.

She can hardly not know - since a letter of Stalin's proving it, was recently published in photostat in the West - that Russia aided and abetted the Western powers, intervening in Greece at the end of the War, and that these - with the cooperation of former Quislings - restored the Greek Monarchy against the active opposition of the majority of the wartime resistance forces. But of course she has the backing of our "anarchist" joker, for, "Stalin does not preserve class divisions based on economic differences!"

Trotting on the (Trot) sky's the limit

"Clearly written under the illusion that workers everywhere were ready to desert the traditional parties and flock to the banner of the FI"

Mrs Reid - ibid - pp. 15

For all his faults Trotsky made it clear in several of his works that "workers are loath to abandon the party which first brought them to radical consciousness," this indeed was his reason for stressing united frontism so consistently, this was why for the first few years of his exile he still insisted that his supporters should form an international left communist opposition, not try to set up independently but try to influence the C.P.s as already existing. This is why soon after abandoning this, he gave up his first attempts to form a fourth international for the "French turn" and took to "entrism" - that is work within the ~~the~~ social-democrat parties.

Until the thirties, even after writing the Revolution Betrayed (itself after Hitler came to power), after absorbing much of the Bukharinist Opposition, he still maintained his forces as the Left Opposition and then the communist left opposition even though this left opposition unlike the early Russian supporters had grouped themselves in an international organization. Trotsky's great failing here was unity-mongering, and indeed had Mrs Reid read Lenin's criticisms of Trotsky she would know that it was for this, not for schismatic tendencies and over-optimism as to the possibility of drawing people out of discredited organizations that Lenin condemned Trotsky in the early days of the Bolshevik-Menshevik split.

One should of course be thankful for small mercies, and it is very good of Mrs Reid to acknowledge that Stalinism committed crimes, and very laudable in her to say, that knowledge of this should not prevent sober analysis of Trotsky's position, & policies. But it is a pity that this period of sabriety was not prolonged long enough to allow her to find out what they were before she examined them. Or to check her facts on Trotskyists and their doings.

She attempts to give an history of the split in the R.C.P. (Revolutionary C.P.) between the "Open" and the "entrism" factions. But as she sees that Healy is now very much opposed to entrism she assumed that this must always have been the case and that he led the anti-entrism faction. Whereas in point of fact, he was so pro-entrism that he led his immediate supporters into the Labour Party a whole year before the split! But Mrs Reid states dogmatically: that he "opposed entrism fiercely". She does at onepoint flatter the Trots of course - talking of the split between Healy and John Lawrence she says that the Trots numbered not more than three of four hundred, had she chosen a figure less than a fifth as large she would have been equally accurate. But so anxious is she to bury the facts of Hungary, that we are told the people who left the Communist Party with Peter Fryer to found the Newsletter, were only uncertain, and suffering from shock, "following the 20th Congress of the CPSU" (funny they took so long to leave the party! This conveniently means that not only is she relieved of the necessity of justifying Hungary, but she also need not mention that Peter Fryer was sent there by the Daily Worker, because the correspondent on the spot was not thought "politically reliable", went believing that it was an American-engineered counter-revolution, and saw for himself that it was nothing of the kind and that though he was assistant editor of the DW, the ^{acting} editor just flatly refused to print Fryer's reports, instead inserting articles written not in Hungary but in Warsaw, as the eye-witness reports!

It is claimed that no mention was made in the Newsletter of Trotskyism until 1960, and that it appeared as a dissident communist paper without mentioning Trotsky. For a time in 1957, this was indeed true, but in early 58 it stated that it was attempting to reconcile three socialist currents, Trotskyists, the best elements among Hungary generation ex-Communists and left Labour Party members; and later that year when it announced its intention to form an open group it confirmed this intent. Early in 59 or late in 58, Labour Review headlined its editorial (and by this time the connection between the Newsletter and Labour Review was stated) "In Defence of Trotskyism."

~~xxx~~ control, less on a workers' party, more involved in Afro-Asian liberation struggles and in Black Power, but yet more critical of many Bandung Bourgeois states than say IMG, the SLL or the RWP. It would take a very long time to enlighten her.

