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FROM NEWS DISPATCHES:

INTERNATIONAL PROPOSALS FOR TERMINATING WAR IN LAOS

Vientiane, 1 March. Laotian Premier Souvanna Phouma sent letters to the British and Soviet Embassies in Vientiane officially requesting Geneva-style consultation on the situation in Laos. The British and the Soviets are co-chairmen of the 1962 Geneva Conference which was intended to guarantee the neutrality of Laos. Conference signatories were: Burma, Cambodia, Canada, China, France, Great Britain, India, Laos, North Vietnam, Poland, South Vietnam, the Soviet Union, Thailand and the United States.

New Delhi, 4 March. The Indian Government has just appealed to both sides in the Laotian conflict to end hostilities, an appeal interpreted by some Far East observers as a first step to reactivate the International Control Commission of which India is the chairman and a fellow member with Canada and Poland.

The ICC was set up in 1954 by the Geneva Powers for the purpose of ensuring the inviolability of national borders in Indo-China.

Saigon, 11 March. Foreign Minister Tran Van Lam of the Republic of South Vietnam officially denounced the North Vietnamese violation of the 1954 and 1962 Geneva Accords, reiterated GVN respect for the Accords and demanded that North Vietnam do the same. Lam also urged all signatories of the 62 Accords to consult with the aim of halting North Vietnamese aggression in Laos and elsewhere in Southeast Asia, and expressed GVN readiness to cooperate in seeking a solution which would guarantee the neutrality and integrity of Laos.

Paris, 12 March. The French Foreign Ministry called for the withdrawal of all foreign troops from Laos, the full implementation of the Geneva Accords, action by the 14 signatories to live up to their responsibilities and the working out of an understanding among the Lao themselves.

NEW YORK TIMES  
1 March 1970

## Profile of Laos

**Population:** 2,825,000, mostly Lao and Thai-speaking mountain tribes, 95 per cent rural.

**Area and geography:** 91,429 sq. mi., about the size of Oregon. Northern Laos mainly jungle-covered mountains; southern Laos, arid limestone terraces.

**Capitals:** Vientiane (administrative), Luang Prabang (royal).

**Government:** Constitutional parliamentary monarchy headed by King Savang Vatthana. Prince Suvanna Phouma has been Premier since 1962.

After 56 years as a French protectorate and a brief Japanese occupation in 1945-46, Laos became an independent state within the French union in 1949. But it soon became part of the Indochina battleground. The Pathet Lao, a Communist nationalist movement, rebelled against the Government in the early 1950's. Peace was restored under terms of the 1954 Geneva Conference ending the Indochina war, and Laos was established as an independent state under a neutralist-Pathet Lao coalition.

Peace was short-lived. In 1960 the coalition broke down, and more fighting erupted. The 1962 Geneva Agreement imposed a truce and supposedly guaranteed Laos's neutrality. But again, the accord broke down and fighting has continued off and on ever since. The civil war has divided the country politically between the Communist-supported Pathet Lao and the Western-supported neutralist-rightist coalition. The Communists control the eastern half, including the Ho Chi Minh supply route; the Government the Western half, with most of the rice land and small cities.

Without aid from the United States, Laos could not exist as a contemporary nation. The United States provides \$50-million annually and equips and advises the Royal armed forces. The North Vietnamese supply and lead the Pathet Lao.

CPYRGHT

# *Nixon on Laos Aid: 'Requested . . . Defensive'*

*The text of President Nixon's statement on Laos:*

In light of the increasingly massive presence of North Vietnamese troops and their recent offensive in Laos, I have written letters today to British Prime Minister Wilson and Soviet Premier Kosygin asking their help in restoring the 1962 Geneva agreements for that country.

As cochairmen of that conference, the United Kingdom and the Soviet Union have particular responsibilities for seeing that its provisions are honored. My letters note the persistent North Vietnamese violations of the accords and their current offensives; support the Laotian Prime Minister's own current appeal to the cochairmen for consultations; urge the cochairmen to work with other signatories of the Geneva accords; and pledge full United States cooperation.

Hanoi's most recent military buildup in Laos has been particularly escalatory. They have poured over 13,000 additional troops into Laos during the past few months, raising their total in Laos to over 67,000. Thirty North Vietnamese battalions from regular division units participated in the current campaign in the Plain of Jars with tanks, armored cars and long-range artillery. The indigenous Laotian Communists, the Pathet Lao, are playing an insignificant role.

North Vietnam's military escalation in Laos has intensified public discussion in this country. The purpose of this statement is to set forth the record of what we found in January, 1969, and the policy of this administration since that time.

## *I. What We Found*

### *A. The 1962 Accords*

When we came into office, this administration found a highly precarious situation in Laos. Its basic legal framework had been established by the 1962 accords entered into by the Kennedy administration.

Laos has been a battleground for most of the past 20 years. In 1949 it became a semi-independent state within

the French union. The Pathet Lao Communists rebelled against the government in the early 1950s, and fighting continued until the 1954 Geneva settlements ended the Indochina war. Laos at that time became an independent neutral state. The indigenous Communists, the Pathet Lao, nevertheless retained control of the two northern provinces. Since then, this small country has been the victim of persistent subversion and finally invasion by the North Vietnamese.

By 1961, North Vietnamese involvement became marked, the Communist forces made great advances, and a serious situation confronted the Kennedy administration. In his news conference of March, 1961, President Kennedy said: "Laos is far away from America, but the world is small . . . The security of all Southeast Asia will be endangered if Laos loses its neutral independence."

In May, 1961, negotiations for a Laotian settlement opened in Geneva, with Gov. Harriman as the chief American negotiator. During the course of those long negotiations, fighting continued and the Communists made further advances. Faced with a potential threat to Thailand, President Kennedy ordered 5,000 Marines to that country in May, 1962.

Finally, in July, 1962, after 14 months of negotiations, 14 nations signed the Geneva accords providing for the neutralization of Laos. Other signatories besides the United States included the Soviet Union, Communist China, North Vietnam, the United Kingdom, France, the Southeast Asian nations most directly involved and the members of the International Control Commission, Canada, India and Poland.

These accords came one month after the three contending forces within Laos announced agreement on the details of a coalition government composed of the three major political factions and headed by the neutralist, Prince Souvanna Phouma. North Vietnam claimed that it favored a coalition government. Both North Vietnam and the Soviet Union backed Prince Souvanna for his new post. The present government of Laos thus has been the one originally proposed by the Com-

munist. In approving the 1962 arrangements, the Kennedy administration in effect accepted the basic formulation which had been advanced by North Vietnam and the Soviet Union for a Laotian political settlement.

### *B. The Record 1962-1969*

Before the ink was dry on the 1962 Geneva documents, and despite the fact that they embodied most of its own proposals, North Vietnam started violating them. In compliance with the accords, the 666 Americans who had been assisting the Royal Lao government withdrew under ICC supervision. In contrast, the North Vietnamese passed only a token 40 men through ICC checkpoints and left over 6,000 troops in the country.

A steadily growing number of North Vietnamese troops have remained there ever since, in flagrant violation of the Geneva accords. They climbed to about 33,000 in mid-1967, 46,000 in mid-1968 and 55,000 in mid-1969. Today they are at an all-time high of some 67,000 men.

These are not advisers or technicians or attaches. They are line units of the North Vietnamese army conducting open aggression against a neighbor that poses no threat to Hanoi.

In addition, since 1964, over a half-million North Vietnamese troops have crossed the "Ho Chi Minh trail" in Laos to invade South Vietnam. This infiltration route provides the great bulk of men and supplies for the war in South Vietnam.

The political arrangements for a three-way government survived only until April, 1963, when the Pathet Lao Communist leaders departed from the capital and left their cabinet posts vacant. Fighting soon resumed and since then, there have been cycles of Communist offensives and Royal Laotian government counteroffensives. The enemy forces have been led and dominated throughout by the North Vietnamese. In recent years Hanoi has provided the great majority of Communist troops in Laos.

North Vietnam appears to have two aims in Laos. The first is to insure its ability to use Laos as a supply route



for North Vietnamese forces in South Vietnam. The second is to weaken and subvert the Royal Lao government—originally established at its urging—to hinder it from interfering with North Vietnamese use of Laotian territory, and to pave the way for the eventual establishment of a government more amenable to Communist control.

Prime Minister Souvanna Phouma has tried a variety of diplomatic efforts to restore peace in Laos. He has repeatedly appealed to the cochairmen and others to help arrange for restoration of the 1962 accords. He and the International Control Commission, hampered by lack of authority, have reported and publicized North Vietnamese violations of the accords. And Prime Minister Souvanna Phouma has made several attempts to achieve political reconciliation with the Pathet Lao and to reconstitute a tripartite government.

None of these efforts has borne fruit. Frustrated in his diplomatic efforts and confronted with continuing outside aggression, Souvanna has called upon three American administrations to assist his government in preserving Laotian neutrality and integrity.

By early 1963, the North Vietnamese and Pathet Lao had openly breached the 1962 agreements by attacking the neutralist government forces in North Laos and by occupying and fortifying the area in Southeast Laos along what came to be known as the Ho Chi Minh trail. In these circumstances, the Laotian prime minister requested American aid in the form of supplies and munitions. The Kennedy administration provided this assistance in line with the Laotian government's right under the Geneva accords to seek help in its self-defense.

In mid-May, 1964, the Pathet Lao supported by the North Vietnamese attacked Prime Minister Souvanna Phouma's neutralist military forces on the Plain of Jars. North Vietnam also began to increase its use of the Ho Chi Minh trail to further its aggression against South Vietnam. The Johnson administration responded to Royal Laotian government requests to meet this escalation by increasing our training and logistic support for the Royal Lao government. In May, 1964, as North Vietnamese presence increased, the United States, at Royal Lao government request, began flying certain interdiction missions against invaders who were violating Lao neutrality.

Thus, when this administration came into office, we faced a chronically serious situation in Laos. There had been six years of seasonal Communist attacks and growing U.S. involvement at the request of the Royal Laotian government. The North Vietnamese had

steadily increased both their infiltration through Laos into South Vietnam and their troop presence in Laos itself. Any facade of native Pathet Lao independence had been stripped away. In January, 1969, we thus had a military assistance program reaching back over six years, and air operations dating over four years.

## II. The Policy of This Administration

Since this administration has been in office, North Vietnamese pressure has continued. Last spring, the North Vietnamese mounted a campaign which threatened the royal capital and moved beyond the areas previously occupied by Communists. A counterattack by the Lao government forces, intended to relieve this military pressure and cut off supply lines, caught the enemy by surprise and succeeded beyond expectations in pushing them off the strategic central plain in North Laos known as the Plain of Jars.

The North Vietnamese left behind huge stores of arms, ammunition and other supplies cached on the plain. During their operations in the Plain of Jars last summer and fall, Lao government forces captured almost 8,000 tons of Communist equipment, supplies and weapons, including tanks, armored cars, artillery pieces, machine guns and thousands of individual weapons including about 4,000 tons of ammunition. The size and nature of these supply caches the Communists had emplaced on the plain by the summer of 1969 show clearly that many months ago the North Vietnamese were preparing for major offensive actions on Laotian territory against the Royal Lao government.

During the final months of 1969 and January, 1970, Hanoi sent over 13,000 additional troops into Laos and rebuilt their stocks and supply lines. They also introduced tanks and long-range artillery.

During January and February, Prime Minister Souvanna Phouma proposed to the other side that the Plain of Jars be neutralized. The Communists' response was to launch their current offensive which has recaptured the Plain of Jars and is threatening to go beyond the furthest line of past Communist advances.

The prime minister is now once again trying to obtain consultations among all the parties to the Geneva accords, envisaged under article IV when there is a violation of Lao sovereignty, independence, neutrality or territorial integrity.

In this situation, our purposes remain straightforward.

We are trying above all to save

American and Allied lives in South Vietnam which are threatened by the continual infiltration of North Vietnamese troops and supplies along the Ho Chi Minh trail. Hanoi has infiltrated over 100,000 men through Laos since this administration took office and over 500,000 altogether. Our air strikes have destroyed weapons and supplies over the past four years which would have taken thousands of American lives.

We are also supporting the independence and neutrality of Laos as set forth in the 1962 Geneva agreements. Our assistance has always been at the request of the legitimate government of Prime Minister Souvanna Phouma which the North Vietnamese helped establish; it is directly related to North Vietnamese violations of the agreements.

We continue to be hopeful of eventual progress in the negotiations in Paris, but serious doubts are raised as to Hanoi's intentions if it is simultaneously violating the Geneva agreements on Laos which we reached with them largely on the basis of their own proposals. What we do in Laos has thus as its aim to bring about conditions for progress toward peace in the entire Indochinese peninsula.

I turn now to the precise nature of our aid to Laos.

In response to press conference questions on Sept. 26, Dec. 8, and Jan. 30, I have indicated:

- That the United States has no ground combat forces in Laos.

- That there were 50,000 North Vietnamese troops in Laos and that "more perhaps are coming."

- That, at the request of the Royal Laotian government which was set up by the Geneva accords of 1962, we have provided logistical and other assistance to that government for the purpose of helping it to prevent the Communist conquest of Laos.

- That we have used air power for the purpose of interdicting the flow of North Vietnamese troops and supplies on that part of the Ho Chi Minh trail which runs through Laos.

- That, at the request of the Royal Laotian government, we have flown reconnaissance missions in northern Laos in support of the Laotian government's efforts to defend itself against North Vietnamese aggression and that we were engaged in "some other activities."

It would, of course, have posed no political problem for me to have disclosed in greater detail those military support activities which had been initiated by two previous administrations and which have been continued by this administration.

I have not considered it in the na-

tional interest to do so because of our concern that putting emphasis on American activities in Laos might hinder the efforts of Prime Minister Souvanna Phouma to bring about adherence to the Geneva Agreements by the Communist signatories.

In recent days, however, there has been intense public speculation to the effect that the United States involvement in Laos has substantially increased in violation of the Geneva accords, that American ground forces are engaged in combat in Laos and that our air activity has had the effect of escalating the conflict.

Because these reports are grossly inaccurate, I have concluded that our national interest will be served by putting the subject into perspective through a precise description of our current activities in Laos.

These are the facts:

- There are no American ground combat troops in Laos.
- We have no plans for introducing ground combat forces into Laos.
- The total number of Americans directly employed by the U.S. government in Laos is 616. In addition, there are 424 Americans employed on contract to the government or to government contractors. Of these 1,040 Americans, the total number, military and civilian, engaged in a military advisory or military training capacity numbers 320. Logistics personnel number 323.
- No American stationed in Laos has ever been killed in ground combat operations.
- U.S. personnel in Laos during the past year has not increased, while during the past few months, North Vietnam has sent over 13,000 additional combat ground troops into Laos.
- When requested by the Royal Laotian government, we have continued to provide military assistance to regular and irregular Laotian forces in the form of equipment, training and logistics. The levels of our assistance have risen in response to the growth of North Vietnamese combat activities.
- We have continued to conduct air operations. Our first priority for such operations is to interdict the continued flow of troops and supplies across Laotian territory on the Ho Chi Minh trail. As commander-in-chief of our armed forces, I consider it my responsibility to use our air power to interdict this flow of supplies and men into South Vietnam and thereby avoid a heavy toll of American and Allied lives.
- In addition to air operations on the Ho Chi Minh trail, we have continued to carry out reconnaissance flights

in north Laos and fly combat support missions for Laotian forces when requested to do so by the Royal Laotian government.

• In every instance, our combat air operations have been flown only when requested by the Laotian government. The level of our air operations has been increased only as the number of North Vietnamese in Laos and the level of their aggression has increased.

Our goal in Laos has been and continues to be to reduce American involvement and not to increase it, to bring peace in accordance with the 1962 accords and not to prolong the war.

That is the picture of our current aid to Laos. It is limited. It is requested. It is supportive and defensive. It continues the purposes and operations of two previous administrations. It has been necessary to protect American lives in Vietnam and to preserve a precarious but important balance in Laos.

### III. The Future

Peace remains the highest priority of this administration. We will continue our search for it in Vietnam. I hope my appeal today to the Geneva conference cochairs will help in Laos. Our policy for that torn country will continue to rest on some basic principles:

- We will cooperate fully with all diplomatic efforts to restore the 1962 Geneva agreements.
- We will continue to support the legitimate government of Prime Minister Souvanna Phouma and his efforts to de-escalate the conflict and reach political understandings.
- Our air interdiction efforts are designed to protect American and Allied lives in Vietnam. Our support efforts have the one purpose of helping prevent the recognized Laotian government from being overwhelmed by larger Communist forces dominated by the North Vietnamese.
- We will continue to give the American people the fullest possible information on our involvement, consistent with national security.

I hope that a genuine quest for peace in Indochina can now begin. For Laos, this will require the efforts of the Geneva conference cochairs and the signatory countries.

But most of all it will require realism and reasonableness from Hanoi. For it is the North Vietnamese, not we, who have escalated the fighting. Today there are 67,000 North Vietnamese troops in this small country. There are

no American troops there. Hanoi is not threatened by Laos; it runs risks only when it moves its forces across borders.

We desire nothing more in Laos than to see a return to the Geneva agreements and the withdrawal of North Vietnamese troops, leaving the Laotians to settle their own differences in a peaceful manner.

In the search for peace we stand ready to cooperate in every way with the other countries involved. That search prompted my letters today to the British prime minister and the Soviet premier. That search will continue to guide our policy.

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# Laotian Reds Outline Peace Plan

By TILLMAN DURDIN  
Special to The New York Times

**HONG KONG, March 7**—The political arm of the pro-Communist Pathet Lao movement in Laos has issued a program for peace there similar to the Vietcong plan for South Vietnam.

The Laotian program—issued by the movement known as Neo Lao Hak Xat—calls for the complete withdrawal of the United States from Laos, the formation of a coalition government and the eventual election of a neutralist government of national union.

The program called for all countries to respect the sovereignty, independence, neutrality and territorial integrity of Laos as provided in the 1962 Geneva agreements, and provided that the United States "must put an end to its intervention and aggression in Laos." Nothing was said about the 67,000 North Vietnamese troops in Laos who are assisting the Pathet Lao and have just taken over the Plaine des Jarres.

## Hanoi Broadcast Plan

Details of the program were broadcast today by the Hanoi radio. The program was made public in Hanoi yesterday at a news conference held by Phau Phimpachman, member of the central committee of the Neo Lao Hak Xat and director of information for the group.

The Neo Lao Hak Xat secretary general is Phoumi Vongvichit, a Laotian Communist. Statements of the Neo Lao Hak Xat can be taken as authoritative expressions of Laotian Communist views.

The program for a settlement of the conflict in Laos comes at a time when Prince Souvanna Phouma, Laotian Premier, has asked Britain and the Soviet Union, co-chairmen of the 1962 Geneva conference, which reached an agreement to neutralize Laos under a government of national unity, to arrange consultation among the Geneva powers on measures to restore and preserve peace and neutrality in Laos.

In his statement on Laos yesterday President Nixon pledged United States cooperation as a signatory to the 1962 Geneva Conference agreement in seeing that provisions of the agreement are honored.

## Nixon Makes 2 Appeals

President Nixon has also written letters to Prime Minister Wilson of Britain and Premier Aleksei N. Kosygin of the Soviet Union asking their help in restoring the 1962 agreements.

The timing of the Neo Lao Hakxat program appeared intended to insure that the Communist view would get consideration at any international attempt to settle the Laotian problem.

The program demanded that the United States "stop escalating the war, completely cease the bombing of Laotian territory, withdraw from Laos all United States advisers and military personnel as well as all United States weapons and war material, stop using military bases in Thailand and Thailand mercenaries for purposes of aggression against Laos and stop using Laotian territory for intervention and aggression against other countries."

The program said Laos must maintain strict neutrality and that Laos "respects Vietnam's independence, sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity" and "the independence, sovereignty, neutrality and territorial integrity of Cambodia "within its present borders."

The stipulation with regard to Cambodia would mean that Laos would abandon all claims to areas in northern Cambodia that were once a part of Laos. This would satisfy the position of Cambodia's Chief of State, Prince Norodom Sihanouk, that all countries must affirm they recognize and respect the kingdom's present boundaries.

The Neo Lao Hak Xat program stipulates "respect for the throne" and calls for elections to form a national assembly and set up a democratic government of national union representative of all Laotians.

## U.S. Studying Proposal

By RICHARD HALLORAN  
Special to The New York Times

**WASHINGTON, March 7**—Officials here said today that they consider the Neo Lao Hak Xat proposal for settling the conflict in Laos to be an opening move toward striking a political bargain there.

The officials, in positions to be aware of policy decisions, said they were giving the proposal careful study. But they cautioned that it contained several sticking points, including a demand that the United States stop bombing North Vietnamese supply routes through Laos into South Vietnam.

The officials also said that the price the Pathet Lao was asking of the Royal Laotian Government was high. They doubted that Premier Souvanna Phouma would be willing to pay it but said the United States would defer to him.

According to the sources, the program was intended to serve at least two purposes. Coming just after the offensive in Laos, it was designed to take the sting out of the United States charge that the North Vietnamese and Pathet Lao were the aggressors and to put them into a negotiating posture.

Secondly, the statement would cover the North Vietnamese and Pathet Lao diplomatically should they decide to continue their offensive deeper into Laotian Government-held territory. The Communists, the sources said, could contend that the proposal had been rejected and thus justify new military thrusts.

Officials here said that a major difficulty in the Pathet Lao proposal, issued almost simultaneously with President Nixon's statement on Laos, was its insistence on an internal solution to the Laotian problem.

They pointed out that Premier Souvanna had already undertaken a diplomatic effort through the Soviet Union and Britain, co-chairmen of the 1962 Geneva conference.

Nonetheless, the officials said they considered the tone of the proposal to be softer and less bellicose than those of the recent past. It left much room for diplomatic maneuver and bargaining, they said.

LOS ANGELES TIMES  
26 February 1970

# Laos a Pawn-- but King-Sized

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BY ROBERT S. ELEGANT  
Times Hong Kong Bureau Chief

On the map, the craggy outlines of the kingdom of Laos resemble a surrealistically elongated horse's head greedily dipping its muzzle into fertile Southeast Asia. Yet the kingdom is no dashing knight in the chess game of Asian power politics, but a pawn.

Laos is, however, the single most important pawn. Whoever controls the Laotian lines of communication is, potentially, master of the region.

The classic demonstration has been the war in Vietnam. The Communists could not have sustained their campaign to "liberate" the Republic of Vietnam if they had been unable to replenish their great losses by sending soldiers and supplies south along the Ho Chi Minh Trail. Cambodia and Thailand also are vulnerable to insurrections supported through Laos.

The obverse is also true. No guerrilla insurrection has succeeded in Asia without external reinforcements and arms. Except for Burma, exposed by its long frontier with China, Southeast Asia is truly vulnerable to effective guerrilla conquest only while the Communists can move men and arms freely through Laos.

Hanoi has no desire to conquer Laos now, but is determined to keep its supply lines open. Last year, American-sponsored irregulars, supported by American bombers, quite surprisingly pushed units into the Plain of Jars, a traditional Communist stronghold. Feeling their supply lines threatened, the Communists are now riposting.

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Laotian armies and Laotian battles are always slightly opera bouffe—and, normally, casualties are pleasantly light. Ten years ago, I saw 800 men of a Royal battalion stalled on the main road between the twin capitals, Vientiane and Luang Prabang, by a force their lieutenant-colonel estimated as "about 10 snipers." Moreover, all reports of Laotian battles must, axiomatically, be considered wildly exaggerated—until proved otherwise.

But two new factors suggest treating the current campaign with less skepticism.

It appears, first, that Hanoi may be responding to the virtual invitation to move in Laos the U.S. Senate issued last December. Although that thesis cannot be proved, the timing is most suggestive.

The Senate stated its disapproval of using American ground troops in Laos and declared that it would deny financial support to troops so employed. It further registered its distaste for any American military involvement in Laos—including air support.

