



# Fourth International

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Autumn 1974



World slump  
and the  
role of  
revisionism

**30,000 laid off at VW plants this week will be trebled next month**

corresponding 1973 period. Volkswagen's 1.5 million sales are divided almost equally among the United Kingdom, Germany and the

**Short-time for 3,000 likely at Lucas**

By Clifford Webb  
Short-time work for 3,000 Lucas group workers in Birmingham is expected to be announced in the next few days.

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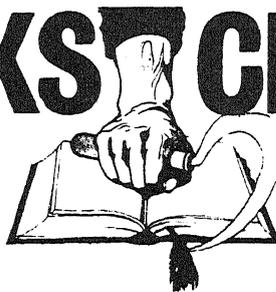
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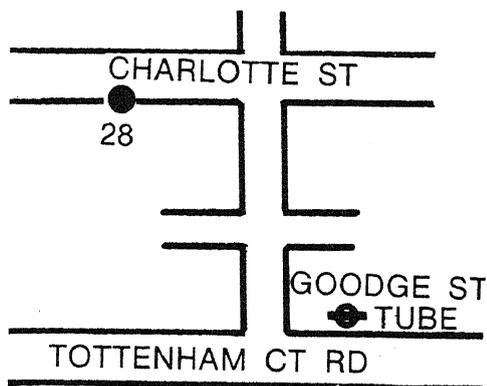
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VOLUME 9 NUMBER 2 AUTUMN 1974

EDITORS: TOM KEMP, CLIFF SLAUGHTER

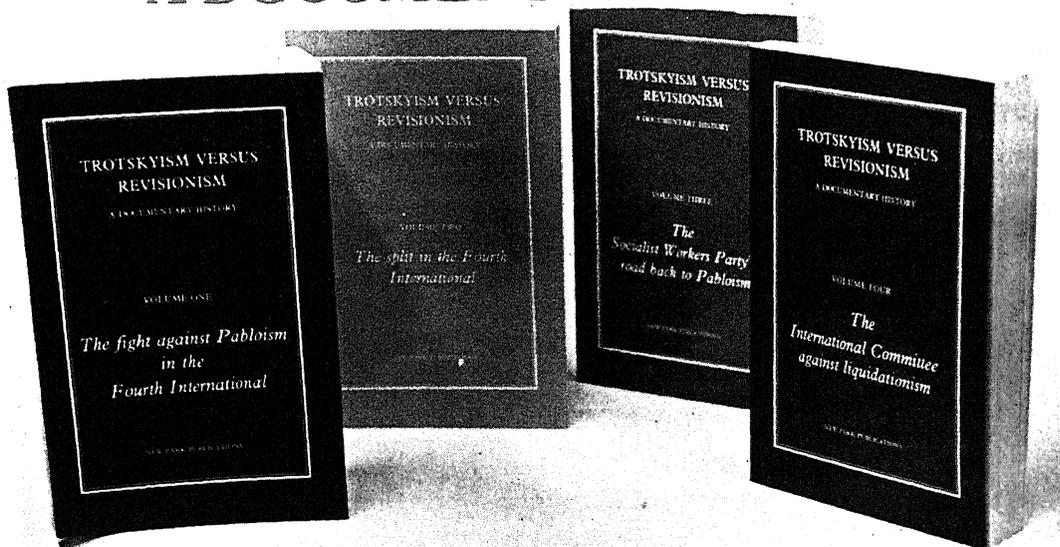
	51	Editorial
<b>Individuals and social relations: some observations on Marx's <i>Grundrisse</i></b>	53	Cyril Smith
<b>History of the Greek Civil War (part iii)</b>	61	Greek Section of the IC of the FI
<b>Book review: Strikes in France</b>	85	Tom Kemp
<b>Manifesto of the International Committee</b>	88	International Committee 7.7.74
<b>Greece and Cyprus: a new stage of World Crisis</b>	92	International Committee 6.9.74

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# TROTSKYISM VERSUS REVISIONISM

## A DOCUMENTARY HISTORY



*In today's conditions of capitalist crisis, only the International Committee of the Fourth International stands on a record of fighting for revolutionary leadership in the working class. To carry forward this struggle now, when every revisionist tendency is striving to turn the working class back into the arms of the bureaucracy, an understanding of its history is essential.*

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# World slump and the role of revisionism

WORLD capitalist economy is now in the grip of a major slump. The years of expansion—the 1950s and 1960s—prolonged by the Keynesian policies of 'controlled' inflation and the international financial agreements of Bretton Woods (1944), far from abolishing capitalist crisis, have only produced even greater accumulated contradictions. For over twenty years every capitalist 'expert' and every reformist and revisionist hailed the ending of the anarchy of capitalist production, the arrival of 'post-capitalist society' or 'neo-capitalism' or 'organized capitalism'. Now not a single one of them can advocate a solution to avoid the slump which has resulted from these very years of boom.

It was possible for the Bretton Woods system, as an agreed international basis for national Keynesian policies, to work for a considerable period, not because of some renewed inherent strength of capitalism, and not because these devices overcame the contradictions of capitalist economy, but because the betrayals of working-class leadership had assured the inevitability of the Second World War and the failure of the proletarian revolution in the advanced capitalist countries. Only in these conditions could the institutions set up in 1944 (World Bank, Bank of International Settlements, International Monetary Fund) establish a *modus vivendi* for capitalism and its contradictions for a further period. The same laws of capitalist decline, of the class struggle and revolution, determined the actual development of capitalist society, and are the only basis for understanding the situation which has now resulted. Only on the foundation of a massive destruction of productive forces, and the elimination of a great mass of fictitious capital, together with the elimination, through physical defeats of the working class, of the possibility of proletarian revolution for a long period, could capitalism restore any equilibrium and lay the basis for a new economic upturn.

These are the economic and political conditions which now predominate in the class struggle in all its phases in every capitalist country. In the late 1960s and early 1970s it was clear that the gathering crisis and prospect of vicious international trade war, the contest between rival imperialisms for shares in a world market beginning to stagnate, was forcing in every country an inevitable pressure on the rate of

exploitation, an intensification of the class struggle on the most basic and elementary questions. Given the undefeated nature of the post-war working class, the capitalists were in difficulties in imposing such solutions. Even the mobilization of the legislative and judicial machinery of the state to impose 'incomes policies' proved useless, despite the crawling collaboration of the trade union bureaucracy. We can be certain that if economic necessity forced a resort to the use of the state even for this stage of the crisis, and if these measures proved insufficient, then the capitalist class cannot escape the need to prepare for extreme repressive measures in order to impose the massive shutdowns and mass unemployment which are now inevitable.

But it would be a gross error, and a descent into the crudest mechanistic thinking, to contemplate the political perspective as a clash between a 'strong' and undefeated working class and a weak ruling class at the end of its historical days. The fact that the working class is undefeated in the advanced capitalist countries since World War II certainly defines for us the conditions of an entirely new period for the development of the Trotskyist movement, for the building of revolutionary parties. It was only in the earliest period of great historical defeats of the working class that the Stalinist bureaucracy was able to dominate, under conditions where the Fourth International remained isolated from the mass movement.

But it is precisely the conscious intervention of Marxists that is required to provide the impulse for transition to a new revolutionary upsurge and victory. Bureaucracy is no longer living in the favourable conditions of working class defeats, but it has nonetheless not yet played its last card. Just as the present world crisis, and the mass struggles to which it gives rise, threaten mortal danger to the capitalist system, so also they threaten mortal danger to the Stalinist and reformist bureaucracies, who will betray every struggle of the working class in order to preserve their relations with imperialism. At the point where the resources of the working class must be mobilized for the revolutionary conquest of power, the responsibility of Marxists is to lay all the stress, theoretically and in practice, on the side of the

situation in the workers' movement, i.e., its continued fatal attachment to the counter-revolutionary bureaucracy and the necessity of independent revolutionary parties to defeat this bureaucracy—this is the essential content of the long years of struggle of the International Committee of the Fourth International against revisionism.

The most virulent form taken by revisionism today is to stress the 'strength' of the working class in a one-sided way which merely provides a cover for the bureaucracy by playing down its counter-revolutionary nature and the mortal dangers flowing from it. Just as Pablo laid all the emphasis on divisions within the Stalinist bureaucracy which could be exploited by 'mass pressure', instead of starting from the reactionary nature of bureaucracy, so today the critics of the Workers Revolutionary Party lay all their stress on 'exploiting the divisions within reformism'. Just as Pablo gave his own revisionist twist to what Trotsky had once referred to as the 'dual nature' of the Stalinist bureaucracy, in order to obscure its counter-revolutionary essence, so today the critics of the WRP and the International Committee condemn us for characterizing the reformist bureaucracy as 'corporatist', and seek to justify themselves by misusing Trotsky's explanations of the dangers flowing from calling social democrats 'social fascists'. In each case what is attempted is to reduce the Fourth International to simply a 'revolutionary' advice bureau for the 'lefts' in the bureaucracy.

These revisionists always move away from the philosophical foundations of Marxism, the struggle to develop theory in the practice of building revolutionary parties, and instead represent leadership as something which can flow spontaneously out of the traditions of organization and struggle of the working class. They neglect the primary question, that, as today's struggles reactivate those past traditions, only Marxism can really make the living relation with the past and bring home all the lessons for the arming of the working class, wresting the essence of the past struggles from the reactionary filth with which they have been overlaid by reformism and Stalinism. 1.

The other side of this revisionist misuse of the idea of the 'strength' of the working class is a criminal failure to warn and prepare against the bourgeoisie's resort to repression and military preparations against the working class. Thus in Britain a small group of renegades from Trotskyism, supporters of the Organisation Communiste Internationaliste in France (which split from the International Committee in 1971), have bitterly attacked the Workers Revolutionary party for its exposure of the accelerated preparations of paramilitary organizations, changes in the structure of the police and military intelligence and command, complicity of Tory politicians and Army top brass, and the dangers of military coup d'etat. This warning and exposure, according to our critics, shows an overestimation of the strength of the ruling class. Once again, a dialectical materialist conception of the contradictory character of the 'strength' and 'weakness' of the class forces is impossible for these prisoners of a mechanical bourgeois mode of thought. They can never grasp what Trotsky explained long ago, that the very historical weakness of the bourgeoisie, the fact that it is condemned in the court of history,

brings about the necessity of its summoning up its greatest strength in self-defence! Its historical 'weakness', the end of its economic role in history, demands its greatest strength in politics and the state!

'This is what Marxism calls the dialectic. The gist of the matter lies in this, that the different aspects of the historical process—economics, politics, the state, the growth of the working class—do not develop simultaneously along parallel lines.'

This uneven development in society has its specific result in the period of capitalist decline:

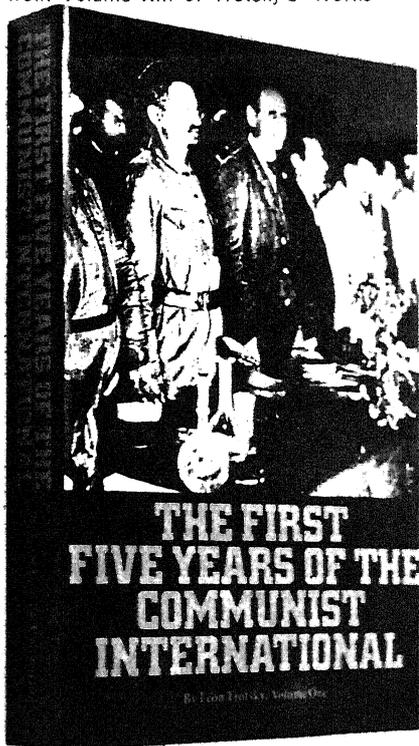
'The bourgeoisie, even though it finds itself in a complete contradiction with the demands of historical progress, nevertheless still remains the most powerful class. More than that, it may be said that politically the bourgeoisie attains its greatest powers, its greatest concentration of forces and resources, of political and military means of deception, of coercion and provocation, i.e., the flowering of its class strategy, at the moment when it is most immediately threatened by social ruin.' (*First Five Years of the Communist International*, Vol II pp. 4 and 5.)

It is in the context of these rich theoretical lessons that the International Committee and its sections have drawn attention constantly to the lessons of the experience of the working class in Chile and in Portugal. The Stalinist bureaucracy, working through the Portuguese Communist Party, proceeds to tie the working class to the coat-tails of the bourgeoisie, its army and its state, even before the killings and the tortures have ended in Chile, where an identical policy led to the 1973 coup. Nothing could prove more decisively the correctness of the struggle of the International Committee against these revisionists who said that the Stalinists 'could no longer betray'. Those today who revert to similar formulae to defend the Stalinist and reformist bureaucracies, obscuring the objective reality with their talk of the 'strength' of the working class, who refuse to start from the lessons of these fundamental experiences and to check them against the years of struggle against revisionism in our movement, bear a heavy political responsibility.

Revisionism is always a reflection of the pressure of the bourgeoisie inside the Marxist movement. It is the rapidity of the development of the combined economic and political crisis which bursts through every element of compromise in the class relations, and so tests out the theoretical and political independence of the cadres of the party in the trade unions and every other sphere of mass work. A decisive struggle is always required at such a stage against the dangers of adaptation to the backwardness and spontaneous forms of the workers' movement, against those who devote all their attention to the 'progressiveness' of the forms of this spontaneity, which remain fatally imprisoned within bourgeois ideology. Revisionist tendencies always neglect the necessary *conflict* between these spontaneous forms on the one hand, and the revolutionary content which produces the movement but cannot be discovered on the surface of the struggle, requiring rather the conscious struggle in the Marxist party for theory, taken into every aspect of revolutionary practice. It is in this dialectical sense that we can say that the conditions are now mature for a major step in the turn of the sections of the IC into the mass movement and for a vigorous development of Marxist theory.

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# INDIVIDUALS AND SOCIAL RELATIONS

## Some observations on Marx's *Grundrisse*

By Cyril Smith

FOR some years before Marx's manuscript *Foundations of the Critique of Political Economy* (*Grundrisse der Kritik der politischen Ökonomie*) appeared in English, the argument went on between scholars as to whether it was more than a preliminary work for *Capital*. Study of the translation can now make it clear that Marx's critique of political economy does, in fact, involve him in every aspect of his world outlook. In *Capital*, Marx presented all the material in *Grundrisse* which relates to capitalist economy, in a far more complete and polished form. But precisely because it is an account of the search for these results, *Grundrisse* contains explicitly many ideas only implied in other works.

In this article we consider only one of the themes of *Grundrisse*: the unity and conflict of individuals and their social relations. But, as we shall see, this question is central to Marxism and its relation to bourgeois philosophy.

The importance of classical political economy for Marx, as well as for Hegel, was its attempt to show how,

... when men are ... dependent on one another and reciprocally related to one another in their work and the satisfaction of their needs, subjective self-seeking turns into a contribution to the satisfaction of the needs of everyone else. That is to say, by a dialectical advance, subjective self-seeking turns into the mediation of the particular through the universal, with the result that each man in earning, producing, and enjoying on his own account is *eo ipso* producing and earning for the enjoyment of everyone else.' (Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, paragraph 199.)

Political economy studied this paradise of equality and freedom, in which separate human beings existed independently of social relations into which they 'entered'. The parts of this beautiful machine existed 'in themselves', interacting without changing each other. Each atom possessed the eternal properties of 'human nature', including the ability to calculate rationally the most profitable course to follow. Political economy thus took the social relations of capitalism for granted, as natural and beyond question.

Marx did not criticize the classical economists simply by pointing out the errors that flowed from this view of the world. He found the origin of political economy precisely in the objective reality of capitalist society, in which the exchange of commodities between two individuals is the basic human link.

The reciprocal and all-sided dependence of individuals who are indifferent to one another forms their social connection. This social bond is expressed in *exchange value*, by means of which alone each individual's own activity or his product becomes an activity or a product for him; he must produce a general product—*exchange value*, or the latter isolated for itself and individualized, *money*. On the other side, the power which each individual exercises over the activity of others or over social wealth exists in him as the owner of exchange values, of *money*. The

individual carries his social power, as well as his bond with society, in his pocket. Activity, regardless of its individual manifestation, and the product of activity ... are always *exchange value*, and exchange value is a generality, in which all individuality and particularity are negated and extinguished.' (*Grundrisse*, pp 156-157, Pelican edition, referred to hereafter as 'G'.)

## Consciousness

Marx does not only want to describe the exchange relationship, but to understand its reflection in the consciousness of those whose lives it dominates. When two individuals exchange commodities,

... each serves the other in order to serve himself; each makes use of the other, reciprocally, as his means. Now both things are contained in the consciousness of the two individuals: (1) that each arrives at his end only in so far as he serves the other as means; (2) that each becomes means for the other (being for another) only as end in himself (being for self); (3) that the reciprocity ... is a necessary fact presupposed as natural condition of exchange, but that, as such, it is irrelevant to each of the two subjects in exchange ... That is, the common interest which appears as the motive of the act as a whole is recognized as a fact by both sides, but, as such, it is not the motive, but proceeds, as it were, behind the backs of ... one individual's interest in opposition to that of another.' ('G', pp462-463.)

Seeking in the categories of political economy the reflection of bourgeois social relations, Marx uncovers the secret of many aspects of ideology, psychology and literature. 'The reciprocal and all-sided dependence of individuals' takes the form of exchange value and money, objects which connect them universally, only in that all particularity and individuality are extinguished. Individual acts are motivated by forces which operate 'behind the backs' of those concerned and not by their apparent motive; every private calculation is made in the context of the entire ensemble of social relations and their history, but this context is not known.

Social relations are not what they appear. Since even the great classical economists could never consider historically the economic relationships they studied, they could not investigate capitalism as a *specific mode of production*. What appeared to be the exchange of commodities between equal, free and independent citizens, was only the surface appearance, the phenomenon, behind which proceeded the exploitation and oppression of the working class by the power of capital.

In his earlier work (for example in *German Ideology*, 1845, Marx had explained the way that money, that impersonal power, dominated individuals, how market forces determined the division of labour, and especially the division between mental and manual labour, and how the social relation *capital* subjugated

the life of the worker to the need of the capitalist for profit.

## Contradictions

But now, in 1857, he probed the contradictions within the process of exchange. The commodity was a unity of two opposing aspects: it was a *use-value*, and at the same time an *exchange value*. Out of this contradiction arose *money*, the objective embodiment of exchange value. Money was the universal equivalent, standing against the particular use-values for which it could be exchanged. It was therefore the *abstract* universal, the general form which excluded the specific characters of the individual commodities.

Labour is a social activity, *the* social activity, that which distinguishes human beings from everything else in the world. But

... labour on the basis of exchange values presupposes precisely that neither the labour of the individual nor his product are *directly* general; that the product attains this form only by passing through an *objective mediation*, by means of a form of *money* distinct from itself.' ('G', p172.)

Labour itself is thus a two-fold process. It is the specific human activity which creates a particular use-value; and simultaneously it is labour in general, *abstract* labour, which produces *value*, giving the commodity its exchangeability. But it is *abstract* labour, 'in which all individuality is extinguished', that is responsible for the connection between the labour of different individuals.

It is this contradiction between the specific, concrete work of the individual producer, and the abstract form taken by the general social character of labour, that drives money forward in its transformation into capital. The capitalist uses part of his money-capital to buy from the worker, not his *labour*, but his *labour-power*. He is separated from his life-activity, and in this separation *surplus value* is created.

'The material on which it [labour-power] works is *alien* material; the instrument is likewise an *alien* instrument; its labour appears as a mere accessory to their substance and hence objectifies itself in things not *belonging* to it . . . Thus labour capacity's own labour is as alien to it — and it really is, as regards its direction etc. — as are material and instrument . . . after production, it has become poorer by the life forces expended, but otherwise begins the drudgery anew, existing as a mere subjective labour capacity separated from the conditions of its life.' ('G', pp462-463.)

What political economy had seen as the promotion of the general good through the single-minded pursuit of private interest, was in essence just the opposite.

'The point is that private interest is already socially determined interest, which can be achieved only within the conditions laid down by society and with the means provided by society . . . It is the interest of private persons; but its content, as well as the form and means of its realization, is given by social conditions independent of it.' ('G', p156.)

## Historical

Political economy took as given, fixed and natural, the opposition between individuals and the social

relations in which they live. In fact, this appearance is a historical development.

'Human beings become individuals only through the process of history . . . Exchange itself is a chief means of this individualisation: It makes the herd-like existence superfluous and dissolves it. Soon the matter turns in such a way that as an individual he relates himself only to himself, while the means with which he posits himself have become the making of generality and commonness . . . In bourgeois society, the worker stands there purely without objectivity, subjectively; but the thing which stands opposite to him has now become the true *community*, which he tries to make a meal of, and which makes a meal of him.' ('G', p496.)

This opposition of the individual to his social relationships, and especially of the labourer to his conditions of labour grows up precisely through the *socialization* of labour. This is the fundamental contradiction of capitalism, which prepares the way for its destruction.

'The more deeply we go back into history, the more does the individual . . . appear as dependent, as belonging to a greater whole . . . Only in the eighteenth century, in "civil society", do the various forms of social connectedness confront the individual as mere means towards his private purposes, as external necessity. But the epoch which produces this standpoint, that of the isolated individual, is also precisely that of the hitherto most developed social (from this standpoint, general) relations.' ('G', p84.)

In pre-capitalist formations, whether based on free landed property or on communal ownership of land, 'the worker related to the objective conditions of his labour as to his property . . . The worker has an objective existence independent of labour.' ('G', p471.) 'His relation to the objective conditions of labour is mediated through his presence as member of the commune.' ('G', p486.)

But Marx has no time for romantic idealization of such forms. Only through their destruction by the development of commodity production and capitalism could the way be cleared for the conditions in which 'universal individuals' could exist.

'In the case of the *world market*, the *connection of the individual* with all, but at the same time also the *independence of this connection from the individual*, have developed to such a high level that the formation of the world market already at the same time contains the condition for going beyond it . . . Individuals cannot gain mastery over their own social interconnections before they have created them . . . Universally developed individuals, whose social relations, as their own communal relations, are also hence subordinated to their own communal control, are no products of nature but of history.' ('G', pp161-162.)

Capitalism creates these possibilities for human development, only to the extent that it blocks their realization.

'The barrier to *capital* is that this entire development proceeds in a contradictory way, and that the working-out of the productive forces, of general wealth, knowledge, etc., appears in such a way that the working individual *alienates* himself; relates to the conditions brought out of him by his labour as those not of his *own*, but of an *alien wealth*, and of his own poverty.' ('G', pp541-542.) 'Forces of production

and social relations—two different sides of the development of the social individual—appear to capital as mere means, and are merely means for it to produce on its limited foundation. In fact, however, they are the material conditions to blow this foundation sky-high.' ('G', p706.)

Capitalism increasingly sets individuals and social relations against each other, and in so doing, prepares the ground for the universal individual of communism,

... not an ideal or imagined universality, but the universality of his real and ideal relations. Hence also the grasping of his own history as a *process*, and the recognition of nature (equally present as practical power over nature) as his real body.' ('G', p542.)

'Society does not consist of individuals, but expresses the sum of interrelations, the relations within which these individuals stand.' ('G', p265.)

Why then did the whole of bourgeois thought—not only political economy—base itself on the opposite view? Because it could not go beyond the framework of bourgeois life, founded on the exchange of commodities and the exploitation of wage-labour.

'The social character of activity, as well as the social form of the product, and the share of individuals in production here appear as something alien and objective, confronting the individuals, not as their relation to one another, but as their subordination to relations which subsist independently of them, and which arise out of collisions between mutually indifferent individuals.' ('G', p157.)