Pablo was very much influenced by his contacts with Ben Bella, which meant that he evolved a theory that even where a ~~x~~ national revolutionary party was not a socialist and Leninist one, it could if it had a Leninist influenced wing be pushed in a revolutionary situation into performing a Leninist Party's tasks. Ben Bella was influenced by Tito's ideas on using a modified form of workers' control - more to control the workers than to provide them with control - and Pablo was uncritical of ^DBen Bella's attempts in this direction.

But to find the reason for these influences, the reason why they led to splits, the emotive factor in the debate one would have to recall debates in the Fourth International at the end of the war, and this would in turn necessitate recapitulating Trotsky's Testament and the theories of Bruno Rizzi, and others.

Finally Mrs Reid in her descriptions of Trotskyists turns to the R.W.P. which she rightly says is little different to the Maoists - that is it has become virtually Stalinist.

To Trot or Not

International Socialism is supposed to believe in the state capitalist position - derided by B.R. in the first quotation at the head of this article, yet one can read through Chris Harman's pamphlet without realizing that it is saying anything that would not be said by every Trotskyist group. This would not matter if - as did Bruno Rizzi - IS held that there is only a difference of degree between saying as did Trotsky in the revolution betrayed that the bureaucracy is a caste and saying that this caste has become a ruling class; and that this is an entirely new class system distinct from any that has gone before. But Tony Cliff - a major IS theorist's pseudonym - in a recent article in IS specifically repudiated the Rizzi position making a distinction between it and IS's state capitalist theories.

For whereas the bureaucratic collectivist theory implies that the Bureaucracy (described by Trotsky as an "episodic phenomenon") arose to distort the revolution &

& then in time developed as an hereditary system taking root as a new class divided society. State Capitalism suggests (and the suggestion is underlined in the writing of Ygael Gluckstein, which are generally highly thought of in IS circles) that the roots of the new class dictatorship were laid far earlier and that this reemergent capitalism in a state form, not just a bureaucracy (episodic or otherwise) was the force that put Stalin into power against the opposition of the Old Bolshevists.

M/s

Mrs Reid is under the completely mistaken belief that "Trotsky had originally accused the Soviet Union of restoring capitalism". In fact Trotsky tirelessly and frequently most unfairly - right up to 1933 - attacked not merely those who argued that Russia was already Capitalist, but even those who said that a revolution (or even a distinct revolutionary party) was necessary in Russia. Even afterwards he was always careful to make a distinction between a political and a social revolution (one that an anarchist might not accept as valid) and claim that Russia needed the one and not the other.

The impact of the rise of Hitler, for the first time made him come to consider the foreign policy of the Stalinists as something more than a stupid aberration on the part of a demented leadership; and to see the need for a clearly distinct international position, and analysis of why Soviet policy was as it was.

However, while he was considering this, Simone Weill in a syndicalist journal published two articles saying that Russia was a class society - not because there had already been a restoration of capitalism (the question which till then was the main point in dispute among left oppositionists) ~~ix~~ but because entirely new economic divisions had arisen. Trotsky wrote "The Revolution Betrayed" in opposition to these articles. In this he conceded that Stalinism could only be destroyed by revolutionary action; but he still insisted that Russia was not a class divided society. Bruno Rizzi set out to reinforce Trotsky's arguments by a detailed analysis of economic developments; and also since he saw that Simone Weill's arguments stood or fell on whether the arguments could be applied as part of an international development he tried to demolish her from this viewpoint, and otherwise plug holes in Trotsky's case. To his embarrassment he found himself proving Weill's, and by carrying Revolution Betrayed to its logical conclusion demonstrated in "La Bureaucratization du Monde the

emergence of a new ruling class on a world plane.

Since then a number of former Trotskyists have improved on Rizzi's analysis, and though of these Ygael Gluckstein's is perhaps notable primarily for its pedestrian approach, and limited concern solely with economics with little interest in the clearer humanist arguments on the issue; the works he has published are nevertheless part of a corpus of such work, and have provided a basis for further development. It is therefore curious that a group which holds him in such respect ~~is~~ should now so ignore the evidence suggesting a more far reaching analysis of stalinism than Trotsky ever made. Even a more orthodox Trotskyist group might be expected to acknowledge the grounds on which Madame Trotsky broke with the Fourth International as being of sufficient importance for mention: - the nature of the East European states, whether the Red Army conquests extend the borders of the workers' state, and how a country can be a degenerated workers' state, without ever having had a workers' revolution.