The second factor is equally intriguing. Communist reinforcements along the Ho Chi Minh Trail dropped sharply in 1969, though the figures began rising toward the year's end. Reinforcements during January, 1970, have just been calculated. They are the highest since 1968.

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More than 10,000 troops and political cadres marched down the trail in January.

The reinforcements were obviously essential to Communist strategy in the south. Stepping up action in Laos could, therefore, be intended primarily to protect Communist lines of communication, while punishing the United States psychologically where we have shown ourselves most vulnerable—in Laos.

The attacks were, moreover, certainly "provoked" by the earlier successes of the irregulars. Hanoi would, naturally, prefer continued, undisturbed use of Laos as a channel for reinforcements and supplies to its forces in South Vietnam. Unless the Communists are "provoked" by effective counteraction, they would prefer not to fight in Laos just now.

Hanoi's chief objective remains South Vietnam. The Communists have, after all, announced that they will get around to liberating Laos and Cambodia after they have bestowed the blessings of "proletarian government by revolutionary violence" on all Vietnam.

Hanoi is, however, irked by military action in Laos which threatens its immediate objective by threatening its essential supply lines. If the United States did not "provoke" the Communists by defending South Vietnam in Laos, the kingdom would be free of fighting—until its turn for "liberation."

# New Delhi hints Laos mediation effort

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## 'Last chance of glory'

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## for International Control Commission?

By Ernest Weatherall  
Special correspondent of  
The Christian Science Monitor

New Delhi

India's appeal to both sides to end hostilities in Laos is regarded here as perhaps the first step in "reactivating" its role as chairman of the long-dormant International Control Commission.

The ICC was set up by the Geneva powers in 1954 to watch that the borders of the new countries carved out of French Indo-China were not violated. Foreign Minister Dinesh Singh told Parliament that during his recent talks with Lao Foreign Minister Khampan Panya, India was asked to use its influence to call for a meeting of "interested powers" to resolve the present crisis.

Mr. Panya said: "We should consider this matter in a Geneva-type conference." However, Mr. Singh told Parliament he had pointed out that any Geneva conference could only be called by the cochairmen—the Soviet Union and the United Kingdom.

### Caution traced

When the non-Communist opposition in Parliament bitterly criticized Mr. Singh for not identifying the aggressors in Laos, the Foreign Minister said: "India cannot make any statement that would jeopardize its position as chairman of the neutral International Control Commission. Any naming of aggressors would have to be done with approval of the other members.

Right-wing members of Parliament said later that Mr. Singh's extreme cau-

tion in discussing the crisis in Laos is because Prime Minister Indira Gandhi's government has not received any clear indications from the Soviet Union on how it feels. Many contend that Moscow wants the status quo to be retained in Southeast Asia and will indicate that India should go ahead as chairman of the ICC and take the initiative in ending the present conflict.

When the ICC was set up in 1954, it was a balanced commission with Poland representing the Communist bloc, Canada the NATO powers, and Jawaharlal Nehru's nonaligned India (which had helped to end the Korean war) as chairman.

Now India is in effect no longer non-aligned. New Delhi has taken sides on the Vietnam war in many ways, including allowing the Soviet Union landing rights for its transport planes going to Hanoi. Communist China no longer regards India as a neutral since their border conflict in 1962.

### Criticism by U.S.

India also has been criticized by the United States for not taking a more active part in trying to end the Vietnam war.

But there has been trouble in the "troika" since 1960 as well. The Poles, taking their cue from Moscow, now refuse to discuss anything related to the Vietnam situation.

The Canadians feel that at least the ICC should go on record as trying to work out some kind of Vietnam solution. However, the commission's task in implementing the Geneva agreement depends on the two Vietnams cooperat-

ing. They have not, and there has been little the ICC can do but fade into the background after being deserted both diplomatically and financially by the Geneva powers that created it.

With the recent withdrawal of the ICC from Cambodia, the erosion of the peace-keeping machinery has reached a point where New Delhi feels it should "adjourn sine die," meaning it could be reactivated if the need should arise. The Indian Government has made no secret that it feels that the ICC has outlived its usefulness.

A logical successor, it is thought by some, would be the proposal launched by President Nixon during last year's Paris peace talks that an "international supervisory body, acceptable to both sides, should be created" to verify withdrawals, supervise a cease-fire, and supervise elections.

### UN auspices urged

All these functions are well beyond the scope of the ICC.

Other Indians feel that an international supervisory body, such as that suggested by President Nixon, should be under United Nations auspices. However, it is felt that in order for UN peace-keeping machinery to succeed in Southeast Asia the world body must admit Communist China and North Vietnam, otherwise there would be little hope it could succeed.

But all these peace consortiums appear to be only in the distant future. The only mediator available today is the imperfect International Control Commission, to help end the crisis in Laos. And it may be, New Delhi feels, the last chance of glory for the commission set up by the Geneva powers 14 years ago.

LONDON OBSERVER  
8 March 1970

## Hanoi plays for big stakes

from MARK FRANKLAND

VIENTIANE, 7 March

HANOI has apparently decided to seek a limited military victory in Laos in order to influence the situation in South Vietnam.

It might be thought most unlikely that North Vietnam would choose the present moment in the Vietnam war—when it must show that America's Vietnamisation programme will not work—to divert men and material to Laos merely to strengthen the hand of its Pathet Lao allies against Vientiane. Yet over the past year Hanoi has sent more soldiers to North-East Laos and is making considerable efforts to keep them supplied. And, for the first time in the Laotian war, it is using these troops on their own, with little or no protective covering from Pathet Lao units.

The present fighting has grown out of the conflict that began with the disintegration of the 'non-aligned' Coalition Government of Laos provided for by the Geneva Agreement of 1962. The break-away pro-Communist Pathet Lao, supported by 30-40,000 North Vietnamese troops before the current escalation, have since been playing military battledore and shuttlecock with the 60,000 strong—but weaker—Royal Laotian Army and guerrillas of Prince Souvanna Phouma's Government, which is propped up economically and militarily by the United States.

What exactly does North Vietnam hope to gain by these efforts? There is general agreement here that North Vietnam does not plan to overthrow the Laotian Government. But even by restricting its advance to the area that its Pathet Lao allies claim is now illegally occupied by the Vientiane Government—and all the major Laotian towns lie outside this area—Hanoi can still hope to force Vientiane to its knees and make it sue for peace.

Hanoi's price for agreeing to peace talks can only be a halt to all American bombing in Laos, including the infiltration routes through Southern Laos to South Vietnam. An end to the bombing of the trails would be a major military and political victory for the Communists in South Vietnam. Its effect on Saigon's morale in an already difficult period could be near disastrous.

Hanoi's attempt to lift the war here out of its limited Laotian context has been helped by the tenfold

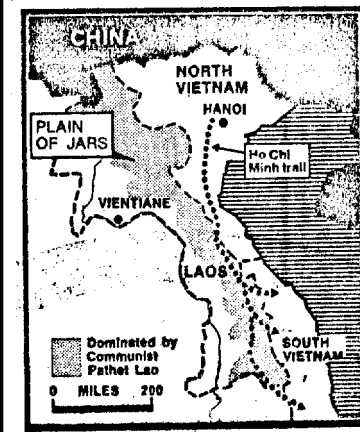
increase in American bombing of Northern Laos over the past year. Although at the time it made military sense for America to use the Thailand-based planes left idle after the bombing halt over North Vietnam, the heavier use of air power has helped to turn Laos into a major political issue in the United States without being able to achieve decisive military results. It has visibly increased American commitments in Indo-China at a time when Washington is trying to reduce them and at the one place where America's power is weakest and least easy to reinforce.

Even so, considerable military and political dangers lie in wait for Hanoi. Although the Laotian Army is no match for North Vietnamese troops, Hanoi must fight now in Laos a war of movement in extremely difficult terrain and with a vulnerable supply line.

It must raise the level of fighting throughout the country to prevent the Government reinforcing the North East. It has a very difficult choice of targets to make, chiefly between the pro-Government neutralist base at Vang Vieng, 60 miles north of Vientiane, which is easily approachable, and the far more inaccessible American-supported guerrilla base at Long Cheng.

Politically, the North Vietnamese are well aware of the delicacy of their position as foreigners in Laos. They must certainly be asking themselves whether their invasion—if pushed uncomfortably far—might justify in the eyes of the world the introduction of foreign troops into Laos to help Vientiane.

Last and most important, in pushing for a halt to the bombing of the Ho Chi Minh trails, Hanoi is playing for very big stakes. The ultimate prize is the collapse of American policy in Vietnam—and Washington is not going to sit back while Hanoi runs away with that.



## A long, soft talk

CPYRGHT

The Pathet Lao have now put forward their peace proposals for Laos to the harassed government of Prince Souvanna Phouma. The main points are that the Americans must stop the bombing of communist positions and supply lines; that there should be talks to set up a government of national union, "taking into account the realities of the present situation"; and that the refugees from the areas lately captured by the communists should be resettled. It is a formidable list. Its most notable exception is any mention of the North Vietnamese troops fighting in Laos, whose attack on the Plain of Jars made it possible for the Pathet Lao to ask for so much.

No doubt talking has advantages for both sides at the moment. It will enable the North Vietnamese and the Pathet Lao to consolidate the gains they have made, and minimise the chance of a government counter-offensive. It will enable the government to regroup its forces and pray for more American aid in arms and ammunition. But, even in the weak bargaining position in which Prince Souvanna Phouma finds himself, the talks are unlikely to lead to a workable settlement. By insisting that the Americans call off their bombers the communists are attempting to take away the most effective weapon in the hands of the government. The State Department has said that the United States will accept any settlement reached between the Pathet Lao and the government (though it expects all the nations that took part in the 1962 Geneva conference to play a role in restoring peace). But what matters is the terms the Americans would be willing to encourage Prince Souvanna Phouma to settle for.

The prince is prepared to talk. But that phrase about the "realities of the present situation" means that the communists want their victory in the Plain of Jars to be translated into a dominating position in a coalition government. Colonel Petrasi, the Pathet Lao representative in Vientiane, told a Japanese correspondent this week that the Pathet Lao might continue their advance across the 1962 cease-fire line. The Pathet Lao radio has been telling its listeners to step up the fighting. Prince Souvanna Phouma says the North Vietnamese now have tanks and 122 mm artillery in Laos. The fact is that the Laotian government has almost nothing to give away short of surrender, and the communists are asking for something very close to that.



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ASIAN SURVEY, BERKELEY, CALIF  
January 1970

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## LAOS: THE FORGOTTEN WAR WIDENS

JOSEPH J. ZASLOFF

In 1969, the most significant change in Laos was the widening of the "forgotten war," "notre guerre oubliée," as Prime Minister Souvanna Phouma calls it. Both the Royal Lao Government (RLG) and the Pathet Lao (PL) expanded their military operations, each attempting to influence the internal power balance as well as the external forces, so important to the future of the country.

The prevailing ground rules, established when government and Communist forces resumed fighting in 1963, were that the Communist forces—North Vietnamese and Pathet Lao—take the initiative during the dry season (generally October to May), followed by ripostes during the wet season by RLG forces, with U.S. air support. The war in Laos was not on the scale of the larger, grinding war in South Vietnam, but rather consisted largely of small unit attacks on isolated positions, struggles for certain tactical mountain-top and road control positions in sparsely populated highland areas, ambushes, and hit and run encounters in some valley sites. The RLG retained control over the Mekong Valley regions, where the bulk of the lowland Lao live, and they held certain adjacent mountain areas and a few scattered sites within enemy territory which they could reach only by aircraft. The Communist forces controlled the northern and eastern segments of the country, including all territory which borders on Communist China and North Vietnam, covering regions inhabited largely by highland minorities. The widened war in 1969 made it clear that these ground rules of engagement had been significantly altered.

### MILITARY DEVELOPMENT: 1969

The Communist dry season campaign, begun about October 1968, continued throughout the first half of 1969, and did not abate, as it had in previous years, with the onset of the rainy season. The Communist gains were substantial, if not decisive. In the South they demonstrated the weakness of RLG General Phasouk Somly by forcing him to abandon Tha Theng, and in the North they showed superiority over the Meo fighting forces with the capture of Na Khang. In Sam Neua Province they cleared out most of the isolated RLG posts which had been supplied by air. The Communists also attacked certain Mekong Valley areas, which previously had been seldom molested, assaulting an ordinance depot near Vientiane, ambushing several foreign aid teams working in villages, attacking the Wattay airport

near Vientiane and crippling road traffic from time to time along the Mekong River road.

During this period of Communist advances, General Vang Pao, with U.S. air support, attempted in the spring to swing the pendulum back to the RLG side by committing his Meo troops to attacking some Communist positions on the Plain of Jars, including an assault upon the province capital of Xieng Khouangville, held by the Communists since the early 1960's. The attack succeeded in expelling the Communist forces, temporarily, but several months later the Communist authorities again moved in behind their armed forces.

In June, another serious Communist attack was launched at Muong Suoi on the Plain of Jars. The Communist forces, estimated at two battalions of North Vietnamese Army (NVA) and Lao People's Liberation Army (LPLA) units, with Russian tanks, overran the area around Muong Suoi, sending three battalions in retreat. The forces of Vang Pao, with U.S. tactical air support, were reported to have counterattacked at Muong Suoi, and failed. Heavy losses were sustained in these engagements on both sides: an Associated Press account put government troops killed and wounded at 400, while the Communists (according to RLG sources) had 385 killed, largely by air bombardment.<sup>1</sup> This attack was politically significant because it was aimed at RLG Neutralist forces. These forces, originally constructed by Colonel Kong Le (now in political exile in Paris), constituted the military element of Souvanna Phouma's Neutralist faction which had been awarded important representation in the government by the Geneva Conference of 1962. The Communists may have been preparing for a future political claim that their own Neutralists, the "Patriotic Neutralist Forces," led by Colonel Deuane Sipraseuth, should have a share in any future settlement which might reestablish a Tripartite Government, like that provided in the 1962 settlement.

In September 1969, RLG forces opened a major offensive against Communist positions on the Plain of Jars and in the Ho Chi Minh Trail area. The *New York Times* reporter wrote from Vientiane, citing "reliable and well-informed sources," that RLG forces, joined by "Royal Thai soldiers in Laotian uniforms, had moved onto the plain and went along Route 9 after round-the-clock bombing had leveled several towns and scattered small defending forces." He added that the attacks were "the result of fully integrated American-Laotian military planning and the most intensive American bombing ever seen in Laos."<sup>2</sup> While there were some differences in detail in the various newspaper accounts reporting the offensive, it appeared that RLG assaults were made against a number of towns, including Xieng Khouangville, Khang Khai, and Phoung Savan on the Plain of Jars, Muong Phanh in central Laos, and Tchepone further south in the Ho Chi Minh Trail area. The Communist forces were apparently taken by surprise and fled their

<sup>1</sup> *Washington Star*, June 25, and 28, 1969.

<sup>2</sup> T. D. Allman, *New York Times*, September 18, 1969.

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positions. As the year was drawing to a close a severe Communist counter-attack appeared likely, but it had not yet begun by late November.

The costliest toll in casualties among the NVA and LPLA has been exacted by U.S. airpower. While the RLG forces, with some notable exceptions, are generally a poor match for the NVA and their LPLA allies, supporting U.S. aircraft has provided some measure of balance. The aggravation of the ground fighting in 1969 was accompanied by a substantial increase in air bombardment by U.S. planes. Writing in the *Washington Post*, Stanley Karnow quoted Pentagon statistics as showing that

"the number of sorties by U.S. aircraft flown over Laos now surpasses those flown over North Vietnam at the time President Johnson called a halt to bombing . . . U.S. airplanes were then flying about 12,000 sorties a month against North Vietnam and about 4,700 against targets in Laos. Sorties in Laos have now increased to an average of about 12,500 a month." He reported that the U.S. air operations appear to have two missions: one largely with B-52's (code-named Steel Tiger) is directed against NVA infiltration to South Vietnam; the other, called Barrel Roll, consists of Phantoms and Thunderchiefs and carrier-based bombers directed against NVA and LPLA in northern Laos.<sup>3</sup>

#### DEVELOPMENTS IN THE RLG AND THE U.S. ROLE

The military gains of the Communists during the first half of 1969, and signs of a declining American investment in Vietnam, produced reports of pessimism among the Lao elite in Vientiane. However, the RLG military initiatives later in the year satisfied some and, whatever the temporary mood, life seemed much the same in Vientiane. No significant political crises emerged in the capital during the year and the configuration of the RLG remained fundamentally unchanged. The principal decision-makers, both civilian and military, continued to be the lowland Lao drawn largely from the few most powerful families of the various regions of the Kingdom, and a few highland minority leaders, like the Meo General Vang Pao, who exercised control among their own ethnic groups.

Prince Souvanna Phouma sustained no serious challenges to his control of the government. While his style has not aroused enthusiastic popular support, he has been successful in commanding the respect of a good portion of the politically-fractious elite and in retaining the confidence of his foreign supporters, including the United States and, though with less vigor the Soviet Union. There were signs of discontent with his policies from some right-wing factions and there were rumors early in the year that former General Phoumi Nosavan, in exile in Thailand, was preparing a new maneuver to return to Laos, but nothing emerged from this. Although Souvanna's government was stable, there were few signs of the building of new political

<sup>3</sup>*Washington Post*, August 16, 1969; see also Arbuckle in *Washington Star*, August 20, 1969.

institutions, despite the fact that Souvanna spoke, from time to time, of the need to construct a unified party for future confrontation with the Pathet Lao, whose superiority in political organization he has acknowledged.

Prince Souvanna's strategy in coping with the Communist military action in his country during 1969 was to launch a major diplomatic effort to mobilize support from the great powers against North Vietnamese interference and to separate the problem of Laos from the Vietnam War. He met with the Chiefs of State in Tokyo, Paris, London, and Washington, and he called upon a number of diplomats at the United Nations in New York. At his numerous press conferences, he denounced the presence of what he claimed were 60,000 North Vietnamese troops in his country. He appealed to the Soviet Union to take "more energetic measures" to restrain the North Vietnamese and asked the British, as co-chairman (with the Soviet Union) of the Geneva Conference, to pressure the North Vietnamese into ending the "invasion" of Laos. Though his effort was vigorous, there were no visible signs that Souvanna, as the head of a miniature, politically-divided state deeply enmeshed in the Vietnam war, had succeeded either in forcing the North Vietnamese from his country or in separating Laos from the Vietnam problem.

During his diplomatic tournee, Souvanna threatened to call upon the United States for increased military assistance if the North Vietnamese kept up their military offensive. Though the U.S. government had continued its important economic and military support to the RLG during 1969, there was growing concern within Congress, particularly the Senate, about the U.S. involvement in Laos. The Senate expressed this concern by approving 86 to 0 an amendment offered by Senator John Sherman Cooper to a \$20 billion military authorization bill, which specified that none of the funds could be used for support of "local forces" in Laos or Thailand. In supporting this amendment, majority leader Mike Mansfield explained that the purpose of the amendment was to see that "we do not back into another Vietnam in Laos or Thailand." However, views expressed by Senator Stennis, and a Defense Department memorandum which he read during the debate, suggested that the Senate had not entirely closed the door to the use of funds, under other appropriations, for support of U.S. forces in Laos and Thailand.

A month following this Senate vote, the Symington sub-committee of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee conducted secret hearings on U.S. activity in Laos. The sub-committee heard testimony from U.S. officials in Laos and from several decision-makers in Washington, including CIA Chief Richard Helms.<sup>4</sup> At the close of the hearings, Senator Fulbright and several others reiterated their concern about U.S. involvement.

<sup>4</sup>Concurrently, the *New York Times* ran a special series of articles on Laos, beginning October 26, 1969, which described aspects of the U.S. role, including CIA support of General Vang Pao's forces, called the Armee Clandestine.

## THE PATHET LAO ZONE AND THE NORTH VIETNAMESE ROLE

It is still difficult to follow developments in the Pathet Lao zone. Few outsiders, particularly Westerners, entered the zone and communications from inside consisted largely of official propaganda. Nevertheless, the public statements of the authorities on the PL radio and refugee reports provide some insight into events there.<sup>5</sup>

The progress of the NVA and LPLA troops during the first half of the year gave the PL leadership reason to rejoice. Their own advances and the apparent political gains of their Vietnamese Communist allies made it appear that they were closer to achieving their goals. However, the increased havoc wreaked upon their zone by the expansion of the war tended to curb the optimism. The frequent bombardments forced residents to move into make-shift underground shelters where some lived for months. Particularly damaging was the RLG fall offensive. Refugees reported heavy damage in the towns in the path of the attacks. For example, in Phong Savan on the Plain of Jars which was assaulted in September, refugees reported that there was not a house left standing.<sup>6</sup>

Furthermore, food, clothing, and other resources were scarce in the PL zone and refugees asserted that taxes were onerous. The PL authorities imposed heavy demands on their population. Most of the able bodied young men and some women were drafted into military service, while the remaining villagers were conscripted for service as porters, laborers for road-building, irrigation and dam digging, and fortification construction.

There were no apparent dramatic political changes in the PL zone during the year. Reports from RLG sources of the death of two key PL leaders, Kaysone Phomvihane and Prince Souphanouvong, appear to have been groundless. Prince Souphanouvong, chairman of the Neo Lao Hak Sat (NLHS) Front, celebrated his 60th birthday in July to public acclamation, according to Radio Pathet Lao. RLG sources state that refugees had reported in January 1969 that Kaysone, probably the most powerful PL leader as head of the Marxist-Leninist party, the People's Party of Laos (Phak Pason Lao, or PPL), had been killed by air bombardment in Sam Neua Province in August 1968.<sup>7</sup> Since the PL radio failed for months to mention Kaysone's presence at public functions, as had been the previous practice, and did not deny his death, the reports gained credence. However, during the ceremonies in the zone to commemorate the death of Ho Chi Minh, Kaysone was reported in attendance and has since been mentioned in radio broadcasts. It is possible that Kaysone had been injured, or was ill, and had been out of public circulation until the memorial service for Ho.

<sup>5</sup>An indication of the sizeable refugee flow resulting from the widened war in Laos is found in reports from RLG refugee officials in August, that 80,000 refugees had already fled the northeastern provinces of Sam Neua and Xieng Khouang during the year. *Washington Star*, August 22, 1969.

<sup>6</sup>*New York Times*, October 11, 1969.

<sup>7</sup>*Bangkok Post*, January 3, 1969; *Le Monde*, January 2, 1969.

Unlike their RLG counterparts, the PL leaders devoted serious attention to expanding their political party, the semi-secret PPL, and to improving the NLHS, the open administrative instrument of the PL movement. The North Vietnamese political and administrative advisory role to the PL authorities continued to be of major proportion and may well have increased with the augmentation of NVA troops in Laos.<sup>8</sup> Further economic distance from the RLG was created by the introduction of new currency called "Liberation Kip," and the requirement that all RLG currency be exchanged for it on a one to one basis.

The PL hardened their political position toward the RLG. On the occasion of the 7th anniversary of the signing of the Geneva Agreement of 1962, PL authorities announced that the Tripartite National Coalition Government was no longer valid and that Souvanna Phouma was "no longer the Prime Minister of the Tripartite National Coalition Government nor the leader of the Neutralist Party." Souvanna was denounced as a "traitor, capitulationist, and a follower of the U.S. aggressors."<sup>9</sup> Although they had hinted at this position earlier, they had not previously stated their denunciation in such severe terms.

The PL also reiterated their position, stated earlier in the 12 Point Program of November 1968, that the Laotian problem must be settled on the basis of the 1962 Geneva Agreement and the "realities of the present situation in Laos."<sup>10</sup> Although they have not spelled out the exact meaning of the phrase "realities of the present situation," they seem to be saying they will insist in any future settlement upon recognition of their territorial gains since 1962 and will demand that their "Patriotic Neutralist Forces," as mentioned earlier, be granted a share in representing the Neutralist faction in the country. Their vituperation against Prince Souvanna Phouma in his capacity as Neutralist Party leader, in addition to their military attacks against Neutralist-held positions on the Plain of Jars, lend substance to this possibility.