## Bourgeois Philosophy

Let us examine briefly the importance of this basic conception of individuals and the relations between them for bourgeois philosophy, by looking at the movement from Kant to Hegel, and thence to Marx's break with idealism.

It was precisely because of the weakness of the German bourgeoisie that Kant was able to bring together the implications of bourgeois philosophy as developed in France and Britain.

'We are philosophical contemporaries of the present without being its *historical* contemporaries. German philosophy is the *ideal propagation* of German history... In politics the Germans thought what other nations did,' wrote the young Marx. (Preface to the *Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right*. See also Hegel's *History of Philosophy*, Vol III, p425.)

The thinker was conceived as being free and independent, complete in his isolation, equipped with the faculty of reason. He appreciated reality through his senses, passively receiving news bulletins about the world in coded form: light, sound, smell, etc. But he then had to decode these messages, using the powers of reason. Can he know that he has the correct code?

Sensations are never taken raw, says Kant. They are 'processed', first by being ordered in space and time, which are 'forms of intuition', and then organized in the categories of reason—quantity, quality, necessity, etc. But neither the forms of intuition nor the categories, can come from experience, since they are the very conditions which make experience possible; they are *prior* to it.

Things *in themselves*—outside experience—can therefore never be known. What is presented to knowledge is only appearance, *phenomenon*. And so,

said Kant, any attempt to overcome this barrier is doomed to fall into contradiction, including the attempt to know God.

The isolated thinker senses separate, individual things and separate aspects of things. Their connections and correlations, the universal character of experience, is the product of the ego, the 'I think' which must be able to accompany all representation of reality in thought.

'All connection... is an act of the understanding which we might call by the general name of *synthesis* in order to indicate thereby that we cannot represent to ourselves as connected in the manifold anything which we have not, ourselves, previously connected.' (*Critique of Pure Reason*, p107.)

## Ends and Means

What were the implications of this view of knowledge for practice? When I act, the consequences of my action in the world 'in itself' cannot be known, only their appearance *to me*. As phenomenon, appearance, I am imprisoned in the subjective world of appearances, governed by phenomenal laws of nature.

But man is also an end 'in himself', says Kant, not in his action, but in the intention which decided upon it. The means I use to carry out this intention are not known in themselves, but my will is free to conform with the moral law. There is a *categorical imperative* which the rational being will follow: 'Act on that maxim which can at the same time be made a universal law'.

Kant knew the relevance of the exchange relationship to the problem he was posing. How could autonomous individual commodity-owners be ends in themselves, related to universal laws?

'What is relative to universal human needs and inclinations has a market price;... but that which constitutes the sole condition under which anything can be an end in itself has not merely a relative value—that is, a price—but has an intrinsic value—that is, *dignity*.' (*Groundwork of the Metaphysic of Morals*, p77.)

Marx poured scorn on the weakness of the German bourgeoisie, reflected in this 'German theory of the French Revolution'.

'While the French bourgeoisie, by means of the most colossal revolution that history had ever known, was achieving domination and conquering the continent of Europe, while the already politically emancipated English bourgeoisie was revolutionizing industry and subjugating India politically, and all the rest of the world commercially, the impotent German burghers did not get any further than the "good will". Kant was satisfied with "good will" alone, even if it remained entirely without result, and he transferred the *realization* of this good will, the harmony between it and the needs and impulses of individuals, to the *world beyond*...

'Neither he, nor the German burghers whose whitewashing spokesman he was, noticed that these theoretical ideas of the bourgeoisie had as their basis material interests and a *will* that was conditioned and determined by the material relations of production.' (*German Ideology*, pp207-209.)

To Kant, therefore, the individual was free only in his apparent independence of social relations. Each

man decided what to do, but only the laws of the market could determine whether all would turn out for the best.

But when the productive forces had developed to the point where they collided ever more violently with these social relations, the isolated individual seemed to be more and more restricted by the straitjacket of social relations in which he was trapped. Freedom, taken to mean independence of the social relations, could only be found outside and against society.

In the convulsive movements of a world in crisis, nothing could be changed by individual decisions. Freedom and truth belonged only in the private universe of emotion, even the absurd and irrational, where the Self was protected against the nightmare of abstract reason.

The political economists of the early years of the bourgeoisie, and the philosophers of the Enlightenment, had attempted to investigate the nature of the real relations of production. In their place today, economists, psychologists and sociologists deal only with appearances, with symbols. Relations are symbolized by mathematical abstractions, cut off from the objects they are meant to represent, strung together in 'models' which patiently wait their turn for empirical refutation.

On the one side, individuals in isolation, struggling to avoid entanglement with external necessity; on the other, empty abstractions, expressing relationships alien to the terms they relate: these are the warring factions in the blind alley of bourgeois thought.

But, just as the horrors of the death agony of capitalism were the working out of contradictions latent in bourgeois society at its birth, so these ideological monstrosities have their roots in the Kantian divorce of individual from universal.

Both in the sphere of knowledge and in action, the objective, necessary, infinite, universal was only *ideal*, purely *formal*, a mere 'ought'. This universal was *abstract*, in that it left outside separate, concrete, individual, existing things. Despite Kant's insistence on the objective nature of the categories, they were in fact only *subjective*, the property of the independent 'citizen'.

## From Kant to Hegel

Because the implications of the subjective viewpoint of previous bourgeois thought had been partly worked out in practice in the French Revolution and the development of capitalist industry, Hegel was able to foreshadow in philosophy the transcendence of this standpoint.

Hegel applauded the aim of Kant to criticize the faculty of knowledge. But if we must know the faculty of knowledge before we can know anything, how can we begin?

'For to investigate the faculties of knowledge means to know them; but how are we to know without knowing, how we are to apprehend the truth before the truth, it is impossible to say. It is the old story of the Scholastic who would not go into the water until he could swim.' (*History of Philosophy*, Vol III p428.)

Hegel underlines Kant's discovery that the unity of reality is the product of the activity of consciousness, but he insists on going further. Where Kant denies that

the unity so produced is the truth, Hegel declares that the essence of reality is penetrated by thought.

'The knowing subject does not with Kant really arrive at reason, for it remains still the individual self-consciousness as such, which is opposed to the universal.' (*Ibid.*, p443.) 'Though the categories, such as unity, or cause and effect, are strictly the property of thought, it by no means follows that they must be ours merely and not also characteristics of the objects.' (*Encyclopaedia*, paragraph 42.)

'The way in which the critical philosophy understands the relationship of these three terms (objects, ourselves, thoughts) is that we place our thoughts as a medium between ourselves and the objects, and that this cuts ourselves off from them. But this view can be countered by the simple observation that these very things that are supposed to stand beyond us and, at the other extreme, beyond the thoughts referring to them, are themselves figments of subjective thought, and as wholly indeterminate they are only a single thought-thing — the so-called thing-in-itself of empty abstraction.' (*Science of Logic*, p36.)

Kant actually inverted the relative status of thought and the object.

'The object, which professed to be the essential reality, is now the non-essential element.' (*Phenomenology of Mind*, p153.)

Both the thinking subject and the object of thought are elements of the same entity, the Absolute. At each stage or 'moment' of the unfolding of this contradictory totality, they are relatively opposed to each other, but this opposition is the active development of knowledge, through which they are united.

The unity of the world and of its many objects, the relations between its multiple aspects, is not the construction of individual consciousness, but was independent of it. The essence of each object developed through its relations with the rest of the world. Its difference from everything else was the basis of its identity.

Thus the contradictions which Kant discovered in every effort to get to know reality were the objective driving force of the Idea, of reality and our knowledge of its essence. These very contradictions pushed the Idea forward into Nature and History, and this is why they were essentially knowable.

In unifying the many-sidedness of its object, knowledge did not abandon difference, opposition and contradiction, but sharpened them into open struggle. Knowledge was neither a medium through which reality had to be filtered in unknowable ways, nor an instrument with which we had to get hold of the truth, so distorting it. (See *Phenomenology*, Introduction, pp130-145.)

By conceiving knowledge in this way, Kant had made the truth into a fixed but unattainable thing. Hegel, on the contrary, sees knowledge as part of reality, in which Mind, or Spirit, moves forward in the eternal conflict between truth and falsehood which are inseparable opposites. The criticism of the faculty of knowledge was the act of knowing itself.

The universal, the infinite, the absolute, were therefore not *abstractions*, but actually lived in the individual, the finite and the relative. Lenin summarized this conception in his notebooks on the

*Science of Logic*: 'The opposites (the individual as opposed to the universal) are identical: the individual exists only in the connection that leads to the universal. The universal only exists in the individual and through the individual. Every individual is (in one way or another) a universal. Every universal is (a fragment, or an aspect, or the essence of) an individual. Every universal only approximately embraces all the individual objects. Every individual enters incompletely into the universal, etc., etc. Every individual is connected by thousands of transitions with other kinds of individuals (things, phenomena, processes), etc.' (Vol. 38, p361.)

## Objects and Relations

Hegel attacked formal thought, which abstracts objects from the relations between them:

'A consideration that stops short at their external relationship, isolates them and leaves them as fixed presuppositions.' (*Science of Logic*, p831.) 'Formal thinking does in fact think contradiction, only it at once looks away from it, and in saying that it is unthinkable it merely passes over from it into abstract negation.' (*Science of Logic*, p835.)

The relation between two objects is a unity of opposite poles which enters into the essence of each of them: 'Each particular only is insofar as its other is contained in its Notion (concept).'

In particular, this applies to the opposition between thought and its object. The object

'is taken for itself, without previous hypothesis, idea or obligation, not under any outward conditions, laws or causes; we have to put ourselves right into the thing, to consider the object in itself, and to take it in the determinations which it has. In regarding it thus, it shows from itself that it contains opposed determinations and thus . . . disintegrates itself in the entirety of its nature.' (*History of Philosophy*, Vol I, p265.)

Kant had shown that for the isolated individual consciousness, what was known were appearances fitted into a prefabricated framework, forms of consciousness independent of objective reality. But Hegel's task was to *derive* the categories, to describe the way they developed out of each other through their internal contradictions.

And this movement of knowledge was the movement of being itself. Thus concrete reality was cognized in the universals of thought. The rational was the actual.

'The fast-bound substance of the universe has no power within it capable of withstanding the courage of man's knowledge: it must give way before him and lay bare before his eyes, and for his enjoyment, its riches and its depths.' (Hegel's address to his students, 1818; quoted in Baillie's Introduction to the *Phenomenology*.)

Objective knowledge was no longer, as in Kant, an unattainable ideal, an 'Idea'. And in action too, the Good was not something which merely 'ought to be', but was actualized in man's practice.

'Within the range of the finite we can never see or experience that the End has been really secured. The consummation of the infinite End, therefore, consists merely in removing the illusion which makes it seem

yet unaccomplished. The Good, the absolutely Good, is eternally accomplishing itself in the world . . . Only out of this error does the truth arise.' (*Encyclopaedia*, para. 212.) 'Thus the truth of the Good is laid down as the unity of the theoretical and the practical idea in the doctrine that the Good is radically and really achieved, that the objective world is in itself and for itself the Idea, just as it at the same time eternally lays itself down as End, and by action brings about its actuality.' (Ibid, para. 235.)

Through the union of cognition with practice, itself the outcome of the working out of objective contradiction, we can know what we do, overcome the apparent division between means and ends. For both the goal we achieve and the means we found to achieve it were part of objective reality, as was the illusion that it was unattainable, says Hegel.

Neither principles of knowledge nor rules of morality existed as abstract ideals outside cognition and practice. The True and the Good were concrete actualities. In the dynamic unity of cognition and practice, the Absolute was attained. But what then is left of Hegel's idealist system? At its very point of culmination, its driving force, the contradictory movement of thought and being collides with its form, the aim to grasp the world in a completed philosophy.

Hegel's *Phenomenology of Mind*, his first major work, and perhaps his greatest achievement, is an attempt to exhibit the movement of consciousness from the level of sense-perception by the isolated subject, through every form of individuality, right up to Absolute Knowledge. Each stage transcends itself as its internal contradictions emerge.

But, of course, this movement takes place only within the sovereign realm of pure thinking. For Hegel, the failure of previous philosophy to escape from the subjective standpoint was a defect of thought. It was here that the conservative side of his idealism was found, which in his later work became more open.

'What is rational is actual and what is actual is rational.' This concept can be the demand to revolutionize reality, to make it what it must be. But it can also be the call for the reconciliation of thought with what is, recognizing its reasonable and necessary nature. Both aspects are to be found in Hegel.

## Marx versus Hegel

Marx, in all his work, both set out from Hegel's method and negated it. In *Grundrisse* especially, he returned yet again to Hegel — in order to complete his break with him. Where Hegel merely criticized subjective, formal methods of thought, describing their defects, Marx sought their roots in material reality and its contradictions. While Hegel tried to transcend subjective thought in thinking, Marx knew that this could only be achieved in revolution.

Kant had produced in its developed form the philosophical expression of the abstract individual of bourgeois society. Hegel, writing after the contradictions of capitalism had begun to emerge, fought to overcome the limitations revealed in bourgeois social relations, but only in their philosophical reflection. Marx began his work when the working class had begun to show itself as the material force which would overcome these limitations in practice.

The outcome of Hegel's system was the resolution of all contradictions in the Absolute and its embodiment, the State. Marx overthrew Hegel's idealism in preparing the working class to smash the capitalist state, and open the way for the universal individuals of communism.

The working class must grasp its historical role and organize itself for power in the construction of a revolutionary party. In fighting for conscious understanding of this task, the party fights to grasp its own theory and practice, and the ideology of its enemies, as expressions of material social forces.

In his last great work, *The Philosophy of Right*, Hegel had reduced the role of philosophy, of theory, to mere commentary.

'One word more about giving any instruction as to what the world ought to be. Philosophy in any case always comes on the scene too late to give it. As the thought of the world, it appears only when actuality is already there cut and dried after its process of formation has been completed.' (Preface, p13.)

Hegel grasped the movements of individuals as the working out of objective laws standing behind the motives of the many individual wills. But his understanding of the way history worked 'behind the backs' of men seeks to reconcile them to the outcome as the movement of Reason, which thus turns out to be an *alias* for God. Philosophy is ultimately reduced to theology once more.

But Marx discovered that philosophy was to be realized by the struggle for power of the working class. While in Hegel the overcoming of the bourgeois standpoint of Kant—the abstract universal—was only posed in thought, Marx as a materialist saw that it would be accomplished in material practice.

'In the measure that history moves forward, and with it the struggle of the proletariat assumes clearer outlines, they (the theoreticians) no longer need to seek science in their minds; they have only to take note of what is happening before their eyes and become its mouthpiece . . . From that moment, science, which is a product of the historical movement, has associated itself consciously with it, has ceased to be doctrinaire and become revolutionary.' (*The Poverty of Philosophy*, pp140-141.)

Marx had grasped the objective relation of the individual activity of the theorist to society:

'When I am active *scientifically*—when I am engaged in activity which I can seldom perform in direct community with others—then I am social, because I am active as a *man*. Not only is the material of my activity given to me as a social product (as is even the language in which the thinker is active); my own existence is social activity, and therefore what I make of myself, I make of myself for society and with the consciousness of myself as a social being.' (*Economic-Philosophical Manuscripts*, p104.)

## Man and Nature

Although Hegel had transcended the subjective idea of knowledge as the private property of the isolated thinker, the contradictory essence of the universal individual remained a mystery for him:

'A person is a unity of freedom aware of its sheer independence. As *this* person, I know myself to be free in myself. I can abstract everything, since nothing

confronts me save pure personality, and yet as *this* person I am something wholly determinate, eg I am of a certain age, I occupy this space, and so on . . . Thus personality is at once the sublime and the trivial. It implies this unity of the infinite and the purely finite, of the wholly limitless with the determinate limitation. It is the sublimity of personality that it is able to sustain this contradiction, which nothing merely natural contains or could endure.' (*Philosophy of Right*, p235.)

But for Marx, man was 'purely natural'. In the process of labour, he fought to subjugate nature, as a part of it. In so doing, he developed his own human powers. In each individual human being, in his ability to speak and think, in his feelings and desires, was contained the infinite history of the whole of humanity in its million-year struggle for life. Even 'the forming of the five senses is a labour of the entire history of the world'. (*Economic-Philosophical Manuscripts*, p108.)

In struggling to transform reality, man uncovered and sharpened the contradictions within it, the objectively opposed determinations which related the different sides of each object. Only in this struggle did man develop his own powers, his knowledge of the world and of himself as part of it, and at the same time grasp the essence of reality, reveal the all-sided connections of everything in the world. 'The unity of the world is its materiality,' as Engels put it.

But the individual human being could only grasp the totality of nature through the totality of social relations of production. It was this which must remain hidden from the standpoint of bourgeois society. Hegel's work was to uncover the way man made himself in changing the world, but only as this was reflected in abstract thought.

'The concrete is concrete because it is the concentration of many determinations, hence unity of the diverse. It appears in the process of thinking, therefore, as a process of concentration, as a result, not as the point of departure . . . In this way Hegel fell into the illusion of conceiving the real as the product of thought concentrating itself, probing its own depths, and unfolding itself out of itself, by itself, whereas the method of rising from the abstract to the concrete is only the way in which thought appropriates the concrete, reproducing it as the concrete in the mind.' ('G', p157.)

Kant, like all bourgeois thinkers, separates man from nature. Hegel can only unite them in thought. But Marx grasps man as part of nature, creating himself in the fight to make it his.

But under capitalist social relations, where the collectivity of man's struggle with nature, the 'true community', takes the form of capital, everything is inverted. Man's powers appear to come out of the properties of this or that individual, instead of the individual talent, intellect, strength or weakness being the concrete expression of universal social relations.

Labour is abstract, standing opposed to the very individuals whose life activity it is. Every effort of the producer only recreates the very social relations which separate him from conscious control over the means of production. To the individual worker in his 'dot-like isolation', capitalist society 'exists outside him like his fate'. The social relations which are reproduced by his own labour seem to be 'natural', fixed and external.

It is this set of social relations which form the basis

for the abstract universal of bourgeois thought, and only in their overthrow can the formal method be transcended, and universally developed individuals appear.

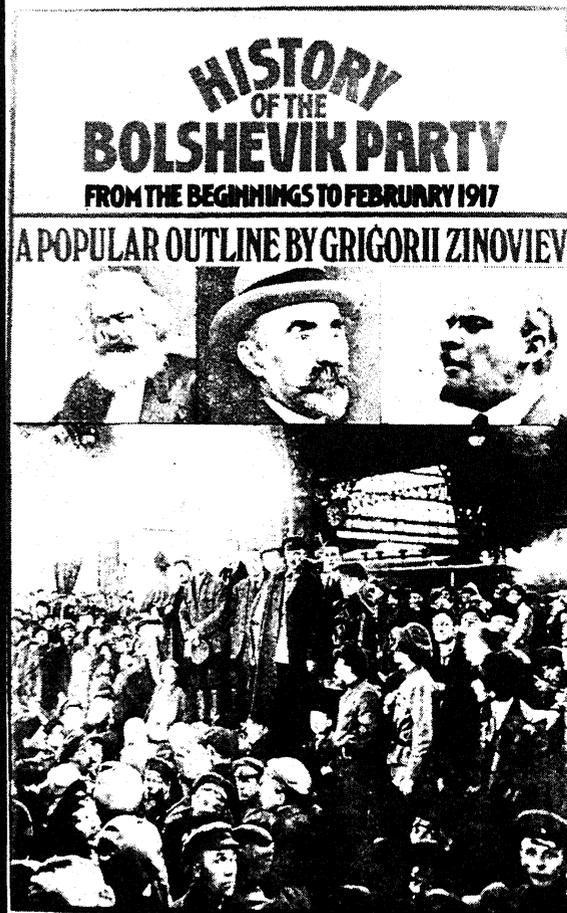
'The degree and the universality of the development of wealth where *this* individuality becomes possible supposes production on the basis of exchange values as a prior condition, whose universality produces not only the alienation of the individual from himself and from others, but also the universality and the comprehensiveness of his relations and capacities.' ('G', p162.)

But the overthrow of capitalism, made possible through the development of its objective contradictions, involves the development of

consciousness of these contradictions. In the constructions of the revolutionary proletarian party, the method brought to a new level in Marx's 'Grundrisse' has to be grasped and fought for.

Every revision of Marxism has involved an attempt to return to Kant and the abstract universal, in the case of Bernstein openly, and in later revisionist tendencies implicitly. Marxism has been reduced to correct formal prescriptions for political activity, the development of theory separated from the struggle to build the party, the development of individuals and layers looked at in isolation from the movements of the class struggle.

In the fight against these tendencies and in the living process of constructing the proletarian revolutionary party, the method which Marx brought to a new level in 'Grundrisse' must be consciously developed.



## HISTORY OF THE BOLSHEVIK PARTY

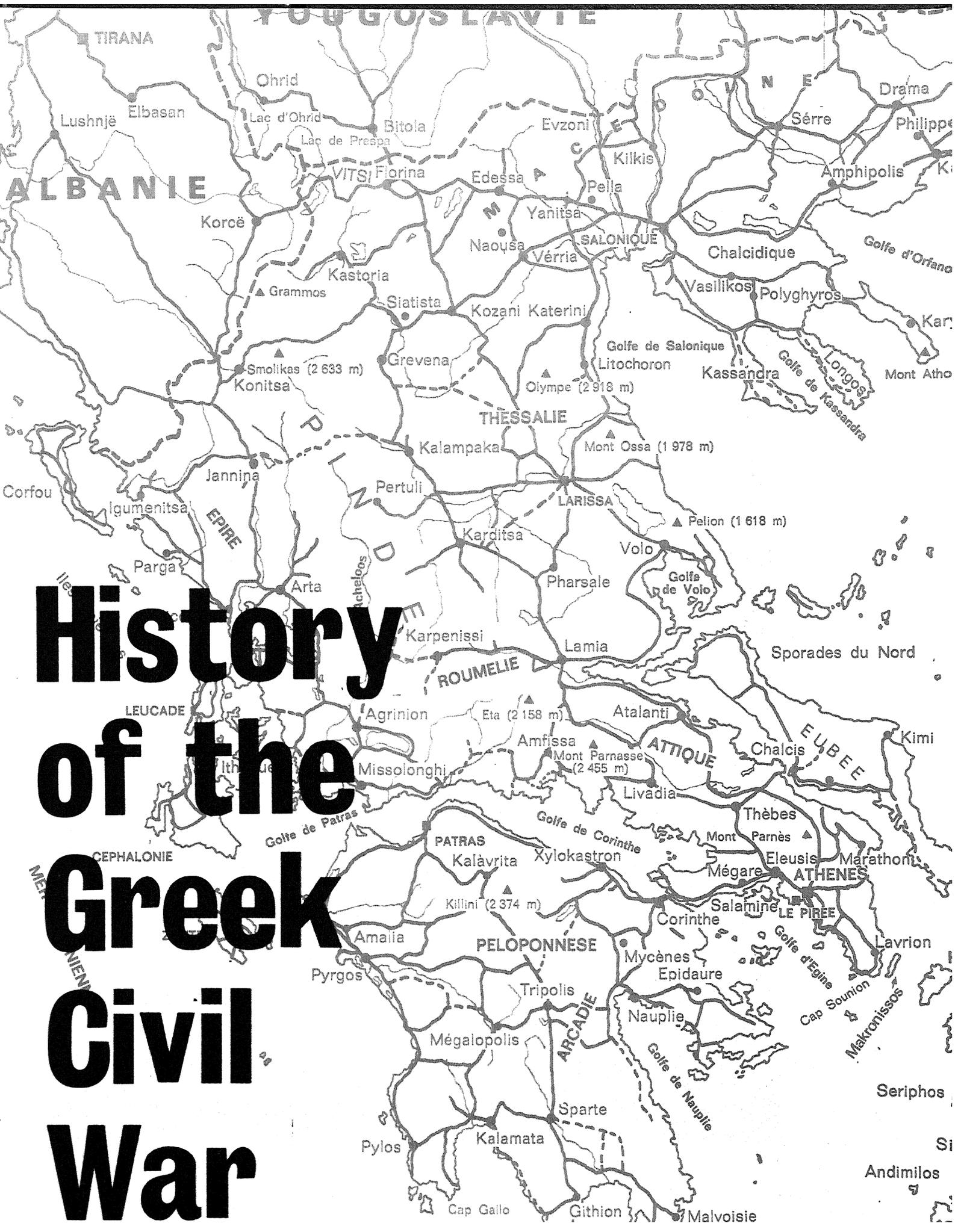
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# History of the Greek Civil War



# The Greek Civil War

## (part three)

### ELAS could have crushed the British intervention

While Churchill declares 'No peace without victory', the CPG acts guided by precisely the opposite maxim. It searches agonisingly for a formula of capitulation. And this was all the more criminal, the more the British found themselves, in reality, completely unable to dominate militarily if the CPG mobilized ELAS, even in part.