One might have expected a group whose theories suggest that the roots of the new Soviet ruling class are to be found even before the Stalin period and who see that period as an inevitable result of the rise of the new class to power to look deeply - in a pamphlet on the degeneration of the Soviet Union at Bolshevist anti-working class policies. But no such luck. Not merely no consideration of how One-Man management was imposed, no account of the attack on the railway workers; but also the Trotsky-Lenin-Stalin lies on Kronstadt are trotted out, even though the publishers have read other material.

We are told that the workers, sailors and others who so gallantly revolted in 1905 & twice in 1917, had all been moved elsewhere - volunteering for the Red Army after 1917. (In fact the Bolshevists imposed a ban on Red Army recruitment from among armaments' workers and would hardly have recruited many men from one military service to another.) So we are told that those who were in Kronstadt were all newly recruited reactionary peasants. No explanation is given of the fact that all the Kronstadt proclamations were signed either by dissident party members or by workers whose role in earlier risings was known.

IS has published and reviewed several of Victor Serge's works, but no mention is made of his views on Kronstadt, nor those of Ida Metts - which like Serge's has of late been republished by Solidarity and was earlier published by anarchist groups.

Serge's and Ida ^WMetts's material is readily available, and so its neglect can only be deliberate; but a serious group with a theory of the state capitalist nature of Soviet society would not be content with material handed it on a plate. So one can also express surprise that there is no mention of Ciliga's material or evidence assembled by Pannekoek. Even if IS members are too lazy to consult such sources - if only to refute them - they could at least explain, why when one of the prime routes for Western Interventionist attack lay through Finland, when Petersburg was still all important, and when Kronstadt was vital for its defence, the Bolsheviks would have taken away from that bastion its loyal defenders - whose revolutionary ardour and experience was beyond doubt and transfer these tried cadres to areas which cannot have been more important, and were probably less.

If IS has any purpose other than to provide a left shield for Stalinists, protecting the Soviet bureaucracy from any thorough going criticism; then this pamphlet signally fails to suggest it. One knows from actual experience of IS activity, - for instance in the May Day Committee - its tail-ending of the Stalinists and praises of Ho at his funeral that IS is even more enthusiastic than most more orthodox Trots in its role of an agent for the C.P. "What need of paid agents, when amateurs are so enthusiastic?" So that even those who are under the delusion that the Soviet Union is in some sense a workers' state usually show more criticism in practice.

True, they quote Lenin; that the state apparatus of the Soviet State was borrowed from Tsarism and hardly touched by the Soviet world, but there is no attempt to analyze the import of this damning admission. No understanding that this was before Stalinist degeneration. We are told that the workers were completely demoralized, so that when the Stalin regime was in power - in no sense could the Left Opposition be regarded as the proletarian wing of the party. Which since hundreds of thousands of workers were liquidated during the mid-twenties, since, documented evidence of this was published in the early days of the American State Capitalist tendency and sent to Tony Cliff of the British section by Raya Dunayevskaya is a somewhat strange assertion and omission. They were liquidated for alleged sabotage and accused of being Troxtskyist though there is little evidence certainly that the Troxtskyists were in fact in touch with the proletarian victims of the regime. The slave camps were founded then - or refounded, if one derives them from Tsarism and filled with workers. The Left Opposition was in truth a pale reflection of working class resistance.

IS does it is true think and usefully set out to prove that Stalin's rise was through counter-revolution; countering the argument that as a revolution involves a total transfer of the control of power, a transfer which cannot be implemented by a succession of parliamentary reforms since these would never attack the basic state institution which had nominally been used for the reforms and which embodies the executive power of the capitalist class; - a counter-revolution must ~~xy~~ similarly be sudden and there was no sudden change.

IS rightly insists that the necessity of sudden change is peculiar to the coming of a classless society. When a change is taking place in the governmental structure this may easily be gradual and there are many historical examples of this - as for instance the rise of the entrepreneur capitalists in Britain in the eighteenth Century. And argues that the emergence of a ruling class can always be a gradual affair.