An issue of primary importance to the Communist authorities in the PL zone, both PL and North Vietnamese, was the U.S. bombing. Their radio broadcasts contained daily denunciations of the ~~air~~ attacks, but claimed great success in coping with them. They intermittently announced a box score of planes destroyed, and on February 9 claimed their 1,000th U.S. plane.<sup>11</sup> They tied future negotiations over the question of Laos to a cessation of the bombing, stating that the U.S. "must halt their bombing raids on the zone of the patriotic forces so as to create conditions for the Laotians

<sup>8</sup>For an account of the North Vietnamese role in Laos, see Paul Langer and Zasloff, *Revolution in Laos: The North Vietnamese and the Pathet Lao*, RAND, RM5935, September 1969.

<sup>9</sup>Radio Pathet Lao in English, July 8, 1969.

<sup>10</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>11</sup>Radio Pathet Lao in Lao, February 9, 1969.

to settle among themselves their internal affairs, without U.S. interference."<sup>12</sup>

In their external relations, the PL authorities relied principally upon the North Vietnamese. The NVA, who provide the military backbone of the Communist effort in Laos, appear to have the capability to overrun the RLG-held territory if they decide to commit sufficient resources.<sup>13</sup> So far, the North Vietnamese have found it more in their interest to limit the military activity of their 50,000 troops in Laos (according to U.S. estimates), to holding, with LPLA troops, the PL territory and to operating the Ho Chi Minh Trail, through which their soldiers and material pass to sustain the war in South Vietnam. Their primary goal is to win the war in South Vietnam, and major offensives in Laos would divert needed resources, risk U.S. retaliation against North Vietnam, and possibly bring on international condemnation for aggression against Laos. Their major concerns in Laos have been free access through the Ho Chi Minh Trail to South Vietnam and protection against possible hostile activity directed at North Vietnam either from Laotian military bases or through the subversive actions in North Vietnam by highland minorities recruited in Laos. Concurrent with their own interests in Laos, they have promoted the fortunes of their junior ally, the Pathet Lao authorities.

The stand-off which had developed in Laos by 1969 (under which both sides remained principally in the areas of their control, with only small changes in territorial control) presented certain advantages to the North Vietnamese. If the Americans and the Thais had been tempted to engage in military activity in Laos to cut off the Ho Chi Minh Trail, they must have been restrained in part by the knowledge that the North Vietnamese could easily move into other areas to create new crises. In addition, if conditions were to deteriorate in South Vietnam, the North Vietnamese would retain the option of increasing activity in Laos in order to pressure the Americans that, at a relatively low cost, they could make trouble for American interests elsewhere.

This latter point may be an important factor behind the increased Communist activity in Laos during 1969. As reports came from South Vietnam of an improving military climate for the South Vietnamese government, Communist pressure in Laos increased. Whether or not these reports were accurate, growing NVA activity in Laos may have been designed to demonstrate to the Americans how fragile is their capacity to guide events in the larger Indochina area. This interpretation would suggest that the more successful the efforts to defeat the Communist in South Vietnam, the more likely are the North Vietnamese to expand the hostilities in Laos. Their

<sup>12</sup>Radio Pathet Lao in English, July 24, 1969.

<sup>13</sup>Former U.S. Assistant secretary of State Roger Hillsman, writing of the 1963 period, stated that the "Communist North Vietnamese could easily put enough troops into Laos to take it over within 2 to 4 weeks, if they were willing to take the risk of American intervention." *To Move a Nation*, Garden City, New York, 1967. This assessment seems equally reasonable today.

pressure may also be interpreted as an effort to halt the U.S. bombing of the PL zone.

Communist China and the Soviet Union recognize Laos as lying principally within the North Vietnamese sphere. A reminder of China's continuing interest in Laos, however, was the work in 1969 on the construction of a road running from China to Muong Sai, some 30 miles south of the border, with apparent plans to link it with Route 19, which runs to Dien-bienphu in North Vietnam. The Soviet Union, while continuing to deal politely with Souvanna Phouma and the RLG, has remained on good terms with the Pathet Lao, whose radio carried reports of Soviet support with increasing frequency during the latter part of 1969.

In summary, while the PL leaders may feel encouraged by what they regard as favorable political and military trends in Laos and Vietnam and their negotiating position has hardened in reflection of their growing strength, the people in the PL area continue to suffer badly from the ravages of war.

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April 1970

THE ARTICULATE REFUGEES OF CZECHOSLOVAKIA

The most recent writings by some of the more prominent and knowledgeable Czechoslovakian refugees that have been published in the West have evoked loud protest, both official and propagandistic, from those presently in charge in Prague. The same writings, however, have tremendous appeal for and have sparked lively discussion among the more articulate of the Western dissident communist and far-left literati. Last month in Rome there appeared the first issue of a new journal-in-exile which unites the talents of Czechoslovakian refugees with those of Western dissidents -- a bold enterprise sure to provoke even more vituperation from Prague.

In the attached list of references are cited titles of some of the books and articles that have stimulated the most reaction. They were written by such well-known refugees as: Ota Sik,\* referred to in the West as the designer of the Czechoslovakian economic reform and the frequent target of Soviet vituperation; Jiri Pelikan,\* former director of Czech TV who achieved worldwide notoriety for the way in which he encouraged and sustained opposition to the Czechoslovakian occupation of August 1968 with his 60-transmitter network, and Antonin Liehm, an outspoken champion of liberalization as early as the Czech Writers' Congress of June 1967 and throughout the Dubcek era.

Mr. Liehm's book, Three Generations, came out in Paris last month with a 30-page opener by Jean-Paul Sartre. As described below, the Sartre-Liehm effort is causing consternation in Prague while it is getting favorable reviews from Communists Ernst Fischer, Giuseppe Boffa, and others. Fischer wrote in Politique Aujourd'hui: "It is an important book, and anyone on the Left owes it to himself to read it in order to reassess preconceived ideas and to contribute toward finding the answer which the problems of European socialism call for." Boffa wrote in L'Unita that in his opinion, Liehm's book "involves one of the most effective testimonials that should enable us to understand what happened and what is still happening in Czechoslovakia." (See the attached reprints of these two Western reviews.)

The Team of Liehm and Sartre

Jean-Paul Sartre's introduction to Three Generations is entitled "The Socialism that Came in from the Cold." Sartre asserts that because of what

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\*As evidence of "official protest," Ota Sik and Jiri Pelikan were deprived, as of 24 February 1970, of their citizenships for "damaging Czechoslovakian interests by their acts abroad."

happened in August 1968 the Soviets can no longer seek shelter in the morality of their system, and recommends that "The people must seize it and throw it into the garbage can."

Both Sartre and Liehm were attacked on Czech television on Friday evening 13 March 1970 by Vladimir Minac, a Slovak writer. Minac said that "Nothing remained of Sartre's Marxism in the preface to Liehm's book.... Sartre had completely yielded not only to one-sided information, but also to a one-sided interpretation of reality." Minac said sarcastically that Sartre knew everything about Czechoslovakia because "Antonin Liehm told him about us.... Thus we learn in a typical Sartre transcription the truth of our radical petty bourgeois that February 1948 was the beginning of a disaster for the Czech and Slovak nations, that we were living in the Kafka world...that for the smallest outburst of gaiety the heaviest sanctions were threatening us."

Minac found it incomprehensible that Sartre should feel that Czech intellectuals were driven to despair by the revelations of the 20th Congress of the CPSU (at which Khrushchev's secret speech revealed Stalin's transgressions). Minac added that Sartre fell, not for the first time, "a victim of those whom he considers victims." He blames Sartre for accepting "ready schemes without examination, as for example, that at the beginning was a word, that is, the word of those intellectuals who had awakened and radicalized the peacefully sleeping working class, and this in turn has radicalized the whole movement." Minac accused Sartre of drawing "strict and shocking conclusions from gossip, pettiness, half-truths and complete lies" as, for example, when he said that "our Western bourgeoisie was not wrong. The entry of tanks into Prague has assured it of the correctness of not ending the cold war and not concluding a new holy alliance with the Soviet Union, which would rule over everything." Minac concluded by saying that everything which Sartre wrote about "our Czechoslovak concrete case is in a sharp contradiction with what he professes generally."

#### Literarni Listy Reborn

Last month there appeared in Rome the first issue of a new Literarni Listy, the Czech literary journal which was forced out of business in Prague shortly after the Soviet invasion. Contributors to the "journal-in-exile" were:

- Ludvic Vesely, former Deputy Chief Editor of Literarni Listy;
- Jiri Pelikan, former director of Czech TV;
- Ivan Svitak, Czech philosopher and writer;
- Evzen Lobl, former Vice Minister of Foreign Trade;
- Ivan Bistryna, Doctor of Law and Sociology;
- Milan Schulz, former TV editor of Literarni Listy;

--Jan Schneider, song writer;

--Ernst Fischer, Austrian Marxist theoretician;

The origin, scope, and objectives of this journal are stated in the 5 March 1970 issue of L'Europeo (Rome), translation attached.

\* \* \* \* \*

Czechoslovakia is going to remain a compelling subject for some time to come. Not only the prominent Czechoslovakian refugees but also, it is evident, leading Marxists in Western Europe will be involved in trying to fathom the lessons of Czechoslovakia.

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The Times, London, 20 December 1969, "Sik Accuses Husak," statement released by Professor Ota Sik (attached).

Christian Science Monitor, Boston, 22 January 1970, "Sik's Economic Theories Haunt Czechs," Vienna dispatch from special correspondent Eric Bourne (attached).

Le Figaro, Paris, 24/25 January 1970, "La régime imposé á la Tchécoslovaquie n'est pas du socialisme," interview of Jiri Pelikan. (Article and translation are attached.)

L'Europeo, Rome, 5 March 1970, excerpts from Literarni Listy, an exile publication of a journal closed down in Czechoslovakia after the invasion. (Excerpt from L'Europeo attached.)



LE MONDE, Paris (Weekly Selection)  
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CPYRGHT

## CZECH INTELLECTUALS IN CLOSE-UP

**T**HESE ten drawings by the Czech writer and artist Adolf Hoffmeister illustrate the volume *Trois Générations: Entretien sur le Phénomène Culturel Tchécoslovaque (Three Generations: Conversations on the Czechoslovakian Cultural Phenomenon)*, which Anton Liehm, a Czech writer and journalist, has just published in a French translation (Gallimard, 330 pp., 32 francs), with a preface by Jean-Paul Sartre.

Josef Skvorocky (top of the middle column) is one of those interviewed in the book, and we refer the readers of his *Armoured Squadron* (reviewed below) to the charming portrait that he gives of himself, defining his position in regard to criticism, literature and jazz, and quoting from his favourite authors.



From top to bottom left: Jan Skacel, Karel Kosik, Milan Kundera. Middle: Josef Skvorecky, Antonin Liehm, Laco Novomesky, Jaroslav Putik. Right: Eduard Goldstücker, Vaclav Havel, Ludvik Vaculik.

[Book review by Giuseppe Boffa: "Fourteen Witness Statements on the Czechoslovak Crisis"; Rome, l'Unita (organ of Italian CP), Italian, 17 February 1970, p 10]

Three generations examine their conscience. The press had much to say about the volume by Antonin Liehm, although only with regard to the preface by Sartre. National and socialist self-criticism on problems of universal significance.

The press had a good deal to say about the book by Antonin Liehm, which Gallimard published in Paris. The book is entitled Three Generations. The press in particular commented on the preface by Sartre, entitled "The Socialism That Came Out from the Cold." It said very little about the rest. I would like to try to proceed in a different manner. I, too, will say something in brief about the preface but I will then right away concentrate on the volume as a whole because, in my opinion, it involves one of the most effective testimonials that should enable us to understand what happened and what is still happening in Czechoslovakia.

Sartre's passage was written with polemical passion. His theses should be examined one by one. Personally, for example, I find good grounds for his energetic opposition to any tendency to import or impose in any country "models" of socialism which were implemented in other nations. Sooner or later, the consequences are harmful. Czechoslovakia proved this. On the other hand, I find that the analysis and interpretation of the Czechoslovak events of 1968 in Sartre -- events which he views as the "rediscovery of the councils" -- correspond to a perhaps suggestive scheme which ~~however has little to do with reality~~: what happened in Czechoslovakia was quite a bit more complicated.

But the thing that I want to underscore most is another point. It is necessary to clear the field of one ambiguity which the infinite speculations of Silone and the bourgeois press have created. Here it suffices to recall that all of them have nothing to say about the fact that Sartre's point of departure is always a denunciation of the Western capitalist societies, in order to understand where the distortion finally winds up. The criticism of the existing socialist societies -- even the most severe criticism -- has a quite different meaning if this criticism is made to defend the society in which we live or merely to seek new and more advanced criteria for the construction of socialism. The first is the position of men such as Silone, Aron, and our domestic journals. The second is that of Sartre.

But essentially this is also the position of the witness testimonies which have been collected in this volume, of which there is so much talk. We have here 13 very extensive interviews conducted with as many Czechoslovak writers by Antonin Liehm who was one of the chief editors of the journal of Czechoslovak writers, Literarni Noviny and then Literarni Listy

plus an introduction by the principal author which is more in the nature of a self-interview. One of the 13 interviews, which involves Eduard Goldstuecker, was published in Italy at the time by "Editori Riuniti." The principal value of the various writings in my opinion lies in their sincerity. They were for the most part collected and finally published in Czechoslovakia, even before the downfall of Novotny. Still, they can be reprinted and translated now without those involved having felt any need for modifying their statements -- not after January 1968 and not even today.

I would like to say right off that we have here 14 witness statements covering a crisis, a rather serious political and cultural crisis. Nevertheless, none of those questioned is even remotely thinking of proposing any step backward -- not even amid the increasing emergence of the expressions of profound dissatisfaction with the situation in which these men are; in other words, they are not proposing a return to private ownership of the means of production or to the prewar bourgeois republic. No, they do not want a restoration of ways which they consider anachronistic even in view of the existence of economically advanced countries, some of whose aspects they might envy them for (they are not even thinking in terms of a restoration here). This is precisely why their examination of conscience is all the more dramatic and this is why their criticism of the "present" is all the more harsh.

As for the rest, we are not so much dealing with a critique here. Instead, we are dealing with a confession. These witness statements constitute a continuous and sometimes anxiety-filled process in which these men question themselves, a many times repeated attempt to dig into themselves, into their own country, into their own culture, into their own society. The responses, more often than once, are a simple and sincere "I don't know..."

But the pursuit of the questions and the problems -- which is sometimes full of anxiety and at other times challenging and always "committed" -- represents the major value of the book.

The title reads: Three Generations. I do not know whether the real meaning of the book is properly expressed by this title. The men interviewed certainly are in different age brackets. But there is something they have in common. To a greater or lesser extent, they all lived through the same sum total of experiences -- although perhaps during different stages of their lives -- and they now think out loud on these experiences. And what experiences they are! The first republic, independence recovered after centuries, then Munich, the Nazi "protectorate" or the fascist state, the occupation, the war, the liberation, the antifascist front, socialism, Stalinism, the turning point of the 20th Congress, and finally the hope and search for an answer which failed to come for all of the questions which multiplied during the Novotny stagnation.

The men who ask themselves these questions are intellectuals who essentially speak with a tone of culture. But there is not a corporation discourse. Nor is there any trace of "discommitment" in their words. The thing that interests them is their country, the society in which they live, their place in the world, the present and the future of socialism and of men. The problems which they pursue in their discourse are mainly those of Stalinism and of socialist democracy but they are immediately inter-

twined with the more general problems of the technological and scientific revolution, of liberty in the world of today, of the place which culture can, or must have, not only in Czechoslovakia, not only in a socialist society, but in any society which wants to be modern, hence, the problems of the role of two little nations -- which rarely have been independent in the past -- in a world that has become much smaller. The dominant tone is self-critical, rather than critical: but there are accents of national self-criticism at least as much as there are accents of a socialist self-criticism which is designed to settle accounts with the Stalinist deformation.

One can observe that the answers are often lacking. This in effect was the great obstacle into which the "new course" of 1968 ran, when the answers, which could not be prepared in advance, had to be looked for rather feverishly while the crisis had already exploded. But the problems are no less real for all that. And the thing that counts is that these are not just Czechoslovak problems, that these are not just the problems of the already existing socialist societies, but rather that they are problems which we all face, problems faced by anyone who fights for social progress, problems encountered by anyone who is inevitably persuaded to seek the solutions on the road of socialism. These are universal problems concerning the struggle for the socialist renewal of society: this was demonstrated by the French May, it is demonstrated by the youth revolt, and it is continuously demonstrated by the political conflicts which are becoming increasingly aggravated in the West where this struggle is more than ever before on the agenda. In its search for a small pretext for anticommunist propaganda, the bourgeois press closes its eyes to all this.

As far as the answers are concerned, it is up to us to give them -- it is up to us who want to be the vanguard force. It has been said that the witness statements in the book were published in the Czechoslovakia of Novotny to a rather great extent, in spite of their bitterness. This was the sign of a tolerance which was interrupted by authoritarian excesses only here and there and these excesses were expressed in the person of the hard although useless actions taken by the censors. But this is not the striking thing here; instead, the striking thing is represented by the fact that these testimonials of crisis could be left standing without any attempt at a positive response, a response capable of understanding the moving forces behind all this. After the August 1968 intervention in Czechoslovakia, there were people who directly reproached Novotny for his tolerance, rather than for his powerless silence before this proliferation of questions. But intolerance and censorship -- even when they were at their most rigid -- did not cause the problems to disappear.

There has been much justified talk about the "leading role" which the worker party can and must adopt. But the party leads precisely when it manages to come up with an answer to the problems that keep maturing in the class, in the people, and in the nation. When the party is silent and when it seeks silence, it is no longer leading. This is precisely why we believe that an answer to these questions will have to come, once again, first of all from our movement.

POLITIQUE AUJOURD'HUI, Paris  
February 1970

(Underlining added.)

# le pouvoir le bonheur le mouvement révolutionnaire

à propos de l'ouvrage d'antonin liehm

ernst fischer

CPYRGHT

L'ouvrage intitulé *Trois générations* (1) vient de paraître en édition française ; son auteur, Antonin Liehm, fut un des promoteurs de la révolution démocratique tchécoslovaque, cette révolution non violente écrasée par la violence de l'extérieur.

« Treize entretiens, quatorze témoignages ou, si vous préférez, quatorze confessions... Ceux qui parlent, romanciers, auteurs dramatiques, poètes, essayistes — il y a même un philosophe — semblent détendus, mesurés, rarement brutaux, souvent ironiques ; s'ils brûlent de la rage révolutionnaire, ils n'en laissent presque rien paraître ». C'est en ces termes que Jean-Paul Sartre dépeint dans sa préface le livre et ses auteurs, Liehm et tous ceux qu'il a interviewés. C'est un livre important, et quiconque se situe à gauche se doit de le lire, pour redresser des idées préconçues et contribuer à trouver la réponse qu'appellent les problèmes du socialisme européen.

Les entretiens datent des années 1967 et 1968. Le livre a été achevé en mai 1968. La préface de Sartre se termine par ces mots : « ... mettre à profit cette analyse pour repenser, sans présupposition ni parti pris, la gauche européenne, ses objectifs, ses tâches, ses possibilités, ses différents types d'organisation en vue de répondre à la question fondamentale de ce temps : comment s'unir, liquider les vieilles structures ossifiées, dans quel sens produire les nouvelles pour éviter à la Révolution prochaine d'accoucher de ce *socialisme-là* ».

En fait, il s'agit de répondre à la question suivante : quelle est la signification du 21 août 1968 et de ses suites, non seulement pour la Tchécoslovaquie mais pour le mouvement socialiste européen tout entier ? Il serait assez vain, après les réflexions que nous livrent J.-P. Sartre et Antonin Liehm, de faire une critique de ce livre dans la forme ordinaire ; on voudra bien plutôt permettre au « critique » d'en extraire quelques questions qui lui tiennent à cœur.

## la faute

Et tout d'abord, celle que Liehm a déjà posée dans une courte préface à l'édition allemande : « Avons-nous commis des fautes ? » L'entrée des troupes a-t-elle été provoquée par les fautes des réformateurs tchécoslovaques ? N'aurait-on pu se garder de bien des choses qui furent dites ou qui furent faites sous la pression démocratique des masses ? Les mass-media ont-ils tenu un langage trop radical ? Fallait-il se montrer plus prudents, ou au contraire plus énergiques ? Il n'y a pas de mouvement révolutionnaire exempt de fautes — mais on peut aujourd'hui répondre avec assurance que ce ne sont pas les fautes des communistes tchécoslovaques qui ont déterminé la

(1) A. Liehm : *Trois générations. Entretiens sur le phénomène culturel tchécoslovaque, préface de J.-P. Sartre, dessins A. Hoffmeister, 370 pages, 32 F, Gallimard (Collection Témoins).*

puissance soviétique à intervenir militairement. La faute, c'était qu'un peuple osât se vouloir libre, qu'il osât, en même temps qu'il secouait un régime devenu intolérable, se rebeller contre l'omnipotence d'un *imperium*. Jusqu'à présent, chaque combat pour la liberté a été une faute, quelquefois absoute par le succès, mais la plupart du temps châtiée d'une défaite. Vouloir être libre, c'est le péché originel ; ne suffit-il donc pas de manger, de dormir, de travailler et d'obéir ?

Constitué dans un pays agricole arriéré, à partir de conditions tout à fait différentes, le « modèle » soviétique du socialisme a été imposé à un Etat industriel moderne, aux ouvriers hautement qualifiés, aux traditions démocratiques. Le résultat n'a pas été seulement la dépolitisation, la lassitude, la perte de l'esprit de responsabilité, la domination d'une « gérontocratie » bureaucratique (comme dit Sartre), la dictature du dilettantisme, de la sottise, mais aussi le délabrement de l'économie. Bon, disent les « modérés », des réformes économiques s'imposaient bien sûr, mais sans démocratie importune, sans cette liberté de la presse et cette liberté de rassemblement, sans, non plus, ces conseils ouvriers choisissant et révoquant les directeurs, refusant de s'incliner devant les décrets de la bureaucratie, mais résolus à diriger eux-mêmes, à prendre les décisions eux-mêmes. Il est bien vite apparu que les ouvriers irrités n'étaient nullement disposés à accroître la production et la productivité s'ils n'avaient pas la possibilité de faire entendre leur voix de façon décisive, si on refusait de les informer, si on leur déniait le droit de critique, de contrôle et d'initiative. Encore méfiants au début, dressés par les démagogues contre les intellectuels, ils ne tardèrent pas à comprendre que seul le combat engagé par les intellectuels pour la liberté pouvait permettre aux conceptions économiques nouvelles, conformes à l'intérêt du peuple travailleur, de faire leur chemin et que des réformes effectives n'étaient réalisables qu'au prix d'une modification du système du pouvoir dans son ensemble. Ce qui avait commencé comme un « mouvement de réforme » devint, grâce à l'action conjuguée des ouvriers et des intellectuels, un mouvement révolutionnaire, une révolution démocratique. « Ainsi, écrit Sartre, au sein d'un vaste mouvement révolutionnaire, les ouvriers et les intellectuels étaient les uns pour les autres, par réciprocité, un facteur permanent de radicalisation... ».