Everything that has been maintained to date by capitalist and Stalinist propaganda has created the impression that in Greece in 1944 and up to 1949 an uprising was suppressed on the field of battle by the superior military forces of imperialism and the Greek bourgeois class. In reality however these 'forces' were nothing but rubbish that the CPG, had it wished to, could have swept up with ease.

But the Stalinists, in the leadership of a dynamic and fully armed mass movement, had no intention of claiming the power. Their own indecisiveness and on the other hand the decisiveness of the working class and the other oppressed formed the two poles of a terrible contradiction which constituted the key to the whole tragedy—from the battles with EDES and the 5-42 in 1943, to the holocaust of Grammos and Vitsi in 1949.

... If EAM-ELAS were determined, after the liberation of Greece, to seize the power by force, the capital waited empty and without power for EAM-ELAS to attempt it the day the Germans abandoned it. If they had decided on this it would have been possible for them (EAM-ELAS) to be pushed out only after an intervention which would have brought heavy losses, but which would have been rendered impossible by Allied pressure and Popular Opinion. No imaginary calculation could have expected a better opportunity (for EAM-ELAS) than this to present itself. The fact that it did not occupy Athens in October, before the forces of General Scobie had yet arrived, is a final proof of the sincerity of EAM . . . (C. M. Woodhouse, *Apple of Discord*).

For the CPG the question of seizing the power when the Germans retreated did not arise at all. The CPG was already in power, and during that time was carrying out all state functions normally. It would only have been obliged to defend this power against a possible British intervention. And it had all the strength and all the opportunities in the world to do that with the greatest facility.

In that period, British imperialism found itself involved in a multitude of military obligations and was not in a position to carry out large scale operations in Greece. In Europe the British were tensed for a powerful German counterattack to be landed while in Palestine large military units were temporarily

immobilized by the Jews who were fighting for the founding of Israel.

Here is how the position of British imperialism appears through a telegram from Churchill to General Ismail on December 28, 1944:

... On the other hand, the military situation in Western Apennines is such that any serious weakening of the reserves of Fifteenth Army Group might be attended with danger.

2. In these circumstances I wish you to consider and be ready to discuss with me on my return allowing the leading brigade of 5th Division to proceed from Palestine to Italy on schedule arranged before 4th Division was diverted to Greece. It would be a great convenience if we could have a reply to this tomorrow, Thursday. I do not leave Caserta until after midnight. This of course would mean that no violent action could be taken in Palestine, irritating the Jews, such as the search for arms on a large scale, until the situation is easier all round.

The British planned initially to purge the whole of Attica of the ELAS forces and also to carry out operations in Salonika. But on December 21 Field-Marshal Alexander sends a telegram to Churchill from Italy saying that this plan exceeded British military capabilities and that the operations had necessarily to be limited to Athens and Piraeus.

In answer to your signal of December 19, I am most concerned that you should know exactly what true situation is and what we can do and cannot do. This is my duty. You would know the strength of British forces in Greece, and what additions I can send from Italian front if forced by circumstances to do so.

Assuming that ELAS continue to fight, I estimate that it will be possible to clear the Athens-Piraeus area and thereafter to hold it securely; but this will not defeat ELAS and force them to surrender. We are not strong enough to go beyond this and undertake operations on the Greek mainland. During the German occupation they maintained between six and seven divisions on the mainland, in addition to the equivalent of four in the Greek islands. Even so they were unable to keep their communications open all the time, and I doubt if we will meet less strength and determination than they encountered.

The German intentions on the Italian front require careful watching. Recent events in the West and the disappearance and silence of 16th SS Division opposite Fifth US Army indicates some surprise move which we must guard against. I mention these factors to make the military situation clear to you, and to emphasize that it is my opinion that the Greek problem cannot be solved by military measures. The answer must be found in the political field.

Finally, I think you know that you can always rely on me to do everything in my power to carry out your wishes, but I earnestly hope that you will be able to find a political solution to the Greek problem, as I am convinced that



Left to right: ELAS chief of staff Saraphis, General Scobie and Zervas.

further military action after we have cleared the Athens-Piraeus area is beyond our present strength. (Quoted by K. Pyromaglou in his book *G. Kurtalis*.)

But even these pessimistic predictions of Field-Marshal Alexander were shortly to be proved optimistic. The Central Committee of ELAS, after the provocations of the British and Greek reaction, was forced on December 7 to turn 'towards the people of Athens and Piraeus' and to declare 'The general battle for freedom and the total liberation of our Greece has begun. We did not want it, it was imposed on us . . . ' In reality however, for the Stalinists 'the general battle for freedom' had never begun. One day before they made their declaration, on December 6, they approached Scobie and asked for a meeting to discuss the conditions of the capitulation! On the other hand, while the battle had 'begun' in Athens, they sent ELAS to fight Zervas in Epirus, they prevented the ELAS detachments in Attica from entering the capital, they disarmed them wherever possible and turned their men over to the English, and they sowed confusion, disappointment and doubt in the fighting detachments of the Militia. In spite of all this, the fighting capacity of the working class and the youth was revealed to be awesome. The British troops were confronted with certain capture and were saved only after the intervention of the Stalinist leadership which suddenly accepted all of Scobie's conditions and called on all its armed forces to abandon Athens at once.

A short time before the battles started Churchill asked Scobie to prevent every approach of ELAS bands to the city and expressed the hope that Scobie, with his armoured cars, would be in a position to teach some of these bands 'a lesson' in order to make an example of them so that the other detachments would not try the same thing. But on December 17, he who arrogantly believed he would give 'lessons', panic-stricken sent a telegram to Field-Marshal Alexander:

The ELAS advance towards the centre of Athens seems to me a very serious feature, and I should like your appreciation of whether, with the reinforcements now arriving, we are likely to hold our own in the centre of the city and defeat the enemy. Have you any other reinforcements in view besides the 4th Division, the Tank Regiment, and the two remaining brigades of the 46th Division? Is there now any danger of a mass surrender of British TROOPS COOPED UP IN THE CITY OF Athens, followed by a massacre of Greeks who sided with us? The War Cabinet desire your report on the military situation in this respect.

2. We have no intention of subduing or occupying Greece. Our object is to afford a foundation upon which a broad-based Greek Government can function and raise a national force to preserve itself in Attica. After this we go, as we have no interests in Greece except those of sentiment and honour . . .

Churchill again on the 28th of the month sent a telegram to General Ismay:

It is clear to me that great evils will follow here in Athens, affecting our position all over the world, if we cannot clear up situation quickly—i.e., in two or three weeks. This would entail, according to Alexander, the moving in of the two brigades of the 46th Division, which are already under orders and standing by . . .

Also the British Ambassador Leeper notes:

During the battle of the first days the British troops, which were numerically in a very disadvantageous position, were cooped up in the city centre. If ELAS had shown greater decisiveness and had attacked in the central part of the city, it could possibly have succeeded, but it would have paid very dearly. By a fortunate coincidence it did not undertake it . . . (*When Greek Meets Greek*)

And Colonel Woodhouse:

During the five intervening months until ELAS accepted (!!) its defeat, the forces of General Scobie had almost submitted. . . . (*Apple of Discord*)

This was the position of the British troops in Athens, when the leaders of the CPG were making moves behind the scenes in order to achieve a truce and an application of the Caserta agreements. Leeper, in *When Greek Meets Greek*, notes that after the

commencement of the conflict everything indicated that the CPG wanted to conclude a treaty:

... But a more important sign, was the demand from Porphyroyenis, one of the most prominent Communist leaders, to be accepted under Scobie. The demand was granted. Since he came to be informed by General Scobie of his conditions, the latter made it clear that ELAS must execute his orders. . . .

Scobie reminded Porphyroyenis that ELAS had come under his orders after the Caserta agreement. And these orders were and remained the evacuation of Attica by ELAS. In Athens and Piraeus the ELAS supporters must be ordered to stop the resistance and surrender their arms. When these orders had been executed, Scobie promised that 'the peaceful enjoyment of the democratic freedoms' would be granted to the Greeks, regardless of their political beliefs.

Porphyroyenis promised that he would convey the conditions to the leaders of the CPG, and passed through the British lines in order to return to the ELAS Headquarters outside Athens. Four days later, on December 16, the Central Committee of ELAS replied that: it agreed to withdraw its formations from Athens and Piraeus if the 'Mountain Brigade' were withdrawn simultaneously; if the whole National Guard were disarmed and its men sent to their homes; if the British troops were used only in operations determined by the Caserta agreement and not in interventions in the internal affairs of the country and finally, if a new government 'of real national unity' were formed as soon as possible.

'These conditions,' Leeper writes, 'were not accepted by General Scobie.'

On December 22, General Scobie received a new communication from the CC of ELAS, according to which the withdrawal from Athens and Piraeus and the disarming

of ELAS supporters were accepted, but this acceptance was accompanied by certain political conditions, for example the formation of the new Government was to take place before the conditions of the truce came into operation.

During the negotiations, the British reinforcements were constantly arriving from Italy. The main road from Athens to Piraeus had been completely cleared and the ELAS forces for the most part had been driven out.

At this point it was announced that Churchill was on his way to Athens. . . .

Churchill arrived in Athens on December 25 to take part in a conference which was organised the same day at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, during which the leaders of the CPG finally accepted the conditions set by the representatives of British imperialism. Besides Churchill, the conference was attended by Eden, Macmillan, Archbishop Damaskinos, as well as the Russian and French Ambassadors.

One episode on that day was to prove that ELAS' followers continued to be the real masters of Athens. It was revealed that the 'Grande Bretagne' Hotel, where the members of Papandreou's 'government' and the British Staff were housed, and where Churchill himself was staying, had been wired by ELAS with a ton of dynamite. If the dynamite was exploded, the whole hotel would have been blown up and all the British strength in Athens, which was already in a difficult position, would have been completely paralysed. But the dynamite was not detonated. It was only a display of strength on the part of the CPG, a threat and a means of 'pressure'.

Churchill wrote in a telegram to his wife:

2. You will have read about the plot to blow up H.Q. in the Hotel Grand Bretagne. I do not think it was for my benefit. Still, a ton of dynamite was put in sewers by extremely skilled hands and with German mechanism between the time my arrival was known and daylight. . . .



Athens conference 26 December 1944. Left to right: Anthony Eden, Winston Churchill, Archbishop Damaskinos, Field Marshal Alexander, Harold Macmillan.

## The main force of ELAS is sent to Epirus

What was happening to the 70,000 men of ELAS and the many more of Reserve ELAS while the battles were raging in Athens?

Even before the CPG ministers resigned from the Papandreou government and while everything foreboded the appearance of a violent crisis, confusion and dissolution were spreading in the ranks of ELAS. It was in a state of demobilisation and at the same time the leadership of the CPG, having supplanted the General Headquarters of ELAS, moved the military units arbitrarily, disbanding all their battle formations.

At the end of November, General S. Saraphis was in Athens in order to be brought up to date on the situation by the CPG leaders. On November 29, he returned to the General Headquarters and announced to Captain Aris Veloukhiotis and the officers of the Staff the opinions of the political leadership. The night of November 30 a telegram from Siantos arrived at ELAS General Headquarters warning that the situation was critical and that all forces must be on general alert. Siantos asked for the 42nd Regiment to be moved to Leivadia. While all the units were notified to concentrate their men and transport and be on their guard, the ELAS Staff informed the EAM Central Committee that with its activities the formation of the detachments was being disbanded and that what was required were operations according to a general plan.

General Saraphis writes in his book 'ELAS':

We replied the same night that the detachments were on their guard and that we would move the 42nd infantry regiment in time and when necessary, not by itself but in conjunction with other units and according to a general plan. On December 1 English airplanes dropped a leaflet from General Scobie containing an order from him, which called on the guerrillas to surrender their arms, according to the plan which I have set out in the preceding chapter. The commencement of demobilization was set for December 10. From a report by the 2nd Division we learn that in Order No 24 the 1st Body of the Army ordered the 7th Infantry Battalion to proceed to Aulona and the 2nd Battalion to proceed to Liatani for manoeuvres. In a telegram to the EAM Central Committee we let them know that moving detachments, without the knowledge of General Headquarters, tends to disband the formation of the detachments and we ask that it be determined, in case of conflict, who will direct operations. The movement must take place with a general pre-arranged plan for activity and not according to the local conditions in each area. The person who will direct the operations will be formally and essentially responsible, otherwise a real and essential direction of operations, which will direct the operations will be executed with premature moves and not calmly and decisively, will be impossible. Moreover we ask that a meeting be arranged with a responsible person. From a telegram from our brother-in-arms Siantos we learn that the PEEA ministers have resigned and that the situation is most critical. He requests us to move towards Thebes, as soon as possible, the command posts of the Band of Land Divisions of the 13th Division, the 52nd Infantry Regiment and the Cavalry Brigade. The same day we received Order No 1 of the ELAS Central Committee from Generals M. Mandakas, M. Hadjimichalis and brother-in-arms G. Siantos and also that General Headquarters is placed under the ELAS Central Committee . . .

Subsequently, General Saraphis notes that until December 2, despite the critical situation, not a single military measure had been taken by the Central Committee of ELAS:

. . . The same day (December 2, 1944) the General Headquarters sent Report No 211-2.12.44 EPE to the ELAS Central Committee, informing them that the detachments of the 8th Division and Cavalry Brigade cannot reach Thebes before 6-8 days have passed, and asked the Central Committee to make its intentions known to General Headquarters. Also it sent Report No 2103-3.12.44 EPE to the Central Committee of ELAS (over the wireless of the 2nd Division) and informs it of what it was doing on December 1-3 and asked once again for a general plan of action to be drawn up, structured and all-embracing, for a correct distribution of forces and formation of necessary commands to take place. From the above activities of General Headquarters it is clearly shown that until December 2 no unit of ELAS had been moved and no measures had been taken that showed a preparation for attack . . .

Day after day, the confusion and disorder is aggravated. The General Headquarters of ELAS is completely unaware of the plans of the Central Committee of EAM and the Central Committee of ELAS. The situation is such that on December 4 Saraphis and Aris Veloukhiotis set out for Attica to meet with the ELAS Central Committee and to elucidate the situation.

Saraphis writes:

At noon we are in Leivadia. There we find Major Stelios Papadakis of the Central Committee of ELAS, who cannot further enlighten us. We take him with us and set out for the seat of the Central Committee of ELAS. As soon as we pass Kakosalesi, we see a column of English cars with unarmed ELASites, who are coming from Athens. We have about 10 escorts with us. Aris becomes angry and wants us to strike the English and liberate the guerrillas. Outside Kakosalesi and towards the north part, we find the English returning with empty cars, their guns cocked and the machine guns and cannons of their armoured cars ready. We approach the men, about 800 of them, and learn that almost all the 2nd Infantry Regiment were disarmed at Tatoi while they were asleep and that the officers were held by the English. Later we learn that the disarmament took place at Psychiko, that the Regiment was surrounded while proceeding at night towards Goudi. There is something suspect about this question. It is a question of treacherous activity by certain officers or Captains . . .

On December 7, exactly the same day that the Central Committee of ELAS issues its proclamation to the people of Athens and Piraeus, and declares that 'the general battle for freedom has begun', it gives the first clear, but also surprising order, to the General Headquarters of ELAS. But let us leave the Commander-in-Chief of ELAS, S. Saraphis, to speak to us about this:

. . . The same day (December 7) General Hadjimichalis arrived at the General Headquarters to bring us up to date on the situation. He brought with him Order No 44-5.12.44 AP of the Central Committee of ELAS to the Units, which were under its direct orders. Also, Order No 76-6.12.44 AP, which determined the dividing line of the zones of the General Headquarters and the Central Committee which was to be the line Halkia-Thebes-Domvraina. The mission of General Headquarters was determined as the dissolution of the Guerrilla forces of Zervas (Epirus) and Tsaous Anton (Macedonia), the security of the borders (northern borders of the country with Albania, Yugoslavia, Bulgaria), the surveillance of the English guards in its zone and the security against landings in its area. Especially, quick action against Zervas was deemed

necessary in order to prevent his forces being transferred to Athens . . .

As we have mentioned in a preceding chapter, Zervas' EDES was almost dissolved and cooped up in the mountains of Epirus. Nothing could justify transferring a whole army, ELAS, towards the north against this small band. In any case, the whole operation against EDES lasted 2½ days, that is, what was needed to surround the area. Zervas managed, with the men he had left, to escape and cross over, with British ships which hastened to take him, to Corfu. But in the meantime, precious time had been lost and Siantos, together with the other leaders of the CPG, was able to have his poor argument in order to capitulate to the English, supposedly from a position of military weakness.

On December 25, after the meeting with Churchill, when the CPG leaders had capitulated conclusively, they send, perhaps as an irony, a new order to ELAS headquarters to move its forces towards Attica because the situation was critical and reinforcements were needed. Saraphis writes:

. . . At Yiannina, we received a telegram from the Central Committee of ELAS, which told us that the

situation was critical and asked for reinforcements. We had already moved the 36th Infantry Regiment towards Arta-Agrini and ordered the 9th Division as well as Regiment I-38 of Euzonoi of the 1st Division with a platoon of artillery, which was in the Preveza area, to move towards Arta, Agrini and Amphisa under orders of the ELAS Central Committee, and the 1st Division to move towards Metsovo, Karditsa, Farsala, Lamia. We judged that at least 15 days, even under the best conditions, would be needed for the detachments to reach the Leivadia area and that they could not be used in the battle of Athens before the end of January . . .

But they did not need to hurry. In Athens the battles had ceased and the ELAS forces which were moving towards the south were not going to fight but be disarmed.

Some detachments had already been disarmed, and in certain cases the Stalinists had to use the most deceitful and cynical methods of disarming them: Nikiforos' (D. Dimitrios') battalion, camped in Philothei, was disarmed by the British during the night while its men were asleep, with the collaboration of Nikiforos himself. Later, when Aris Veloukhiotis was informed of this dirty deal, it is said that he swore to strangle Nikiforos with his own hands if he met him.

## The Varkiza Agreement



*Varkiza conference 12 February 1945. Left to right: Saraphis, Siantos, Tsirimokos and Partsalidis.*

At the conference with Churchill on December 25, a preliminary agreement had been reached that the British demands were to be discussed in detail after the cease-fire. Thus, on February 2 a delegation from EAM-ELAS led by Siantos which also included Partsalidis, Tsirimokos and Saraphis, met with the representatives of the British government and army in the villa of the right-wing politician, P. Kanellopoulos, in Varkiza.

Three days later the conference of the 'Three Great Powers' began at Yalta. As Churchill relates, at this conference Stalin asked to be 'informed' about the situation in Greece, explaining that 'a criticism of British policies' was outside his intentions. It was proposed to him to send an 'observer' to Greece, but Stalin refused. It would appear that he considered sending an observer would have exposed Moscow as being accessory to the crime which was being

perpetuated. For this reason he closed the matter with the following words: 'I have complete confidence in British policies in Greece.'

The negotiations at Varkiza were carried out under the shadow of the Yalta conference. And the agreements signed there (at Varkiza) on the 12th of the month were regarded as the Greek adaptation of the settlements made by the 'Great Powers'.

In Lebanon the CPG leaders had accepted that the men of the Greek army in the Middle East had to be prosecuted like common criminals. At Varkiza they committed an even more incredible betrayal unparalleled in the whole of world history. Siantos admitted that a crime had been committed by ELAS. That its natural, and not its moral authors must be prosecuted. Thus, the simple ELASite who pulled the trigger was turned over to the reaction's mania for revenge and the CPG leaders saved their hides.

On February 11 Siantos gave a Press conference for representatives of the international Press:

'To the degree to which the Great Allies have decided that the presence of the British army is necessary in Greece, it is right that it should be here. We consider that the conflict between the British and ELAS is the result of a sad misunderstanding which we hope will be forgotten.'  
(Quoted from *Les Kapetanios* by Dominique Eudes).

At the same time in Yalta, Stalin agreed with Churchill that the raging conflict in Greece had been provoked by the Trotskyists!

By the night of February 11-12, the negotiations had ended and Siantos had to sign the document of the agreement. But the man who long ago had learned to coolly stick the knife in the backs of the working class, was hesitant. He refused to sign.

Leeper writes:

Siantos, in battle dress and rubber boots, entered the room declaring that he did not aim to sign the same night, because he was very tired and his mind was not clear enough. We made several attempts to press him to sign, but he persisted for the time being in his refusal.

Macmillan and I were sitting, drinking water and eating sandwiches, waiting like two policemen for our man to sign his paper. Finally at four in the morning Siantos gave us to understand that although it was impossible for him to sign the agreement in its entirety, he was prepared to sign a short provisional agreement.

Parallel to the political negotiations, Saraphis was taking part in a military conference which was occupied with the questions concerning the disarmament of ELAS. At this conference it was agreed that ELAS had to surrender 41,000 rifles, 2,000 machine-guns, 160 mortars and 30 cannons.

But in the end ELAS surrendered many more than they had promised or than they were expected to have. Instead of 30 cannons, they surrendered 100, and almost double the number of rifles. Among the rifles surrendered, modern small guns were rare. It would seem that these were kept by the ELAS fighters and hidden in the mountains. Many of them were discovered later by the government forces.

The whole Greek people, and above all the fighters of ELAS, followed anxiously the political developments which seemed to indicate the darkest forebodings. Everyone's eyes were turned towards Varkiza, where the CPG leadership was negotiating their destiny.

The French journalist Dominique Eudes, in his book *Les Kapetanios*, which describes events based on the

accounts by old fighters, (Eudes travelled to several Eastern European countries to talk with many Greek emigrés who had taken part in the civil war) renders vividly the electrified atmosphere in the city of Trikkala, where the arrival of the EAM-ELAS delegation from Varkiza was being awaited.

In the middle of the large square, an empty platform awaits the arrival of the ELAS delegation. Dawn has broken and a strong light floods the streets. The streets are deserted. The whole city is gathered at the end of the road from Athens, it blackens the hilltops and waits for Siantos' car to arrive. A forced optimism livens the first conversations but a heavy foreboding makes silence fall each time. As time passes, anxiety freezes the crowd even more. All eyes are turned towards the point where the road is lost among the hills. The delegation is already six hours late. The silhouettes, stretched with impatience, look like a universe of stones.

Cars appear out of the fork in the road. A new tense movement increases the pressure of the restlessness even more. Not a welcome, not a sound. The last anxious moments of waiting.