However even here there are implicitly two fallacies:-

The first depends on their earlier fallacious view of the October Revolution. For it is not true, as they should have seen from their quote from Lenin, that the Soviets ever achieved full power. The Bolsheviks did for a time endorse the Anarchist-Maximalist-Mezhraiontii slogan of "all power to the Soviets", but the bolsheviks then used the Soviets to take control of the state machinery, and this was never subordinated to control by the free soviets. For a period this meant that power was in the balance. The Soviets which had maintained their independent dual power under the provisional Governments were nominally all powerful and might have been able so to become. But in fact six months later the bolsheviks had succeeded in integrating some into the state and suppressing others. Not without struggles, and the bolsheviks had in the process been driven further than they intended to go, by workers expropriating capitalists whose industries the government had not touched.

To the extent that the workers achieved self liberation in 1917 they did so as the power of the soviets increased, which was a continuous process from April to October, and which in some senses then continued to the following February. To the extent that the workers allowed the soviets

to be emasculated in 1918 - long before they were banned in 1927 - there was a physical and rapid transfer of newly won power away from the workers. The seizure by the state from the soviets of petroleum, of coal, of the railways, the imposition of one-man management, the attack on the Vyborg Quarter, on Makhno, and on Kronstadt, the liquidation of the Left Bolsheviks, the Left Communists, the first Democratic Centralist faction - comprised mainly of Trotsky's former associates from exile, on whose actions his life had once depended, but whom nevertheless he had shot, - and the Workers' Opposition were all stages in the development of the rise of the new class tyranny. All stages involving struggle, resistance and rapid forceful transfer of powers from workers to the state.

This is not to argue as some superficial ex-Trotskyists have argued that there was no real difference between Lenin and Trotsky on the one hand and Stalin on the other. That the policies of the Bolsheviks led inevitably to the slave camps. It is to argue that the powers of the state capitalists were released by the policies of Lenin and Trotsky and under them gained the momentum that was to destroy Trotsky and replace him by Stalin. Raya Dunayevskaya (who would not share the present author's analysis of Kronstadt and similar events) who was Trotsky's secretary - Russian language secretary - at the time of the Moscow Trials and was responsible with Trotsky for preparing his counter-case, and therefore had more occasion than anyone else to study the Trotsky archives, has commented that had Trotsky remained in power he could not have done otherwise than pursue Stalin's policies, but that since he was not such a hard man, and had a conscience he would have committed suicide rather than carry them to the final conclusion. State Capitalism, then was not the result of Stalin's rise to power but its cause.

The other fallacy is less important but is significant. Significant because IS limited as it is to thinking in terms of governmental change, unable to conceive of the workers actually liberating themselves, can only imagine a transfer of power if it happens suddenly. No doubt, when in circumstances like the Russian it is limited to one country this is correct, but in terms of a world-wide revolution with simultaneous upsurges in many advanced countries on scales of and surpassing that of Paris 68, a series of strikes would both

weaken the capitalist (or managerialist) class, and would heighten the self-reliance, confidence, commitment and consciousness of the workers themselves.

In such circumstances - provided that there was a simultaneous movement of disaffection within the armed services, so as to bind the hands of the state's coercive arms - the strikes might well be accompanied by the formation of workers councils - though possibly posing at first only piecemeal demands for partial workers' control of factories - (the right to control hiring and firing, to fix wages by the workers' vote on the shop floor, to fix hours and so forth) - but these demands growing with the course of events.

This could escalate on a world plain, with Capital seriously weakened, and with services not just in one country but many "voting with their feet" for demobilization to a point when before a revolution had matured to completion the balance of power in society had begun to change decisively in the favour of the workers. Then workers' councils would be able to take over essential services or organize other such services on a parallel basis, on a cooperative basis without such cooperatives and communal organizations having to compete with capitalism on capitalism's terms which is what happens to communities and cooperative enterprises now, and is why these are corrupted. This in turn would involve new forces in the workers' struggle and permit new developments on the industrial front.

Obviously sooner or later the capitalists would stake all on a last desperate fling, but the longer the workers' councils had had to mature before the greater their power and ability to run a new society and the less the capitalists would be able to do; so that the final push would not be more than a stage in the revolution, a significant and necessary stage no doubt, but in no sense the essence of the whole revolutionary development.

But as IS thinks exclusively in terms of a capture of state power, as it is prepared to think a revolution happened in Russia because state power was captured - rather than examining whether the soviets really did manage to overthrow the old class-exploitative state forms - it can only think in terms of a sudden change; that is a sudden change in the holders of state power. For those who want another revolution - a rank and file workers' revolution will find the state an irrelevancy at best and an enemy in all normal circumstances, and it has to be displaced which may be sudden or may not.