Mais, rétorquent certains à l'Ouest, qui sont parmi les « radicaux » les plus fougueux, pourquoi n'a-t-on pas eu dès le début un mouvement révolutionnaire, avec l'objectif de remplacer l'Etat bureaucratique par le pouvoir des conseils ? Les ouvriers, en fait, n'avaient que le désir de mieux vivre, ils lorgnaient du côté de la « société de consommation », cependant que les intellectuels réclamaient des libertés démocratiques bourgeoises, la suppression de la censure, etc. — qu'est-ce que tout cela a à faire avec le socialisme ? C'est incontestable : les ouvriers *avaient* le désir de mieux vivre, et les intellectuels *luttaient* contre la censure — mais est-ce là quelque chose qui va à l'encontre du socialisme ? Ce que récusait aussi bien les ouvriers que les intellectuels, c'était un socialisme pour lequel l'homme n'était pas une fin, mais seulement un moyen.

L'écrivain J. Skvorocky, né en 1924, auteur des « Lâches » (2), déclare : « Dans sa quasi-totalité, ma génération avait accueilli le socialisme comme la solution du problème social ; elle prend conscience cuisante de ce que ce socialisme n'est plus qu'un mot. De ce qu'il faut faire à présent pour que ce mot devienne chair... ». Ludvik Vaculik, qui a travaillé dans la chaussure chez Bata, se promettait du socialisme « qu'on s'abstint d'engueuler les gens, qu'on fit régner la courtoisie et qu'on humanisât les conditions du labeur... Au lieu de cela, ce fut la dégringolade, ... la fatigue du turbin demeure le lot des hommes, des ouvriers bien rémunérés ont vu leur paye réduite au plus bas... ».

Mais beaucoup plus que cet échec matériel, c'est l'échec moral qui le rend furieux, l'autoritarisme appuyé sur la force, le primitivisme, la médiocrité, la servilité. « Notre expérience majeure, c'est de n'avoir pas construit le socialisme que nous imaginions... Bien mieux que jamais, nous savons ce que le socialisme n'est pas... ». Et Eduard Goldstücker : « ... le Parti au pouvoir se voyait en fait dépolitisé, le plénum de ses membres exerçait une influence de plus en plus faible sur les décisions, celles-ci devenant l'apanage d'un cercle restreint de fonctionnaires permanents tandis

(2) Deux œuvres de cet auteur, « l'Escadron blindé » et « la Légende d'Emoke » ont été éditées en France (Gallimard).

que leur exécution était prescrite aux simples membres comme un devoir. Du centralisme démocratique, il ne resta plus finalement que le centralisme, la démocratie, elle, avait disparu ». Ivan Klima, né en 1931, constate que le socialisme s'est métamorphosé en religion. Une trinité divine est posée : classe ouvrière — plan — science. « L'idée que je me fais, quant à moi, du socialisme, est, si vous voulez, polythéiste, pas mal de dieux y trouvent place. Le socialisme doit doter l'homme du maximum de libertés. C'est en cela qu'il peut indiquer un degré supérieur d'évolution sociale. Bien entendu, en supposant remplie la condition d'un développement maximal des forces productives... ». Et enfin Antonín Liehm : « Ce système de perpétuelle suspicion, de peur de perdre les rênes du pouvoir, d'horreur des nouveautés, ce règne de la petitesse tchèque avec ses goûts pantouflards, sa couardise et sa muflerie a finalement obligé tous ceux qui auraient pu préparer et amorcer un renouveau à bander toutes leurs forces contre ce que le système représentait, en vue de l'écartier, c'est-à-dire d'abattre la puissance de ses dirigeants. Quand enfin ceci fut fait, on s'aperçut qu'il n'y avait ni idée ni projet tout prêts, que le pays cherchait tâtonnait, ne savait pas. »

Je crois que Liehm exagère sciemment : il n'y avait pas la conception d'ensemble de ce que *doit* être le socialisme, et de ce qu'il *pouvait* être dans les circonstances existantes, mais on ne manquait pas d'idées sur les aspects économiques, politiques et culturels d'un socialisme « à visage humain », fruits de recherches scientifiques et de réflexions approfondies. On ne pouvait s'attendre à ce qu'une conception *achevée* de la société socialiste pût être élaborée dans les conditions du « stalinisme libéral » dont Novotny était l'incarnation (et si jamais de telles conceptions achevées voient le jour, la pratique se chargera de les réviser pas à pas). Nous ne devons pas oublier l'apathie morose avec laquelle les masses du peuple regardaient venir le désastre ; nous devons nous souvenir qu'au début les *intellectuels* et avant tout les *écrivains*, étaient presque seuls lorsque de la guerre de position contre la censure ils sont passés à l'offensive contre le système, que les fonctionnaires du Parti mécontents du système qui se sont joints à eux n'envisageaient que quelques réformes et quelques changements de personnes ; puis que les ouvriers, sortant de la réserve dont ils avaient fait preuve au début, devinrent la force décisive d'un mouvement démocratique révolutionnaire, et que les armées des puissances du Pacte de Varsovie firent leur entrée au moment où une démocratie révolutionnaire, socialiste, était sur le point de voir le jour.

Le 21 août 1968 a confirmé, par conséquent, que le groupe dirigeant de l'Union soviétique a répudié le legs de la Révolution d'Octobre pour adopter une politique russe de grande puissance, qu'il a renoncé à toute perspective socialiste et ne souhaite nullement voir se développer en Europe des mouvements révolutionnaires, pas plus dans la sphère d'influence américaine que dans la sienne. L'occupation de la Tchécoslovaquie est la réplique du putsch militaire que les services secrets américains ont sinon organisé, tout au moins encouragé en Grèce. Il faut espérer que la gauche européenne saura en tirer la leçon : soutenir l'Union soviétique lorsqu'elle même soutient — quels que soient les mobiles auxquels elle obéisse — la lutte d'un peuple pour sa liberté comme au Vietnam ou lorsqu'elle agit dans le sens de la détente internationale, mais rejeter toute dépendance à l'égard du P.C.U.S., se guider non pas sur les intérêts du moment de celui-ci, mais sur les exigences de sa propre cause et sur un internationalisme qui ne soit pas dirigé ou abusivement exploité à partir d'une quelconque métropole.

### ouvriers et intellectuels

Dans la révolution démocratique qui s'est accomplie en Tchécoslovaquie, les intellectuels ont joué le rôle qui leur incombait. Il n'y a jamais eu entre les intellectuels tchèques et le peuple travailleur la barrière qui a existé ailleurs. La politique tchèque, le combat pour la démocratie et la souveraineté nationale ont puisé leurs impulsions décisives dans la lutte pour une culture autonome. On aurait tort, cependant, de considérer comme un phénomène spécifiquement tchécoslovaque le fait que les revendications des intellectuels aspirant à plus de liberté aient abouti à l'alliance avec les ouvriers, alliance d'une intensité et d'une solidité sans précédent. Dans la société moderne, les intellectuels ont vocation et qualité pour engager la critique des

situations, des instances, des institutions, sans s'ériger en individus supérieurs, mais sans se charger non plus d'un complexe d'infériorité, comme si la substance de la classe ouvrière leur faisait défaut, comme si la conscience de classe s'identifiait à une conviction religieuse.

Écoutons Milan Kundera : « L'intellectuel, c'est celui qui doute... le scepticisme ne change pas le monde en néant. Il le convertit en question... » ; Jaroslav Putik : « Plus tôt et avec plus de sagacité que les autres, les clercs pressentent, en effet, les relations profondes, d'où leur prédestination à jouer un rôle plus considérable dans les développements politiques. Qu'ils y tiennent ou non, et souvent contre leur gré, les intellectuels deviennent des locomotives politiques ». Eduard Goldstücker : « A mon sens, nous étions coupables de ceci : êtres pensants qui passaient tout au crible de l'examen rationnel, nous étions devenus des croyants, des créatures aveuglées par leur foi. D'où qu'elle vienne et de quelque motivation qu'elle procède, nulle critique ne doit être repoussée *a limine* mais, au contraire, doit faire l'objet de notre réflexion... ». Et Karel Kosik : « Dans telle ou telle mesure, chaque homme est responsable de son action... Et, puisque le domaine d'activité principal de l'intellectuel, c'est la pensée, le rapport de cette pensée au réel, un effort tendu vers la réalisation du pensé, il faut bien qu'un intellectuel oriente sa méditation du côté de la responsabilité de sa pensée. En premier lieu qu'il soit entendu qu'il ne peut être responsable qu'autant qu'il refuse de jouer les idéologues, lesquels habillent en système des notions erronées auxquelles ils confèrent un semblant de vérité et de motivation... Il y a cependant une autre forme de responsabilité. Dans son activité mentale, l'intellectuel se doit de faire preuve d'esprit de suite, d'affirmer sa capacité de déduire intégralement conséquences et conclusions... ».

Avec beaucoup d'énergie, Kosik s'élève contre le procédé démagogique qui consiste à vouloir dresser une opposition entre les ouvriers et les intellectuels. Ce fut un des phénomènes les plus significatifs de la révolution démocratique en Tchécoslovaquie que les intellectuels, sans suffisance aucune, se soient orientés sur la classe ouvrière, cependant que les ouvriers reconnaissaient aux intellectuels, parmi tous les participants du mouvement général pour la réalisation de la démocratie socialiste, la pensée la plus critique et l'argumentation la plus pertinente. « Le lien révolutionnaire des ouvriers et des intellectuels naît de cette donnée que les deux couches sont à la fois cerveau et mains, que toutes deux travaillent et pensent ; le sens de leur réunion, c'est d'innover sur le terrain politique ; cette nouveauté politique indéfinie se réalise précisément dans cette association et résulte du dialogue, du contact et de l'influence réciproques... ». Il s'agit de réaliser une synthèse « de la sagesse révolutionnaire et du révolutionnarisme sage », c'est-à-dire, dans une interaction constante de la critique et de l'action, de l'élan et de l'expérience, de la spontanéité et de l'esprit d'organisation, de l'audace et de la discipline, la communauté de combat dans laquelle les intellectuels commencent par exprimer ce qui est venu à maturité dans les masses, après quoi les ouvriers, entrés en action, réalisent méthodiquement la percée jusqu'à ce que finalement le plan de clivage des tempéraments, des intelligences, des énergies, traversant toutes les couches, cesse de marquer une différence de formation sociale. Qu'une telle communauté de combat soit possible, et au delà de toute espérance, c'est un des enseignements les plus importants, les plus durables de la révolution démocratique tchécoslovaque. La flamme qui à Paris, en mai 1968, est restée à l'état d'espérance ou de virtualité était devenue réalité en Tchécoslovaquie.

### deux mois de bonheur

Quelque chose était arrivé qui s'élève au-dessus des catégories politiques...

« On ne rit pas le Premier Mai... » s'écriait une sévère camarade à l'adresse d'un groupe de jeunes gens qui suivaient le cortège en bavardant et en riant. Cela se passait avant 1968 ; le socialisme était un devoir austère, et rien alors n'incitait



au rire. Eduard Goldstücker parle du pouvoir comme d'une « catégorie d'existence tout à fait particulière » et nous dit avoir eu l'espoir que le pouvoir communiste serait quelque chose d'autre, quelque chose de compatible avec la liberté, la raison, l'humanité. « Nous prenions nos désirs pour des réalités... ». La culture, c'est « servir la vérité », la politique, par contre, c'est « servir le pouvoir... ».

Et Ludvik Vaculik s'indigne : « Comment s'expliquer que le pouvoir finisse toujours par devenir la chasse gardée d'individus de piètre caractère et de qualité médiocre ? Un benêt à face d'abruti dans le plon, dans toute politique communale, à dix hommes nobles et intelligents... ». Karel Kosik va au fond de la question, il parle d'une *fausse conception de l'homme*, qui dérive d'une *fausse conception du socialisme* : « Les hommes ne naissent tout de même pas arrivistes, bornés, affublés d'ocillères, rebelles à la réflexion, insensibles, enclins à la démoralisation, mais un système donné requiert de telles gens afin de pouvoir fonctionner, et c'est pourquoi il se les procure... Il va de soi qu'un homme sans conscience morale, qui ne meurt pas, ignore la responsabilité personnelle, ne connaît pas le rire, etc, constitue la pièce de choix d'un système manipulable et gouvernable bureaucratiquement. En revanche, l'homme de la culture tchèque de la décennie écoulée apparaît comme un révolutionnaire en puissance, incapable qu'il est de vivre dans ce système discrétionnaire, fondé sur la docilité et la manipulation... ».

Le stalinisme, cette « fausse conception du socialisme », se trahit déjà par son vocabulaire politique, remarque encore Kosik : « règles de fer de l'histoire... discipline de fer... ingénieurs des âmes... leviers de transmission... société en tant que mécanisme », etc. Il conviendrait d'ajouter une expression caractéristique de Staline, qui disait les communistes « taillés dans un autre bois » que les autres hommes ; c'est le communiste superman, peu différent dans sa substance et dans sa structure, du superman américain. Dans la conception du stalinisme, l'homme est un « fonctionnaire », l'exécutant de lois historiques, toujours en « état d'alerte », dur et irresponsable, « comme la loi l'exige ». Le stalinisme correspond, dans les pays arriérés, sous les auspices du socialisme, à la manipulation, à la dépersonnalisation, à la deshumanisation, pratiquées dans le monde capitaliste industriellement développé avec un appareillage moins transparent et des méthodes plus raffinées. L'idéologie dont il se réclame est un « matérialisme historique » dénaturé, expurgé de toute dialectique.

« Si nous comprenons l'histoire, poursuit Kosik, comme une nécessité qui se déroule avec la régularité obligatoire d'une science de la nature, si le socialisme se motive lui-même comme inéluctable et nécessaire, si l'homme est conçu en tant qu'*homo economicus* ou comme une unité manipulable, si la dialectique se réduit à quelques traits élémentaires et si la vérité est considérée comme une affaire d'ordre utilitaire, l'assemblage de ces représentations idéologiques nous montre l'issue dont découle la forme historique du socialisme que nous connaissons... Le stalinisme est tout ensemble produit et producteur d'une certaine forme historique de société de masse, c'est-à-dire d'une société où, à la place de gens responsables, pensant et agissant conformément à une pensée critique, s'impose l'anonymat d'une masse irresponsable et où, se substituant aux rapports intersubjectifs entre les hommes — relations fondées sur la possibilité du dialogue et l'intelligence mutuelle, des rencontres, du jeu, etc, — c'est l'entrée en scène de l'universelle manipulation... ».

Ce cercle infernal, les Tchécoslovaques, en 1968, l'ont brisé. « On ne rit pas le Premier Mai ! » Et voilà que soudain il y eut un Premier Mai, où il était permis, où il était possible de rire. Et ce rire, si longtemps réprouvé, était l'aura dans laquelle

baignaient tous ceux que nous avons alors rencontrés. Ils étaient heureux. Un peuple entier était heureux, quand avait-on vu cela ? Ce n'était pas un petit bonheur fugitif dans un coin, c'était le grand bonheur collectif de l'autolibération, de l'initiative, de la solidarité, l'émerveillement, atteignant à l'euphorie, que le socialisme se soit révélé capable d'être tout autre chose que la violence autoritaire de bureaucrates moroses, que la combinaison d'incapacité, d'insouciance et d'hypocrisie qui ruinait le pays et déformait les hommes. En changeant le système, les hommes se sont changés eux-mêmes. Autant le système issu de la fausse conception du socialisme avait favorisé

tous les défauts — l'arrivisme, la dissimulation, la servilité, l'irresponsabilité, l'animosité — autant, maintenant, toutes les qualités trouvaient un terrain propice pour s'affirmer, atteignant, dans un processus spontané d'auto-éducation un étonnant degré d'élévation. « Je n'aurais jamais pensé que mes voisins étaient aussi serviables ! » me disait une Tchèque. « Je les considérais comme mesquins, envieux, sournois et quels braves gens ce sont en réalité ! ». Dans une réalité qu'elle n'avait jamais connue auparavant, dans la réalité, qui se créait peu à peu du fait des hommes eux-mêmes, d'une société socialiste.

### questions

Sous l'impression du 21 août 1968, j'écrivais :

« Est-ce que cela existe, seulement, le socialisme ?

La réponse fut : oui ! Elle est venue de Prague, de Bratislava, de Tchécoslovaquie. Ce qui s'est passé là-bas, ce fut la justification de notre existence en tant que communistes, nonobstant toutes les erreurs, tous les égarements, toutes les fautes que nous avons à nous reprocher.

La Tchécoslovaquie avait apporté la preuve de la possibilité d'un socialisme européen. Le 21 août 1968 fut la preuve contraire. La possibilité du socialisme et, si peu de temps après, son impossibilité aussi longtemps que la politique des grandes puissances décidera du sort des peuples : contradiction absurde qui, pour nous communistes, aboutit à une mise en question de nous-mêmes.

Qu'il soit possible d'écraser un peuple à terre sous la supériorité des armes, les peuples le savent depuis des millénaires. Mais qu'il ait été possible, dans un petit pays, de faire apparaître le visage humain du socialisme, si fugitif qu'il ait été, voilà qui compte beaucoup plus que la victoire nullement surprenante du plus fort. Une telle victoire, c'était le probable. L'improbable se produisit lorsque le vainqueur, quelle que fût sa puissance, se révéla si longtemps incapable de trouver des exécutants dociles. L'improbable, dans tous les calculs de *Realpolitik*, c'est toujours l'homme.

Ce n'est donc pas folie que d'espérer. » (3).

Qu'il se soit pourtant trouvé, en fin de compte, des exécutants dociles, cela aussi c'était le probable. Le pouvoir est revenu aux mains des hommes qui en font l'usage, pour lequel il est toujours prêt : un mauvais usage. Les hommes au pouvoir font appel à l'infamie. Un mot avait cours autrefois dans le mouvement ouvrier :

« Der grösste Schuft im ganzen Land  
Ist und bleibt der Denunziant. » (4).

Et c'est précisément à cela, à dénoncer leur voisin, qu'on exhorte ouvertement les citoyens. On leur enjoint d'acclamer les envahisseurs comme des libérateurs, de faire dire aux mots le contraire de leur sens à peine retrouvé, d'appeler l'initiative socialiste contre-révolution et la droiture anticommunisme, de traiter les conseils ouvriers d'ennemis de la démocratie socialiste et les communistes progressistes de traîtres, de voir dans ceux qui se prosternent les forces saines de la nation et la normalisation dans la lâche vengeance. Le seul résultat jusqu'à présent, c'est que l'Empire russe a conquis une province et perdu un peuple, c'est que la précaire minorité des arrivistes, des flageorneurs, des sans scrupules et des soumis dont le système a besoin, fait son chemin dans le régime, tandis que le peuple se tient à l'écart, silencieux, dans une résistance passive. Ce serait folie d'espérer que dans un avenir prévisible le régime des *Statthaltern* tolérera la moindre manifestation de démocratie socialiste. Les tanks constituent une base solide. Quoi qu'on en dise, il est apparu qu'on pouvait être assis sur des baïonnettes. Pour l'instant, ce n'est donc pas à une amélioration, mais à une aggravation qu'il convient de s'attendre.

(3) *Erinnerungen und Reflexionen, Rowohl, Hambourg 1969.*

(4) « La plus grande fripouille dans tout le pays est et reste le moucharb ».

Pourtant, ce n'est pas folie que d'espérer.

Les mois d'initiative démocratique et de bonheur qu'a connus la Tchécoslovaquie ne sont pas près de s'effacer dans les mémoires. L'évolution qui se poursuit là-bas impose à la gauche européenne le devoir de réfléchir encore plus profondément aux questions qui se posent pour elle, et dont voici quelques-unes parmi les plus graves.

De quelle façon est-il possible de former une nouvelle gauche non seulement à l'extérieur, mais aussi à l'intérieur des organisations existantes qui aspirent à des réformes sociales, pour préparer des mouvements démocratiques révolutionnaires ? Non pas des sectes s'entre-déchirant dans des batailles idéologiques, mais une nouvelle gauche qui soit la coordination de toutes les forces ayant comme objectif la société socialiste ?

Comment allier spontanéité et organisation de façon qu'une masse mise en mouvement ne soit pas réduite à improviser au moment décisif et que d'autre part l'« appareil », indispensable au maintien des conquêtes du mouvement, n'accapare pas le pouvoir, reste soumis au contraire à un contrôle démocratique permanent et puisse être remplacé à tout moment ?

Comment transformer en réalité durable l'exigence uniformément ressassée de l'alliance des ouvriers et des intellectuels ? Comment assurer l'interaction durable de ces deux couches qui dépendent l'une de l'autre et se complètent mutuellement ? Comment faire pour réduire au minimum la disparité engendrée par la différence des conditions de production ?

Comment nouer entre groupements révolutionnaires et réformistes les alliances correspondant à chaque situation donnée, sans rien abandonner de la conscience révolutionnaire ? Comment par conséquent, peut-on affronter victorieusement aussi bien le danger de se transformer en secte que le danger d'être contaminé par le réformisme ?

Comment, tout en tenant compte avec lucidité de la disposition du champ de forces international, peut-on défendre et assurer l'autonomie du mouvement démocratique révolutionnaire ?

Telles sont les questions qui assaillent le lecteur du livre d'Antonin Liehm « Trois générations » ; questions devenues plus impérieuses encore depuis l'interruption brutale de l'entretien ici rapporté, entretien qui est loin d'être terminé.

# Smuggled from Czechoslovakia:

## SCENARIO FOR STALIN'S LAST PURGE

THE PERIOD OF TERROR which culminated in the trial and execution of Rudolf Slansky in 1952 was something more significant than a mere sinister episode in the history of Czechoslovakia. Neither the peaceful spring revolution which brought Alexander Dubcek to power in 1968, nor the Russian invasion which ended it that August, can be understood except in the context of the Stalinist past.

It was therefore inevitable that one of the first things that the Dubcek Government did with its short-lived freedom was to set up a committee under Jan Piller to establish the truth about the terror and the trials. For

although much had been rumoured, very little was known for sure: not even the number of the victims.

We have every reason to believe that the document of which we publish extracts on this page and the next is an authentic copy of that report.

The committee's report was suppressed after the Russian invasion. Here, we publish extracts from this report, brought to us from Czech

In form, it is a bulky typescript, running to about 402 pages, or some 125,000 words. It is thoroughly annotated with references to the voluminous archives of the

Central Committee and other Party and official bodies, as well as to the private papers of Slansky, Gottwald, and the other protagonists.

The effect of the report is rather as if the meticulous files of the Kremlin had been suddenly thrown open to inspection by a team of scholars from Oxford or Cambridge.

The report, therefore, contains a mine of new knowledge. It spells out for the first time the depth of Russian involvement in the Czech terror. It reveals the craven, alcoholic kow-towing of Gottwald, the Czech President, in his relations with Stalin. It enumerates for the first time the precise toll of victims: 233 condemned to death, 178 executed, more than 10,000 political prisoners in Bohemia and Moravia alone.

It spares none of the chilling details of the way the prisoners were broken under interrogation at the orders of men who had been their revolutionary colleagues and friends; or of the cynical hypocrisy with which the public trials were stage-managed.

It is as if, diagnosing paranoia, the Czech party had attempted the heroic cure by self-analysis. For this is the most important thing to be borne in mind. This is not a spy thriller, nor a work of

anti-Communist propaganda. It is the considered work of the Czechoslovak Communist Party—as it was, that is, for a few fleeting months in 1968.

### The theory of conspiracy

Extracts from the document (sometimes slightly paraphrased) are in roman, and editorial comments and explanations are italics.

The document begins with a description of the committee's work, and an introduction:—

The committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia set up to complete party rehabilitation submits this final report in three parts: I. Political trials, II. Reassessment and rehabilitation, III. Political responsibility.

The final report was drawn up by a working group of historians, lawyers and economists. . . . The working group met with great understanding and full co-operation.

In spite of the quantity of material made available to the working group, there were some obvious gaps — the material of the Interior Ministry was not complete on the trials, and some issues connected with the trials could not be covered by Czechoslovak archive sources alone.

The working group studied over 15,000 pages of material.