The first car passes between two rows of insatiable gazes. Partsalidis is leaning on the door of the car. The silent question-mark painted on the faces is unbearable.

He says in a broken voice: 'All right, all right.'

These syllables discharge the air like a shot.

A weak outburst of joy replies as if the good news had been announced. The crowd escorts the car to the square where the platform stands. Their chests are lightened after their six-hour agony in a fragile mood of joy accompanied by voices.

'Partsalidis steps onto the platform. He is cool and without fear. Some final applause tries to exorcise the spirits, to drive out reality.

'We have been forced ...'

It is like a flash of lightning. The crowd has received the blow. In a heavy silence the conditions of the Varkiza agreement are enumerated. When he has finished, someone begins quietly to sing the ELAS hymn. And hundreds of voices follow, which are in danger of choking.

'Forward ELAS for Hellas, for justice and freedom.'

Several thousand guerrillas and many captains have gathered in Trikkala. The next day the captains begin to collect the guns. The work takes place without explanations, with dry orders. They do not dare to look straight in the eyes of the men who are surrendering their guns, crying. Some small episodes startle the CPG leadership which fears the birth of an organized rebellion against it. But it manages to control the situation.

It is not only the stolen victory that weighs on the hearts of the ELAS fighters, but also the certain foreboding of the harsh destiny that awaits them.

Many are hesitant, do not surrender their arms, prefer to destroy them or bury them somewhere.

On February 16, the leadership of the CPG is forced to circulate a proclamation signed with two names of authority—Aris Veloukhiotis and Saraphis.

Officers, captains, guerrillas of ELAS and EAM. The struggle of our army has ended and ELAS has been dissolved. For almost three years now you have waged a hard fight against the occupier, in a confrontation full of sacrifices and heroism. Our mountains and plains are covered with the enemies' graves and spoils which the occupier left behind him as he fled. You should be proud of your work. You have done your duty towards the Fatherland. On returning to your homes, you should become good citizens, reaping the fruits of your effort according to the democratic ideals.

We kneel respectfully before our heroic dead. Their

memory will perpetually be surrounded with respect and glory. Having led and watched your battles, we express our respect and gratitude and we salute you all. With your struggles you have written the brightest pages of the glorious history of our beloved Greece.

Long live our indomitable nation.  
Long live its highest issue, ELAS!

Had Veloukhiotis and Saraphis really signed this proclamation? This has been disputed. But as far as the historical position held by both of them, the episode does not have decisive significance. Saraphis was never a Communist, and had already taken part in the Varkiza conference. Veloukhiotis was sincerely dedicated to the movement of the oppressed and in this sense was a revolutionary, but as we have already said not a Marxist. Throughout his revolutionary career and up to his death he was characterized by

empiricism and consequently by vacillation between the opportunist leadership of the CPG and the militant ranks of ELAS. The possibility that both of them signed this proclamation cannot be ruled out.

In any case its contents were not composed by them but by the CPG leadership: ELAS has been dissolved—you have fought hard—you are heroes—we kneel respectfully before you . . . but—go to your homes and become good citizens . . .

This proclamation showed the unbridgeable gap which existed between the working class and all the oppressed on the one hand, and the Stalinist leadership on the other. It is not in military manuals where one must seek the cause of the December defeat, but in the work of Trotsky on the nature of the counter-revolutionary role of Stalinist leadership.

## The assassination of Aris Veloukhiotis

*Aris Veloukhiotis* x



The simple ELAS fighters in their totality, and many of the captains could not accept defeat in a battle which they had never waged. They wanted to continue the fight.

But the CPG leadership kept the situation firmly under its control and methodically carried out everything that it had agreed with the English at Varkiza.

But Aris Veloukhiotis, together with Tzavelas,

preserved a band of 100 men. Yiannouris, another ELAS captain, did the same. Various other small but unrelated bands remained in the mountains. But their example was not immediately followed. And this was to be expected.

The CPG leadership was tied to the working class movement by a long tradition. It had the blessing of Moscow which in the consciousness of the workers was the continuity of the October revolution. Above

all, it was firmly based on theoretical confusion, which it sowed for two decades with its Stalinist policies. It was not possible for a new leadership to shoot up suddenly, magically, and immediately win over the consciousness of the masses.

This leadership was a matter of a long struggle to train cadres in the principles of Marxism and build the new revolutionary party through a day-long struggle to uncover the Stalinist betrayals. The Trotskyists who would have been able to carry out this fight were deprived of their tried and tested leadership, confused and isolated. The Archeiomarxists of the 'Workers' Struggle' and the defeatists of Stinas always maintained their stand of 'irreconcilable hostility' towards ELAS, which they regarded as 'an extension of the imperialist front of the "allies"'. .

Veloukhiotis had tried, in his own simple way, to provide a solution and make the other captains face their responsibilities. After the Caserta agreement, intuitively sensing the threat which had appeared, he called a meeting on November 11 at Lamia, in which many captains from all over Greece took part. At this meeting, hesitantly and only by allusion, did he try to set out his fears and prepare his brothers-in-arms for the eventuality of the continuation of the struggle, despite the wishes of the party leadership. However he experienced the cold reception of all the adherents of the party leadership. The meeting was dissolved when it was condemned as anti-party.

After Varkiza, Veloukhiotis, having refused to surrender his arms, installed himself with his 100 dedicated guerrillas near Spercheios, at the same place he had first begun the armed struggle.

He began to call on the old ELASites and captains to join him. But instead of any reply, he was soon visited by a delegation from the CC of the CPG, led by Grigoriadis. The delegation conveyed to him that the CC called upon him to stop armed action and tried to persuade him that he must return to Athens, or, if he preferred, go abroad. He was persuaded. But he knew that in Athens he would be isolated from the party and that his life would be in immediate danger. For this reason he stated that he would go abroad.

He set out with his men for the Albanian border. Grigoriadis had assured him that everything was arranged and had been made known to the Albanian authorities. However, this journey was to hold many surprises for him. One night, Aris' band found itself suddenly surrounded by a British battalion of the 4th Indian Division. Thanks to his knowledge of the terrain, he evaded the encirclement and continued his march towards Hoxha's Albania. There a new surprise awaited him. The Albanian guards opened fire on him. Aris understood that these incidents were no accident and that the whole history of his flight abroad was boded no good for him. He left three wounded in the hands of the Albanian guards and started a return journey to his old hideouts.

When he got as far as Trikkala, he was informed that Nikos Zachariadis, the old General Secretary of the party, had returned to Athens from Dachau and was welcomed at a large and enthusiastic rally at the Stadium. Like many others, Aris yielded to the naive self-deception that everything would change now. The old leader, whose name was cheered by the members of the party as they died before the firing squads during the harsh years of the Occupation, would put an end to



*Nikos Zachariades*

the suspect 'mistakes' and would finally lead to victory.

The 'saviour' had arrived at Tatoi in a British military aircraft. He must have suffered greatly at Dachau. But fighters with a personal knowledge of his case confirmed later that he enjoyed special treatment. Besides, it was for this reason that he, the General Secretary of the Greek Communist Party, survived at Dachau where thousands of simple and peace-loving people were exterminated.

Supposedly his fate was not known during this whole period. But he had not been lost, this former student of the Stalinist KUTV school. A few years later it was officially revealed that he maintained continuous contact with the party, through his mother. But he was kept in reserve. When the Siantos leadership, under the weight of its crimes, fell into general contempt, the British brought Zachariadis out in order to strengthen the confidence of the masses in the CPG, in the party which had been so useful to them.

Veloukhiotis immediately sent a letter to the party commissioner at Trikkala:

I am at the disposal of Zachariadis and I will return to Athens if he considers it expedient. In case he cannot reply to me, he should send Barziotas with instructions.

Afterwards he installed himself in the Tzoumerka area, where Zervas had been formerly, and waited for the reply.

Aris had not been informed that in the meantime the man in whom he had placed his hopes, Zachariadis, had published in *Rizospastis* a resolution of the CC, where 'Aris Veloukhiotis, Thanasis Klaras or Mizerias', 'the declarer', 'the renegade', 'the adventurist', 'who took advantage of the leniency of the party' was exposed 'to popular contempt'!

At Tzoumerka, instead of a reply or Barziotas, he received on June 18 1945, a sudden attack by strong forces of the Gendarmerie. Surprised, his men were forced to scatter in order to escape the encirclement. Aris remained behind with Tzavelas. As various witnesses later confirmed, a hand grenade was heard exploding from where they stood, followed by firing from the gendarmes. It is said that the two captains committed suicide embracing, with a hand grenade between them. However no one witnessed this to be able to confirm it.

The Gendarmerie then cut off their heads and carried them round Trikkala and Lamia for everyone to see that the ELAS captain was no more and that their every hope was futile.

Decapitation and carrying round of the heads was in that period a common phenomenon. The Minister of Justice, Rentis, in the government recognized by Moscow, paid rewards to reactionary gangs only if they brought him heads.

After Veloukhiotis' death rumours were circulating that his retreat had been betrayed by the CPG leaders themselves. Of course no one had indisputable evidence to prove anything like this.

It is however a fact that at that time turning dissenters over to the police was a very common weapon in the struggle within the party. In many cases, the CPG leadership itself exterminated those who opposed it, through the feared OPLA. In Barziotas' report to the CC of the CPG (1946) reference is made to the murder of 600 'Trotskyists'. In reality this figure is very conservative. The victims of OPLA were much more numerous and not all of them were Trotskyists.



*Vassilis Barziotas*

Besides, why should anyone doubt that Veloukhiotis was betrayed to the Gendarmerie by the CPG leaders when these leaders had already quite consciously betrayed a whole movement to the imperialists and local reaction?



*Andartes and Kapetanios of Roumelia. On the right: Aris.*

## ELAS is reborn in the Democratic Army



The mass movement had been betrayed but had not been smashed. It preserved all its strength and it would not subside so easily. On the other hand, the bourgeoisie was in a shambles and could hardly stand on its feet, despite its British crutches. So, while ELAS was disarmed and dissolved, 'law and order' were not restored.

After Varkiza, instead of there being a course of gradual restoration of 'normality', the country was heading inevitably towards a sharpening of the civil war.

It was not a new war that succeeded the old, but the continuation of the struggle that had already begun during the Occupation.

ELAS, the armed advance guard of the working class and all the oppressed, betrayed, disarmed and dissolved by the Stalinists, was not long in being reborn in the 'Democratic Army'.

In this new phase, the mask of national liberation which had been imposed on the movement by the Stalinists during the Occupation was inevitably shed and the proletarian class character of the movement came clearly to the surface.

This period, named the period of the 'second guerilla movement', precisely because it could not take on any 'national' colouration was denounced by the 6th Plenum of the CC of the CPG in 1956 as 'a leftist mistake of the Zachariadis leadership of the Party'.

But the 'Democratic Army' and the second guerilla movement were not, nor could have been a simple product of the political initiatives of the CPG—the result of some 'leftist mistake'.

The 'Democratic Army'—like ELAS—sprang necessarily from the concrete conditions prevailing in

the country, which of course this time had not been formed independently of the role played by the CPG, that is independently of the betrayals of the CPG.

Through the December events and Varkiza, the British imperialists managed to install a purely bourgeois governmental power. They could not however satisfy themselves with this. They had, above all, decisively to overthrow the correlation of class forces, so as to stabilize the gains they made thanks to the Stalinists. The working class had to be smashed by force, until it could not raise its head again. They had to adopt Churchill's dogma 'no peace without victory'.

The reaction launched a fierce manhunt. Mass arrests were made of ELAS fighters, the members and followers of EAM-CPG. Some fighters were thrown into prison, others were executed, others murdered in broad daylight in the streets. The reactionary gangs made attacks on houses, killed, raped, looted.

According to the figures published by the 'Democratic Government' (Stalinist government of the mountain) between the signing of the Varkiza agreement and March 1946, Grivas' 'X' and the other right-wing gangs, committed: '1,289 murders, 6,671 woundings, 31,632 tortures, 18,767 robberies and arrests, 84,931 arrests, 509 attempted murders, 165 rapes and other ill-treatment of women' in the cities and the countryside. (*The Truth about Greece.*)

These figures give only a shadowy picture of the terrible pogroms launched by the reaction. Besides, such situations cannot be described in dry statistical data.

The case of the editor of *Rizospastis*, Vidalis, gives a taste of the nightmare the country was living through after Varkiza. In August 1946 Vidalis left Athens to

travel in the provinces to collect data for a reportage on the activities of right-wing gangs there. Because he was constantly being followed, he telephoned Karageorgis in Athens. He received orders to return immediately from the Party. On the 16th his train, on its way to Athens, was stopped by Sourlas' gang. Sourlas' armed men forced Vidalis to get off the train and began to torture him in the presence of the passengers and a British officer who watched the scene with indifference. When they had put out his eyes and cut off his tongue, they executed him.

The result of this fierce persecution, like the oppression of the Occupation Authorities in the preceding years, was precisely the opposite from the one that was sought. The working class did not passively accept the harsh fate imposed on it thanks to the deceitful policies of the Stalinists. Its fighters, instead of fatalistically awaiting the executioner's knife, went to the mountains to save themselves. The same thing was done by the poor peasants and especially the youth all over the country. As the terrorism intensified, so the current of the exodus to the mountains became greater.

Naturally, this situation would not have existed if the CPG had seized, or rather defended the power which passed into its hands after the German retreat, if it had not betrayed in the December events, if, if . . . It was only in this sense that the CPG was responsible for the forming of the second guerilla movement.

Those that fled to the mountains did not of course fold their arms. They united in bands and began guerilla activities. From these bands the Democratic Army was born.

The Stalinists who had dissolved ELAS never thought about creating a new guerilla army. While the battles were raging in the mountains, they were legally publishing *Rizospastis* in Athens and 'washed their hands'. They officially sponsored the guerilla movement only in the summer of 1947, and the CPG leadership immediately undertook its direction, in order to lead it finally to destruction.

However, the Stalinists tried from the inception to exploit the activities of the guerilla bands in order to use them—as usual—as a means of 'pressure'. While playing with fire, they were carried away against their wishes into the whirlpool of the civil war.

At the beginning of 1946, the Regent Archbishop Damaskinos made known his decision to lead the country to general elections. With the elections the reaction did not aim of course to give the masses an opportunity to express their verdict, but to strengthen its position through them and to continue its counter-revolutionary work. The date of the elections was set for March 31. At the beginning of February the 2 Plenum of the CC of the CPG met. The Plenum dealt only lightly with the subject of the elections.

The 2nd Plenum of our party, writes Markos Vafiadis, met before the elections. At it the question of the elections was scarcely discussed. It remained open as to whether we would take part or not. (Letter to the Politburo, November 1948. From the journal *Struggle*, No 2, February 1971.)

#### Says Vafiadis:

'On the contrary, at the military conference which took place at the end of the Plenum, the impression was created that the top leaders of the CPG were oriented towards armed rebellion.'

Despite the fact that the question of the elections had remained open, on February 17 *Rizospastis* announced a decision of the CC that the CPG would abstain from the elections because the conditions of terror which prevailed did not permit them to be conducted smoothly, the right-wing gangs had not been dissolved, the Nazi collaborators had not been arrested, guarantees for general amnesty had not been given, the election registers had not been cleared of non-existent electors, and, mainly, because the demand of EAM for the formation of a new 'National Unity' government with their participation had not been accepted.

Even the 'liberal' and right-wing politicians admitted that the conditions prevailing did not permit the smooth conduct of the elections. Despite all this, Damaskinos rejected any idea of postponement and stated that the elections would be held come-what-may on the prescribed date.

Then the General Secretary of the CPG, N. Zachariadis, addressed himself to Markos Vafiadis and Kikitsas who were EAM cadres in Macedonia, and asked them to 'strike', on the eve of the election, a target which they themselves would choose.

Indeed, on March 30, a band of armed EAMites, led by Ypsilantis, entered Litochori in Macedonia, where three old ELAS guerrillas had been murdered in recent weeks. The inhabitants of the village were EAM sympathisers and many of them former ELASites. There was a Gendarmerie station in the village and a company of government soldiers who had just arrived in order to supervise the elections the following day. The soldiers did not resist, and certain of them left with the guerrillas. The gendarmes however refused to surrender their arms. The EAM men surrounded the station and set it on fire. When they raised the white flag, they had lost 12 men.

Markos, connecting the military conference at the 2nd Plenum with the abstention and the order to attack at Litochori, believed that the Party had decided to take up the armed struggle. He addressed himself to the CC, notifying it that he could arm 25,000 men immediately. But Zachariadis reprimanded him and gave him to understand that the Party, with its operations, simply wanted to exert pressure for a compromise.

However, the episode at Litochori was to be the spark that set alight the dry field. The bands of 'proscriptors', dispersed in the mountains, saw the signal for rebellion in this. The guns began to be unearthed.

In the meantime, the coalition of the monarchy and right wing gained the majority in the elections. The total votes cast were 1,121,696. The vote was supposedly supervised by a committee of foreign observers. As the international Press has written, its members knew neither the Greek language, nor Greek reality. But its validity was disputed even by the single fact that it had been approved by the imperialists.

This committee reckoned the percentage of abstention at 15 per cent. In reality it was much greater. In 1946, the number entered on the electoral lists constituted a riddle. If the estimates of the percentages are made on the basis of the 1951 lists, which contained 2,244,446 electors (the population had not altered significantly), the percentage of abstentions amounted to about 48 per cent. And these estimates are possible if we forget for the moment the violence and ballot-rigging exercised by the authorities.

The conditions that prevailed in 1946 were indeed, as the CPG leadership said, unsuitable for holding



*Markos Vafiades*

elections. They were conditions of civil war. A revolutionary leadership, in the CPG's position, would have been obliged to denounce the attempt of the reaction to drape the counter-revolution in the mantle of electoral legality. A revolutionary leadership would have been obliged to boycott the elections and to undertake, with the support of the masses, the immediate seizure of power. But the CPG, just 16 months earlier, had offered to give the power back to the puppets of British imperialism. With this precedent, what meaning could the boycott of the elections have had?

The abstention, since it did not have as an opposite pole the immediate revolutionary claim to power, constituted an invaluable gift to the reaction. It armed the reaction with arguments for its persecution, helped it to form with ease a parliamentary government, and afforded the police with a complete list of the CPG supporters. The electoral lists were later used for throwing 80,000 people into prison and uninhabited islands and for condemning 2,000 to death. The 'stigma' of abstention accompanied thousands of fighters to their graves and today still accompanies their children, who undergo every kind of discrimination and persecution, are forbidden to work in the public service, in branches related to 'national security', etc.

While a policy of abstention was adopted in the March elections, six months later when the Greek bourgeoisie had relatively stabilised its position and had seriously strengthened its armed bodies, the CPG decided to take part in the plebiscite on the question of the monarchy. In this way it legalised the improbable result of the plebiscite, which showed 68 per cent of Greeks in favour of the monarchy.

As was to be expected, after the March elections the murderous orgy of the reaction surpassed all limits. The Tsaldaris government, ignoring every proposal for compromise by the Stalinists, applied itself unrestrainedly to its attempt to bring the masses to their knees with iron and fire. The current of the flight to the mountains grew even stronger. Many fighters crossed the northern border of the country to take refuge in Yugoslavia and the other workers' states.

Under this terrible pressure, the Politburo of the CPG was forced to address itself this time to Markos Vafiades and to ask about the possibility of organising armed bands.

But the leaders of the CPG were seized by a double fear. They were more afraid of the mass movement than of the reaction. Thus Zachariadis gave Markos the instruction for the bands to limit themselves to defence activities and not to concentrate in large numbers.

Wrote Markos:

The Party did not set out with faith and decision to dominate the armed popular movement. It wanted to use it as a means of blackmail for facing the situation which arose from Varkiza and after the elections. (Letter to the Politburo, November 1948, op. cit.)

But it was not easy for the CPG to control the course of the guerrilla movement. The 'proscrits' condensed its ranks quickly. In October 1946 the guerrillas carried out 100 operations and occupied temporarily the city of Naousa. On the 28th of that month Markos announced the founding of the Democratic Army.

## The CPG and the Democratic Army

As we have said, the reaction was in shambles. It could not have endured a general attack of the forces which the CPG was in a position to mobilize. On the other hand, its British protectors were not in a position to aid it decisively. If the Stalinists had sought victory they would have been able to win it very quickly. But they were thinking only about 'compromise'.

They considered a few armed bands sufficient for their policy of 'pressure'. The Democratic Army matured in spite of their wishes, and imposed itself on them. When its founding had been announced, EAM declared in Athens that it had no relation to it. The Stalinists had once again remembered their familiar refrain of the 'proletarian' methods of struggle. Vladas, speaking in Piraeus, accused those who fled to the mountains of being 'idlers who abandon the real fight in the cities and within the factories'!

Markos writes:

Instead of (the party) mobilizing all its forces and instead of proceeding decisively towards the armed struggle (the possibilities were many that a broad movement within the cities would arise with decisive blows), after the elections it established a middle-of-the-road policy. It over-estimated the legal possibilities that remained, it created illusions within the Party and the people about a peaceful solution to the Greek problem. Not one of the organizations of the Party had a clear position on where we were heading. I refer to some characteristic events: Throughout 1946 and the beginning of 1947 we had very strong bases within the monarcho-fascist army. Many units were in their majority composed of EPONites, workers who were Party members, peasants from AKE, etc. The reaction had not yet had time to create the necessary machinery to purge the army which it had created hastily. The Party put the thesis for us to pose the question not of organized but of isolated military detachments passing over to the guerillas, and only under orders. Up to October and subsequently, very few party cadres were sent to the guerillas and 150-200 fighters were sent from the cities, at the moment when the cadres and party members were being arrested for the firing squad, the prisons and exile. When I went out to the mountains at the end of September, I put this question to the organizations of Macedonia and Thessaly, as well as to the leaderships, but the reply which Macedonia gave to the comrade I sent in November 1946 was that we must not forget that we are fighting for reconciliation and that our demands were limited, that the development of the mass movement comes first, etc. It was right that the party must not stop organizing the mass movement in the cities for one moment. But here the question arose first of all about small cities, close to the mountains and with a peasant composition, but with a conscious revolutionary movement. Cities which were guerilla mothers to ELAS and which had thousands of ELAS fighters. The leaderships of the organizations in these cities did not receive any instructions to take fighters out and it was to be expected, due to their peculiar position, that they would be struck by the reaction. But even from the large cities there was scarcely a single attempt up to June 1947, for cadres and fighters to go up to the mountains. When I put these questions to Ioannidis in November 1946 in a letter, the reply was: for cadres etc. to go out to the mountains was the concern of Athens and that it was not right for other cadres to be exposed to winter's hardships. It was apparent that the party did not have a clear position on where we were heading. The period from the elections of 1946 to March 1947 was the period when the greatest possibilities existed of our dominating decisively in certain basic areas. Could not most of the thousands of cadres and members of the Party at least have passed to the people's republics, which was so easy from Macedonia and Thessaly? This did not take place in time even for the members of the Central Committee who were of necessity

in the mountains. The fact is that we lost practically the only opportunity which existed in this period because monarcho-fascism was unprepared and with a decisive push forward of the armed struggle it would have been possible to create serious pre-conditions for a decisive blow and overthrow of monarcho-fascism in certain areas. (op. cit.)

Despite the boycott of the leadership, the guerilla movement developed with great speed. Three months after its official appearance, the Democratic Army numbered 13,000 men and women and had under its control large areas in the north part of the country which contained about 100 villages.

Each of the guerilla bands which was formed was independent and responsible for finding its quarters and securing its provisions. Markos adopted classic guerilla tactics. He made sudden attacks on small military detachments of the government and retreated immediately before reinforcements could arrive.