The real condemnation of the IS group however comes in the fact that as Mrs Reid says: "As for communists it may well be possible to find common ground with individual members of international socialism". IS is not a libertarian group, it does not share anarchist opposition to hard party lines, on the contrary it has a more or less Leninist organization, and individual recruits are vetted before they join; - so that if there are members with whom the C.P. can work happily this is a condemnation not just of those individuals but of the whole of IS.

ca ne marche pas - far less Trot.

On anarchism the pamphlet is no worse than many similar attacks from Trots. Of course we are said to hold theories "that the organized working class has sloughed off".

(As everyone knows the C.P. - as also the Trots who also regurgitate such nonsense - has the solid support of the vast masses of the working class: one can only ponder as to why they have never made the revolution.)

Of course, also, King Hill, and similar Homeless campaigns are damned with faint praise, as also squatter activity.

The pamphlet insists that the total effect of Solidarity's actions - and one assumes anarchist - is to divide and disarm the working class movement; but the test of the pudding being in the eating, and so little the C.P. is able to show in terms of the results of its actions; that it cannot seriously believe itself when its hacks argue thus.

One can only treat Mrs Reid with the same disdain that one would show Trot attacks; but curiously some inkling of what we say and want managed to come through the libels and for anyone with any experience of reading between the lines of Stalinist abuse, the message would be clear that in the anarchist section of the pamphlet alone Mrs Reid is dealing with people who really do want a revolutionary and total change in society. We can thank her for her unintentional generosity.

The remainder is devoted to a generalized study of left groups - mainly Trot - & of these 12 pages are devoted to France. It is interesting with what hesitation the Stalinist case is brought out, obviously the C.P.G.B. does not really consider the arguments of its French counterpart convincing. Because the

the P.C.F. assurances do not carry much weight, Mrs Reid produces a quote from a writer in Tribune, (though she does not mention it - contradicted by several other writers in the same journal), as her clinching argument. "The answer (as to whether there was a revolutionary situation) regrettably is no..."

"The massive support for De Gaulle cannot be discounted....." "The evidence of the ballot."

evidence of the ballot was taken after the C.P. had succeeded in confining the struggle to the parliamentary field, and had thus disheartened many workers, and others realizing that the ballot would settle nothing saw no reason to bother to vote. (It also excludes 4,000,000 immigrant workers mainly Algerians)

socialist struggle must be primarily on the plane of production, and so it does not necessarily follow that because a majority of non-workers, in non-productive occupations are opposed to the coming of socialism, that the workers must wait for their sanction.

There are obvious dangers if they do not, though Mrs Reid does not mention it Lenin and the bolshevists took power when there was such a majority openly opposed to them, and a majority indeed of producers opposed to them. But nevertheless if a majority of workers decide to take over factories, and a number of people who do not engage in meaningful production are opposed to this, then it is hardly their concern; they will no doubt attempt to prevent the action, but they can hardly plead their democratic rights as justification. When the workers have to combat interference from such non-producers the role of democracy is irrelevant, and it is then right and proper to consider the issue in terms of social strength. Non-producers include the military and so they have a considerable weight in their favour, but economically they have no strength. As in the present instance there is evidence that there was disaffection in the armed forces, the evidence of the ballot is far from convincing and conclusive, what was the evidence of the factory occupation and of the army?

doubt social change cannot be permanent - and it certainly cannot be anarchist if there is no majority in favour of the change. But it would be possible to make changes which limit the propaganda and conditioning powers of the state, and thus to permit the development of consciousness necessary for further change.

If the ballot box is to be the measure, then one must think not in terms of an

ephemeral and marginal parliamentary capacity, but of an overwhelming and unconscious permanent majority among the voters, for for social change to become a social revolution that is what is needed, but before this comes the old order has to be weakened, without creating a new exploiting system.

This entails creating spheres of dual workers' power, with as much power in their hands as they can attain, and struggling to defend it.

The rest of the pamphlet is concerned with Vietnam, (leaving aside a section on the internal struggles of stalinism - particularly the Maoists, which is of no possible relevance to a pamphlet on the Left,) and the earlier struggles against the Bomb.

The keynote for this is given by a quote at the very beginning of the pamphlet - a passage in which Mrs Reid alleges that Trots and anarchists did not support CND and wrote off the movement against the bomb as bourgeois liberal from the first.