The political trials came into being as the result of external and internal factors. The relationship between them was not constant. While the external factors exerted a stronger influence in providing the immediate impulse to begin the trials with Communist officials, the internal factors created favourable conditions for these impulses to fall on fertile ground. Subsequently these internal factors gained a momentum of their own, playing an increasingly independent role.

[In other words, although the original impulse came from the Soviet Union, the process rapidly became self-supporting. The committee goes on to explain that Cold War tensions much exacerbated the situation.]

The representatives of both blocs counted on the possibility of war breaking out in the mid-fifties—Increased international tension was brought about not only by the acts of the capitalist world, primarily the U.S.A., but also by the acts of foreign police of the Socialist camp.

In this period, the doctrine of "separate roads to socialism" was outlawed, and a new crime invented—violation of

the principles of proletarian internationalism. The theory was developed of a sharpening of the class struggle, which made anyone who had friends in the West suspect:

The concept arose of the inter-connection and complexity of hostile activity.

According to this there was a general and permanent conspiracy of imperialists against all socialist countries. An important part of this was the recruitment and placing of agents. The more developed and more important the people's democracy was, the greater the concentration against it, correspondingly foreign espionage tried to penetrate higher positions. . . .

The Communist Party assumed power in Czechoslovakia in February, 1948.

The party was uncertain of its hold on the country, and the world was in crisis. On August 13, 1948, reports the Piller Committee, two relatively unimportant security men named Placek and Cerny wrote to President Klement Gottwald (Archives of the Central Committee, main file, 100/24, No. 919). They said:—

"Czechoslovakia has become the playground of foreign spies. We believe that a number of British nationals, posing here as Left-wingers, or even Communists, are trained members of the Intelligence Service . . . there is no other means of struggle than the penetration of agents into these circles.

"We wish to point out that our small intelligence services just cannot guarantee the security of the State. We are afraid that at any moment assassination attempts on important persons may take place. We feel that the most terrible high treason is already occurring, that secret documents are already known to the enemy, or can become known to them at any time."

On September 3, 1949, Gottwald received an even more important letter from Rakosi, the Hungarian party leader (Archives of the Central Committee, file 02/2.AJ 201). People already arrested in Hungary had been persuaded to "name" Czechoslovak citi-

zens in their confessions: Rakosi knew that his trials must be mounted in parallel with similar efforts in Czechoslovakia. The Piller report quotes his letter as follows:

" . . . Within two weeks we are to begin a trial against the first group of those accused in the Rajk trial. The indictment will be published in a week. In this connection some difficulties are beginning to appear since if we are to include in this group spies who were sent from England to Hungary, Czechoslovak names by the dozen will appear, names which you also know.

"These persons are still at liberty. For a part of the Czechoslovak public this section of the trial will come quite unexpectedly."

The report details the connection between events in Czechoslovakia and cases in other Communist countries:

The international circumstances that led to the search in Czechoslovakia for members of an imperialist international conspiracy were connected with the investigation of the Rajk case\* in Hungary. Note the visit of Hungarian security men to Prague, and Czechoslovak visits to Budapest [only five days after Gottwald received Rakosi's letter]. Hungarian and Party comrades pressed us in our common interest to start arrests of suspected persons, because any delay would mean a threat not only to Czechoslovakia but also to Poland and Hungary. They pointed out that there was no time for long preparatory investigations, but that the goal should be reached through arrests, interrogations and confrontations.

At the end of September, the arrests began: of Spanish Civil War veterans, Yugoslav partisans, Londoners and other potential anti-Party elements: [i.e., of virtually anyone who had had "Western" contacts over the last decade]. To deal with the work a special department of the Ministry of the Interior was established under K Svab.

## The 'advisers' from Moscow

The first period of the search for an imperialist conspiracy was not successful. . . . There followed a retreat from the concept of ~~seeking out enemies inside~~ the party. This change was to shift the focus to higher positions and functions. . . . In connection with the Rajk case it was more and more stressed from Budapest and Warsaw that there must exist in Czechoslovakia a centre of internationally connected conspiracy. The Czechoslovak leadership and Security were blamed for being unable to expose them.

This led K. Gottwald and R. Slansky [the Party Secretary-General] to ask the leadership of the Soviet Communist Party, in a letter of September 16, 1949, to send to Czechoslovakia Soviet security advisers, although at first they were apparently unwilling to accept them as they had been informed of the harsh methods used during the trial of Rajk.

The request was granted on September 23. In October Comrades Lichachev and Makarov arrived in Prague from Moscow, and were later replaced by another group of advisers, led by V. Bojarsky.

The advisers Lichachev and Makarov right from the beginning of their work in Czechoslovakia were critical of Czechoslovak State Security, pointing out that it was too soft and indecisive, that it allowed itself to be pushed around, that it was not vigorous enough in pushing through its views; and that it was handling the class enemy with kid gloves.

They insisted on a speedy reorganisation of Czechoslovak State Security. For the first time, an important part of the party apparatus was combined with the State Security system. . . .

The advisers were endowed right from the beginning with too extensive powers. They were not subject to control by the Czechoslovak authorities, and were responsible for

## THE CAST: Purgers and purged

Klement Gottwald: Communist President of Czechoslovakia 1948-1953

Rudolf Slansky: Secretary-General of the Czechoslovak Communist Party. Executed 1952 on charge of leading anti-State conspiracy.

Antonin Novotny: Party leader 1953-1968; President of Czechoslovakia 1957-1968.

Alexei Cepicka: Gottwald's son-in-law. Chief denouncer of Slansky. Himself denounced and retired 1956.

Bojarsky, Lichachev, and Makarov: Three Russian security officers lent by Stalin to Gottwald to help organise interrogation and trials.

Matyas Rakosi: Hungarian Communist Party leader.

Laszlo Rajk: Hungarian Communist condemned to death in show trial 1948.

Vlado Clementis: Slovak; Czechoslovak Foreign Minister. Charged with bourgeois nationalism and executed 1952.

Gustav Husak: Slovak; led Slovak national revolt against Germans 1944. Arrested for bourgeois nationalism 1950. Now First Secretary of Czechoslovak Party.

their activities only to the Soviet Ministry of State Security headed by Beria . . . New methods of work were applied. Instead of investigating real criminal acts on the basis of verified proofs, Security began to seek out enemies, especially inside the Party.

The confession and testimony of a prisoner became the main evidence and a starting-point for further investigation and sentence. That is why great efforts were made to obtain false confessions and testimonies. To this end, inhuman methods were used. A carefully worked out system of physical and psychological violence . . . a sincerely self-critical admission of a mistake . . . a piece of gossip or an accusation by some other person were often sufficient cause for accusation and arrest. . . .

The method most frequently used was that of long interrogations in shifts, while the person being interrogated was allowed minimal rest. This, in combination with beatings, starvation and thirst, dark chambers, creating fear for families, the placing of

stool-pigeons in the cells of the accused, etc.

*What the report demonstrates is that the process was not one in which actual offences were investigated: it was one in which a search was conducted for possible offences to lay against "enemies" who had been selected.*

When the Soviet advisers arrived in Prague there were 6,136 political prisoners in Bohemia and Moravia. Within 7 months this total had risen to 9,765. Between 1948 and the end of 1952 233 prisoners were sentenced to death—178 were actually executed. . . .

The number of death sentences was so high that at the beginning of 1951 the Ministry of Justice excused the delay in bringing cases to court by saying that "verdicts on all these cases cannot be pronounced at an earlier date because the death sentence would pile up too fast." [Archives of Ministry of Justice, Security Commission, No. 7447456, Vol. II.]

On March 13, 1950, the Minister of Foreign Affairs,

Vlado Clementis, was accused in the Praesidium of bourgeois nationalism, of inimical attitudes towards the Soviet Union in the past (he had denounced the Hitler-Stalin Pact) and of an intellectual attitude towards the Party. . . .

His self criticism was repeatedly rejected by the Party as insufficient until in a written statement of June 27, 1950, he admitted everything of which he had been accused . . . on February 21, 1951, it was announced at a plenary meeting of the Central Committee that the case of Vlado Clementis and his accomplices was no longer a political case but had become a criminal matter.

## The fabrication against Slansky

*Inevitably, the central issue for the Piller Committee was the trial and execution of Rudolf Slansky, general secretary of the Czechoslovak Communist Party until September, 1951, executed for treason in December, 1952.*

*Using files from the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of the Interior, the Politburo and the Central Committee (the references are too numerous to quote here) the report builds up a remarkable narrative, in a chapter headed "The Mechanism for the Production of Political Trials."*

*The first accusations against Slansky were produced during the investigation and condemnation of some party members who were, relatively, unimportant.*

*At the Central Committee session in February, 1951, Vaclav Kopecky presented a report on behalf of the commission of inquiry and of the Central Committee Praesidium. As evidence, Kopecky used some fabricated admissions made by Otto Sling. He also tried to connect the case of Sling with that of Vlado Clementis . . . Kopecky unequivocally described Sling as 'a spy, brute, cynic, criminal and murderer.'*

Further interrogations of Sling would not yield the expected results, although the Minister of National Defence, Soviet advisers and others personally participated in them. Sling would make false admissions only to take them back later.

Until summer, 1951, the idea was to prepare a trial at which Sling and Svermova would be presented as the ringleaders of the conspiracy. At that time, however, interrogations . . . began to centre on Rudolf Slansky. O. Sling realised that he was no longer to be the protagonist of the coming trial, and he now considered it his duty to help convict Slansky, in the interests of the Party. As soon as the theory of the anti-State conspiracy headed by R. Slansky was born, Sling's case appeared as a convenient starting point for an even bigger trial.

O. Sling was selected along with 13 others to stand trial as a member of the conspiracy. In this context he was presented as a 'spy' and agent of the 'conspiracy' in the Brno region. Sling believed that he would ingratiate himself with the Party by a show of docility and that the court would be lenient with him. When K. Bacilek, the then Minister of State Security, visited him in his cell, Sling declared that he understood the political importance of the trial and that he would give no trouble.

On November 27, 1952, he was condemned to death and executed on December 3. These were his last words: 'Mr President (of the Court), I wish every success to the Communist Party, the Czechoslovak people and the President of the Republic. I have never been a spy.'

*Slansky at first remained immune to the deadly accusations against him produced by the interrogations of Sling. Indeed, he had just been elevated to the pinnacles of power in Czechoslovakia, and for a time the momentum of his rise continued:—*

*Towards the end of 1950 and at the beginning of 1951,*

*symptoms of a general crisis in the country were becoming more and more obvious. The military and political situation was tense (there were fears of a new world war, the country started to arm at full speed and this created stresses in the economy). . . . The command economy became more rigid: the process of liquidation of private farmers and artisans was accelerated, and thus whole social groups were subjected to increasingly harsh treatment.*

*The structure and quality of the governing group and the executive apparatus was also changing. The very top group which had the monopoly of decision making and governing contracted even further. Towards the end of January 1951 the Party Praesidium set up a political secretariat as an organ of the Party Central Committee. It included K. Gottwald, R. Slansky, A. Zapotocky and V. Siroky, and was entrusted with enormous decision-making powers, and also powers over State security and political trials . . .*

*(In other words, Slansky was now helping direct the mechanism of terror.)*

*Towards the end of 1950 and at the beginning of 1951, a large number of Communists were arrested as a prelude to a new wave of political reprisals. . . . A selected group of those arrested were taken to Kolo-deje Castle, near Prague, which had been hurriedly turned into an improvised prison.*

*Under the guidance and with the very active help of Soviet advisers, people were subjected during incessant interrogations to merciless beatings and tortured with hunger and thirst. They were kept in damp cellars without floors, and suffered from frost-bite on arms and legs.*

*Many confessions were thus obtained in this manner but the interrogators themselves realized that this "evidence" was not very conclusive, especially as it did not point to Sling as ring-leader of a conspiracy. Some of the interrogators started to fear a*



collapse of everything they had created, and suggested to Gottwald and R. Slansky that the head of the "conspiracy" must be someone in a higher position than Sling. Slansky's name had cropped up already in February, during the interrogations at Kolodeje. At that time, this fact attracted little attention and was not recorded, since the main purpose of the interrogations then was to convict Sling. . . . Before long, however, these anti-Slansky confessions began to be noticed, since they offered a way out of the impasse. . . .

### The pre-arranged death sentences

On July 20 Stalin sent K. Gottwald a coded message confirming the receipt of convincing evidence against R. Slansky, and B. Geminder. Stalin remarked the evidence was not conclusive, obtained as it had been from 'known' criminals.

A. Cepicka, Gottwald's special confidant, was present at a Politburo session of July 23, 1951. The Politburo dealt in great detail with the cases of Slansky and Geminder. In Stalin's letter to Gottwald of the following day, it was stated that the Soviet Party leadership continued to regard the confessions of convicted criminals as untrustworthy.

They concluded, however, from the reports of Soviet advisers working in Czechoslovakia, that Slansky had made many mistakes in cadre policies and could not therefore continue in the post of Party Secretary-General. . . .

On his birthday, July 31, 1951, Slansky received the highest State decoration and a letter of congratulation from the Party Central Committee. No birthday message came from Moscow. Meanwhile a full report containing the new evidence against Slansky was being prepared by Czech security officers and their Soviet advisers.

At the Party Central Committee session in September 1951, Slansky was subjected to a thorough-going criticism for the mistakes he had made in making appointments, and for having erroneously inter-

"in whom is power vested?" It is obvious from Gottwald's speech that he drew mainly on the materials provided . . . by the interrogators and Soviet advisers.

Slansky made a statement of self-criticism. . . . He was demoted to Deputy Prime Minister and entrusted to Zapotocky for special guidance. (Antonin Zapotocky became President of the Republic after Slansky's downfall.) At the same time, one of the Soviet advisers had all the evidence against Slansky . . . and others collected it and took it to Moscow.

Slansky's criticism and downgrading made a strong impression . . . Some people thought that Slansky had not told the party everything, and that he could be the hidden enemy in the top Party leadership.

The result of new interrogations of Slansky, Geminder and the others disappointed the interrogators . . . The Soviet advisers worked out a solution. The prisoners were now asked to confess that they and their accomplices had carried out their "activities" with Slansky's approval. Sling and others accepted this with some relief, hoping for more lenient treatment, and in their statements they now identified Slansky as the head of the conspiracy.

The Slansky case took a new turn with the visit of A. Mikoyan (Soviet Foreign Minister) to Prague. He arrived on November 11, 1951. He brought Gottwald a personal message from J. V. Stalin, which differed substantially from the position he had taken in July. Now Stalin insisted that Slansky must be speedily arrested lest he escape to the West.

According to Cepicka's testimony, Gottwald hesitated . . . Mikoyan's reaction was to break off the conversation and contact Stalin from the Soviet embassy. When the talks resumed, in Cepicka's presence Mikoyan confirmed that Stalin insisted on his point of view, and reminded Gottwald of his grave responsibility.

concrete facts, finally concluded that Stalin as usual had reliable sources of information and that his advice was sound. He sent a message to Stalin through Mikoyan that he agreed with Stalin's insistence on Slansky's arrest.

(Slansky was arrested thirteen days later.)

The proceedings were later approved by the whole Party Central Committee. Gottwald misinformed this body when he stated that new evidence had come to light. At this point, Slansky's fate had been virtually decided and no new evidence in his favour, nor his urgent letter to the Party Praesidium of November 26, could alter this fact.

The machinery of the manipulated "support of the masses," especially of Communists, was also brought into full operation. Rank and file Communists, trade unionists, even school children sent in resolutions expressing thanks to the vigilant Party and demanding the most severe punishment for the offenders. By December 19, 1951, the Central Committee had received 2,355 resolutions, letters and cables, all of them free from doubt about Slansky's culpability.

It took a whole year to prepare the show-trial of Slansky and his group. It was prepared systematically, according to a plan of action. In the first stage, long interrogations were conducted at the Ruzyn prison in Prague. Apart from Czechoslovak interrogators, special zest was shown by Soviet advisers despatched from Moscow, and by their leaders already on the spot.

Until January 2, 1952, Slansky admitted only political mistakes as stated in his speech of self-criticism in September, 1951. As pressure on him was stepped up, at the end of January, 1952, he attempted suicide, and failed. After this, he broke down and gradually confessed all that was asked of him.

In February, 1952, B. Doubek, who was in charge of the interrogations, was invited to the Hradcany Castle personally to report to K. Gottwald and Zapotocky. Gottwald, satisfied with the results of the interrogations,



asked that they should continue according to plan and that nothing should be done without the Soviet advisers . . .

. . . There were great discussions about how to describe those of the accused who were of Jewish extraction, which was the case of 11 out of the 14 chosen to stand trial, including Slansky. In the end the formula "persons of Czech nationality and Jewish origin" was preferred to "those of Jewish nationality."

In the summer and autumn of 1952 the text of the indictment was worked out, and the composition of the tribunal determined. Prosecutors, judges and defence counsel went through a special training, and each was assigned a special role. They had to promise to stick faithfully to the material provided by the interrogators and to the "scenario" of the trial.

"Under the guidance of the advisers, the accused had to memorise the statements they were to make in court. They were all broken people, yet their roles were tape-recorded in advance . . . and extracts were played in the Party Central Committee Praesidium. K. Bacilek talked personally to the accused

(except Slansky) just before the trial, promising leniency in return for "good" performance. . . ."

Several versions of the indictment were prepared.

This was on November 13, 1952. At about the same time the sentences were decided. The decision was taken in a commission appointed by the political secretariat of the Central Committee, and handed down to the court through the Ministry of Justice. Cepicka said later: "I do not think the discussion was long."

The trial opened on November 20, 1952 and unfolded according to a scenario and a detailed timetable prepared in advance. Only once did it happen that the prosecutor left out a question and the defendant, who had memorised his sequence of questions and answers, answered the question he should have been asked instead of the one he had actually been asked.

The trial was given great publicity in radio and in the Press. In factories, offices and elsewhere thousands of death sentences were passed before the court passed theirs.

The sentences, which referred to various charges of high treason, espionage, sabotage and military treason, were announced according to plan on November 27, 1952. Those sentenced to death included: Slansky, Geminder, Frejka, Frank, Clementis, Reicin, Svab, Margolius, Fischl, Sling and Simone. London, Loebl, and Hajdu were sentenced to life imprisonment.

The condemned did not appeal. Their plea for mercy was rejected. Eleven of the 14 accused were executed on December 3, 1952, early in the morning.

All of the accused, with the single exception of Slansky, wrote last letters before their execution. Without exception, they denied the truth of their confessions. Most, in different words, expressed what Simone wrote to Gottwald; that in the hour of his death a man speaks the truth, and "I have never been a traitor or a spy or an agent of the West."

Those letters written to the dead men's families were never delivered. Ten weeks after the trial, a large number of members of the Security Police were decorated for their services in connection with the trial.

## The duty of a Communist

*The report concludes by expressing certain qualifications about the sacred Communist doctrine of the "leading role of the party." Although very cautiously expressed, such doubts are almost without precedent in an official party document. The emphasis belongs to the authors of the report:*

The analysis of the political trials and course of their review brings out a number of lessons and warnings of great importance both for the present and the future. Voices in the party and society at large are constantly calling for guarantees against the possibility of similar events repeating themselves.

The implementation of such good intentions cannot rely solely on the goodwill and wishes of political officials but must be based on guarantees afforded by the political system itself.

The party considers the creation of a system of guarantees against the repetition of political trials to be an indivisible component of its post-January policies, part of the effort to overcome the bureaucratic centralist deformation of the political system. This is a long-term process.

The political system of our society is based on the principle of the leading role of the Communist Party. This principle is and will continue to be the basis of political government of the State. At the same time the party must declare the principle that it is inadmissible to assert this leading role in contradiction to the Constitution and its valid laws. . . .

At the same time this principle enlarges the rights and obligations of every party member. A communist has not only the right but also the duty to refuse to carry out those Party resolutions that its valid laws contradict. . . .

POLITIQUE AUJOURD'HUI, Paris  
November 1969

## "je poursuis la lutte"

lettre ouverte de Jiri Pelikan

Après avoir analysé les derniers développements dans mon pays et, plus spécialement, les conclusions de la dernière session du C.C. du P.C., j'ai décidé de démissionner du ministère des Affaires étrangères et de ne pas rentrer en Tchécoslovaquie, en dépit des ordres reçus. Cette décision, prise après mûre réflexion, est celle d'un diplomate, d'un membre du Parlement, d'un citoyen tchécoslovaque pleinement conscient de ses devoirs envers sa patrie et les idéaux socialistes auxquels il s'est consacré depuis trente ans, en tant que membre du parti communiste.

Cette résolution est pénible, tragique même, du point de vue personnel, mais politiquement inévitable.

En effet, je ne peux me mettre au service de la nouvelle direction du Parti, laquelle falsifie les faits, caricature la politique choisie par la direction de Dubcek après janvier 68, la qualifiant d'antisocialiste et de contre-révolutionnaire alors qu'elle fut et est encore soutenue par la large majorité des communistes et des autres citoyens de mon pays. Les dirigeants actuels, de toute évidence, retournent graduellement aux méthodes et vocabulaire de la période stalinienne.

Je ne puis accepter les événements du 21 août 68, je ne puis me taire lorsqu'on qualifie l'invasion de « nécessaire ». Les armées du pacte de Varsovie ont agi contre la volonté et sans l'invitation du président de la République, du gouvernement, du Parlement ou de la direction du Parti. Ne pas respecter la volonté de ces plus hautes instances, c'est violer la Constitution, profaner le droit national et international.

En avril dernier, des pressions étrangères ont imposé le remplacement d'Alexandre Dubcek par le D' Husak. Jusque-là, on pouvait encore espérer que certains des aspects du programme de Janvier seraient conservés et que la ligne politique en cours obtiendrait le soutien du peuple. Aujourd'hui, chacun peut aisément comprendre où la direction nouvelle va conduire notre pays. Il suffit de rappeler l'interdiction des journaux et revues, la révocation de centaines de nos meilleurs journalistes, l'introduction d'un système de censure plus sévère que celui de Novotny, l'expulsion des organes du P.C. et parfois même du Parti lui-même, d'un grand nombre de personnalités associées à la réforme de Janvier. Ajoutons à ceci les milliers de démissions et d'expulsions des diverses administrations et organisations régionales, fédérales et locales. Parallèlement, nous voyons émerger à nouveau des politiciens qui furent condamnés pour leur participation aux grossières déformations du passé et qui sont entièrement responsables des difficultés politiques et économiques où nous nous trouvons aujourd'hui. La police s'est attaquée brutalement aux citoyens qui voulaient exprimer leur désaccord au moment du premier anniversaire de l'invasion et, immédiatement, des lois exceptionnelles sont entrées en vigueur, ouvrant la porte à toutes sortes de mesures arbitraires.

Il est tragique que l'actuelle direction ait, de toute évidence, oublié les amères leçons d'un récent passé. Ces hommes ont, hélas, oublié que lois exceptionnelles et campagnes hystériques entraînent leurs auteurs dans le cercle vicieux de la répression où les accusateurs d'aujourd'hui sont les victimes des purges et procès de demain. Il ne suffit pas de déclarer que les années cinquante ne se reproduiront pas, il ne suffit pas de souhaiter qu'elles ne se répètent pas. Le groupe de Gottwald ne désirait pas les procès qu'il autorisa plus tard au nom de l'internationalisme et de la fidélité à l'U.R.S.S. Il permit pourtant que soient qualifiés d'ennemis du parti et de l'Etat, de révisionnistes et traîtres, des communistes qui, refusant de copier aveuglément le modèle soviétique, tenaient compte des traditions et conditions particulières de notre pays

dans leurs efforts pour découvrir de nouvelles voies possibles pour le socialisme. Nous savons combien notre patrie souffert des tragiques conséquences de la liquidation de ces camarades ainsi que du travail qu'ils avaient ébauché.