In January 1947 Markos founded a permanent headquarters of the Democratic Army in the corner of the borders of Greece-Albania-Yugoslavia, at the place where the Vitsi and Grammos mountain ranges unite. A rocky and wild territory, considered easy to defend and difficult to capture.

During the whole winter and up to April 1947, the guerillas struck heavy blows against the army of the government. In April, the first large purge operation by the government was a complete disaster.

The appearance of the Democratic Army and its successful operations put the Tsaldaris government in a difficult position. It was accused of failure in managing the situation. In January 1947 it resigned, to be succeeded by the Maximos coalition in which Kanellopoulos, Venizelos, Kartalis, Papandreou and Zervas took part. The coalition was formed with an ultimatum from the 'socialist' Bevin in its hand, to be finished with the guerilla movement in three months. Bevin was Foreign Minister in Britain, where the Labour Party had succeeded the Tories in the government.

In that period the situation of economic chaos which prevailed in Greece brought a joint Anglo-American committee to examine the fate of its millions in foreign aid which were granted to the various Greek governments.

The committee ascertained that a large part of the aid had been squandered on importing luxury goods, on perfumes, jewellery, ties and fancy scarves.

British imperialism was facing serious economic problems and found it increasingly difficult to continue its aid to the Greek bourgeoisie. The British government began to advise the Athens government to address itself to the Americans. In February, S. Venizelos, a 'liberal' friend of the Stalinists, visited the USA to ask for aid. On the third of the following month the government officially called on the US to intervene in Greece.

During 1947, the Greek bourgeoisie, which for several decades had been tied to British influence, changed its guardian. As the American 'technicians' and 'experts' increased in Greece, the missions of the British withdrew or their importance became only symbolic.

In the last six months of that year, the dance of the millions of the Marshall Plan was at its height in



*American artillery in use with Greek government forces.*

Greece. The Greek bourgeoisie and its crooked politicians threw themselves greedily on the moneybags of their new master.

The aid in war material was huge. New tanks, motor vehicles, ships, modern jet-propelled aeroplanes and heavy bombers.

On the initiative of the Americans the Mountain Commando Companies (LOK) were set up, to carry out counter-guerilla war against the Democratic Army.

Because the inhabitants of the cities and villages helped the guerillas in every way in their operations, the government saw 'Fifth Column' Trotskyists everywhere and, urged on by the Americans, began to uproot whole populations by force in order to install them in camps close to the military encampments.

In these conditions, thousands of people and above all thousands of orphaned children were in danger of dying of starvation and illnesses.

The government had concentrated 14,000 of these children in special camps.

O'Ballance writes:

... The Greek Government took children from certain fringe areas and put them into colonies for care and education, both on the mainland and in the islands. These, in 1948, amounted to about 14,700. (Edgar O'Ballance: *The Greek Civil War.*)

During the same period the Democratic Army was helping children who had lost their parents or children whose parents wanted to send them to a safe place to cross the border into Yugoslavia, Albania and Bulgaria. The reactionary propaganda had a field day. The same act, carried out by the government of head-hunters, was 'care and education', carried out by the Democratic Army, it was compared to the 'child-collecting' as in Turkish occupied Greece in times gone by.

Until the Americans became involved in the Greek civil war, the reaction avoided mobilizing the youth into its army which it believed had left inclinations. After that, however, it changed its tactics, mobilized them and put them in special concentration camps called 'reform schools'. Fifteen thousand army recruits were locked up in such camps.

The government justified the intervention of the Americans and its own crimes by claiming that it was fighting an uprising incited by the 'Slavo-Communists'. The truth was that the Democratic Army did not get any serious aid from the neighbouring countries, while Moscow ignored it completely.

Markos often took refuge in Yugoslavia, and less often in Albania and Bulgaria, in order to reconstitute his forces or care for the wounded. But this did not mean that the governments of these countries were actively on the side of the guerillas. They simply took account of their own and the international working class and did not dare to come out openly against the Greek guerillas.

Only once, in the battle of Vitsi and Grammos, did Albanian soldiers take part on the side of the Democratic Army, but they did so completely spontaneously.

The British Major Edgar O'Ballance writes about this episode:

Some Albanian soldiers took part in the Vitsi fighting, and over 20 were found dead on Greek territory and another seven were captured. These were individual Albanian soldiers whose enthusiasm had caused them spontaneously and unofficially to join in and fight with the Democratic Army. (op. cit.)

As a 'proof' that the Democratic Army was instigated

by 'Slavo-Communists', the reaction made the claim that the real headquarters of the Democratic Army was in Bulkes, a small town 100 kilometres northwest of Belgrade. There, in a special camp, were 3,000 ELAS men who had escaped to Yugoslavia so as not to fall into the hands of the right-wing gangs. Bulkes was not a headquarters but a Stalinist 'reform school'. The ELAS men ended up there because Tito transported them from city to city, further and further north. These men had begun to criticize the policies of the leadership in past years, the agreements of Lebanon, Caserta and Varkiza, and for this reason found themselves under the strict supervision of the authorities and of Pechtasidis, the investigator of OPLA. 'Worms,' 'middle class leftists', 'Trotskyists'—these were the epithets levelled against them by the leadership. They were obliged to live in groups of five, denied the right of contact with one another.

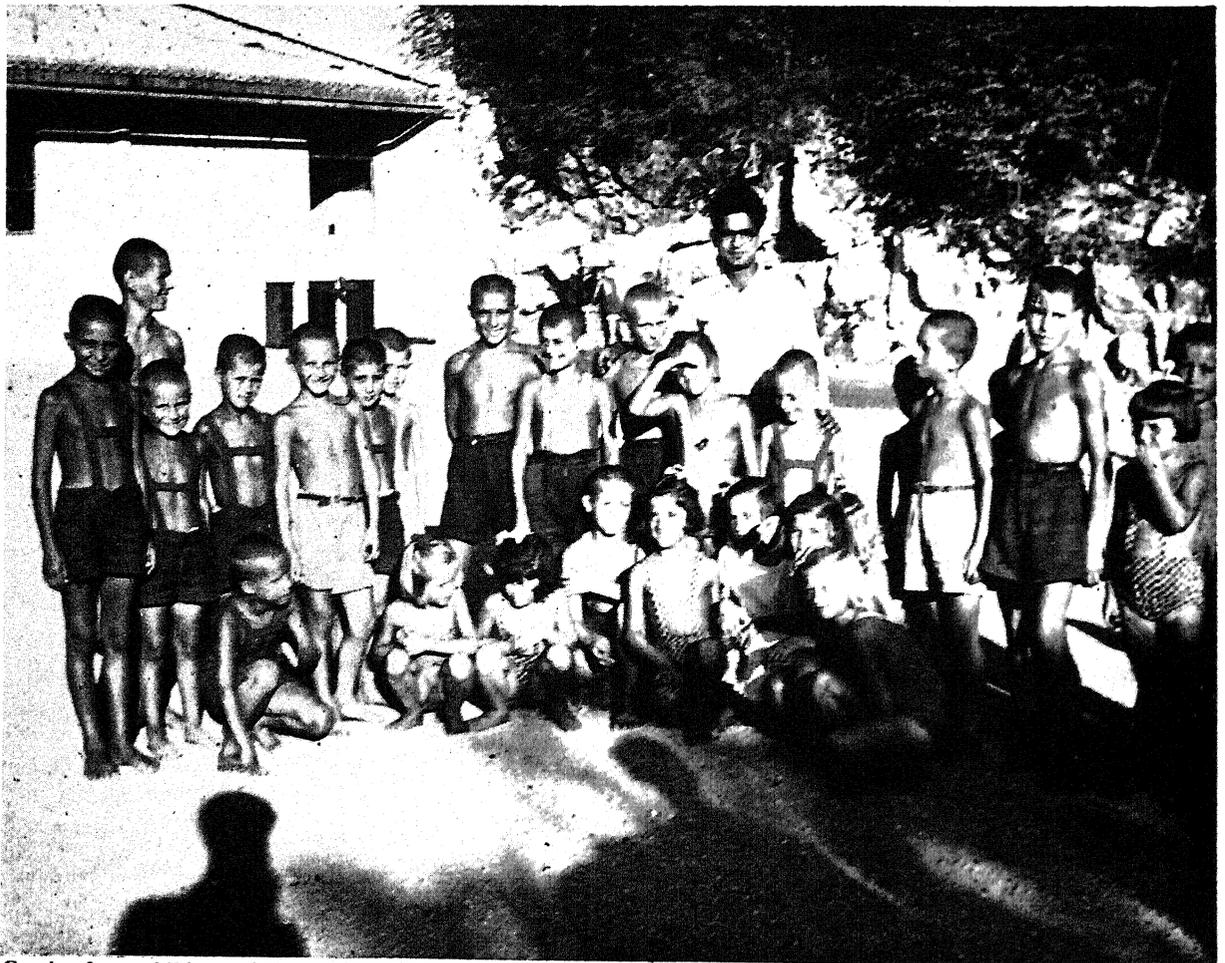
Dominique Eudes, in his book *Les Kapetanos*, says that many of the insubordinate ELASites were escorted back to Greece, a gift to the gangs of the head-hunters.

An old ELAS Captain, Mavros, with a few other men, was forced to take the train to Greece. On the platform he passed between two rows of men who cursed him as a 'traitor' and spat on him. Later, Mavros the 'traitor' was to be killed fighting in the ranks of the Democratic Army.

The Stalinists of Western Europe had promised aid to the Democratic Army. In 1947 a campaign was begun to form international brigades to be sent to Greece. Recruiting offices opened in Toulouse, France and other European cities. The government army, with American help, had surpassed 300,000 while the guerillas waited hopefully for the arrival of the international brigades! But they never arrived.

A few months after the American intervention, the Democratic Army no longer had the possibility of immediate victory over the reaction. However, limiting itself to guerilla tactics, it did win some victories. The long-term but more certain prospect of wearing out the regime which had been set up with the help of the British and American imperialists was still present. The three-month deadline which had been given to Maximos' government to clear up the situation ended with the Democratic Army increasing in number to 35,000. The Americans soon got the message that it would not be at all that easy to win the guerilla war.

At precisely this point Zachariadis and the other top men of the CC of the CPG, in collaboration with the Balkan governments, intervened in order to force Markos to abandon guerilla tactics and send the men and women of the Democratic Army to certain death, fighting in regular formations against the fully armed and numerically superior government troops.



Greek refugee children, 1950 near Zagreb, Yugoslavia.

## In the slaughterhouse of regular warfare

Regular warfare was a criminal means employed by the CPG leaders to destroy the Democratic Army. From May 1947 the Democratic Army, with inadequate provisioning, without any heavy armaments whatsoever or fire power greater than mortars, began systematically to attack the cities.

All the orders were issued under Markos' signature. But the real leadership was the triumvirate of the Politburo—Zachariadis, Ioannidis, Rousos. Markos merely furnished them with a mask.

On May 28, an attack took place in Florina. On June 1, once again the same city was attacked; on July 13, Konitsa; a few days later an attack on Kastoria; on the 25th on Grevena and on the 31st of the same month on Alexandroupoli.

The artillery and air force of the government simply mowed down the guerillas. Napalm burned them up. Often the attacks of the Democratic Army were broken up before the detachments arrived at the Gates of a city.

In instances where, despite all this, a city was taken, the Democratic Army never managed to hold its positions in it for longer than a few days. The heroism and determination of the guerillas was admirable. But these attacks were nothing less than suicide. However great the heroism of the unarmed men, it could not compensate for the overwhelming numerical superiority of the government army, the fierce bombings, tanks, and aeroplanes.

At the joint Greek-American Army Staff, set up in December, the American experts supported the strengthening of LOK forces. They could not imagine—and correctly so—that the Democratic Army would risk a face-to-face confrontation. The Greek government army commanders insisted that weight should be given to broad mobilization of massive military detachments, heavy armaments and an air force.

They were right! They grasped correctly the meaning of the attacks on the cities.

In June 1947, the General Headquarters of the Democratic Army was invested with governmental jurisdictions. It began to issue government orders. Of course it was not able to apply them, but they betrayed the intention of the leadership to fight from firm positions.

At the beginning of the autumn, the 3rd Plenum of the CC of the CPG officially ratified the new strategy of the war. 'The Democratic Army is ready to strike the final blow at monarcho-fascism', declares Zachariadis. He did not believe it. He coldly calculated a mass crime. But he also had faith in compromise. From 1946 to March 1948, Athens rejected 31 demands for restoration of peace signed by Markos.

Here is a letter from Markos to the Politburo which provides invaluable documentation and throws light on the whole tragedy:

When the 3rd Plenum (six members of the Central Committee and four cadres of the Army) met in September, decisions were taken which were completely unfounded. These expressed our wishes, but not reality. Life proved that we, as leaders of the guerilla movement, did not succeed in assessing the country's situation as correctly as was necessary despite the fact that in my telegram of August 1 informed the Party leadership that

within the People there is a certain numbness, with a kind of lack of confidence in victory and I said that we could operate seriously in the spring if the Party was in a position to break this situation, to mobilize all its forces and to secure provision of war material for the GDA in all the regions. The part of the Politburo (Zachariadis, Ioannidis, Rousos, second committee) did not have a clear conception of what was happening in the cities and in the areas of the countryside with which it had direct contact. The decisions of the 3rd Plenum were taken in a festive atmosphere. We completely agreed with the theses set by the Politburo. Immediately after the 3rd Plenum, in the months of October, November and December, life proved that: 1) We did not have a basis for sufficient recruitment to be in a position to arrive at the number of 50-60 thousand men determined by the Plenum. 2) We are not in a position to take towns before spring according to [the instructions of] the Plenum. Consequently the two basic problems, that is the formation of strategic reserves and attack operations against towns, seizing and holding them, could not be carried out. In October, our attack against Metsovo failed. When after a month the question was raised in the Politburo of attacking Konitsa, the opinion was expressed that we could not seize the city by a direct attack, that we were being too hasty because neither our material means nor our forces were capable of such an operation, that the enemy had the ability to move much larger forces and incomparably greater means. But the comrades continually insisted on striking at the cities. After the above, the Macedonian headquarters was asked, and assured us in turn that we could take Konitsa. At Konitsa, our detachments fought heroically for seven days and we lost 650 dead and wounded. The city was not captured. At the party deliberations of 15 January, in which political and military cadres (higher and lower) took part, I said in my second contribution (despite the fact that I had written it in different spirit) that one of the reasons—together with our mistakes—that we did not take Konitsa was that we were still, from the point of view of organization, means and possibilities, more guerillas than a regular army and that we were not yet in a position to effect serious attacks on centres. Comrade Zachariadis stood up angrily and after continued sharp interruptions I was forced to stop altogether. The same evening he called the members of the Central Committee of the Party to a session, without a decision having been taken by the Politburo (at least I did not know about it. I am a member of the Secretariat of the Politburo) and put the question of whether the decisions of the 3rd Plenum were correct. As soon as three to four comrades had spoken, he asked me: 'What does Markos say? Are the decisions correct?' I said yes and the session broke up immediately.



Nikos Zachariades

Zachariadis used all his strength to impose regular warfare. But this was not enough. He tried further to undermine the Democratic Army by removing forces away from their units, in order to create . . . reserves.

Says Markos:

In November as soon as Zachariadis had come to the mountains, the Politburo discussed this question. I maintained that it was disadvantageous to weaken the headquarters at this moment by taking a part of the forces at their disposal for reserves. Because this weakening would have as a consequence the weakening of their actions, and consequently smaller recruitment as well. It must be noted that by the middle of 1947 recruitment to the GDA had already taken on an almost completely violent character. The voluntary recruitment was not even 10 per cent. In order to recruit you need not a concentration but a spreading of the forces of penetration to places where there is recruitment material. Consequently our course in forming the reserves should have been analogous. Men should be taken for reserves not from the existing detachments but according to the increase of forces which would take place in each headquarters. But the other position prevailed for immediate forming of detachments and it was decided that before March this reserve force should reach 14,000 men. This decision was never realized. By June the total strength of the reserve units was 5,500. I must say that on this question I was obliged to say more because Zachariadis, for lack of another argument, said: Markos knows how to fight and from the point of view of tactics confronts matters well. But he does not understand, he is unable to conceive of the strategic matters such as the question of the reserves.

In the summer of 1947, Zervas, Minister of Public Order, launched a new wave of arrests in the cities. On October 18, *Rizospastis* was declared illegal. And in December the right to strike was abolished.

On the 24th of the same month, the radio station of the Democratic Army announced the founding of the

Provisional Democratic Government. Prime Minister was Markos. The next day the attack on Konitsa began. A city had to be captured and declared the Capital of 'Free Greece'. It was Stalin's 'condition' for recognition of the government and offers of aid.

The government, however, was never recognized by anyone. On the contrary, six months later and while the battles in the mountain ranges of Grammos were raging, Sofiare-established relations with Athens!

Stalin was involved in the abandonment of guerilla tactics by the Democratic Army. A short while before the Democratic Army began to be transformed into a regular army and to fight battles in formation, the decision of Stalin to put 'an end to this rebellion' had been clearly expressed in a decision with Tito's second-in-command, Kardelj. Their dialogue, which took place on February 10, 1948, is published in the book by Milovan Djilas *Conversations with Stalin*.

Subsequently we dealt with another subject. The uprising in Greece.

Stalin: This uprising, he said, must be 'covered up'. (He used the Russian word *zverdem* which means in the strict sense to wrap up.) Do you believe, he said turning to Kardelj, in the success of the Greek rebellion?

Kardelj: Yes, if the foreign intervention is not developed and if no military and political mistakes are made.

Stalin: (without paying the slightest attention to Kardelj's opinion) If, always these 'ifs'! No, it has no possibility of succeeding. You think that Great Britain and the United States—the United States, the strongest state in the world—will permit you to cut their lines of communication with the Mediterranean? Nonsense! And we have no navy. This uprising must stop as soon as possible.

Someone then referred to the recent successes of the Chinese Communists.

Stalin: Yes, the Chinese comrades had successes. But the situation is completely different in Greece, where the



*The signing of the Russo-Yugoslav pact.*

United States—the strongest state in the world—are deeply engaged.

In China the problem is different, the relations with the Far East are not the same. It is true that even we can make mistakes. Here, when the war with Japan ended, we invited the Chinese comrades to reach an agreement so that a *modus vivendi* with Chiang Kai Shek could be found. They agreed with our opinion, in words, but when they returned to their country they did the first thing that came into their heads: they collected their forces and struck. It appeared that they were right and that we had been misled. But Greece is another matter. We must not hesitate, let us put an end to this rebellion.

Fourteen battalions of the Democratic Army, which numbered about 2,000 men and women, set out from Grammos on the way to Konitsa. They installed themselves on the hills around the city. One

detachment captured the bridge on the river Aoo, closing the road to the reinforcements. The attack was covered by mortar fire and two mountain batteries. But heavy artillery and thick squadrons of aircraft with machine guns and rockets protected the city.

The strategy of the Americans was based on generous use of fire power and cost the guerillas much blood. On the 30th of the month strong reinforcements of government troops arrived from Yiannina and Grevena, and clashed with the Democratic Army detachments outside the city. By January 2 the battle had been decided. But the government army needed another week to purge the city of the firmly entrenched guerilla bands which continued to fight.

Yet another attempt to capture a capital had failed.

## Grammos-Vitsi



*Last patrol.*

On July 19, 1948, the government troops began their first big attack on the centres of the Democratic Army in the mountain ranges of Grammos and Vitsi. The operation bore the name 'Kronis'. The American General Van Fleet followed the operations at first hand.

The government transferred 70,000 regular troops to the northwest part of the country. This was only the first wave. 'They are going to the Grammos mountains to destroy Slavo-Communism. The Grammos mountains will become the grave of Slavo-Communism.' Twelve thousand guerillas defended the highlands. The government troops arrayed themselves first on one side of the borders with Albania and Yugoslavia. Two other detachments closed the area from east to west in an iron grip. Tanks, heavy artillery and 50 modern Curtiss Helldivers were thrown into the battle.

The guerillas were under orders to hold their

positions irrespective of sacrifice. Their own arms were nothing more than packets of Teller mines which were tied several together and rolled down the steep mountain sides.

All the wild mountain tops of stones and rocks, around the Aliakmonas plain are smashed to bits by the never-ending bombardment. There, for the first time American 250lb bombs were used. But the guerillas continued to come out of their holes on the scorched mountain-sides and to fight. All the foreign observers expressed their admiration for the decisiveness of the fighting men and women of the Democratic Army. They defended their positions to the last bullet, to the very last man; they never abandoned them, except on orders.

Eudes relates:

On the Fourka mountain the guerillas go into the craters opened by the bombs. In their last refuge the wounded

continue to nurse the phosphorus burns which do not cease to advance tormentingly beneath the skin, burning the flesh. Not a foot of ground remains for one to take refuge.

The bombardments of the preceding days have destroyed the rocks and have bared the mountain tops. An aeroplane turns in the sky like a vulture before diving with a siren scream.

The silhouettes fall on the hard ground. Only one remains standing. A young woman with an automatic rifle in her hands, she is aiming it. She discharges a first round in the direction of the aeroplane. Her name is Anna Dossa. She is 25 years old. Thirty-three guerillas fight under her orders. The aeroplane strikes once again. Anna remains standing and empties a fresh round. It is a duel between a woman, the rocks and the pilot. He dives down once more. Anna weighs her ammunition. Black smoke pours out of the engine. The aeroplane crashes on the mountain. (Dominique Eudes. *Les Kapetanios*.)

When the mountains have been completely surrounded, the guerillas are obliged to break the rules of regular warfare, which they have been forced to follow, and to return to guerilla warfare. The government calculated that it would put an end to 'Slavo-Communism' in two weeks, but eight pass before the whole operation is a failure. Markos, returning to guerilla tactics, slides skilfully out of the iron grip, out of the northern edge of Grammos. The guerillas leave without leaving behind them a single wounded person, a single gun. They set out to re-assemble and regroup at Vitsi.

At the end of July 1948, the 4th Plenum meets. Markos insisted that the resolutions of the 3rd Plenum be re-examined. He was to make the opening report, make a draft and take it to Zachariadis. But the reply he received was that if the resolutions were not carried out, this was because 'the Communists did not do their duty'.

In his letter to the Politburo Markos says:

Thus we were led yet again to resolutions which corresponded no more to reality than those of the 3rd Plenum. Instead of coming out clearly and honourably to state the real reasons for the decisions of the 3rd Plenum not being carried out, we tried to justify our mistakes by patching them up. The whole resolution was written by Zachariadis. None of the comrades present seriously objected to the report or to the resolutions. It is a fact that monarcho-fascism was in a shambles. But to say that it had wooden legs and that its overthrow was more imminent than at any other time is something which loses its seriousness and exposes the Party and the movement to dangers.

The first battle of Grammos had cost both sides thousands of dead and wounded. Markos, cut off with a small band, received a murderous attack at the end of August by the band of a certain Polydoros, who was accused of misuse of funds of *Rizospastis*. Polydoros' band undertook murder missions for the party. Markos, who was close to the border when the episode took place, escaped to Albania. There the Soviet Mission promised him care and protection. Despite the fact that he was not deposed as Commander-in-Chief and Prime Minister of the Democratic Government before January 31, 1949 (5th Plenum), he had already been deprived of all power. His letter to the Politburo would soon be characterized as the 'anti-Party platform of Markos'.

In the party the rumour began to spread that his disappearance was due to his ill-health. The Democratic Army, concentrated at Vitsi, passes directly under the command of Zachariadis.