Of course Mrs Reid would not know, for the C.P. denounced the early CND as a Trotskyist organization, splitting the broad unity of the peace movement with maximalist slogans, and the C.P. in Croydon expelled members who were associated with the organization of the 1958 Aldermarch.

Indeed no doubt revolutionaries in CND did attack the leadership of the campaign in the terms of a number of quotes she has chosen out of context in her pamphlet to prove her allegation, but these comments were chiefly made by the people who were known as the most active campaigners. From the start of the campaign those who took unilateralism seriously pointed out that in launching the Campaign J.B. Priestley had referred to unilateralism as an impossible demand, which it was worth advancing in order to get concessions from Gaitskell on other fronts. Those who were serious about attaining the ends of the campaign naturally had to criticize a leadership in which Priestley was prominent. Moreover at that period there were rank and file struggles for internal campaign democracy as the CND Executive did not then hold itself answerable to the Campaign's conferences and ignored resolutions from the latter opposing NATO and putting unilateralism in its context, anti-imperialism and freedom from hunger.

One has only to look at the personnel of most revolutionary or Trotskyist groups today to find that a very high proportion of the membership came to them from a first political involvement with CND.

The fact is that on each of the early marches the war contingents from each of the
literature at one meeting. That the C.P. held
we were objectively war mongers. That moreover the C.P. did not reverse its
position until the end of 1959, and then only as a result of the collapse of
one of its own attempts at manoeuvre which turned in its hands and rebounded.

The British Peace Committee called a convention under the misleading title -the
National Disarmament Conference (NDC) and wrote to all CND (Campaign for Nuclear
Disarmament) branches inviting them in terms that made it appear it was a CND
Conference. Finding out the trick the London Regional Council of CND, knowing
that many unilateralist branches had been misled into attending suggested that
Campaign militants should attend in numbers and push an unilateralist motion.

When the platform had been forced to allow discussion on this, it was obvious that it
had overwhelming support and there was a prompt switch in line on the part of the
chairman and others. With its front organization so committed to unilateralism
the C.P. abandoned the line that unilateralists were damaging the peace movement
and tacitly it became assumed that they supported unilateralism. Though certainly
as late as November 1961, the C.P. was unable to produce any leaflet, paper,
pamphlet, press statement or other official document it had published in which it
argued the case for unilateralism or unambiguously stated that this was its position.

This makes rather sick the list of quotations on page 48, designed to show that the
Trots had ignored the campaign; anyone with any knowledge of the journals
from which the quotes were taken know that they were full of discussion of the
policies unilateralist should follow and the reasons why the campaign was or was
not getting the success it should have had.

As it happens whereas Mrs Reid alleges that the Trots - particularly the S.L.L. -
did not support the campaign; the truth is that Peter Fryer's pamphlet attacking
the Russian Bomb, and another S.L.L. leaflet putting the unilateralist case to
industrial workers - calling for the backing of bases, were used by many ordinary
CND branches not influenced by the Trots.

On the 1959 march - when the C.P. & Daily Worker were calling for the "unity of
unilateralists and multilateralists against the warmongers" (whatever that may
have meant at a time when the Government claimed to advocate multilateralism.)

the leadership of the S.L.L. was negotiating with the Direct Action Committee for a fusion.

The fusion was opposed by the anarchist wing of the DAC - centred round PYAG - but would nevertheless have gone through with overwhelming support, if it had not been for the tactlessness of a group of S.L.L. members who without permission had published a pamphlet made up of previously published SLL arguments including one giving the traditional leninist view of pacifists. It is ironic that this SLL grouping, later expelled for heresies beginning with this breach of discipline, was to become an integral body within the Committee of 100 - Solidarity.

After this, the split in the SLL at the end of 59, when Fryer and Cadogan, Coates and Daniels left the League was precipitated by the dissidents' wish to drop part of the League's critique of CND so as to win more contacts among CND militants. Besides all this the SLL as a body and as a focus for its own internal debates provided a catalyst for much needed debate within CND, which was to have a significant effect on the development of CND's more radical thinking - and the later emergence of the C of 100.