Que la politique actuelle soit le résultat de pressions extérieures ou de dissensions internes au sein de l'équipe dirigeante, le fait est que notre pays n'a cessé, depuis un an, de s'enfoncer de plus en plus dans une grave crise politique, économique et morale, due en partie aux erreurs du passé, mais largement à l'occupation du territoire national et à l'abandon de la politique de janvier 1968...

Les nouveaux dirigeants se plaisent à répéter qu'il faut accepter la « réalité », car il n'y a pas d'autre alternative. Quel paradoxe de la part de ces adeptes du marxisme, système philosophique qui nous enseigne que l'homme doit connaître la réalité afin de la transformer. Nous communistes qui nous sommes engagés à fond dans la politique de janvier 68 et sommes fiers d'avoir ainsi agi, nous devons déclarer au parti et au peuple qu'il est possible et qu'il est nécessaire de changer la situation actuelle et qu'il existe une solution à cette crise...

De plus en plus, les pays socialistes veulent suivre leurs propres voies, de plus en plus nombreux sont les partis communistes qui refusent de se subordonner à un seul centre ; ils cherchent des solutions neuves, rejetant les vieux dogmes du monolithisme. Ils ont compris combien l'occupation de la Tchécoslovaquie a entravé la marche en avant des mouvements communiste, socialiste et démocratique dans le monde.

Si nous voulons que les autres nous soutiennent, il faut prouver que nous savons défendre nos droits, que nous savons résister et que nous ne sommes pas résignés. La lutte sera longue et difficile, elle exigera des sacrifices, elle souffrira de défaites provisoires. Mais finalement, nous vaincrons car l'histoire ne peut s'arrêter à un point mort.

Le front principal de cette lutte est, bien entendu, dans notre pays même. Ses combattants sont les communistes et les autres citoyens qui, l'an dernier, unirent leurs efforts pour construire une société

socialiste qui soit nôtre.

Je me considère moi-même comme inséparable de ces combattants. J'ai choisi de m'efforcer provisoirement à l'étranger parce que, dans les circonstances actuelles, si je restais, je serais, pour le moins, condamné au silence et à l'inaction. Je refuse de me soumettre aux mesures disciplinaires prévues contre moi par la commission de contrôle du parti. Je ne pourrais les accepter qu'à condition qu'on me laisse me défendre publiquement. Or, il n'y a aujourd'hui que deux alternatives à ma disposition : ou acheter le pardon en le payant d'une autocritique humiliante ou être expulsé du parti et condamné. Mon devoir, qui me semble-t-il, est de m'exprimer à haute voix et ouvertement et, avec mes amis et camarades tchécoslovaques et étrangers, aider l'opinion publique à comprendre la vérité...

Je ne doute pas qu'il me sera malaisé de vivre à l'étranger et de maintenir mon indépendance avec de telles opinions. J'ai laissé derrière moi, à Prague, ma maison, mes amis, ma famille, tout ce qui m'est cher et sans quoi j'imagine difficilement ma vie future. Mais il est des moments, dans l'existence, où il faut tout subordonner à une cause unique...

J'ai longuement hésité avant de faire cette déclaration publique. Après l'invasion, en août 68, je me suis tu. Je ne voulais pas compliquer la tâche de ceux de nos hommes politiques auxquels j'avais accordé ma confiance, lorsqu'ils s'efforçaient de régler la crise par certaines

concessions. Mais me taire aujourd'hui serait apporter de l'eau au moulin de ceux qui viennent de légaliser l'invasion. Ce serait donner le coup de grâce à la politique de Janvier, ce serait approuver une politique opposée aux intérêts de mon pays et contraire à mes convictions.

Si donc je condamne l'occupation et ceux qui la justifient, cela n'implique pas pour autant que je partage les opinions des anticommunistes et des professionnels de l'antisoviétisme. Malgré les expériences pénibles de l'an dernier, je respecte, tout comme par le passé, les sacrifices du peuple soviétique et son énorme contribution à la lutte contre le fascisme et à la libération de mon pays en 1945. Je souhaite au peuple soviétique des succès économiques et culturels, je lui souhaite de vivre dans la paix, je lui souhaite d'avoir des dirigeants pleins de sagesse. Mais je n'admets pas que ces sentiments soient exploités pour servir de justification à l'invasion de l'été 68. Car cette violente agression a balayé pour longtemps l'amitié traditionnelle entre nos deux peuples, elle a gravement nui à la confiance générale envers l'U.R.S.S. dans le monde entier.

J'en appelle à tous les amis sincères, à tous les partis démocratiques et progressistes, aux syndicats, à la jeunesse, aux organisations estudiantines, aux parlementaires, aux journalistes et je leur demande de soutenir avec efficacité les justes revendications de notre peuple qui veut que les troupes étrangères se retirent de son territoire et exige de reprendre en main son

destin.

Il est essentiel que les progressistes soutiennent cet effort pour empêcher qu'il ne soit exploité par ceux qui ont des buts différents des nôtres. Nous refusons l'aide des forces fascistes ou de la droite. Nous clamons notre solidarité avec le peuple du Vietnam et notre admiration sans limite pour sa lutte contre l'intervention américaine qui nous sert d'exemple.

Car le programme de Janvier avait pour but précisément de renforcer le socialisme et non de l'affaiblir, en effaçant à jamais les graves erreurs du passé et en consolidant le régime par un réel épanouissement de la démocratie et de la liberté.

Désormais, la question tchécoslovaque n'est plus uniquement l'affaire de notre peuple. S'il en était ainsi, ce problème serait déjà réglé. Notre tragédie concerne les consciences de tous ceux qui se soucient de l'avenir du socialisme, du progrès et de la démocratie dans le monde. Si la souveraineté et l'indépendance d'un petit pays socialiste sont violées, l'avenir du socialisme est en péril dans le monde entier.

Je poursuivrai la lutte, me souvenant à chaque instant que je suis un citoyen tchécoslovaque et un membre du parti communiste. Dès qu'il me sera permis d'exposer et de défendre publiquement mes idées, je retournerai dans mon pays et rendrai compte de mes activités.

LONDON TIMES  
20 Dec. 1969

# 'Sacrificing a nation to the interest of a foreign power' Sik accuses Husak

A statement was released yesterday by Professor Ota Sik, who was a Deputy Prime Minister of Czechoslovakia under Mr. Dubcek. Now living in Switzerland, he has long been one of his country's leading campaigners for fundamental economic and political reforms, having abandoned an earlier belief in centralized planning. He is now under regular attack in the Soviet Union and Czechoslovakia as a mastermind behind last year's "counter-revolution". He is accused of being responsible for Czechoslovakia's present economic troubles. In October he was expelled from the Communist Party. These are extracts from his reply to his critics, in the form of an open letter to the Praesidium of the Czechoslovak Communist Party.

You are now the political representatives of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic with the approval of a deciding foreign power. You have made it impossible for your political opponents to defend themselves against attacks and false accusations.

I was a member of the communist movement for 35 years. Now I have become one of the many victims of the present reactionary political developments in our country. I regard it as my duty once again to protest, before the entire world, in the name of all those being persecuted in Czechoslovakia today for their progressive and reformist efforts—even more, in the name of an entire people subjected to severe economic and moral suffering and unable to express itself freely any longer.

You characterize the reform movement, which was led by the most progressive and sincere members of the Czechoslovak Communist Party, as an opportunist and counter-revolutionary incitement.

You accuse the representatives of this movement, who were so close to the thought and feelings of the people, of anti-socialist intent. But the pinnacle of defamation is your attempt to blame the reformers for the terrible state of the Czechoslovak economy today.

The basic aim of socialism was the universal liberation of the worker, not only from economic need and exploitation but also from political suppression and alienation. Social conditions were to be created which could guarantee a rapid unfolding of productive forces, conditions which were to form the foundation of a cultural and humane flowering of the entire people.

Formerly most of you admitted that such a flowering cannot be achieved under the old form of socialist conditions—the form which is again being practised today. This is impossible within the framework of the existing system of management, stimulation and organization of production, the existing mechanism for the selection and training of economic and political cadres, the non-existence of effectiveness criteria for economic activity, the elimination of all technical and qualitative initiative directed at economic independence and an entrepreneurial role for individual factories and other enterprises.

Today, you behave as if you had never approved the basic concept of economic reform, as if far-reaching reforms had in fact never been prepared. Today, you wish simply to negate the years of discussion within the party and among the masses, discussion in which hundreds of our leading theorists and practitioners participated.

You have reverted to a primitive form of argumentation which, under the weight of analyses and scientific proofs,

even Novotny no longer resorted to.

You try to create the impression that it would be sufficient merely to improve management and heighten labour discipline in order to overcome the present difficulties. But you conceal the fact that, without creating a genuine economic interest on the part of plants and other enterprises, neither their management nor labour discipline can be improved.

If you now believe that such a change can be effected solely by political appeals, by a mobilization of political forces and by strong words, no one can take such a belief from you. But neither can you avoid the monstrous responsibility for all the economic losses which such a belief will bring.

You constantly reiterate that nothing concrete had been prepared for the realization of economic reforms. You call for a "serious" Marxist analysis of the actual state of the economy and the true causes of its failures. But you have not yet told the people precisely what you feel to have been false in the more than 100 page long analysis which was collectively prepared by a group of our leading economic experts in the summer of 1968 at the request of our Government, nor why this document has been kept from the public.

Similarly, you have failed to say what was wrong with the extensive documentation that was assembled in preparation for the reform.

You are apparently uninterested in the gigantic economic losses occasioned by the fact that production has for years not been adjusted to demand, that lack of competition has meant a lack of

impetus for qualitative improvements, inventiveness, technical progress, flexible structural changes, optimal utilization of production factors, etc.

It is shattering to see how a year's intensive effort to uncover the basic causes of constantly increasing economic difficulties was liquidated by brutal political interference. And it is depressing to see men, who know full well how the Novotny regime suppressed all economic knowledge and the realization of all new ideas and reform proposals, try to blame the reformers for the country's catastrophic economic situation merely in order to justify the imposed political measures taken against them.

History has seen countless instances of politicians rejecting everything they formerly advocated, sacrificing former comrades-in-arms and condemning their activities, merely in order to save their own positions of power. But it is distressing to see the same people who were themselves politically persecuted and discriminated against, now manoeuvring themselves into position as the mainstays of the very system which once persecuted them.

The reoccupation of all important political and ideological positions by reactionary and conservative individuals, and the elimination of all progressive-minded people from all functions in the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic, will become a fundamental obstacle to any change in the definitively obsolete forms of socialist society.

The Czechoslovak press is now controlled by superficial propagandists who, during the spring of 1968, did not dare to write a single polemic article, although there was ample opportunity to criticize the reform movement. But an ideology which fears public discussion and a confrontation with reality has nothing in common with scientific socialism. Such an ideology can no longer win over thinking people to its side.

Your constant reiteration that no one has been arrested and condemned for his political views and orientation is a mockery. Is it not enough that the most honest and upright communists, who were concerned less with their careers than with helping socialist society and the people, have been hounded from their jobs and their political positions? Their sentencing in manipulated trials would be the apex of the present anti-human political developments, the ultimate expression of its reactionary nature.

You may announce as loudly as you please that your only concern was to free yourselves of anti-socialist and opportunist elements in order to save socialism. But you will never convince the Czech and Slovak nations. Much less world opinion, of the truth of such an assertion. It is too old a tactic.

The real opportunists have always been those who sacrificed the true vital interests of the workers for the sake of their own political careers and the wishes of those in power. Under the former political constellation, every one of the Czech and Slovak intellectuals now being persecuted could have achieved a personally advantageous position and a political career, had that been their sole interest.

You may eliminate hundreds thousands of these most progressive of men, silence them, harass them, but you will never succeed in making them enemies of the people. You may vilify, calumniate and slander those who refused to serve an inhuman and undemocratic regime, but our people will never forget their names.

The passive acceptance of the power constellation would be something else again—in contrast to the active discrediting of great, humane socialist ideas by means of propaganda, which subverts all human values and shrinks neither from lies nor from demagoguery.

The politicians who are trying to throttle our people's progressive spirit and ethical force are making the invader's task

easier, but they cannot change the thoughts and feelings of the people. In the long run, the sheer quantity of propaganda cannot outweigh truth.

Although the present political situation may prompt the world to return to its daily affairs and temporarily "forget" the formerly promising developments in Czechoslovakia, our people will never lose sight of the great ideas which inspired them. Even the most powerful dictatorships, regardless of the ideologies and power mechanisms on which they were based, have fallen when they represented an obstacle to economic and cultural development. Sooner or later the force of economic necessity will make itself felt. And the concomitant political changes, as expressed in the "Prague Spring" will be introduced into all socialist countries. Then all those who are being persecuted in Czechoslovakia today will be rehabilitated and the ideas for which they fought will be revived and realized.

# Sik's economic theories haunt Czechs

By Eric Bourne  
Special correspondent of  
The Christian Science Monitor

Vienna

The shadow of an exile and his rejected plan for reform still falls across Czechoslovakia's troubled economic scene.

It will be apparent, too, later this month when the Communist leaders present their own way out of the country's grave difficulties to the party's Central Committee.

There will without doubt be new attacks on the exile—Prof. Ota Sik—and on the “new economic model” he proposed for revival in the preinvasion period of '68.

He and his blueprint for a totally renovated system of management in place of the Stalinist model which had brought stagnation and near-complete breakdown were among the principal targets of Soviet criticism.

When the Russians marched in, the professor—then a deputy premier of the reform government—was vacationing abroad.

He returned several times to Prague until the final removal of the “liberal” leaders nine months ago and the hard-line policies adopted thereafter precluded the prospect of anything like the reforms he had urged.

## Party role stressed

When, some months ago, this writer asked the new party chief, Dr. Gustav Husak, if Professor Sik still could play a useful role in planning economic recovery, the answer was a curt unadorned “no.”

That was and is the view of the party politicians who took over from the Dubcek leadership last spring.

It is evident, however, that among the experts strong support still persists for the Sik school.

“Certain Czech economists,” Rude Pravo, the official party daily, protested Jan. 13, “still seem unable to come to terms with the leading role of the party in the economy.”

“They are unable to reconcile themselves to its leading role in the sphere of their activities. They believe that no one has the right to have a say in economic policy and that it is up to them alone to decide what will be made today and tomorrow in this country.”

The paper went on to insist that the party's “leading role” in the economy, as in every sphere of society, is both logical and necessary. It reasoned, with doubtless unintentioned irony: “Who else, which other political party, can formulate our main economic objectives?”

Who else, indeed, as things now stand?

The continued controversy over economic planning—long after the repudiation of the Sik reforms—was evident also in the repeated postponement of the committee session slated for Jan. 28.

First mooted in October for November it has been deferred four times because of the differences among the experts.

Undoubtedly there are some who incline still to the Sik view. But the visible dispute has been between modest “reformers” acceptable to Dr. Husak's own orthodoxy and the dogmatists.

The former accept the imperative need for more flexible management and for more, but not fully independent management. But they stop far short of the Sik plan for reorganization. The hard liners insist on retaining the mechanical, firm hand of party control.

The outcome is some kind of much diluted compromise. The party denies intention to interfere in the “general” management of enterprises, but nonetheless accepts a return to authoritarian centralization to enforce strict observance of the plan.

It talks about more modern, more efficient management and above all a more conscientious effort by managers and by the men on the workshop floor. But there is no tangible concession to initiative and enterprise and little, if any, recognition of the real faults pointed up by Professor Sik.

## Penalties brandished

Moreover, instead of reform, the regime stresses the threat of penalties and other labor disciplinary measures, as though these are likely to produce the response desired from workers.

If anything was needed to bring home the urgency of the radical changes envisaged two years ago, it was the Christmas shortages followed by the power failures which have doused the Prague lights this month.

The wretchedness of citywide blackouts—while unfinished power stations stand among the monuments to excessive and less essential investment—symbolized hard economic facts which are as pertinent today as when they were explained to the whole nation in Professor Sik's notable television broadcasts in the “spring” of '68.

## Accusations hurled

That was part of the short-lived period of “telling the people the truth.” There is nothing like it today.

The “conservative” extremists now accuse Professor Sik of exaggerating the country's ills. An economist committed to the Communist movement for 35 years, he is called “antisocialist” and is accused of planning to restore capitalism in Czechoslovakia.

The charge is as patently ridiculous and as unsupported by evidence as that alleging Alexander Dubcek favored neutrality and taking Czechoslovakia out of its alliance with the Soviet Union.

The professor's argument was that, after nearly two decades of the stereotyped application of a model created specifically for the Soviet Union—and aggravated by the grossly inefficient “power” dictatorship of the Novotny period—the time had come to face the truth, however painful.

First of three articles on need for economic reform in Czechoslovakia.

LE FIGARO, Paris  
24/25 Jan. 1970

**"THE REGIME IMPOSED ON CZECHOSLOVAKIA IS NOT SOCIALISM"**

Interview with Mr Jiri Pelikan by Jacques Renard

At the moment when one is witnessing in Czechoslovakia a sudden renewed outbreak of purification, we met in Paris\* one of the men who made the "Prague Springtime," Mr Jiri Pelikan. He has jutting gray hair, thick black eye-brows, an average face and figure. He was director general of the Czechoslovak television and chairman of the foreign affairs committee of the national assembly. He is a politician-journalist. Dismissed from his television functions after the invasion by the Warsaw Pact forces, he was appointed counsellor to the embassy of Prague in Rome, up until the moment when he publicly denounced the approval of the Soviet invasion. Then he lost everything. He lives in exile somewhere between England and Italy.

Question: You became director of television in the time of Novotny, in 1963. How do you explain that he kept you in this post? Did he have nothing to reproach you for before the "Prague Springtime"?

Answer: I held a record for length of service. Usually in this post one never remained more than a year. But you know, the "Prague Springtime" was not done by new people. It originated at the core of the party that Antonin Novotny led. The results were not seen until January 1968 but in reality it began in 1965. A debate existed between the men of politics and the economists. To be sure, censorship, for example, remained, but just the same there was progress. It was only when we learned that it was not possible to go farther with Novotny that he was eliminated from the post of first secretary...but he still remained president of the republic for several months.

It would be a mistake to see this Novotny epoch solely as a "black period." And then, suddenly, the "Prague Springtime" would have appeared out of the blue... No, it was the direction of the Novotny regime that was bad, that could not resolve either economic or political problems or ideological problems. Its system had remained a copy of the Soviet model. It was necessary to adapt it to Czechoslovak realities.

Question: Here you are a refugee in the western world. Is not the system in effect here more foreign to you than that which is presently in operation in your country?

\*Mr Jiri Pelikan is the author of the comments that accompany the documents relating to the 14th congress of the Czechoslovak CP that Le Seuil has just published in its Combats collection under the title, Le Congres clandestin (The Secret Congress).



Answer: Foreign, yes, certainly, because I remain Marxist and communist. But, on the other hand, the regime that is presently imposed on Czechoslovakia is not for me a socialist regime as such. This is what Sartre has called the "socialism that comes from frigidity," a distortion of socialism. I remain abroad in order to have the possibility of saying some truths that I could not say in my country. But I am ready to go back, even if I must be tried there, but on the condition of having the possibility of defending myself. I have not yet received this guarantee.

Certainly I would have preferred to find refuge in a socialist country but in present conditions it is excluded.

Question: This socialism with a human countenance, don't you believe it would be more accessible in the west than in the east?

Answer: The obstacle, in order to arrive at that, in the countries that are socialist at present, is constituted by the directing blocs, which are bureaucratic, "sclerotic," solely concerned with power and for whom ideology is nothing but a "cover." Nevertheless, principles such as nationalization of the means of production, the new relations between different classes, are bases that one cannot deny and which may facilitate the accession to power of a "socialism with a human countenance."

In the west, conditions are perhaps more ripe and political conditions more favorable, but the obstacle is the absence of economic bases. Look at Sweden, for example: there, there are a great many accomplishments in regard to social policy but the economic structures have remained capitalistic. I do not say that this socialism is inaccessible to the west, but it will be difficult to attain.

#### Capitalism with a Human Countenance

Question: And does capitalism with a human countenance suggest nothing to you?

Answer: This is a little like playing on words. We do not want to talk about a "socialism without the distortions that have made it inhuman" but about socialism. Some theorists have disputed our expression, saying that either socialism is human or it is not socialism at all.

That being said, there are differences between capitalist countries like France or England, for example, and Greece, some countries of Latin America or the Third World. Capitalism also can have a more or less human countenance.

One cannot deny a certain development that made the two camps approach closer to each other, but not to the point of identifying themselves with each other. There is no convertibility of the two systems. Each camp influenced the other. The existence of the socialist countries has modified the development of the capitalist countries, and



reciprocally. But there remains this essential difference that concerns the ownership of the means of production...even though some capitalist countries have been able, finally, to show themselves to be more progressive than some socialist countries afflicted by the personality cult, for example.

Just think that in Czechoslovakia more communist leaders have been killed under the socialist regime than were condemned under the capitalist regime of the first republic...

Question: Did you have some part in the feats of the underground radio at the beginning of the occupation?

Answer: Yes, yes, obviously. But, you know, all that was related very closely to the radio-television structures. Thus, we, at the television, were installed in 60 different places in Prague. To such a point that, in my time, the backbiters said that no director of the television had ever visited all the studios! The occupants did not do so either. This defect became an advantage. And then, there was the miracle of the technicians...

Question: You also call that a "miracle"?

Answer: Ah, yes! To install a temporary television studio on the fifth floor of an unfinished building is a fantastic job that is akin to a miracle. I say this even more willingly than previously because when I asked technicians to arrange for the transmission of a soccer match, for example, they always replied that they needed at least six weeks to prepare for it...

And then it must also be said that the Soviet army was not dead set against us.

Question: And now how do you see the future?

Answer: The future? I see it in two stages. The first is rather pessimistic. I believe that the situation is going to deteriorate in the months to come because the population cannot accept this occupation status and one cannot control it by force. There will be some persecutions, purges, trials, and then an economic, ideological and cultural crisis. But from this initial tragedy there can come the solution later. In fact, things will be so bad that the Soviet directorate itself will understand that new ideas are necessary and will take up again some of the theses proposed by the "Prague Springtime."

Question: Then you still have hope?

Answer: Yes. The people of our country understood that change was possible. They developed a taste for freedom and these truths will end by asserting themselves in other socialist countries.

I see a general movement manifesting itself in international communism, a movement in which China itself is participating and I believe that all this is going to create new conditions favorable to a renewal of this experience of the "Prague Springtime."

L'EUROPEO, Rome  
5 March 1970

(Excerpts)

"This journal (Literarni Listy) is born as an attempt to make public a series of thoughts on questions - past, present and future - concerning the Czechoslovak problem.

"Naturally it covers only a small part of these questions and more often than not offers a contradictory diversity of thoughts. Thus the reader, already accustomed for some time to this type of open and free journalistic discussion, must judge for himself the truth and justice of the various arguments.

This, our newspaper, comes out under very special circumstances, from all points of view.

"The collaborators, for the most part long-time contributors to Czechoslovak literary journals, almost all live abroad. And the readers too are spread out in various parts of the world.

"The quality of the publication, for these reasons, cannot be the best: May the reader excuse us. The important thing is to make one's own voice heard in some way. Only he who has no way of making himself heard can remain silent.

"If some copies of this newspaper succeed in reaching our country, we beg the recipient to have it read by the largest numbers of people.

"We finally believe that one day it will be possible again for a free Czechoslovak press to reach its readers through normal channels."

Next 1 Page(s) In Document Exempt

April 1970

SOVIET ECONOMIC PROBLEMS

Foreign interest in the progress of the Soviet economy has reached its highest peak of recent years as the result of a "secret speech" by Secretary General Brezhnev to a CPSU Central Committee Meeting on 15 December 1969. What apparently was the substance of Brezhnev's speech, which sharply criticized the lagging economy, was given in the lead editorial of Pravda, the CPSU daily, on 13 January 1970. Subsequent articles in the Soviet press have hammered away at the individual themes which Brezhnev apparently stressed.