On August 29, the government army began a new

attack on Vitsi. For ten days it falls in waves on the guerillas' defence. On September 9, the Democratic Army commenced the counter-attack. Ten thousand people are fighting a regular and more numerous Army. On September 20, the government forces are completely pushed back to Kastoria. The presence of Queen Frederica, King Paul and General Papagos did nothing to strengthen the morale of the government troops. Van Fleet admits in one of his statements that 'the sacrifices of the army were without precedent'.

Winter was drawing near and it was already clear that a new year of civil war was coming. 'Slavo-Communism' had not been destroyed yet. In Athens rumours that the Americans were going to abandon the Greek affair had reached a climax. Marshall visited Athens on October 22, and on November 13 a new government contrivance of Tsaldaris-Sofoulis was set up.

On December 1, the Democratic Army abandoned the attempt to seize Serres, after suffering a rain of napalm which cost it 183 dead.

On December 11 it attacked Larisa. It seized and held the city for two days but was forced to abandon it, taking 500 soldiers with it as hostages.

On December 22, three brigades attacked Edessa and Naousa. Naousa was seized for three days. Sixty new recruits adhered to the Democratic Army. The city was abandoned and the men of the Democratic Army left taking with them large amounts of food and medicine.

On January 11 and 12, 1949, the city was recaptured and after three days 600 new recruits followed the guerillas on the way to the mountains. While the attacks on the cities continued, the government forces began operation 'Peristeri' in Erymanthi and Chelmos in the Peloponnese. There the Democratic Army, cut off from the north, without arms and provisions, was hunted down everywhere and before April it was almost liquidated.

In the north, the council of war of Zachariadis celebrated the successes of Naousa, which were attributed to the military genius of Vlantasi!

On January 30 and 31, 1949, the 5th Plenum met in the mountains of Vitsi. During the discussions the withdrawal of Markos 'for health reasons' and of Chrysa Hadjivasiliou who supported him was ratified. Prior to that, a series of cadres had withdrawn and officers of military detachments had been executed as traitors by those responsible for the catastrophe at Grammos. The Plenum approved unanimously the enterprising plans of Zachariadis for the immediate liberation of the whole of Northern Greece.

On February 8, Markos announced his resignation on the radio station of the Democratic Government:

My failing health, after the battle in the Grammos mountains, forces me to give up my offices as president of the government of Free Greece and Commander-in-Chief of the Democratic Army. Our enemies try to exploit my resignation, but our future victories will oblige them to shut up. (Journal *Struggle*, No. 2.)

Ioannidis took Markos' place as Prime Minister of the Government, and Zachariadis took his place as Commander-in-Chief.

In the meantime Yugoslavia had been expelled from the Cominform (July 1948). Tito had already refused the representation of the CPG at the Conference of Yugoslav Communists in Skopje. Now, after Markos' removal, he had even more reason to make difficulties

for the guerrillas when they crossed the border. Markos had not taken a stand in the dispute with Moscow and he probably leaned favourably towards Tito. Markos' withdrawal by Zachariadis meant, besides other things, that the CPG would openly turn against the Yugoslavs.

After the 5th Plenum, Zachariadis found the

opportunity to travel to Bulkes. The time had come for Pechtasidis, the executioner of Trotskyists and 'middle class leftists'. Pechtasidis was publicly accused of being an agent of Tito. It is calculated that together with him more than 500 people were executed at Bulkes, during the terrible purge campaign of Zachariadis.

## The beginning of the end

On February 8 the Democratic Army had its last military success at Karpenisi. One of its brigades captured the city for 18 days.

On February 25 General Papagos, who had followed closely the first big operations at Grammos and Vitsi, was placed by the American Mission in the position of Commander-in-Chief. Papagos purged the National Defence Council of the elements who blocked its effective functioning by their intrigues. He changed the military commanders of the divisions on a large scale and elaborated plans for systematic purge operations in the Peloponnese, which were to be progressively extended towards northern Greece.

On its part, the Council of War of the Democratic Army, led by Zachariadis, was preparing the last attempt to capture a capital!

On the night of February 11-12, about 4,000 men and women, some of the best Democratic Army fighters, attacked Florina.

Almost all the fire power of the Democratic Army was used for the preparation of the initial attack. The city was strongly garrisoned and overflowed by thick squadrons of aeroplanes dropping tons of napalm, bombs and rockets on the positions of the attackers. The guerrillas now in regular army formations, well-dressed for the first time, wearing new, freshly-ironed khaki uniforms and new boots, advanced proudly towards the city. The sky rained fire, but the guerrillas had the express order of the leadership which criminally abused their confidence and sent them to certain annihilation.

The first wave of the attack struck the south side of the city. Two days passed without any progress. On the third day, the situation worsened. The guerrillas halted their attack and limited themselves to defending their positions. The government had mobilized huge forces for the defence of the city. And Queen Frederica had come secretly to Florina to encourage the detachments of the government army. At the end of the third day the command of the guerrilla operations had lost control of its detachments. On the fourth day, the whole attack collapsed. The Democratic Army began to retreat. A few bands of resolute fighters remained to cover the retreat of the main body and were annihilated to the last man.

The guerrillas escaped back to Vitsi. They left 143 dead on the field of battle. After the defeat came the punishment. Fresh purges of 'traitors'. Katsaros, Georgiadis, Skotidas and others were executed.

In the meantime the government army had almost purged the Peloponnese. The 1st Brigade of Roumeli had been dissolved and the 2nd Thessaly Brigade moved towards the corner of the borders.

By March 1949, the Democratic Army established itself on the Grammos mountain tops abandoned by the government forces. All the guerrilla bands, hunted everywhere, gathered at Grammos and Vitsi.



August 1949, on Grammos.

On April 3, the Democratic Government was reshuffled. Partsalidis became Prime Minister, Ioannidis Vice-President, Rousos Minister of Foreign Affairs, Vlantas Minister of War, Barziotas Minister of the Interior, Stringos Minister of National Economy, Karageorgis Minister of Supply, Papadimitris Minister of Agriculture, Savvidis Minister of Farmers' Co-operatives, Porphyrogenis Minister of Justice, Kokkalis Minister of Health and Education, the president of the Slavo-Macedonian organization NOF, Misrovski, Secretary of Supply, Vournas Minister of Transport and Botchev (NOF) Under-Secretary of Ethnic Minorities.

The position of NOF in the government expressed the support for the separate Macedonian state to which the CPG had recently returned, after pressure from Dimitrov.

On May 3, the Democratic Government made another offer of peace. But in Athens they were in no

mood for reconciliation. They replied with mass arrests, with the death sentence for Manolis Glezos, while the trade union leader Paparrigas was found hanged in his cell.

All of Papagos' forces moved towards the Grammos area. There the last act of the tragedy was to be played out.

In the meantime in Prague the CPs of Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Poland decided to cut off all diplomatic and trade relations with Yugoslavia. They compelled Tito to a greater measure of collaboration with the imperialists. On July 10th, Tito, in one of his speeches in Pola, stated his decision gradually to close the Yugoslav border to the guerrillas.

In a short time the Government Army was to begin operation 'Dada'. Zachariadis announced that Vitsi was impregnable and that monarcho-fascism was 'coming to be destroyed'.

—'Everyone to arms! Everyone for victory!'



*Partsalidis*



*Karageorgis*

## The last act

In midsummer 1949 the Democratic Army prepared itself for the final battle. The number of its men had significantly decreased, despite the fact that in the 'liberated' areas forcible recruitment was adopted. The policy of conciliation with the bourgeoisie led inevitably to the clash with the masses, who were no longer disposed to fight under a leadership that drowned their hopes in mud and blood.

Into operation 'Dada', the government forces threw 160,000 men and all the modern means supplied them by the Americans. Against them, arrayed like a regular army, were 5,000 men on the bare mountain tops of Grammos, 8,000 at Vitsi and 1,200 at Beles. The guerrillas prepared for battle without belief in victory. But they have no choice. In village and in city the government executioner was waiting for them. They must stay in the mountains and drink the bitter cup to the end.

On July 21, Papagos sent his army against the

position Kaimaktsalan on the Yugoslavian border. After a week of hard battles, the 1,500 guerrillas defending it were forced to abandon it, leaving 400 dead behind them. With the capture of Kaimaktsalan, Papagos had driven a heavy wedge into the eastern part of the Grammos-Vitsi complex and had cut off the 1,200 guerrillas of Beles from the main body of the Democratic Army. Now he could surround the area, thought not completely, because facing him was a front about 70 kilometres long.

The plan was to draw the attention of the Democratic Army to Grammos with a feint and then suddenly throw all his weight onto Vitsi. When he had captured it, he intended to strike back at Grammos again. He had at his disposal all the mechanical means which assured him of swift movement. The weather was good, the month was July, and his lorries were not going to stick in the mud or snow, while his air force was able to hammer the positions of the guerrillas in clear weather.

The Democratic Army detachments did not have any means of transport. They couldn't take the initiative. They stuck to their positions and awaited Papagos' attack.

When the battles began, the guerillas heroically defended every inch of ground they occupied but it was clearly suicide. Their leadership had surrendered them as cannon-fodder to the overwhelming fire of the government forces.

On August 5, Papagos captured the villages around the foot of the Grammos mountains. On the 10th, three more divisions of the First Corps of the Army attacked Vitsi and captured it, after fierce artillery and aerial bombardment. Four thousand of the men defending it managed to go to Grammos and join the other detachments of the Democratic Army. They left 997 dead behind them.

On the 19th of the month, before the final phase of the operation began, Papagos sent the Third Army against Beles. The positions of the guerillas were very weak. After a four-day defence they were forced to abandon them. A thousand of the defenders of Beles crossed the border into Bulgaria. The Exodus had begun.

After Beles, Papagos turned with all his forces for the final conflict at Grammos. His problem was to cut off the routes of escape of the guerillas to Yugoslavia. At this point he had the aid of the Yugoslav Stalinists who silently permitted the government army to penetrate Yugoslav territory in order to begin his attack from the north. On August 25 the government forces began to capture the highlands one after the other from that side of the border. The guerillas' resistance collapsed quickly. Within two days the mountain was occupied.

Then the government forces blocked the main passes into Albania.

For the whole duration of the battles, Enver Hoxha's Army lay in readiness, arrayed on the other side of the border. It was said that Hoxha was disturbed by a possible attempt of the Greek bourgeoisie to accomplish, now that it had the strength, its dreams of annexation in North Epirus (South Albania). But no attack took place. On the contrary, the Albanian army executed what Hoxha had announced on August 26:

All armed Greeks found on Albanian territory would be disarmed and detained. (Edgar O'Ballance, *The Greek Civil War*.)

*For some time he did not carry this into effect as his small army was incapable of doing so, but he restricted Democratic Army movements wherever he could and curtailed supplies. The Democratic Army was disintegrating anyway, and in September Hoxha was in fact able to disarm several small elements of it in his territory, and to concentrate the larger bodies into camps and to keep them passive by threatening to cut off their rations. (op. cit.)*

Despite Papagos' iron grip many guerillas managed to cross over to all three countries on the northern border. Others, less fortunate, were scattered in Epirus and Macedonia. Now, in Athens, they were afraid that the Democratic Army would regroup and continue to fight. The government army was ordered to remain in readiness and to continue the pursuit of isolated guerilla bands. At this point Stalin himself intervened in order to demand that the CPG officially declare a cease-fire.

O'Ballance writes:

It is believed that Zachariadis, his Democratic Army generals and the Central Committee of the KKE were readjusting themselves to a prolonged insurgent struggle waged from Bulgarian territory against the Greek Government, when Stalin stepped in and forced the Democratic Army to declare a cease-fire. (op. cit.)

Indeed, on October 16, 1949, the radio station of the CPG 'Free Greece', broadcast this announcement:

The Greek Provisional Government ceased hostilities to prevent the complete annihilation of the country. The Democratic Army does not lay down its arms but halts operations for the moment. This of course does not mean that it abandons the struggle for the rights of the Greek people. The Anglo-American imperialists and their monarcho-fascist agents are being deceived if they think that the struggle is over or that the Democratic Army has been dissolved.

From the official announcement of the cease-fire, threats were not lacking. The 6th Plenum of the CC of the CPG repeated them, proclaiming the slogan 'At ease!'. In reality everything had ended. The threats represented only an attempt by the Stalinists to create favourable impressions with the masses, who now despised them.

After a six-year civil war which cost 160,000 dead, 1,300 executions and the forced expatriation of 100,000 Greeks to the Eastern countries, the result was that reaction triumphed, not thanks to its strength or its ability, nor thanks to the assistance it received from its Anglo-American friends, but because it found invaluable undertakers on the other side of the barricade.

Even though the reaction continued minor military operations for some time until it had annihilated the last remnants of the guerillas who were hiding from their hunters in the mountains, 'law' and 'order' had been firmly re-established. Greece remained part of the 'free world'. Thus, another 13,000 people, prisoners of war or people arrested in the cities by the police, were thrown on the wind-beaten rocks of Makronisos.

Some of the prisoners had spent a whole life in prisons. They were prisoners of the Metaxas dictatorship, the Venizelos 'democracy' and even the Pangalos dictatorship of 1926-1927.

But they had never lived in such a hell. They were tortured with unprecedented brutality. Sexual tortures were among the most common. Various other 'original' methods of torture were devised by the 'bold' imaginations of the jailers. One of these was to place the prisoner, naked and tied up, in a sack with a cat and to throw him into the water. Many did not endure and died. Others committed suicide. Still others were left crippled. Others went mad.

Opposite the island is Laurio. The distance from the small industrial town is great, about 10 kilometres, but when the wind blew from the east the groans of the prisoners reached the ears of its inhabitants.

A whole series of oppressive measures were imposed, which policed even the smallest expressions of life. Prosecution and heavy fines because you did not hang the Greek flag from your house during the least important 'national' holiday, because you did not whitewash your front steps, because you did not have a leash and identification on your dog, because you were singing too loudly, had the radio on loud, etc. etc.

The working class, all-powerful and dominant in 1944, was now prey to the mania of a trivial ruling class

thirsting for revenge. When the Stalinists had to account for this result, they claimed that mistakes had been made. In party resolutions, a single word was employed to explain the untold, to justify the unjustifiable.

But Greece was not an exceptional case. Precisely the same 'mistakes' occurred in all the countries which Stalin had ceded to imperialist influence. They were not 'mistakes' but national adaptations of an international sellout which took place consciously.

It was not only the Greek Stalinists who took part in a bourgeois government and worked to tame the masses. Whatever Siantos did in Greece was repeated by Thorez in France. In Italy, Togliatti entered the government of General Badoglio. He restrained, disciplined and disarmed thousands of revolutionary workers in the industrial areas of N. Italy, who threatened to march on Rome.

On Italy, the official history of British Foreign Policy in World War II writes the following, characteristically:

On the other hand the Soviet Government manifested its willingness to collaborate with the Badoglio Government and to leave aside the question of the resignation of the King until the day when Rome would be occupied. The Soviet representatives outlined the content of their policy saying that Field Marshal Badoglio would have to do everything possible to unite the democratic and anti-fascist forces in Italy and must reorganize his Government for this purpose. Much more, however, the Soviet stand became more decisive from the moment that the leader of the CPI, Mr Togliatti, arrived in Italy, especially sent from Moscow, and it was possible for him to influence the political parties of the left wing. The fact of the participation of the Communist Party of Italy in the Badoglio Government obliged the other parties to take part. . . .

When the Greek people were informed by the CPG radio station of the cease-fire, on the other side of the earth Mao Tse-tung was triumphantly entering Peking. China was the second country after Yugoslavia where the agreements on the 'spheres of influence' were violated. This happened in opposition to Stalin, who pressured Mao for a new 'reconciliation' with the butcher Chiang Kai-shek, as he had also pressured Tito to form a government of 'national unity' with the darling of the English, Mihailovich.

Nevertheless in Greece, as elsewhere, the result of the struggle was dependent not only on the policy of Moscow. The Kremlin gangsters could not have done

anything without the co-operation of a CPG rotten to the marrow.

The civil war was only one period in the history of the CPG. The one immediately preceding was the pre-war struggle — for a time within the party — between Stalinism and Trotskyism. The two periods can only be judged in relation with each other. The domination of Stalinism over Trotskyism brought about the bureaucratic degeneration of the CPG and then led the working class to destruction. Stalinism had transformed the proletarian party into a servant of the bourgeoisie. As a result the independent struggle for socialism had been rejected. The party fought for a popular front and for bourgeois democracy. This policy pervaded all its activities in the civil war. While its leaders have spoken abstractly about mistakes, they have never revised this policy. On the contrary, they continued in the same manner. The result was that at another critical turning point in the class struggle, they paved the way for the Papadopoulos dictatorship.

The CPG consciously buried this revolution. The working class, however, always remained 'at ease'. More than two decades have passed since the rifles stopped firing on the Grammos mountain tops and the heroism of those who sacrificed themselves always remains indelible in the memory of the generation which has taken the baton from them. The saga of 1943-1949 is always a source of inspiration and fighting passion. But history has shown that heroism and militancy, although they are a necessary factor, are not sufficient.

While the present crisis shakes capitalism to its foundations, the Greek working class is faced with a new historical challenge, incomparably stronger than anything of the past. It faces the greatest opportunities. But at the same time it faces the greatest dangers from the prolonged crisis of leadership.

The defeat in the civil war was not only a catastrophe, but also an accumulation of lessons which have been paid for dearly. The working class can win nothing with the CPG. A new revolutionary party must be built in the irreconcilable struggle against the Stalinist betrayals. Only if this lesson is well learned can the working class arm itself politically and bid for power successfully in the coming great revolutionary struggles.

(CONCLUDED)



## THE THIRD INTERNATIONAL

### AFTER LENIN

BY LEON TROTSKY

Leon Trotsky, whose role in the founding of the Communist International was second only to Lenin's, was also the principal fighter against its degeneration. After Lenin's death he battled to reverse the disastrous course on which it was being directed by Stalin and Bukharin, with their theory of 'socialism in one country'. Trotsky's devastating criticism of this theory and the policies flowing from it, written for the Sixth Congress of the Comintern, forms the main part of this book. More than just a defence of the principles of Bolshevik internationalism and the lessons of the first four Congresses of the Comintern, it is an important and independent contribution to Marxism. Trotsky examines every aspect of the activities of the Comintern in the four years after Lenin's death: its programme, strategy and tactics, organization, and the internal life of the Soviet Communist Party itself. Included in this new edition—for the first time in English since 1929—is an article giving brief character-sketches of the leading Comintern functionaries.

320pp. Price £1.50 Post and packing 15p.



## *Book review*

*STRIKES IN FRANCE 1830-1968*  
Edward Shorter and Charles Tilly.  
Cambridge University Press. £9.50.

This book attempts to draw some conclusions from a massive statistical study of the 100,000 odd strikes recorded as occurring in France from 1830 until the great general strike of 1968. Analytical in approach, it is not easy to read, and it assumes a good deal of knowledge of the French labour movement, the history and structure of which are not described until half way through the volume. However, the patient reader, prepared to cope with the tables and diagrams and put up with the authors' style, may find it rewarding.

Their aim is to use quantitative methods, i.e. the purest empiricism, to try to find out why strikes took place and what they were about. In doing so they clash with some of the assumptions and views of certain industrial sociologists and social historians and try to establish their own position.

In the history of the class struggle under capitalism strikes have played a central role. They reflect the constant struggle which is going on over the division of the product: the employer is constantly trying to beat wages down, the workers to get the highest wage possible because it is their only source of income. In

individual bargaining the employer will always defeat the worker. It is only by collective action, by the threat of withdrawing their labour or actually doing so, by going on strike, that workers can do anything to reduce the essential inequality of the wage contract. The workers show by striking that they are the real masters of production and thus pose a threat not only to their own employer but to the capitalists as a whole. At the same time they learn their own strength and become conscious of their own class interests in opposition to the owners of the means of production.

Thus strikes are endemic in the capitalist mode of production and can only be prevented by the severest repression, that is to say under a fascist regime which destroys the workers' organizations and thus leaves the individual worker helpless before the employer or dragoons him into some kind of corporate organization.

During the period covered by this book France was subject to a number of different forms of bourgeois rule. In fact until 1864 strikes were illegal and not until 1884 were trade unions recognized. This repressive legislation was a legacy of the bourgeois revolution of

1789; the revolutionaries understood by 'liberty' the right of owners of property to have at their disposal a force of 'free' wage labourers. Despite the existence of a French equivalent of the Combination Laws, which lasted longer than their British counterpart, workers in the more skilled, artisan trades did organize and go on strike. It was only as the working class grew larger and stronger that it was able to fight for its basic rights and bring about a change in the law.

Now the authors of this book take many of these basic points for granted. They are much too elementary for sophisticated research workers who want to get to the 'facts' as shown in statistics, but they are not able to ignore them completely, otherwise they would be unable to write a coherent book about strikes at all. So some real problems do creep in and they are aware, not unsympathetically, of the Marxist theory of class struggle though one has the impression that they have spent so much time in libraries and manipulating their computer tapes that they have never discussed the question with a French worker or even bothered to read workers' papers from the past.

Many points which they raise are inevitably of great interest to Marxists but they could only be dealt with seriously at considerable length, it is worth mentioning some of those which are explicitly aimed at marxism.

First of all there is the question of the role of the state. Strikes were first legalized by the bonapartist regime of Napoleon III who was angling for the support of the skilled workers organized in unions when his regime was on the decline. Under the Third Republic the state was concerned to uphold the general interests of the ruling class, which was itself by no means a homogeneous force. Here again, politicians representing the bourgeoisie were wary of provoking the working class into revolt by the use of repressive measures against strikes. When the authors talk about exploding 'a myth in historiography of the French labour movement . . . that the government invariably repressed strikes . . .' they have not struck a blow at Marxism. The custodians of the state power did recognize that individual employers who were excessively tyrannical and oppressive could threaten the system as a whole. On occasion, therefore, they put pressure on such employers to settle strikes or make concessions.

In general, however, the employer knew that the forces of law and order were on his side. Police and soldiers were always ready to defend his property. Where coercion was used it was against the strikers, not against their bosses. This was quite consistent with the intervention of government to settle strikes which were a threat to public order or were in danger of extending into a general class confrontation.

Given the balance of class forces which existed under the Third Republic and its successors it was possible for the strikers, or their leaders, to appeal to the authorities to intervene. When the authors talk about the strike 'as an instrument of working-class political action', this is what they mean. But they also

suggest that peak periods of strike activity occur when the working class is mobilizing for political action. This is sound enough: there were examples in the period 1880-1914 and it hardly needs elaborate statistical analysis to establish it for 1936 or 1968 which, incidentally could not have been expected from any statistical study. They refute the views of industrial sociologists that strikes reflect frustration or aggression. They emphasize that political conditions and not 'national character' or individual psychology account for the frequency and extent of strikes in France. They rightly argue that strikes are not 'the spontaneous outburst of angry individuals' but require organization and preparation.

A weakness of their position is that they pay scant attention to changes in the trade unions and particularly in their leadership. For example the ebb of strikes in the 1920s partly arose from the taking over of the CGT—the pre-war home of 'revolutionary syndicalism'—by a reformist bureaucracy under Leon Jouhaux and the formation of a rival CGTU affiliated to the Profintern in which many militants were isolated. Likewise, in the period after the coming to power of General de Gaulle in 1958 the Communist Party, which now controlled the CGT, pursued a policy of 'peaceful co-existence' which entailed canalizing worker discontent into short, dispersed and partial strikes. Thus one department after another in a plant might strike for an hour or two, while a big national strike would only last for 24 hours. Of course, this pattern dominates the statistics of the period—but it cannot be understood without knowing the motives and methods of the Stalinists. The authors of this book find all that rather tiring. They say of the critical stages in the formation of a political movement in the 1890s 'how dreary is this tale of rupture and divisions'. And they go on wrongly to conclude 'Ideological differences account for almost none of the differences in either propensity to strike or the forms of strike action around this time'. From later chapters it is an assumption upon which they seem to work throughout.