CND's rank and file had been from the beginning a coalition of two streams, which had arisen from disillusion in the Labour Party with the leadership of the Left - coupled with secessions from the C.P. Nye Bevan in 56 counselled against industrial action in opposition to the Suez adventure, - a year later the Naked in the Council Chamber speech capped this - and many of his former supporters turned first to general support for the ^NNew Left and then to membership of Vfs. But under the threat of proscription by the party leadership neither of these organizations were able to grow beyond skeleton organization.

Labour leftists were looking for means of cross and inter-regional organization which would permit them to campaign for changed policies rather than for changed personnel; unlike the Vfs and New Left, CND was not proscribed.

Besides these and apart from the very small minority who had been active proponents of unilateralism Before the campaign was founded, there were a large number of the "Stage Army of the Good", do-ggoders who saw that unilateral disarmament was intrinsically desirable but did not appreciate the nature of the state and the difficulty of attaining the ends desired. These contrasted with the Labour lefts, - "Unilateralists are multilateralists who mean it" - who saw that unilateralism

however intrinsically desirable would necessitate revolutionary change, and while they wanted the other - did not want the other, but used the unilateralist demand as a bargaining counter in the attempt to further other left social democrat policies.

In these conditions, the SLL - or at least parts of it, for Healy and Gale with others always supported the Soviet bomb, even when the League was selling Fryer's pamphlet showing that it detracted from the possibility of working class defence of the USSR - provided a theory which combined the two sets of arguments commonly used in the campaign. A body which believing revolution desirable advocated work within the Labour movement and Party, and yet insisted on the necessity of attaining unilateral disarmament.

No doubt the SLL showed an inadequate understanding of the relationship between unilateralism and revolution, never appreciating that to take from the state its major weapon of coercion and the power to remake it was to enact revolution and therefore ND was a potentially revolutionary demand far more relevant to modern conditions than anything in the Fourth International Transitional Programme; but the very fact of its over-simplified revolutionism (yes its crudity of theory!) meant that it was better placed than many other groups to speak in a language understood by the majority of the early CND rank and file; and in early 1958 the Newsletter had a very considerable impact among CND militants.

It was therefore able to synthesize the two strands in the campaign - or more to the point provide the necessary incentive and basis for the strands to synthesize themselves. This gave rise to the evolution of new unilateralist theories and deeper campaign understanding, provided the climate of opinion which during 1961 gave mass support to the committee of 100 and which also resisted - through '62 - the swing to the right in the campaign initiated by the influx of social democrat and fellow travelling labour leftists, who until this period had been but nominal and non-participatory members of the campaign, but now appeared at meetings and annual conferences to oppose any constructive and radical action.

This point is argued not for pleasure of recalling the past, not for interest in historical esoterica, nor merely to show that the Communist Party propagandists are still liable to twist historical truth to their own ends. It has a more immediate interest. In the years since the heyday of CND the Trade Union left; represented by Scanlon, Jones, Daly, Seabrook and McNamee amongst others has advanced considerably in power from the lone position of Cousins in the CND period.

Having so done it has reached a point whereat either it has to compromise with the TUC right or show an open and clear left/right split; and it has done the former, agreeing with the right to offer the Government that instead of the State jumping on unofficial strikers the TUC will do it on the state's behalf.

Though there has been no clear betrayal in the sense that Bevan sold out his pre-56 followers, nevertheless the same pressure for unity has taken the vigour out of the broad labour party left and has spread disillusion amongst leftist industrial workers. Just as before there was a need for a national organization to coordinate the left's actions in the Labour Party, and just as the ~~w~~ only way this could come about was to harness their struggle to the organization and energies of a peace movement organization sufficiently independent of the Labour Party as to prevent it being suppressed by the party; so today there is an urgent need for militant shop stewards and TU branch secretaries to find a way of combining across industry and union boundaries in a manner which will not cause them to be instantaneously expelled from their unions.

Part of the CND's safeguard lay in the fact that many leading party leftists who had no intention of doing the hard canvassing and organizational work of the campaign were nevertheless glad of the chance of a platform on which they could speak and hog the headlines from those who had done the work; and yet since the campaign was not directly concerned with struggle within the Labour Party, their presence on campaign platforms was not branded as factionalist activity in the way that Vfs work was. In much the same way, the TU left leaders would welcome a similar platform which did not directly challenge the compromises they have made within the TUC.