The Yugoslav newspaper Borba, in commentary on the Pravda editorial, concludes (full text attached):

"the key problems of the Soviet economy are to increase the efficiency of social production and the application of modern technology"; no longer can Soviet economic growth rely simply on "increasing the number of employees and a high rate of increasing investments."

Borba points out that the Pravda editorial and subsequent Soviet press articles do not detail precise ways in which greater efficiency is to be attained. Rather, Pravda only emphasizes the formula of technology, responsibility, and discipline and adds, vaguely, that "a new stage of development does not permit working in the old way; it requires a new method and new solutions." Borba feels that in the foreseeable future only insignificant and nonessential changes can be expected in the centrally directed management of the economy. Picking up a phrase from Moscow's recently published "Theses for Lenin's Centennial," Borba wryly adds that this form of management "stands out as an inviolable basis of a socialist economy."

The Paris daily Le Monde carried two commentaries by Alain Jacob, its Moscow correspondent, on the 13 January Pravda editorial (full texts attached). The first, on 14 January, discussed the editorial's severe criticism of the organization of the economy, and expressed the opinion that the cause of the alarm is "the immobilism, the passivity, the sclerosis of the State apparatus." On 31 January a dispatch by Jacob asserted that the deficiencies of the Soviet economy pose a political problem. He cites "certain specialists" who estimate that "the economic situation is worse than in the autumn of 1964, when difficulties of the same kind contributed to M. Khrushchev's downfall." Jacob cautions, however, that because the political situation has changed the political effect of the similar economic situation won't necessarily be the same.

Another comment on Brezhnev's speech appeared in an extraordinary open letter addressed to Brezhnev and signed "Sakharov." The letter ranges somewhat farther afield than Borba or Le Monde. Whereas Borba points out that, according to statistical reports, the Soviet economy is performing within tolerable limits, "Sakharov" paints a picture of economic shambles in the USSR:

- Not only have the Soviets lost the moon race but also the competition for economic achievement.
- The USSR is turning into a supplier of raw material to Europe;
- Only the "fantastic natural resources" of the USSR and the "traditional patience of the peasantry" enable the country to hold its own.
- The imaginary world of the USSR, where self-deception keeps people from facing the truth, is permitting other countries which are building their economies on solid ground to pull "further and further ahead of us."

These current commentaries open up three questions which are discussed below: What are the general economic trends? How are the outstanding economic problems being attacked? And, what are the prospects for solving these problems?

#### General Trends of the Economy

Throughout 1969 unfavorable economic news kept cropping up in the Soviet press. On 16 December, State Plan Chairman Baybakov and Finance Minister Garbuzov confirmed earlier impressions of a lagging Soviet economy by revealing that overall indices had fallen short of expectations. The growth rate was declining. Plans were unfulfilled. Productivity gains were disappointing. Underlying these trends was the demonstrable ineffectiveness of the 1965 economic reform program, now rarely mentioned.

The growth of national income and gross industrial production declined at an unusually rapid rate between 1967 and 1969:

	<u>1967</u>	<u>1968</u>	<u>1969</u>	<u>1970 (Plan)</u>
National income	8.6	7.5	6.0	6.0
Gross industrial production	10.0	8.1	7.0	6.3

(Western economists would reduce these figures -- from Soviet sources -- by two or three percentage points, since Soviet economic computations do not follow the same standards as those of free world nations.) The growth of gross industrial production was the lowest since 1946.

The status of the fulfillment of the over-all economic plan is somewhat muddled because over-all plans were stated twice: in February 1966 and in October 1967. Assuming that on the later date Soviet planners knew more about what they could accomplish in 1970, the following comparison can be made: gross industrial production was planned as of October 1967 to rise by 53% in 1966-70; the expected actual increase, will be 39%. This is the picture in the key industrial sectors:

	<u>1969 pro-</u> <u>duction</u>	<u>Current</u> <u>1970 Plan</u>	<u>1970 Plan per</u> <u>five-year-plan goal</u>
Electric power (billions of kwh)	689	740	830 to 850
Oil (millions of tons)	328	350	345 to 355
Natural gas (billions of cubic meters)	183	196	225 to 240
Coal (millions of tons)	608	618	665 to 675
Crude Steel (millions of tons)	110	115	124 to 129
Plastics (thousands of tons)	1,452	ca. 1,800	2,100 to 2,300
Mineral fertilizers (millions of tons)	46	58	62 to 65
Trucks (thousands)	504.5	574	750 (revised from 600 in January 1968)
Passenger Cars (thousands)	293.6	348	700 to 800

Gross agricultural production will fall short of the five-year plan goal even if an 8.5% yearly increase planned for 1970 is attained. The 25% total increase planned for the five year period 1965-1970 will only reach 21%. Shortfalls are expected in meat and meat products. The state's investment in agriculture in 1966-70 is expected to reach only 78% of the amount planned in 1966. This is reflected in a cumulative shortfall from 1966 to 1970 of more than 300,000 tractors, 450,000 trucks, and about 80,000 combines. Combined with a 6,000,000-ton shortfall in mineral fertilizer, this belies the Soviets' claims that unfavorable weather has accounted for the disappointments in agriculture.

In the consumer sphere the picture is equivocal because of the peculiarly inflationary situation. Workers and employees will earn an average 25% more in 1966-70, versus a planned increase of 20% plus; collective farmers' average earnings will be about 40% higher. Retail trade turnover is expected to have increased by 49%. Nevertheless, it is widely reported that the man-in-the-street either can't find what he is looking for in the stores, or has to waste an inordinate amount of time shopping to buy poor quality goods.

Small wonder, then, that Soviet consumers have been turning their backs on the poorly supplied stores, and have been saving their money at unusually high rates. In 1969 personal savings deposits rose by 18.5%, following annual increases of 20% during the previous three years. Total bank account savings now equal almost one-fourth of the annual money income of the population.

Housing, the most aggravating shortage in Soviet society, has been short-changed by 10% to 15% during 1966-70 as construction continues to fall far short of goals. Annual plans for housing construction have not been fulfilled for 11 straight years. Instead of the 9 square meters of living space per person by 1970 promised by Khrushchev in 1957, Soviet urbanites average only some 7.2 square meters.

Productivity gains have been relied upon by the Soviets to provide for the bulk of the planned gain in output. The Soviets base their plans on the expectation that existing plants will produce increasing quantities of goods, and they count on obtaining higher production rates from new, technologically more advanced industrial facilities. Moreover, they include in their plans specific increases in the total output per worker in industry and construction. However, productivity has not risen as expected, and dragged-out construction schedules have deprived the economy of the benefits of new technology. Most disturbing is the recent downward trend in industrial labor productivity. Official statistics show the drop in growth rate from 6.6% in 1967 to 5.0% in 1968 to 4.4% in 1969. And, according to Soviet economist Alexander Birman, gains reported in national statistics may well be deceptively high. This claim is supported by the heavy pressure being put on workers to sharply increase output.

#### Attempt at Reform

In October 1965, what was then called "the new, business-like Soviet leadership," instituted a new economic reform. Economic performance in the early 1960's had grown flabby, the blame for which was placed largely on Nikita Khrushchev.

The reform proposed to give greater economic latitude to plant managers "on the basis of the expansion of commodity-money relations." This meant, in effect, to encourage managers to increase profits by producing more efficiently and increasing the quality of their products. (Soviet propagandists went to great pains to explain that Soviet "profit" was completely different from capitalist "profit.") Managers themselves would be offered the incentive of higher bonuses; at the Minsk meat packing plant, for example, bonuses rose from 8% to 28% of the salaries of engineers, technicians, and office workers. To a lesser degree, production workers were to share in the profits by receiving bonuses and through plant-funded construction of housing, kindergartens, and other facilities.

Initial results were trumpeted as demonstrating the success of the economic reform; national income and gross industrial production rose rather sharply in 1966 and 1967. This growth, however, was stimulated by the initial enthusiasm with which the Soviet leaders backed the program, and by the unique opportunity afforded managers to dispose of surplus goods and equipment. After 1967 the program lost steam and economic growth and performance slowed.

By fall of 1969, when 72% of all industrial enterprises had been converted, a halt was called to further change-overs. Since mid-1968 the Soviet press had been increasingly sour on the economic reform. By late 1969 and early 1970, aspects of the economic reform program, were being severely criticized as contributing to poor discipline. For instance, enterprise managers were said to have gotten overly independent and so preoccupied with profit that they avoided costly technological improvements. Managers were accused of trying to enlarge incentive funds faster than they were raising labor productivity. The few defenders of the economic reform, such as Academicians N. Fedorenko and A. Birman, appeared to have no visible political support. In late 1969 Birman, a prominent liberal economist, made a detailed case for extensive changes in the organization and management of the Soviet economy, lamenting the feeble efforts undertaken thus far to improve the economic machinery. But by December 1969, when Brezhnev gave his "secret speech" to the Central Committee Plenum, the "economic reform" showed few signs of life.

#### Outstanding Economic Problems

The USSR's disappointing economic results are considered by foreign observers to be largely the result of unrealistically ambitious planning, poor management, the lack of effective incentives, and the unreliability of the agricultural system. However, the Soviets are inclined to point their fingers at unsatisfactory returns on investment in science and technology and low labor productivity as the main causes of their present economic difficulties. Campaigns designed to attack these problems are under way.

#### To Encourage Innovation

The gap between what the Soviets have expected from their science and technology programs and what they have gotten has been a prime concern for several years. According to Borba's analysis of Brezhnev's purported speech, how to increase application of modern technology is one of the key problems of the Soviet economy. The problem has three main aspects: scientists and technologists are not interested in the mundane business of developing and applying new techniques to manufacturing; industrial officials are reluctant to cooperate with scientists and technologists in introducing innovations; and the slow rate of construction of new plants hampers technological advances in industry.

A Government decree of October 1968 had spelled out ways to raise the efficiency of scientific organizations and to speed the adoption of scientific and technical advances in the economy. According to the decree, practical



economic results, i.e., research and development translated into profits, were to be the basis for judging scientists and engineers. The latter had been criticized for preferring more scholarly pursuits, and industrial officials had been reluctant to cooperate with them. This situation still prevails as recently confirmed by a study in Literaturnaya Gazeta (Literary Gazette) published in January 1970 which points out that because of the time and costs involved, nobody is interested in "being the first to introduce a new idea." Launched with fanfare, this program for making scientific and technical work profitable and efficient has been discussed very little of late, and it seems fair to conclude that improvements resulting from the program have failed to provide the economic stimulus that the Brezhnev/Kosygin regime had wished for.

The economic costliness of the slow construction rate was noted in Borba, 31 January 1970, which quoted a Soviet director as saying: "When we cut the ribbon at the ceremonial opening of a new factory and we distribute awards to deserving construction workers, the factory is already obsolete and impractical." Borba also cited an article from Pravda, 24 July 1969, in which Deputy Chairman Vadim Trapeznikov of the USSR's State Committee for Science and Technology wrote that the scheduling of construction is such that twice as many structures are being built simultaneously as is economically appropriate. This causes long construction periods, and thus delays technological innovations; on the average, according to Trapeznikov, in the USSR it takes 8 to 12 years between the development of new technological ideas and the initiation of mass production based on them.

#### Toward Labor Discipline

Low labor productivity, a persistent problem in the USSR, was highlighted as a major current problem in the 13 January 1970 Pravda editorial which purportedly expressed Brezhnev's criticisms of the economy. The unsatisfactory attitude of "some workers" was typified as showing lack of conscientiousness and poor discipline. The editorial placed major emphasis on "increasing the struggle against antisocialist manifestations such as embezzling socialist property, idleness, and misuse of alcoholic beverages."

An indication of the seriousness of the labor discipline problem is seen in the recently inaugurated crackdown by trade unions and the State Committee for People's Control. Units of the latter group, according to a statute of 19 December 1969, can now institute criminal proceedings and demand the "dismissal of workers, wage stoppages, and other forms of punishment." A trade union plenum of January 1970 passed resolutions authorizing the imposition of disciplinary measures such as denying delinquent workers' rights to vacations, new housing, and social security benefits. (See the attached analysis of these threatened measures published in Borba, 5 February.)

The magnitude of the workers' "embezzling socialist property" and "idleness," as charged by Pravda, would be difficult to measure; however, there are some indications of how much "misuse of alcoholic beverages" is going on.

An intense press campaign to curtail drinking has emphasized the waste of millions of man-hours a year caused by excessive drinking and resulting in huge losses of state production. Reportedly, one-sixth of all retail spending in the USSR goes for drink, mainly vodka.

Meat and autos may present additional, particular economic problems in 1970. It was highly unusual for Pravda in its 13 January editorial to confess a widespread meat shortage. It is speculated that nothing would have been said if there weren't some official basis for thinking that the shortage will persist. The production of autos this year is planned at 348,000, as opposed to the earlier scheduled production of 700,000 to 800,000 autos in 1970. These two disappointments, when added to general inflation and continuing acute housing shortages, may well compound the regime's problem of rebuilding worker morale and discipline.

#### Prospects

It is possible that the Soviets' current campaign to tighten discipline will yield some short-term results. However, unless the Soviet leaders can at the same time offer material incentives, the prospects of enduring improvement in discipline and resultant gains in productivity are none too bright. Neither are prospects any too bright for reinforced reforms or, for that matter, the mild economic reforms decreed in 1965. No doubt the December Central Committee meeting would have focused on this possible source of improvement, if reforms were to be made meaningful.

The prospects for economic improvement, thus, will have to be considered unfavorable until evidence to contradict this impression becomes available.

BORBA, Belgrade  
31 January 1970

Soviet Economy Today

UPSWING AND -- LACK OF SATISFACTION

by S. Vujica

What the Pravda editorial shows regarding the conclusions of the Central Committee plenum on the economy.

It seems, not without reason, that the recent Pravda editorial entitled, "Toward New Achievements," has produced exceptional interest and wide commentary. Reports from Moscow say that the text of the official organ of the party (about 2,000 words) for the first time publicly points to the content of a still unpublished speech of Leonid Brezhnev at the plenum of the Central Committee of the Communist Party on 15 December 1969. At that time the secretary general, as was officially reported, presented a speech "On the Political Activity of the Politburo of the CPSU Central Committee in the Field of Foreign and Internal Policy," in which, the editor of Pravda reports, considerable attention was devoted to "an analysis of the status and prospects of development of the Soviet economy." The latest reports from Moscow say that sharp criticism of the failure to fulfill the plan tasks and of lagging in the economy was also included in the speech of Leonid Brezhnev.

What Is Being Criticized

According to published statistical data, economic trends in the 4 years of the present Five-Year Plan (the last year is 1970), are satisfactory. Basic indicators on the trend of industrial production, national income, real earnings, housing construction, and similar factors, are within the range provided for in the directive of the 23rd Congress of the CPSU Central Committee on development up to 1970. Also, the 1969 plan was successfully fulfilled overall.

Nevertheless, judging from the Pravda editorial devoted to evaluations of the plenum on the economy and a series of other articles in the Soviet press published in the last few days (which also refer to the Brezhnev speech), a basis is provided for concluding that the Soviet leadership is dissatisfied with the present trends in the economy.

Industrial production increased by about 7 percent (7.3 percent was planned). In the judgment of those who know, this is the lowest growth rate of industrial production in the last few years, which has always been a significant standard for evaluating the development of the Soviet economy.

The lag in the growth of labor productivity is even larger. The plans of the 23rd Congress regarding a 33-35 percent increase in 5 years have been con-

siderably jeopardized by the 1969 achievements: instead of the planned 6.5 to 7 percent increase, labor productivity increased by only 4.4 percent.

The growth rate of the national income was also reduced in 1969. While in the first 3 years of the Five-Year Plan the average annual increase amounted to more than 8 percent, in 1969 income growth increased by 6 percent.

The Pravda editor reports that the plenum showed that "several economic fields are lagging"; that "the increase of labor productivity and of the efficiency of social production is slow"; then it pointed to a "lack of a sense of responsibility among some workers, lack of conscientiousness, poor discipline, which is above all, shown in the lack of a serious attitude toward fulfilling the state plan,"; it also pointed to the fact "that difficulties have appeared in supplying the population, especially in the large cities, with livestock products."

From an official report published a few days ago it is seen that in 1969 seven important industrial branches (this is the largest number in recent years) did not fulfill the established plan tasks. Two industrial branches -- meat and gas -- failed to fulfill the plan by as much as 4 percent, while among the branches which are also lagging are ferrous metallurgy, the chemical industry, and the wood, cellulose, and paper industry.

The six central Asian republics also did not fulfill the plan: Turkestan [Turkmenia] (the plan was 94 percent fulfilled), Uzbekistan (98 percent fulfilled), Kazakhstan and Azerbayizhan (99 percent), Tadzhikistan (99.4 percent), and Kirghiz (99.6 percent fulfilled).

#### Major Shortcomings in Construction

The Pravda editorial's emphasis that the plenum found "major shortcomings in the field of capital investments" attracts special attention. However, this appraisal also was present in many editorials published before the plenum, as well as a series of other articles devoted to this subject in the Soviet press. Recently, for example, on the pages of Pravda, Academician Trapeznikov pointed out that twice as many structures are today being built simultaneously in the Soviet Union than is economically appropriate and that such a "broad front" causes a long construction period for new structures, which is a significant factor of slow technological innovation of the Soviet economy.

Moreover, Academician Trapeznikov disclosed that on the average a period of 8-12 years elapses in the Soviet Union from the initial development of new technological-technical ideas to their realization in series production (which is several times longer than in developed economies), and that the construction period for factories also extends up to 8 years under existing technological procedures. (Recently, a Soviet director said, criticizing slow construction: "When we cut the ribbon at the ceremonial opening of a new factory and we distribute awards to deserving construction workers, the factory often is already obsolete and impractical.")

Pravda's editorial writer also emphasizes the judgement of the plenum that increasing the efficiency of social production and the application of modern technology are today "the key problems of the Soviet economy"; that it cannot today, as previously, develop "on account of increasing the number of employees and of a high rate of increasing investments, but on account of their intensification through rational utilization of existing capacities, through application of new technologies."

#### Which Way

Neither the Pravda editorial nor other articles published since the plenum provide a more precise answer as to the manner in which more efficient business operations will be attained. The editorial of the central organ of the CPSU only emphasizes the formula -- technology, responsibility, discipline --, stating in addition that "a new stage of development does not permit working in the old way; it requires a new method and new solutions."

Nevertheless, both the editorial itself and all that has been written recently in the Soviet Union confirm that, according to current assessments of the Soviet leadership, solutions will not be sought in the development of the previously announced extensive economic reform and enterprise autonomy. The editorial, for example, commenting on the conclusions of the December [1969] plenum, emphasizes that the ministries are the "determining link in managing the economy." The organ of the Central Committee of the CPSU places the main emphasis on "raising work and production discipline" and on "increasing the struggle against antisocial manifestations, such as embezzling socialist property, idleness, and misuse of alcoholic beverages."

We also notice in the Soviet press and publications of recent months that texts are appearing more and more frequently whose content, as well as profusion, provide a basis for the conclusion that the chances are now minimal for implementation of the earlier announced extensive economic reform as a factor for more efficient economic management. On the other hand, the more recent articles confirm that in the foreseeable future only insignificant changes can be expected, and nonessential at that, in the currently centrally directed management of the economy, which stands out as an inviolable basis of a socialist economy.

СОВЕТСКА ПРИВРЕДА ДАНАС

УСИЛОМ И —

НЕЗАДОВОЛЬСТВО

## комитета о привреди

Изгледа, не без разлога, изузетно интересовање и широке коментаре изазвао је недавни уводник „Правде“ под насловом „Како нашим достигнућима“. Извештаји из Москве јављају да тај текст званичног органа партије (око 2.000 речи) по први пут јавно указује на садржину још необјављеног реферата Леонида Брежњева на пленуму Централног комитета КП СС 15. децембра прошле године. Тада је генерални секретар, како је званично саопштено, поднео реферат „О политичкој делатности Политбироа ЦК КП СС у области спољне и унутрашње политике“, у којем је, саопштава уводничар „Правде“, значајна пажиња посвећена анализи стања и перспективама развитака совјетске привреде. Последњи извештаји из Москве јављају да је у реферату Леонида Брежњева дата и оштра критика неизвршења планских задатака и заостајања у привреди.

### Шта се критикује

Привредна кретања у четри године садашњег петогодишњег плана (последња је 1970), према објављеним статистичким подацима, задовољавајућа су. Основни показатељи о кретању индустријске производње, националног дохотка, реалних зарада, стамбеној изградњи и сличног крећу се у оквиру директива 23. конгреса КП СС о развоју до 1970. године. И план у прошлој години је у глобалу успешно остварен.

Ипак, судски према уводнику „Правде“ посвећеном оценама пленума о привреди и низу других написа у совјетској штампи објављених последњих дана (који се такође позивају на реферат Брежњева), дају основу за закључак о незадовољству совјетског руководства садашњим кретањима у привреди.

Индустријска производња повећана је за око 7 одсто (планирано је 7,3). То је, по оцени познавалаца,

најнижа стопа раста индустријске производње после дњих година, што је иначе увек било значајно мерило оцене развитака совјетске економије.

Још веће је заостајање у порасту продуктивности рада. Предвиђања 23. конгреса о повећању од 33 до 35 одсто за пет година знатно су угрожена прошлогодишњим остварењима: уместо планираних 6,5 до 7 одсто, продуктивност је порасла за свега 4,4 одсто.

У минулој години успорен је и темпо пораста националног дохотка. Док је у прве три године петогодишњег плана просечно годишње повећање износило више од 8 одсто, у прошлој години пораст дохотка достигао је 6 одсто.

Уводничар „Правде“ саопштава да је пленум указао да „заостаје низ области привреде“; да је „спор пораст продуктивности рада и ефикасности друштвене производње“; затим „на одсуство осећања одговорности код неких радника, фактор несавесности, нарушавања дисциплине, што се пре свега испољава у олаком односу према извршењу државног плана“, као и „да су се појавиле тешкоће у снабдевању становништва производима сточарства, посебно у великим градовима“.

Из званичног саопштења, објављеног пре неки дан, види се да прошле године седам значајних индустријских грана (то је највећи број у последњим годинама) није остварио постављене планске задатке. Две индустријске гране — меса и гаса — подбациле су план за читаву 4 поена, а међу гранама које заостају налазе се и црна металургија, хемијска индустрија и индустрија дрвета, целулозе и папира.

И шест република (све средњоазијске) такође није остварило план: Туркестан (план је остварен са 94 одсто), Узбекистан (98 одсто), Казахстан и Азејбердан (99 одсто), Таџикистан (99,4 одсто) и Киргизија (99,6 одсто).

### Велике слабости у градњи

Посебну пажњу привлачи немишљање уводника „Правде“ да је пленум констатовао „велике слабости у области капиталне изградње“. Та оцена је, иначе, била присутна и у не малом броју уводника објављених пре пленума, посвећених овој теми, као и у низу других написа у совјетској штампи. Недавно је, на пример, на страницама „Правде“ академик Трапезњиков указао да се данас у Совјетском Савезу истовремено гради два пута више објеката него што је економски целесходно и да тако „широк фронт“ условљава дуг рок градње нових објеката, што је значајан фактор споре технолошке иновације совјетске привреде.

Академик Трапезњиков је, поред осталог, изнео да у Совјетском Савезу од почетка разраде нове технолошко-техничке идеје до њене реализације у серијској производњи прође у просеку 8—12 година (што је неколико пута дуже него у развијеним привредама), а да рок градње фабрике по постојећим технолошким поступцима траје и до 8 година. (Недавно је један совјетски директор изјавио, критикујући спору градњу: „Кад пресечемо вршцу на свечаном отварању нове фабрике, поделимо одликовања заслужним градитељима, фабрика је често већ застарела и нерационална.“)

Уводничар „Правде“ такође наглашава и осуду пленума да су данас повећање ефикасности друштвене производње и примена савремене технологије „кључни проблеми совјетске привреде“; да се она данас не може, као раније, развијати „на рачун повећања броја запослених и високог темпа повећања улагања, већ на рачун њене интензификације рационалним коришћењем постојећих капацитета, применом нове технике“.