From these comments it will be clear that while there is a lot of meat in this book, on almost every vital question the methods and conclusions of the authors must be questioned but would require another book, and as much research, fully to refute. For example, there would have to be a full analysis of the great sit-down strikes of 1936, the high point in the struggles of the French working class movement in the inter-war period, and the great general strike of 1968. In both cases, of course, what was involved was not a simple industrial strike but a challenge to the bourgeois right to rule. Again, nothing can be made of them without taking into account the political background—as the authors do to some extent—and dealing precisely with the way in which, on both occasions, the Stalinists, who had not called or wanted these strikes to develop, stepped in to preserve capitalist property relations by getting the workers out of the factories and back to work. And this is not simply a question of French

politics, it is an international question about the role of Stalinism.

From the point of view of this kind of analysis, our authors, so sophisticated in the handling of statistical techniques, are politically naïve. Because they are cut off from the working class they also accept stereotypes from industrial sociology—of the sort which cannot be subjected to statistical test—and despite the reverence for 'facts' there are just as many unsubstantiated opinions and prejudices in this book as in those of the more orthodox type. They accept the picture of the 'classic semi-skilled proletarian (who) becomes resigned to the dehumanization of the industrial environment'—a sociologists' model which has little reference to a real Renault worker of the 1960s. They exaggerate the importance of the so-called 'science-sector' workers, 'the artisans of twentieth century technology', following the researches of a number of French writers which won fashionable acclaim in the 1950s when they 'discovered' a new industrial revolution.

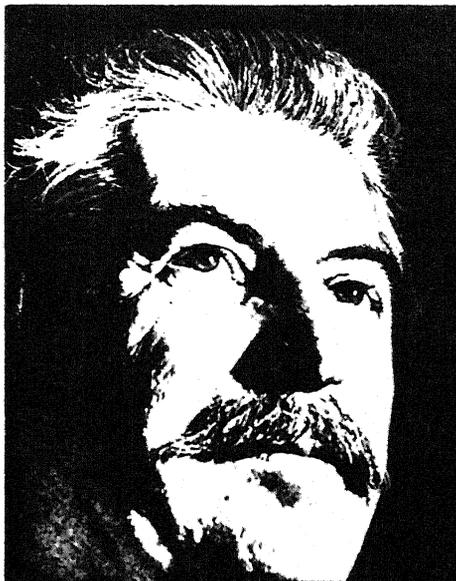
Yet surprisingly enough, at the end they admit that they have been unable to supplant Marxism (if that is what they were trying to do). Having knocked a number of their forerunners in the field they say: 'And what about old Marx? How does his attempt to link economic change and political conflict fare in the light of France's strike history? Not badly at all. We have re-discovered, to the accompaniment of loud self-congratulation, some of the truths about economics and militancy that Marx described so passionately a hundred years ago. So the factory proletarians used strikes to political ends? That will scarcely come as news to Marxist scholars. Marx recognized no significant distinctions among industrial relations, class relations and relations of power. In his view, "Every movement in which the working class

comes out as a class against the ruling classes and tries to coerce them by pressure from without is a political movement"'. The reader will find nothing in our text to contradict this, although we slide uneasily over the distinction Marx made between political movements as such and 'economic movements'.

Despite this testimonial to Marx's insight, it is typical of the authors that they do not round off their work with a discussion of the significance of the strike, or its future. They are, of course, or pretend to be, neutral as between the contending classes—above which, they hint in their text, the state can stand as friendly neutral.

Marxists regard strikes, not as ends in themselves or 'facts' to be correlated on computer tapes but as 'schools of war'. Dealing with the view, which was that of the French revolutionary syndicalists, that the workers would emancipate themselves through strikes, Lenin wrote: 'It is a mistaken idea. Strikes are one of the ways in which the working class struggles for its emancipation, but they are not the only way; and if workers do not turn themselves to other means of conducting the struggle, they will slow down the growth and the successes of the working class.' What he meant, of course, that it was only through building a political party which could overthrow the capitalist ruling class that it could perform its historic role of establishing a socialist form of society which could emancipate all working people from the yoke of oppression.

A study of strikes which does not see them in that perspective is bound to be distorted. They have to be seen within the context of the struggle to build such a party and amid all the vicissitudes which it has passed through, including these ideological and 'sectarian' struggles of which Shorter and Tilly are so contemptuous.



# THE STALIN SCHOOL OF FALSIFICATION

BY LEON TROTSKY

*Leon Trotsky's damning reply to the Stalinist falsifiers of the history of the Russian Revolution, originally published in Germany in 1932, now appears in a British edition for the first time. The revolutionary role of Trotsky and leading Bolsheviks subsequently framed and murdered in the 1930's purges, is here amply documented. Other historical material included by Trotsky demonstrates how Stalin and the Soviet Communist Party leading group resorted to re-writing the Bolshevik's struggle for workers' power to cover their own betrayal of Leninism and Marxism. This book throws a searching light on the emergency of the Stalinist bureaucracy and thus forms a key weapon today in the working class movement internationally.*

*A new introduction has been written for this edition and full explanatory notes are included at the end of the volume.*

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# MANIFESTO OF THE INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE OF THE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL

THE international crisis of capitalism has now entered its decisive stage. Collapse of major enterprises and banks, rapid decline of investment, and the failure of business confidence reflected in stock exchange figures in every country, are the certain signs of large-scale slump.

The International Committee of the Fourth International calls upon the working class in all countries to prepare now for the revolutionary struggle for workers' power, which is being rapidly brought onto the agenda by the insoluble economic crisis. Only the building of the Fourth International, which means building parties in every country as sections of the International Committee, can put an end to the domination of the Stalinist and reformist leaderships and prepare for victory in the coming struggles. This was the central conclusion of the Fifth World Congress of the International Committee of the Fourth International, meeting in April in London.

The 'peaceful, parliamentary road to socialism' of the Stalinists and reformists is a prescription only for bloody defeat and repression, as was proved by the experience of the Chilean workers in 1973. The Stalinists' programme of 'advanced democracy' denies the reality: that there is no outcome to the capitalist crisis except either workers' power and socialism or counter-revolution and the imposition of Fascist regimes.

After the post-war decades of inflationary boom, made possible only by the treachery of world Stalinism in 1944-1945, the contradictions of capitalism in the epoch of imperialist decay now break through the surface on a more vast and catastrophic scale than ever before. The immediate future for the workers in every part of the capitalist world is one in which their living standards, jobs and democratic rights are threatened in their entirety. Not a single capitalist government or international agency has the slightest prospect of stopping or even slowing down the rate of inflation. Now the inflationary boom, already brought to a halt by the 1971 scrapping of the Bretton Woods agreement, is turning inexorably into recession. The Finance Minister of Japan, the fastest-expanding sector of world capitalism in the boom, declared on April 21 that the world slump had already begun.

In all the capitalist countries, the ruling class is thrown into political crisis by the urgent necessity of changing its forms of political rule in order to smash the working class, a necessity which comes

immediately into total conflict with the determined resistance and unbroken strength of an international generation of undefeated workers. Far from the post-war years having brought into existence a 'new' capitalism free of revolutionary contradictions, capitalism now faces a situation where each national ruling class can survive only by first smashing its own working class, in order to remove every restraint on the rate of exploitation. Revolutionary struggles are objectively inevitable because of these economic and political necessities caused by the world crisis.

There could be no more complete confirmation of the insoluble contradiction between the productive forces developed in the twentieth century and the capitalist social relations of production. To preserve capital and its rule, capitalism is forced to set out to destroy countless millions of members of the working class, the greatest productive force of all! This is the historic meaning of the present world crisis. It shows beyond any question the counter-revolutionary character of those Stalinist and reformist leaders who seek 'peaceful co-existence' with capitalism in its death agony. It reveals more sharply than ever before the basic position of the Fourth International, that humanity's crisis is concentrated on the crisis of proletarian revolutionary leadership.

## Most revolutionary factor

The most revolutionary factor in the relation of class forces on a world scale is undoubtedly the immediate and direct effect of price-inflation on the living standards of millions of workers and their families in every country. To this is now added the certainty of mass unemployment. The unique historical feature of the present crisis is that these developments threaten the workers of all countries simultaneously. The attempt since 1944 to build up a system of international capitalist safeguards in finance and trade, seen by revisionists as characteristic of 'neo-capitalism' free of crisis, has itself contributed to this internationalization of the class struggle at a new level. Every struggle against the monopolies and the state in one country has immediate effects in all the other countries, and deepens the process already begun by the international inflation.

World inflation and the attacks of the capitalist class have in the last two years rapidly undermined the

living standards and the social conservatism of the millions of professional, educational, white-collar and even state employees whose ranks had been so swollen by the increasing parasitism and bureaucratisation of modern monopoly capitalism. This gives an enormous breadth to the mass movement in every country. Social strata which for a time, in conditions of boom, acted as a buffer between capital and labour and a social base for petty-bourgeois radicalism and reformism, are now being rapidly organized into unions and solidarized with the working class. This is not a gradual but a revolutionary process, because it comes at the point where the working class must turn to revolutionary political solutions and not syndicalist ones. The growing strike movement in Britain, Germany, Japan, Italy and France in the last few years is only a preliminary indication of these mass struggles.

## Quadrupled oil price

At the level of government and of the relations between states and the international banks and monopolies, countries like Italy and Britain are brought to the point of a declaration of bankruptcy by their insoluble balance of payments positions. They are forced into all kinds of nationalist and protectionist measures, even though they had sought in the EEC to take advantage of the possibilities of an enlarged and open European market. The instability and weakness of currencies, the absence of any basis for securing loans to meet the unprecedented payment deficits, and the threatened revaluation of gold, all create conditions for collapse of business confidence and an economic crash of hitherto unknown proportions.

Since November 1973 the world capitalist crisis has been greatly intensified by the decisions of the bourgeois and semi-feudal ruling classes in the Middle East to quadruple the price of oil. This decision followed a two-year period in which the collapse of confidence in paper currencies had brought a doubling and trebling of the price of every raw material and primary product through speculation on future sales. The combined effect has been an intolerable pressure on the rate of profit and the prices of industrial products in the advanced countries, as well as the catastrophic effect on the level of import bills in the national accounts.

All attempts since August 1971 to find a substitute for the scrapped Bretton Woods Agreement (1944) have proved completely unworkable. The contradiction between Europe and America, principal expression in international relations of the historical conflict between forces of production and private property and the nation-state, comes once more into the open, exacerbating every problem of capitalism in decay. Nixon's ending of dollar convertibility and fixed parities in 1971 was an announcement that in the ensuing trade war US monopoly interests would override all considerations of providing conditions for the stability of other capitalist countries. They are all now exposed to the vastly greater competitive strength of US capitalism.

It was into this crisis situation that the increase in oil

prices entered. The insuperability of the contradictions is illustrated by the fact that the steps taken by the Arab rulers to protect their own interests against inflation are themselves the most inflationary steps of all. Now they have told the imperialists in so many words: unless the working class in the advanced countries is defeated, and on that basis the supply of manufactured goods cheapened and our currency holdings stabilized in value, then we shall continue to hoist oil prices still further as our only protection. Here is rich confirmation of the theory of permanent revolution in our own day. Imperialism is called upon by the colonial bourgeoisie to prosecute the struggle against the proletariat in the advanced countries, in common struggle against the threat of the combined struggle of these workers and the colonial masses.

There is no solution to hand for the imperialists. Britain's balance of payments deficit is running at an annual rate of nearly £6,000m, against total gold and currency reserves of just over £2,000m. Japan's deficit is running at some \$1,400m per month. Yet in neither country is the working class prepared to relax for one moment its wages offensive and its defence of trade unions, as was shown by the miners' strike and fall of the Tory Government in Britain and the April strikes in Japan.

The Italian Government was forced to resign, unable to raise a loan, because international finance could not find guarantees of control over the Italian working class. The 'solution' to this government crisis, which can last only a few months, was to revalue Italy's central gold reserves at the free market price and use them as security, thus undermining one of the basic conditions of any relative stability in post-war capitalist monetary relations. Even apart from this consideration, a country like Britain, in the same critical difficulty over balance of payments, has gold reserves which constitute only 14 per cent of its total reserves, compared with Italy's 50 per cent. Furthermore, the terms of trade between industrial products exported from Britain, and imported raw materials and primary processed goods, has deteriorated by more than 20 per cent in two years, and the gap is widening. A favourable position in these terms of trade, the last heritage of empire, was instrumental in preserving British capitalism from the worst ravages of the depression of the 1930s. France now has a national interest rate which is openly acknowledged as a charter for massive recession and mass unemployment. In Germany, the collapse of the Landesbank has now been followed by the Herstatt crash, leading to the loss of savings of thousands of small investors, reminiscent of the bank collapses of 1931, and heavy losses by British and United States merchant banks who dealt with Herstatt.

The Eurodollar market and all credit in Europe is in a highly uncertain state for other reasons than the growing risk of lending. The US imperialists have achieved a degree of success in attracting to New York the major part of the cash income of the Arab rulers accruing from oil price increases. Not a single capitalist country can escape the gathering storm. The United States is the world's biggest exporter and at the same time the biggest market. World recession will produce in the US the greatest struggles of all as the millions of the mighty American working class resist mass unemployment.

The mass struggles over prices, wages and jobs cannot be 'economic' struggles alone. The necessity of a struggle for power itself is brought before the workers by the intervention of governments in wages policy and laws against trade unions, an intervention itself made unavoidable by the economic crisis. Not only does every wage struggle and defence of rights become a political struggle, but also there occur crises in government and state machine in one country after another. Such a succession of political and constitutional crises is one of the essential conditions for drawing even the most backward masses into politics and thus bringing into existence revolutionary situations.

In the United States, the President faces impeachment, and his whole executive cadre of a year ago faces criminal charges. Governments have fallen, new coalitions and combinations have been necessary in nearly every major capitalist country: Japan, Britain, France, Belgium, Italy. In Portugal we see the first major effect politically of the economic crisis, with the bourgeoisie forced to dispense with Caetano's regime and the conditions created for an entirely new scope for the struggle of the masses. The military junta under Spínola, supported by the Stalinists and reformists, comes immediately into conflict with the working class. The impact of these events in Fascist Spain will be an enormous impetus to the youth and the industrial workers whose fight has developed in the last period.

The Portuguese Stalinists' support for the army, equalled by the French CP's chauvinist campaign for Mitterrand in pursuit of a new 'Popular Front' government, bring into focus the major political questions facing the advanced workers. As the working class moves into fighting position, in revolutionary struggles of international scope, the first necessity for the class enemy is that the workers shall remain under the tutelage of the Stalinist and reformist bureaucracies. Everywhere the Stalinists attempt to form coalition governments in the name of the popular front, preparing to inflict on the working class in every country the fate of Chile.

## Preparation for power

What confronts the working class is preparation for the struggle for state power. The election to office in this period of reformist and Stalinist parties does not signify that some alternative path can be taken. Revisionists and centrists will defend such governments, opposing revolutionary preparation in struggle and liquidating the independent revolutionary party. Behind the screen of 'minimum demands' on such governments they obscure their counter-revolutionary role. The reality is that behind the cover of governments of this type the reactionary preparations of the capitalist state continue and are intensified, as Chile showed. In this situation the specific task of the revolutionary party is to combat these revisionists and centrists who seek to lull the working class to sleep with the message that reformism is the legitimate expression of its interests and struggles.

Centrism comes forward to take the place of discredited reformism in such a period, and the sections of the Fourth International must conduct an unwavering struggle against the centrists. As the working class in struggle is forced to question and then reject the reformists, it goes through a centrist stage, of transition from reformism to revolution. The centrists are those political tendencies which are moving in the opposite direction; consequently, at a certain point their 'left' talk coincides with the stage reached by sections of the working class. At this decisive point, where everything depends on the building of a revolutionary party which begins always, from the preparation for the struggle for power, the centrists restrict the struggle to immediate or 'minimum' demands. They attack the Trotskyist movement as 'sectarian' and 'ultra-left'; they accuse us of disrupting the spontaneous movement of the class towards revolutionary consciousness.

## Transitional demands

Thus the OCI's followers in Britain condemn as 'ultra-left' our fight for transitional demands against the minority Labour Government, and want to restrict the fight to demanding only that the Labourites fulfil their own minimum election programme. This was the OCI's own position in relation to Mitterrand's election campaign. In Portugal the tiny OCI group enters the Social Democratic Party.

In every country all the revisionist tendencies have embarked on a policy of support for the social-democratic and Stalinist bureaucracies, presenting them as the only forces which can defend the basic rights of the working class and block the road to fascism.

The Pabloites, the OCI in France, the IS in Britain have opened up an attack on the International Committee because it insists on fighting for the political liberation of the working class from the influence of the reformist and Stalinist agents of the bourgeoisie, and for the construction of independent revolutionary parties.

A particularly sharp attack was unleashed against the Workers Revolutionary Party, British section of the IC, for its participation in the last parliamentary elections in Britain by fielding nine candidates. The revisionists have never been able to fathom the explosive character of the present crisis, and how critical is the task of revolutionaries to intervene independently in the class struggle, to warn the working class against its treacherous leadership and to pose in the sharpest way an alternative leadership, determined to lead the struggle to its final conclusion, the overthrow of capitalism and the establishment of socialism.

The electoral support of reformist and Stalinist parties and every challenge which revolutionaries direct to these parties are always tactical means—not the only ones—with educational importance for the working class. Means which in every case must be subordinate to the struggle to resolve the crisis of leadership of the working class. The revisionists, however have transformed these means into an end; they reject the struggle to build revolutionary parties,

entrusting the defence of the basic rights of the working class to the reformist and Stalinist traitors. The recent tragedy of Chile means nothing for them and they fully refuse to draw the dearly-paid-for lessons from it.

The revisionists, in fact, have taken on a terribly dangerous role: they offer themselves as a left cover to the traditional leaders, who in turn open the road to fascism. The latter can keep the working class under control only thanks to the 'critical support' given them by the fake-left groups of the Pabloite type, the OCI, the IS etc.

While, due to the deepening economic crisis, great changes are taking place in the political sphere and the basic social classes are heading by necessity to decisive confrontation, the sections of the International Committee must carry out the most determined struggle against the left upholders of the traditional apparatus.

The working class can defend itself in the face of the attacks of the bourgeoisie only under the leadership of independent revolutionary parties in the struggle for conquest of power, in every country, in the struggle for the world revolution.

In this way centrism, particularly as reflected through revisionism inside the ranks of the revolutionary movement rejects the essential basis of the revolutionary party—our epoch: that the resolution of the crisis of proletarian leadership is the central task. Today, the unbroken strength of the working class frustrates at every turn the absolutely necessary changes attempted by the capitalist class but the reformist and Stalinist leadership still seeks every way of assisting the ruling class. Such a deadlock cannot last: it is the material basis for Bonapartist regimes, unless the struggle for power is successfully prepared. The defeat of centrism in the workers' movement is an imperative necessity in the preparation of struggle against Bonapartism and Fascism.

## Conjunction of revolutionary forces

Since World War II there has been no interruption in the revolutionary struggle of the workers and peasants in the colonial and semi-colonial countries, despite the fact that the relative stability and expansion of post-war capitalism had the effect of isolating these struggles from the workers in the advanced countries. Now these struggles coincide, brought together by the international character of the crisis and in particular by the inflation which undermines the class relations in every country. The same inflation which shattered the basis of the treacherous 'Popular Unity' government in Chile and undermined semi-feudal despotism in Ethiopia has brought the collapse of Caetano in Portugal, and fuels the revolutionary crisis in Britain,

in Italy, in Spain, in Japan, in Germany, in the US. The working class comes to the fore in the colonial struggles just as in the metropolitan powers.

The 'oil crisis' has served to bring into even sharper focus the alternative: socialism or barbarism. It is not only backward countries like India which are threatened by mass starvation and economic collapse. There is no reform solution to a single one of the problems brought by the economic crisis. The alternative—socialism or barbarism—is posed concretely as a revolutionary struggle between capitalism and the working class, and this struggle is concentrated into the fight to resolve the crisis of revolutionary working-class leadership.

The Fifth Congress of the International Committee of the Fourth International, basing its decisions on these economic and political perspectives, called urgently upon all its sections to advance their preparation in the building of independent revolutionary parties, and initiate detailed plans of work for the building of sections, including in countries where no section yet exists. When we conduct the struggle on programmes of transitional demands in each country, including the demand that the traditional workers' parties form their own government and take socialist measures, we do so always and only on the basis of our Founding Programme; the struggle on the elementary needs of the masses leads directly to the struggle for workers' power, and cannot be satisfied by reforms; power can only be won under the leadership of revolutionary parties, sections of the Fourth International; to win this leadership, we must bring the workers as a class through political experiences in which they decisively reject their existing leadership; it is for this purpose that we raise the demand for a government of reformist or Stalinist ministers independent of the bourgeois parties.

The revisionists turn this demand into its opposite, teaching the masses to have confidence in the reformists and Stalinists. For the sake of 'unity' exposure of the reformists and Stalinists is excluded. They justify this by warning against the danger of 'isolation' of the vanguard if it disturbs the confidence of the masses in its traditional parties. In this way they become the apologists and defenders of the reactionary leaderships.

The task of the sections of the International Committee, on the contrary, is to carry their work deeper and deeper into the masses, who are driven by the crisis into inevitable and ever sharper conflict with the politics of their traditional leaders. This must be the basis of our political work in propaganda and agitation, in the trade unions and among the youth.

**International Committee of the Fourth International**

July 7, 1974

# Greece and Cyprus: a new Fight Greek Popular Front All

THE COLLAPSE of the military junta in Greece marks a qualitatively new stage, not only for the class struggle in that country but for the development of the international crisis and the world revolution.

So profound is the economic crisis of world capitalism following the collapse (1968-1971) of the post-war boom and the Bretton Woods agreement, that the whole relationship of class forces which has maintained imperialism since World War II is breaking up, and creating a situation which is unprecedentedly favourable for the working class.

Already in April 1974 Portuguese fascism collapsed. Just as the mass movement in Greece and Cyprus broke up the plans of the imperialists, so it was in Portugal. The problems for the Portuguese fascists resulting from world inflation could not be solved by taking any more from the working class, despite the massive apparatus of repression.

A section of the bourgeoisie itself, politically organized in the Armed Forces Movement, was forced to set up a Bonapartist regime, leaning heavily on one side on the Stalinists and reformists, and through them on the masses and on the other side on the weakened bourgeoisie.

The mass movement in Portugal gained a tremendous new scope for development and the workers' movement in Spain, already greatly revived in recent years, received a terrific boost. In Spain too, inflation is undermining the economy rapidly, and the political superstructure is crumbling.

World inflation had already brought the polarization of class forces in Chile. There, Stalinist betrayals assured the temporary victory of the military junta, but it is certain that revolutionary struggles will break out in Bolivia, Argentina, Peru and once again Chile as a result of the continued and uncontrolled inflation.

Portugal made it clear that this inflation is the most powerful international revolutionary factor, bringing a homogeneity into the struggle in different continents which surpasses anything in the past. In Portugal we saw the first political explosion on the continent of capitalist Europe resulting from the world inflation. In the intervening period, revolutionary struggles had begun in Ethiopia, and of course the face of Africa will inevitably be changed by the break-up of Portuguese fascism and its colony empire.