If the Moratorium movement in the United States grows much further, the idea will undoubtedly catch on in Peace Movement, anti-imperialist circles - as indeed also even in those Vietcong squalidity circles whose sole concept of leftism is anti-Americanism. The moratorium has from the start been oriented to industrial action and therefore industrial organization, and if provided with aims specifically attacking British involvement in the Vietnam and other wars (Biafra) and with opposition to British manufacture of nerve gases and other weapons being used coupled with the now traditional unilateralism on the bomb it would be a qualitative development from CND; and would also provide an admirable frame work for rank and file trade unionist links.

The coalition, which such an English Moriatorium movement would involve, (if - as one deduces - trade unionists already fighting such Government legislation as the Part II, and a future revamp of In Place of Strife saw its use in their own struggles, and if too, one assumes that just as the average CND activist coming from the Labour Party had previously been attracted to the New Left or the Communist and had views shaped by these so today the sort of militant trade unionists now drawn to such groups as the Institute for Workers' Control might reasonably be expected to play a part in a British Moriatorium movement;) would be similar.

In such circumstances the trends one would expect to find within the Moriatorium a strongly internationalist current, now largely outside union activity, probably influenced not only by pacifist but by left Leninist views, and industrially based left of communist militants. But though both traditions will have been influenced by Leninism they will not find a common *raison d'etre* and synthesis within any of the existing well known Leninist factions.

Such a synthesis will only be possible on the basis of a perspective of revolutionary stemming from a movement rooted within the unions and geared to industrial organization, advocating workers' control, industrial action - the social general strike - as the central factor in attaining revolution and a one big union with industrial sectors organizational form. The catalyst for the creation of such a synthesis can only be a simplified - perhaps over-simplified - form of syndicalism. Not necessarily limited to those taking the full anarcho-syndicalist position, not excluding those for instance who still see the relevance of some form of parliament-oriented activity provided they do not subordinate the industrial struggle to the electoral. Not excluding those who hold those interpretations of Leninism which see the soviet - the workers' council - rather than the party as the all-important revolutionary body, a body the workers can control and use to control industry. But nevertheless firmly insistent that it is to be the workers not a revolutionary vanguard that makes a revolution, for only such a rank and file movement could possibly consider weakening the state by unilateral disarmament.

(This division within Leninism pervades most streams of his disciples, Trotsky for instance defined the soviet as the highest form of the United Front - and that therefore if the majority of the working class joined a revolutionary party before a revolution, soviets would be unnecessary. This is sometimes held to mean that the party

would anyway have healthy industrially-based, rank and file democratic institutions which would make their repetition in siviets superfluous, but it is also sometimes held to mean that the soviets are only needed to win working class support for the revolution and must be subordinated to the party, when that support is won, as they were in fact subordinated in Russia.)

Since the shop stewards' movement first came into existence as a result of syndicalist and other industrial unionist revolutionary action in industry it is perhaps hardly surprising that a future development which would enormously advance the position of rank and file industrial development should need the catalyst of syndicalist agitation. Should need the clear argument that a socialist society would dispense with bourgeois state organizational forms, and depend on free associations of workers' committees, and that the socialist movement should practice within its own bounds the equality it preaches for society; should raise in stark and simple terms as an immediate issue the aim of the abolition of the wage system - not its perpetuation in state capitalist forms.

This relevance of syndicalism makes doubly interesting a couple of quotes on Spain. The Week March 13/68: "Can anyone say that the Vietnamese are less justified in their cause than were the Soviets in the twenties, or the Spanish Republicans."

- it would of course have been easy to answer that the Russian soviets were socialist organizations and had they in fact controlled Russia would have constituted a socialist society; - whereas neither the Republican parties, in Spain, nor the N.L.F. so are. (The N.L.F.'s programme contains a pledge not to abolish capitalism.) -

B.R. says: "The issue here is not, of course the relative justice of the causes mentioned. To which all Communists (but presumably not all Trotskyists) would give total support."

But she goes on in quite different vein: "When the legally (my emphasis L.O.) elected Spanish Republican Government was under attack by Hitler and Mussolini wide sections of the British Labour Movement - and beyond - (excluding only the right wing leadership of the Labour Party and the Trotskyists) were clear on what was involved."

Well there's fine proof that the stalinist skills in misrepresentation, the amalgam, whereby guilt by association is used to brand opponents, still survive. We have given facts on page 5 and now need only stress that we too should be included.