The April 1967 dictatorship was the result of an acute political crisis, caused in the early 1960s by the conjuncture of two basic factors. On the one hand there was the revival of the workers' movement, that had decisively overcome the defeat in the civil war, and on the other hand, the slashing by the Kennedy administration of aid to the underdeveloped countries.

The first clouds of the coming monetary crisis and the threat of recession were gathering. The imperialists tried hard to avoid the inevitable by forcing the underdeveloped countries to bear the brunt of their problems. As a result, there was a series of coups, as in Indonesia, Ghana, Algeria, and elsewhere.

In Greece, the attempts to implement a deflationary policy confronted an all-powerful workers' movement. In 1961, the country was shaken by the big struggles of the building workers, and, in 1963, the then premier, Karamanlis, whose chief aim was to support the Greek drachma at the expense of labour was overthrown.

## Palace plot

The crisis that broke out meant essentially the end of parliamentarianism. With the intervention of the State Department, the Centre Union was formed as an alternative political formation. But the new party had no real social basis, nor was there any room for the implementation of a policy, other than that of Karamanlis. The Centre Union came to power in February 1963, and soon became bankrupt. It split and collapsed in July 1965.

To complicate matters, a reactionary conspiracy was instigated by the Palace against the democratic rights of the masses. The working class, the peasants and the youth revolted and, for 80 consecutive days, occupied the streets demanding the abolition of the monarchy.

The country was plunged into an absolute political impasse. On the one side, there were the bourgeois parties, which proved unable to form a strong government capable of taming the insurgent working class. On the other side, the working class did not have a political leadership determined to take up the struggle to overthrow the monarchy and the fake parliament and open the road to a socialist perspective.

The Stalinist leadership, recognized by the working class, working through EDA, capitulated to the monarchy, and dragged the masses behind Papandreou senior the Centre Union leader.

In other words, there was a balance in the relations of class forces, in which neither of the major social classes was in a position to resolve the crisis. Into this impasse there stepped inevitably the junta.

It did not have a power of its own, it did not defeat the working class. It drew its opportunity to take the power and to govern from the political stalemate created by the failure of the monarchy to crush the working class and the frustration of the reformist-Stalinist leadership which returned to overthrow the monarchy.

While the regime that was established by the April 1967 coup was meant to overturn the relations of class forces to the benefit of the bourgeoisie and American imperialism, it never dared to challenge the power of the working class. It was forced to base itself on the preservation of the balance of class forces, and, in this sense, it embodied this balance on a governmental level. It embodied the crisis and the impasse.

The junta's strategy was to avert the transformation of the economic problems into political ones, and for this purpose they continued and extended the inflationary policy of their predecessor parliamentarian governments, rapidly multiplying the country's foreign debt.

# new stage of world crisis foreign troops out of Cyprus!

Nevertheless, the junta's strategy was possible only on the basis of the inflationary policies of imperialism and the attachment of the drachma to the dollar. The ending by Nixon of dollar convertibility into gold made it impossible and unbearable for capitalism to any longer preserve through inflationary concessions the balance of forces.

In Greece, and throughout the world, the working class had to be smashed and to bear the brunt of the crisis. This meant that the bonapartist dictatorship of Papadopoulos had either to transform itself into a fascist regime or to collapse.

## Reconciliation

It was in this stage that the Papadopoulos junta tried a policy of reconciliation with the EEC, to get aid from it and win support from the Greek opposition politicians. Papadopoulos aimed at creating a political basis for his regime and to acquire the strength necessary to carry out his counter-revolutionary plans against the working class.

This was the meaning of the 'democratization' which included a referendum for a new constitution, release of political prisoners, suspension of the activities of EOKA B in Cyprus, and a pledge for an election under the Markezinis government.

But an epoch in which the economic crisis of capitalism is beyond any control, is also characterized by capitalism's inability to control completely the trend of political developments. The 'democratization' strengthened the self-confidence of the masses and undermined the dictatorship. In the conditions of tremendous inflation, the occupation of the Athens Polytechnic in November 1973 assumed revolutionary proportions and smashed all the plans and timetables of the regime.

## Occupation

The class struggle took its own course, not only against the will of the junta but also against the will of the Stalinists. The Partsalides faction openly and the Kolliyanis faction hesitantly, welcomed the promise of an election and saw in the occupation of the Polytechnic a 'provocation' jeopardizing the attempt to establish democracy. They denounced the occupation as the work of 'extremist elements' and deserted the battlefield politically and physically.

There, student and worker supporters were left alone in an untimely confrontation with the junta's tanks. The victims were counted in hundreds. But this sacrifice did not go in vain. The Polytechnic massacre filled the masses with anger, terrified the junta and threw it in a worse crisis.

The Gizikis coup on November 25 was an attempt to save the American-backed regime. It was a manifestation of crisis within a regime of crisis. The new variety of dictatorship coincided with a sharp worsening of the economic crisis created by the massive increase in oil prices. A period of recession

and a rapid rise in unemployment began in the country.

In order to discourage the working class and to stop it fighting for its demands, the regime unleashed a wave of terror and arrests. At the same time it tried to curb the rise of prices and the rise in unemployment, so undermining public funds and reducing foreign exchange reserves.

The result of this policy was the bankruptcy of the Athens council while other public services faced the same fate.

The regime was once again thrown into a conclusive crisis politically more damaging than the previous one. Papadopoulos' men were exiled to the island prison of Yiaros, while others were dragged into court for scandals connected with meat imports.

The commander of the 3rd Army Corps based in Salonika, General Davoos, openly opposed the Athens government, while the right-wing paper 'Greek North' of Salonika, obviously echoing his views, called the Gizikis government a 'bunch of hoodlums', who had deposed the 'mafiosi'.

The dictatorship since its establishment in 1967 faced the opposition of important sections of the bourgeoisie, especially after the devaluation of the dollar and the consequent collapse of the drachma.

## Diversion

The Greek capitalists, faced with the spectre of catastrophe in the present crisis, accused the dictatorship of serving foreign interests at their expense. Those section of the bourgeoisie, together with the King, and with the approval of the European imperialists, organized the abortive Navy coup in the spring of 1973. The bourgeois opposition also expressed its open approval of the Polytechnic occupation.

Under these conditions all hope for the survival of the regime lay in a massive political diversion around the question of the Aegean sea oil—forgotten since 1951 — and Enosis with Cyprus. In both cases it was confronted with the Turkish bourgeoisie, suffering from the same crisis and faced with similar problems.

The Turkish government claimed certain parts of the Aegean and it later imposed its will unilaterally by sending an oceanographic vessel to carry out tests in the disputed area.

The Athens regime—lacking any political support—was sunk in the sharpest economic problems and was unable to react. Despite the intervention of the Americans—who rushed to protect it—Turkey refused to withdraw its claims. This refusal, and the subsequent intervention of the Turkish army in Cyprus, in violation of its NATO commitments, brought into the open a new element in the crisis—the strengthening of nationalism in the underdeveloped countries.

The coup in Cyprus, which overthrew Makarios, the last of the 'non-aligned' leaders of the 'third world', was known by the CIA and it was related to the plans of the Americans to reinforce their positions in the

# Greece and Cyprus: a new stage of world crisis

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While the regime that was established by the April 1967 coup was meant to overturn the relations of class forces to the benefit of the bourgeoisie and American imperialism, it never dared to challenge the power of the working class. It was forced to base itself on the preservation of the balance of class forces, and, in this sense, it embodied this balance on a governmental level. It embodied the crisis and the impasse.

The junta's strategy was to avert the transformation of the economic problems into political ones, and for this purpose they continued and extended the inflationary policy of their predecessor parliamentarian governments, rapidly multiplying the country's foreign debt.

Nevertheless, the junta's strategy was possible only on the basis of the inflationary policies of imperialism and the attachment of the drachma to the dollar. The ending by Nixon of dollar convertibility into gold made it impossible and unbearable for capitalism to any longer preserve through inflationary concessions the balance of forces.

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The class struggle took its own course, not only against the will of the junta but also against the will of the Stalinists. The Partsalides faction openly and the Kolliyanis faction hesitantly, welcomed the promise of an election and saw in the occupation of the Polytechnic a 'provocation' jeopardizing the attempt to establish democracy. They denounced the occupation as the work of 'extremist elements' and deserted the battlefield politically and physically.

There, student and worker supporters were left alone in an untimely confrontation with the junta's tanks. The victims were counted in hundreds. But this sacrifice did not go in vain. The Polytechnic massacre filled the masses with anger, terrified the junta and threw it in a worse crisis.

The Gizikis coup on November 25 was an attempt to save the American-backed regime. It was a manifestation of crisis within a regime of crisis. The new variety of dictatorship coincided with a sharp worsening of the economic crisis created by the massive increase in oil prices. A period of recession

and a rapid rise in unemployment began in the country.

In order to discourage the working class and to stop it fighting for its demands, the regime unleashed a wave of terror and arrests. At the same time it tried to curb the rise of prices and the rise in unemployment, so undermining public funds and reducing foreign exchange reserves.

The result of this policy was the bankruptcy of the Athens council while other public services faced the same fate.

The regime was once again thrown into a conclusive crisis politically more damaging than the previous one. Papadopoulos' men were exiled to the island prison of Yiaros, while others were dragged into court for scandals connected with meat imports.

The commander of the 3rd Army Corps based in Salonika, General Davoos, openly opposed the Athens government, while the right-wing paper 'Greek North' of Salonika, obviously echoing his views, called the Gizikis government a 'bunch of hoodlums', who had deposed the 'mafiosi'.

The dictatorship since its establishment in 1967 faced the opposition of important sections of the bourgeoisie, especially after the devaluation of the dollar and the consequent collapse of the drachma.

### Diversion

The Greek capitalists, faced with the spectre of catastrophe in the present crisis, accused the dictatorship of serving foreign interests at their expense. Those section of the bourgeoisie, together with the King, and with the approval of the European imperialists, organized the abortive Navy coup in the spring of 1973. The bourgeois opposition also expressed its open approval of the Polytechnic occupation.

Under these conditions all hope for the survival of the regime lay in a massive political diversion around the question of the Aegean sea oil—forgotten since 1951 — and Enosis with Cyprus. In both cases it was confronted with the Turkish bourgeoisie, suffering from the same crisis and faced with similar problems.

The Turkish government claimed certain parts of the Aegean and it later imposed its will unilaterally by sending an oceanographic vessel to carry out tests in the disputed area.

The Athens regime—lacking any political support—was sunk in the sharpest economic problems and was unable to react. Despite the intervention of the Americans—who rushed to protect it—Turkey refused to withdraw its claims. This refusal, and the subsequent intervention of the Turkish army in Cyprus, in violation of its NATO commitments, brought into the open a new element in the crisis—the strengthening of nationalism in the underdeveloped countries.

The coup in Cyprus, which overthrew Makarios, the last of the 'non-aligned' leaders of the 'third world', was known by the CIA and it was related to the plans of the Americans to reinforce their positions in the

eastern Mediterranean transforming the island into a reliable military base against the Arab peoples.

At the same time this coup cannot be seen separately from the strengthening of Greek nationalism which appeared with the strong pressure exerted by the bourgeoisie and sections of the army on the Gizikis regime, for action against the Turkish claims in the Aegean and for the defence of the 'national interest' and the 'Hellenic heritage'.

Neither the Americans nor the junta had anticipated a decisive reaction by Turkey. The intervention of Turkish troops in Cyprus brought the regime before a complete impasse. This regime had been proved unable to face the problems created by inflation and the movement of the masses, and it was now being proved unable to defend the most vital interests of Greek capitalism so it had to leave the scene.

The overthrow of the Makarios government is the most damning proof of the utter rottenness of Cypriot Stalinist policy — wholly supported by Gollan and King Street — of class-collaboration and betrayal of Greek and Turkish Cypriot workers by Akel in the name of a sacred union with the Cypriot bourgeoisie.

Fearful of the masses at all times Makarios, like Allende, refused to arm the masses and again like Allende, relied on a hand-picked force of elite police who were absolutely incapable of defending the regime in its hour of crisis. It is no accident either that Makarios was overthrown by the same group of officers that he invited to Greece to uphold the unviable and reactionary constitutional settlement which reflected the Cypriot capitalist's inability to solve the national problem.

Makarios' refusal to clear the British bases out of Cyprus and to establish the unconditional sovereignty of the island from British imperialism and the Greek bourgeoisie alienated the Turkish minority without in any way dissuading the Greek junta from trying to annex Cyprus.

Makarios and the Akel Stalinists were incapable of smashing EOKA B because to do so they would have had to arm and mobilize the working class and to do that would be to create a dual power in Cyprus. The renunciation of the struggle for the liberation of the Cypriot working class by Akel doomed itself to a position of passive impotence when the forces of EOKA B struck.

As a result the Makarios regime—despite the heroism of individual Stalinists—remained suspended like a rotten apple before falling ignominiously into the lap of the Greek colonels. The defeat of Makarios is not a defeat for the forces of socialist revolution in Cyprus. On the contrary it is a complete exposure of the rottenness and impotence of the native bourgeoisie and the necessity to replace this regime with a socialist workers' and farmers' government uniting the Turkish and Greek masses.

The Stalinists with their talk of the 'democratic opening' deluded the masses in Greece before the 1967 coup. Now they are coming forward with appeals for a government of national unity.

The discredited Greek bourgeoisie and its equally discredited politicians will be completely relying on the Stalinists to discipline the masses.

The Stalinists' main demand is for a Popular Front government and this constitutes the most deadly danger for the working class. CP participation in the government would sow confusion among the masses.

It would bring about disappointment among workers and the petty bourgeoisie because of the anti-working-class policies the Popular Front would follow.

It would split the unity of the working class and would on the other hand strengthen the confidence of the right wingers in the army and increase their influence on certain strata, mainly within the petty bourgeoisie.

A popular Front carries the danger of bringing the country face to face with a counter-revolutionary coup as in Chile.

The most crucial task of the Greek section of the International Committee is to fight uncompromisingly against a Popular Front. This means it will have immediately to undertake a struggle for the Transitional Programme and to unmask and undermine the class-collaborationist policies of the Stalinists as a precondition for the overthrow of the Popular Front and its replacement by a genuine workers' and farmers' government carrying out socialist policies and protected by an armed workers' militia.

Nobody should be deceived by the euphoria and the contrived demagoguery of the new Athens regime. The new premier Karamanlis is certainly well-known for his right-wing anti-working-class policies during the 1950s.

Gizikis is still holding his position. Ioannides lurks in the background. Nevertheless, this is only the surface appearance. The essence of this situation is insoluble crisis and unavoidable confrontation with Turkey over Cyprus and the Aegean.

## Repress

The Americans will not abandon their positions easily, and they are bound to fight decisively against European influence and against sections of the Greek bourgeoisie opposed to them.

But a return to power of the junta is inconceivable without a decisive defeat of the working class in a civil war. Karamanlis' government cannot assure any of the democratic rights of the working class or establish even the semblance of political democracy in Athens.

Like Spinola's government in Portugal, it will restrict and repress the working class with the aid of the Stalinists while opening the door to extreme right wing reaction backed by European and US imperialism.

It has already reinstated the 1952 constitution and it will not be able to avoid granting the Communist Party's call for government participation (on Karamanlis' terms) in the immediate future. Related to this are the talks Karamanlis recently had with the leader of the EDA, Eliou.

United States imperialism is already wracked by an internal political crisis greater by far than anything in that country's history. The American bourgeoisie must face the mighty US working class, as the slump approaches, under conditions where it has no political stability whatsoever. Now on the international level comes a mighty setback for US imperialism.

Nixon's visit to the Near East was intended to break the Soviet military and intelligence influence there and in the Mediterranean, as well as to take advantage of the funds going into the oil countries from Europe. Along with this, he sought to reinforce the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. These were the preparations of imperialism against the working class throughout Southern Europe.

Now, however, the Cyprus fiasco and the

subsequent collapse of the Greek colonels have shattered these plans. The forces of the working class in these countries are the forces of the world revolution. The great historical lesson is that for all the support of US imperialism, the colonels' regime and the puppet Sampson were unable to survive.

Greek capitalism, because of its historical weaknesses, among them the fear of post-war investment because of the strength of the working class, was the first victim, along with Portugal, of the world crisis and its effects in Europe. The stage is now completely set for the European socialist revolution. From Portugal across to Cyprus and Turkey, the masses have created a situation of complete instability and crisis for imperialism.

Now the Italian working class faces the vicious attacks of the Christian-Democrat government under wholly changed conditions. These attacks are forced by the same economic crisis which afflicts Greece, and they will produce revolutionary confrontations. The fascist MSI has grown as the crisis has matured, because of the betrayals of the Stalinists.

Now the Italian proletariat will confront these forces within a new situation. The events in Greece show beyond doubt that the working class will not permit the victory of the fascists, and the conditions for building a revolutionary leadership have never been more favourable.

But the Stalinist bureaucracy will not be slow to understand these profound changes, and will make their own counter-revolutionary preparations. Already in Czechoslovakia there has begun the biggest round of arrests and repressions since 1968. In that year, similarly, the Kremlin bureaucracy moved against the working class of Eastern Europe in response to the revolutionary events in France.

## Essence

There is no doubt that the divisions reported within the Soviet ruling clique are centred on how to deal with this changed situation forced by the strength of the working class and its ability to act despite the role of the bureaucracy. In Greece, the same Stalinists who deluded the masses before the coup of 1967 will come forward with popular front politics of 'governments of national unity'.

Above all they will see it as their role to prevent the political independence of the working class, seeking to tie it to the tail of 'democratic' bourgeois politicians. The political essence of the revolutionary struggle in Greece today is an implacable fight to defeat Stalinism in the course of a turn to the masses in every way possible.

The governments in Athens, Ankara and Nicosia are bourgeois governments who must seek to stabilize the situation for imperialism. They cannot solve a single one of the problems which caused the collapse of the previous regime, and they will inevitably come into direct conflict with the masses.

The Stalinists will play their counter-revolutionary role of politically disarming the working class before these struggles and paving the way for reaction. We have reached the stage of the world revolution at which Trotskyist parties can and must be built and must prepare to lead the struggle for working-class power, and in the course of this defeat the discredited Stalinists.

Greece now takes the front line in this process. The

Greek section of the International Committee of the Fourth International will receive every assistance from all the Committee's sections in order that the revolutionary party can be built in Greece.

All the revisionists and Stalinists who capitulated with the theory that capitalism had left behind the stage of crisis and proletarian revolution are prostrate before the unfolding events. Greece brings a new dimension into the struggle. While the developing crisis poses the same necessities — either proletarian power, or fascist repression — as between the world wars, we now have clearly revealed the fact that the bourgeoisie is unable to repeat the experience of that period of working class defeats in the same way.

The imperialists are a later stage of the decay of their system. Fascism has collapsed in Portugal and the junta has fallen in Greece. World imperialism plunges deeper into crisis.

Dominating over this change is the unbroken strength of the working class internationally since World War II. It is the inability of the capitalist class to deal with this unbroken strength which accounts for the chain of revolutionary developments in Vietnam, Ethiopia, Portugal, Greece, and which creates simultaneous crises from the United States right through Western Europe and Japan.

The advanced workers in every country will now go through a rapid development of struggle and consciousness, because the separateness of their struggle in each country is being overcome every day. This internationalization of the struggle, and the great reverse suffered by imperialism, indicate beyond doubt that the economic crisis has now passed the point where it prepares a new, revolutionary relationship of class forces.

To the tempo of development of the rapidly worsening economic crisis is now added the rise of the world revolution itself. Just as the bourgeoisie's defences against inflationary crisis have been swept away in Greece, so in Western Europe, Britain, the United States, and Japan, the old political relationship of forces will under profound shocks, and the working class will have, in the immediate future, great revolutionary opportunities.

The primary task of the revolutionary movement, of the sections of the International Committee of the Fourth International, is to respond to these changes. Everything now depends on a decisive turn into the masses, and the training of thousands of workers in every country in the theory and practice of Marxism, established in the struggle for the Fourth International.

Only parties built on this basis can carry through the strategy and tactics required by the working class in the revolutionary period we are now in. Only the Trotskyist movement can defeat the counter-revolutionary plans of the Stalinists and reformists as they rush to defend imperialism in the new stage of its crisis.

The bourgeoisie must now stake everything on the hope that the coming slump will weaken and divide the working class, opening the road for fascist repression.

This plan has received a massive setback in Greece and Portugal. But there must be the utmost vigilance and bitter struggle against the Stalinists and reformists, whose role is precisely to weaken the working class in preparation for these plans of the class enemy. That was the lesson of Chile.

If the change in the word situation is consciously grasped, and the revolutionary leadership is built, then this stage of capitalism's economic crisis can bring the defeat of imperialism in the major countries. That is the meaning of the changes in Greece.

The International Committee is confident that the undefeated international working class will provide the basis for this victory, and that thousands of workers, youth and intellectuals will come forward to build the parties of the Fourth International.

All those who revised Marxism under the pressure of the so-called invincibility and overpowering strength of US imperialism have been confounded! The oldest fascism in Europe, Portugal, has disintegrated under the impact of the crisis. Now the first right-wing dictatorship erected against the working class as the boom ended has crashed. All the reputed 'strength' of imperialism and its CIA, fascist and military agencies have proved completely vulnerable, because they are all founded on the shifting sands of a social system in its last stages of decay.

This was always the historical basis of the Communist International, of the Left Opposition and of the Fourth International.

All over the capitalist world, the approaching slump is signified by collapse of credit, banking crisis, decline of investment and production, plunging of stock markets. But the capitalists cannot carry out the necessary policies, because the masses get more and more combative, still fighting against inflation. As against the organized strength of the working class, the capitalist class finds itself racked by corruption and political and moral disintegration.

All the economic, political and cultural conditions of breakdown and of proletarian revolution have matured. It remains only to bring the subjective factor into line with these objective preconditions.

The opportunities for the building of revolutionary parties, sections of the International Committee of the Fourth International, are now at their highest. They arise out of an inescapable necessity not just in Greece but in every other country.

Nowhere will the working class be able to avoid revolutionary struggles; the question of victory or defeat is the responsibility of the forces of the International Committee.

In Greece, the Workers' Internationalist League (section of the International Committee) must drive

deeper and deeper into the mass movement as it comes into collision with the Karamanlis government.

From these struggles on wages, living standards, democratic liberties, unemployment, and every other basic question which the bourgeoisie is totally unable to answer, many thousands of recruits will come forward for the revolutionary movement and can be trained in the struggle to defeat the treacherous Stalinists.

## **Programme**

The bourgeoisie will be forced to attempt to reimpose dictatorship. They cannot do this now without civil war and the most ferocious resistance of the working class and peasantry. The Greek Trotskyists must take every possible advantage for the expansion of their publications and of their membership in the youth and the working class.

- **No partition of Cyprus! Down with federalism! Withdraw all foreign troops from Cyprus! Scrap Zurich Agreement!**
- **Unconditional release of all prisoners and restoration of all liberties, passports, etc.**
- **Immediate arrest and punishment by people's courts of the colonels and all their assistant torturers!**
- **Down with the Karamanlis government, for a workers' and peasants' government!**
- **Expropriation of the banks, big industries and shipping companies under workers' control and without compensation!**
- **Break with NATO immediately. No ports for the Sixth Fleet!**
- **Nationalization of the land. Immediate assistance to the peasants by revoking of all debts to banks and monopolies, and new terms for supply of farm machinery, chemicals etc on the basis of the nationalization programme.**

Only such a programme, carried out by a workers' and farmers' government, can begin to tackle the economic crisis. In the struggle for such a government and such a programme, the International Committee fights to prepare the working class for the only solution to the problem, the exposure and defeat of the Stalinists and the winning of workers' power.

**Build the Fourth International in Greece!  
Long live the Greek proletarian revolution!**

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