### Којим путем

Ни уводник „Правде“, а ни други написи објављени после пленума, не дају прецизнији одговор на који ће се начин постићи ефикасније пословање. Уводник централног органа КП СС једино истиче формулу — технологија, одговорност, дисциплина — констатујући уз то „да нова етапа развитака не дозвољава, да се ради на стари начин, да захтева нови метод и нова решења“.

Ипак, и сам уводник, а и све што се у Совјетском Савезу пише у последње време, потврђује да се, према садашњим оценама совјетског руководства, решења неће тражити у развијању раније најављеног ширег програма реформе и аутономије предузећа. Уводник, на пример, коментаришући закључке децембарског пленума, истиче да су министарства „одлучујућа карика у управљању економиком“. Орган ЦК КП СС главни акценат ставља на „повећање радне и производне дисциплине“ и на „повећање борбе са антидруштвеним појавама, као што су развлачење стација листичке својине, забушавање, злоупотреба алкохолних пића“.

Приметимо још да се последњих месеци у совјетској штампи и публикацијама све чешће појављују текстови чија садржина, а и бројност, дају основу за закључак да су сада минималне шансе за спровођење раније најављеног ширег програма реформе као услова за ефикасније привређивање. Напротив, новији написи потврђују да се у догледно време могу очекивати само незнатне промене, и то не битне, у садашњем централизованом, директованом, руковођеном привредом, које се истиче као неприкосновена основа социјалистичке економије. С. ВУЈИЦА

BORBA, Belgrade  
5 February 1970

Soviet Economy Today

"HOW TO IMPROVE WORK DISCIPLINE"

by Sl. Vujica

Strict Measures Are Being Demanded Against Poor Workers, Shirkers, and Drunkards

Reports from Moscow say that a central Soviet trade union forum several days ago proposed to collectives "that they take strict measures against all violators of work and state discipline." The trade union forum "suggests to collectives that they wage a sharp struggle against shirkers, workers who frequently change employment, and especially drunkards." It proposes that the question of poor workers be discussed at meetings of collectives, that so-called disciplinary courts try them, that they not be given or that they have taken from them "passes" to vacation places and health sanatoriums, that they be removed from the list of people who are to get apartments, that they be deprived of bonuses, and, finally, that they also be excluded from the trade union.

This proposal was issued to producers at the last plenum of the trade union which examined the conclusions of the plenum of the CPSU Central Committee held in December 1969 on the status of the economy, when, according to reports from Moscow, Brezhnev severely criticized shortcomings in the economy.

Educational Work and Penalties

The proposal of the trade union forum to the collectives is not new. The recent PRAVDA editorial, devoted to conclusions of the December plenum of the CPSU Central Committee on the economy, in addition to stressing the necessity "for increasing state and production discipline" as an important measure in achieving the goals, also suggests "increasing the struggle against anti-social manifestations, such as the pilfering of socialist property, shirking work, and the misuse of alcoholic beverages."

"Progul'shchiki," as they call shirkers, poor workers, in the Soviet Union, have for a long time been the subject of severe criticism and the subject of editors of the central Soviet newspapers, but especially PRAVDA.

The editor of PRAVDA, suggesting measures in regard to the struggle against work indiscipline, assigned first place to "the need to create in collectives an atmosphere of general intolerance toward absenteeism, toward shirking, lagging in production, and poor work."

Suggesting measures, as the editorial stresses, for the honest and conscientious fulfilling of obligations to society" and for "an irreproachable

respect for work discipline" -- the editor of the central party organ especially stresses the importance of ideological-educational work of party and other organizations and the application of penalizing measures.

### "Honor Lists" and "Lists of Shame"

In the Soviet economy, solutions for preventing indiscipline on the job were sought primarily in educational and punitive measures, or again in compelling conscientious work from the worker by means of so-called progressive norms, the significance of which the editorial calls attention to this year. It is known, for example, that "honor lists" are employed extensively in enterprises and establishments in the Soviet Union as a means of stimulating the worker to do a better job. In addition, "lists of shame," reserved for loafers, slackers, and violators of work discipline, were used until recently. Or again: on the pages to TRUD, the party secretary of a Donbas [Donets Basin] enterprise suggested broader use of the educational measures which his collective is employing--the writing of letters to the families of outstanding and of poor workers.

### And Other Suggestions.

The arsenal of educational measures which is being used and the significance of which the forums and editorialists are now particularly citing is very extensive: from the conducting of lectures and the writing of articles to the conferring of transferable banners to collectives and individuals and the conferring of honorifics, such as, for example, "Communist shock worker." The list of punitive measures also is extensive.

Whereas in the efforts to improve discipline the forums and editorialists concentrate on educational propaganda work, administrative measures, and progressive norms, i.e., exorcizing discipline "from the top," individual Soviet economists are suggesting that solutions be sought elsewhere. They are confronted with the facts that neither "lists of shame" or "honor lists" nor compliments and penalties, honorifics and banners, have yielded the desired results. Individual economists emphasize, as a priority, the necessity for more rapid and more consistent implementation of the previously announced program of economic reform.

In the efforts to improve work discipline, the proprietary attitude toward work, and the fulfillment of planned tasks, they concentrate on improving the system of economic management through economic methods and incentives. In other words, they are in favor of creating those conditions of economic management in which each producer and every collective would be somewhat more directly materially interested in better work, in self-disciplined and prompt completion of an obligation.

Nevertheless, judging from recent editorials which interpret the conclusions of the December [1969] plenum, the principal solution for better work and discipline will also be sought in the future predominantly in educational and punitive instructions.



BORBA, Belgrade  
5 February 1970

# КАКО ПОБОЉИТИ РАДНУ ДИСЦИПЛИНУ

*Захтевају се оштре мере против лоших радника,  
забушанаца и пијанца*

Централни совјетски синдикални форум, јављају извештачи из Москве, препоручио је пре неки дан колективима „да предузму оштре мере против свих прекршилаца радне и државне дисциплине“. Синдикални форум „сугерише колективима да поведу оштру борбу са забушанима, радницима који често мењају запослење и нарочито пијанцима. Он предлаже да се о ло-

шим радницима расправља на скуповима колектива, да им суде такзвани дисциплински судови, да им се не дају, или одузму, „путјоке“ (упути) за одмаралишта и санаторијуме, да се бришу са списка људи који ће добити станове, лишавају премија и, најзад, да се искључе и из синдиката.

Ова препорука производјачима донета је на последњем пленуму Синдиката који је разматрао закључке пленума Централног комитета КПСС од децембра прошле године о стању у привреди, када је, према извештајима из Москве, Брежњев оштро критиковао слабости у привреди.

## Васпитни рад и казне

Препорука синдикалног форума колективима није нова. И у недавном уводнику „Правде“ посвећеном закључцима децембарског пленума ЦК КПСС о привреди, уз истицање неопходности „повећања државне и производне дисциплине“ као значајна мера за постизање циља сугерише се — „повећање борбе са антидруштвеним појавама, као што су развлачење социјалистичке својине, забушавање, злоупотреба алкохолних пића“.

„Прогуљивци“, како у

Совјетском Савезу називају забушанте, лоше раднике, већ дуже времена су предмет оштре критике и уводничара централних совјетских листова, а посебно „Правде“.

Уводничар „Правде“, сугеришући мере за борбу против радне недисциплине, на прво место је ставио „неопходност да се у колективима створи атмосфера свеопште нетрпељивости према изостајању са посла, према забушавању, заостајању у производњи и лошем раду“.

Сугеришући мере за, како се у уводнику наглашава, „поштено и савесно испуњавање обавеза према друштву“ и за „беспрекорно поштовање радне дисциплине“, — уводничар централног партијског органа посебно истиче значај идејно-васпитног рада партијских и других организација и примену казних мера.

## „Табле почастии и „табле срама“

У совјетској привреди су се решења за отклањање недисциплине на раду углавном тражила у васпитним и казним мерама, или пак у приморавану радника на савестан рад путем такзваних прогресивних норми, на чији значај скреће пажњу уводник ове године:

Познато је, на пример, да се у Совјетском Савезу у предузећима и установама широко користе „табле почастии“ као средство за подстицање радника на бољи рад. Донедавно су уз ове коришћене и „табле срама“, резервисане за ленивце, забушанте, прекршиоце радне дисциплине. Или опет: на страницама „Труда“ партијски секретар предузећа из Домбаса је предлагао шире коришћење васпитне мере коју примењује његов колектив — писање писама породицама истакнутих и лоших радника.

## И други предлози

Арсенал васпитних мера које се користе и на чији значај сада посебно указују форуми и уводничари је веома широк: од одржавања предавања и писања чланака, па до поделе различитих застава колективима и појединцима и доделе почасних звања, као на пример „ударника комунистичког рада“. И скала казних мера је такође широка.

Док форуми и уводничари у напорима за побољшање дисциплине централно место дају васпитно-пропагандном раду, административним мерама и прогресивним нормама, то

јест истеривање дисциплине „одозго“, поједини совјетски економисти сугеришу да се решења траже на другом месту. Суочени са чињеницама да ни „табле срама“ и „табле почастии“, ни похвале и казне, почасна звања и заставе нису дали жељене резултате — поједини економисти као приоритетно истичу неопходност бржег и последнијег спровођења раније прокламованог програма привредне реформе.

Они у напорима за повећање радне дисциплине, за домаћински однос према раду и извршењу планских задатака централно место дају усавршавању система привређивања, економским методама и подстицајима. Они се, наиме, залажу за стварање таквих услова привређивања у којима би сваки производјач и колектив били што непосредније материјално заинтересовани за бољи рад, за самодисциплиновано и благовремено извршавање обавеза.

Ипак, судећи према последњим уводницима који тумаче закључке децембарског пленума, главна решења за бољи рад и дисциплину ће се и убудуће тражити претежно у васпитним и казним одредбама.

Сл. ВУЈИЦА

LE MONDE, Paris  
14 January 1970

**U. R. S. S.**

**S'INSPIRANT D'UN RAPPORT DE M. BREJNEV**

**La « Pravda » critique sévèrement l'organisation de l'économie**

Moscou. — La « Pravda » consacre mardi matin son éditorial au bilan de la réunion plénière du comité central, qui s'est tenue le 15 décembre dernier et de la session d'hiver du Soviet suprême réuni à la même époque. Déjà, depuis quelque temps, le bruit courait à Moscou qu'un important rapport avait alors été présenté par M. Brejnev. L'éditorial de la « Pravda » le confirme entièrement, en dressant un sévère réquisitoire de la

gestion économique en U.R.S.S. On se souvient qu'à la tribune du Soviet suprême, MM. Baibakov et Garbouzov, respectivement président du Gosplan et ministre des finances, avaient eux-mêmes mentionné toutes sortes d'insuffisances et présenté pour l'année 1970 un budget et un plan fortement empreints d'austérité. M. Brejnev, selon la « Pravda », aurait critiqué les « méthodes d'organisation » en vigueur dans l'économie soviétique.

De notre corresp. particulier

**ALAIN JACOB**

L'éditorial de l'organe du comité central rappelle, mais avec une vigueur inédite, quelques-unes des lacunes les plus graves. Les industries de la sidérurgie, des mines, sont mises en cause pour n'avoir pas réalisé leur plan en 1968. Il est dit encore, que des réductions injustifiées du cheptel, de la volaille, ont entraîné « des difficultés dans l'approvisionnement de la population en produits d'élevage, en particulier dans les grands centres industriels ».

Ces insuffisances sont mentionnées dans une critique d'ensemble du style de travail et des méthodes de gestion. « Nous sommes engagés, écrit la Pravda, dans un état qui ne permet plus de travailler à la manière ancienne et qui implique de nouvelles méthodes et de nouvelles solutions. »

La session d'edecembre du comité central des critiques de deux ordres. Les unes ont trait à ce que l'on pourrait appeler les défaillances des individus : tendance à fuir les responsabilités, absentéisme, gaspillage de la propriété

de l'Etat, et même ivrognerie. Une autre série de critiques, plus fondamentales, vise l'appareil lui-même de l'économie, les « instances superflues », le « bureaucratisme » de certains organismes, le « désordre » régnant dans telle ou telle branche, par exemple dans les transports ferroviaires. Plus précisément encore, la Pravda désigne les ministères comme les maillons les plus défectueux, les moins efficaces de l'économie nationale, en leur reprochant en particulier de « ne pas faire confiance aux entreprises » ou d'admettre, comme dans la construction ou l'industrie chimique, que « de vastes installations soient paralysées pour une longue période ».

**Le congrès ajourné ?**

L'éditorialiste de la Pravda, suivant d'assez près, semble-t-il, le rapport de M. Brejnev, en arrive presque à mettre en cause les méthodes de fonctionnement

du parti lui-même. Il est indispensable, écrit-il, d'y « développer largement la critique et l'auto-critique », d'améliorer le travail du contrôle populaire, de faire preuve de plus d'exigence à l'égard des cadres en se montrant intransigeant lorsque tel ou tel travailleur refuse de tirer les leçons de la critique, de se perfectionner, porte systématiquement atteinte à la discipline du parti et de l'Etat... La responsabilité de ces insuffisances, toutefois, incombe aux individus plutôt qu'aux structures, puisqu'il est dit que, « dans la dernière période, le parti, le comité central du P.C.U.S., ont fait des efforts considérables pour déployer l'initiative des hommes, créer un climat de confiance, permettre à chacun de manifester ses capacités sur le plan de la profession et de l'organisation ».

L'impression générale est que la session de décembre a été l'occasion d'un très sévère examen de conscience, rendu indispensable par une situation alarmante

dans l'économie nationale. Ce qui est finalement en cause, c'est l'immobilisme, le laisser-aller, la sclérose de l'appareil de l'Etat. On peut penser que diverses mesures seront prises pour rectifier çà et là quelques-uns des défauts les plus graves dénoncés par M. Brejnev. Mais il n'est pas impossible qu'un travail de révision plus fondamental ait été amorcé. Il expliquerait notamment que l'on ait jugé nécessaire de s'accorder un nouveau délai avant la convocation du prochain congrès du parti. Celui-ci, comme on le sait, doit normalement se tenir dans le cours de l'année 1970. Récemment encore, on estimait qu'il serait réuni au printemps, afin de suivre ou de précéder de peu les cérémonies marquant le centenaire de la naissance de Lénine, au mois d'avril. Selon de bonnes sources, sa convocation ne serait plus désormais envisagée avant l'automne.

LE MONDE, Paris  
31 January 1970

CPYRGHT

## La discussion du rapport de M. Brejnev

# LES DÉFAILLANCES DE L'ÉCONOMIE SOVIÉTIQUE POSENT MAINTENANT UN PROBLÈME POLITIQUE

Moscou. — Le rapport présenté par M. Leonid Brejnev, le 15 décembre dernier, au comité central du parti communiste fait, depuis le début du mois de janvier et jusqu'à la fin de février, l'objet de discussions dans les cellules du parti

et dans les assemblées plus vastes, comme le Conseil des syndicats, qui s'est tenu cette semaine à Moscou. La presse participe au débat par toutes sortes d'éditoriaux et de reportages.

De notre corresp. particul.

ALAIN JACOB

Si le discours de M. Brejnev n'a pas été rendu public, les thèmes essentiels — du moins en ce qui concerne la situation intérieure — en ont été repris par la Pravda, le 13 janvier, dans un long éditorial. Ce texte dressait un sévère réquisitoire de la gestion économique en U.R.S.S. et dénonçait de graves lacunes dans l'organisation des branches les plus diverses de la production et des services (le Monde du 14 janvier).

Le secrétaire général du parti a illustré son exposé de quelques exemples particulièrement éloquentes. Dénonçant le désordre régnant dans les transports ferroviaires, il a raconté comment des grues en provenance de la R.D.A. et destinées au port d'Odessa avaient traversé toutes les gares du Transsibérien pour aboutir à Vladivostok avant que quiconque se préoccupe de les remettre sur le bon chemin. Critiquant d'autre part les tendances au « triomphalisme », il a évoqué le cas d'exploitations agricoles dont certaines réalisations avaient été citées en exemple, mais dont on devait découvrir ultérieurement que le cheptel avait diminué dans des proportions considérables.

Beaucoup plus toutefois que les insuffisances ou les difficultés de l'agriculture, ce sont les méthodes de la gestion industrielle qui ont été critiquées. Suivant le vocabulaire marxiste, M. Brejnev aurait développé le thème selon lequel « les rapports de production » freinent actuellement en U.R.S.S. « les forces productives ». Ainsi l'accroissement de la productivité au cours des dernières années serait-il sensiblement inférieur à ce qui avait été prévu en 1966 par le vingt-troisième congrès, « l'irresponsabilité des organes », la dispersion des investissements, le retard dans la création

de nouvelles entreprises, étant quelques-unes des causes principales de la crise.

### Comme en 1964

Selon des indications concordantes, l'exposé de M. Brejnev a été accueilli de manière très positive par les membres du comité central. D'aucuns auraient vanté le courage et la franchise de l'orateur. Oubliant peut-être certains discours de M. Khrouchtchev, ils auraient même prétendu que l'on en avait pas entendu de pareil depuis Lénine.

Pourquoi le secrétaire général a-t-il fait ce discours ? Certains spécialistes estiment que la situation économique est plus mauvaise encore qu'à l'automne 1964 au moment où les difficultés du même ordre contribuèrent à la chute de M. Khrouchtchev. Il faut toutefois préciser que les circonstances ont beaucoup changé depuis cette époque et que des causes identiques n'enraineront pas nécessairement les mêmes effets. Grâce à son caractère collégial, l'actuelle direction est beaucoup moins vulnérable que ne l'était l'ancien premier secrétaire. Il n'empêche que les défaillances de l'économie ont pris une ampleur suffisante pour poser un problème politique. On s'en serait aperçu, en particulier, dans les mois d'octobre et novembre derniers, au cours de diverses réunions où étaient à la fois examinés les résultats de l'année 1969 et fixés les objectifs du Plan pour 1970.

Il existe en U.R.S.S. une école importante réunissant aussi bien des chefs d'entreprise que des économistes et quelques fonctionnaires qui font une critique fondamentale des méthodes de préparation et d'exécution du Plan. Celui-ci, disent-ils, est trop souvent établi à partir d'informations fausses ou irréalistes quant aux réalisations antérieures et à l'état d'avancement des programmes.

Souvent, par exemple, on affirme que telle usine ou tel atelier nouveau entrera en service au printemps alors qu'il ne commencera réellement à fonctionner que six mois plus tard au moins. Quant à l'exécution des objectifs du Plan, elle ne peut être assurée dans ces conditions que par des coups de collier désordonnés, particulièrement au quatrième trimestre de l'année, exigeant des efforts démesurés ou d'un prix exorbitant de la part de la main-d'œuvre et accessoirement du matériel. Encore ces efforts ne suffisent-ils pas toujours. Dans les cas même où les obligations du Plan sont « presque » remplies, c'est trop souvent par le jeu de procédés plus ou moins réguliers consistant, par exemple, à puiser excessivement dans les ressources de l'entreprise ou à présenter sous une dénomination déterminée des produits d'une qualité inférieure.

Ces vices de fonctionnement ne tiennent pas seulement à des négligences individuelles, mais proviennent en réalité du système lui-même. Si les dirigeants de l'économie, à tous les niveaux, ne manifestent pas suffisamment le sens de leurs responsabilités, c'est parce que ce système (crainte de sanctions aussi bien qu'absence de stimulants) ne les y encourage aucunement.

M. Brejnev aurait repris à son compte quelques-uns de ces arguments. Peut-être s'est-il également préoccupé du sentiment populaire. « Après tout, nous disait un ami, il est tout de même embarrassant d'inviter les gens à fêter le centenaire de la naissance de Lénine cinquante-trois ans après la révolution sans être capable de leur fournir du saucisson à volonté. » Formule imagée — car on trouve du saucisson dans les magasins de Moscou — mais qui résume assez bien le contraste entre le « triomphalisme » courant de la propagande officielle et la pénurie de nombreux produits de consom-

mation courante, voire seulement leur mauvaise qualité ou leur caractère démodé.

### Un changement d'orientation ?

Est-ce à dire que le plénum de décembre annonce une ère nouvelle, un changement radical de politique ? En ce sujet comme en d'autres, il faut revenir sur le passé pour situer l'événement dans son véritable contexte. Une partie au moins des difficultés que connaît actuellement l'économie soviétique vient d'orientations définies au printemps 1968, à l'époque où furent ressenties le plus vivement les craintes d'une contagion en U.R.S.S. des transformations en cours en Tchécoslovaquie. Dans l'esprit qui conduisit à l'invasion du mois d'août, des garde-fous furent mis en place pour éviter que les réformes économiques ne se développent dans des directions analogues à celles que M. Ota Sik définissait à Prague. On a donc freiné, sinon bloqué, de cette manière un processus considéré comme dangereux.

L'heure est venue de juger cette politique — et ceux qui en ont été les auteurs — à ses résultats. Et cela dans la perspective du concret que les statuts du parti font obligation en principe de réunir cette année. Ce n'est pas s'aventurer dans des spéculations gratuites que de noter, dans ce contexte, que le nom de M. Brejnev est beaucoup plus directement lié que celui de M. Kossyguine à l'invasion de la Tchécoslovaquie, alors que le président du conseil soviétique continue à incarner pour sa part, à tort ou à raison, les promesses de la réforme économique.

De là, deux hypothèses. La première veut que l'on tire à l'heure actuelle la leçon des erreurs commises depuis dix-huit mois et que la voie, désormais ouverte aux promoteurs de la réforme, en premier

lieu à M. Kossyguine, pour poursuivre sans entraves leur expérience. Certains indices ont pu faire penser qu'il en était question.

Une seconde hypothèse toutefois est pour l'instant considérée comme plus vraisemblable. Le rapport présenté par M. Brejnev constituerait une opération beaucoup plus tactique que stratégique et n'annoncerait pas en réalité de changements profonds. Il aurait ainsi pour but de couper l'herbe sous le pied de

ceux qui auraient pu critiquer l'actuelle direction et dont le secrétaire général emprunte délibérément le langage. Ce serait une manière pour le premier personnage du régime, et pour ceux qui lui sont le plus proches, de garder le contrôle direct de la situation, de consentir à divers ajustements rendus indispensables par les événements, mais en prenant soin qu'ils ne débordent pas vers des orientations jugées « révisionnistes ». Notons encore une fois que

la solidarité collégiale de la direction du parti s'accorderait assez bien de ce schéma, dans la mesure où elle fait par nature obstacle à de brusques changements. Les échos que l'on reçoit d'autre part des réunions de cellule en cours dans le pays montrent que le rapport du 15 décembre donne lieu à des discussions beaucoup plus formelles que sincères. D'aucuns en concluent que, si important qu'ait été l'exposé de M. Brejnev, il n'est pas l'occasion

d'un véritable débat au rond. Aussi bien, la Pravda du 13 janvier prenait-elle soin de dire que « le style léniniste et les méthodes de travail établies dans le parti ne sont révélés justifiés ». « La tâche, ajoutait-elle, consiste à améliorer encore le style du travail ». Améliorer et non changer... C'était une manière d'indiquer les limites au-delà desquelles ne sauraient aller les remises en cause.

ALAIN FADOB.

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CPYRGHT

# Soviet consumer laments

## *Higher wages are little consolation to Russians when goods are scarce and of poor quality*

CPYRGHT

By Charlotte Saikowski  
Staff correspondent of  
The Christian Science Monitor

Moscow

Recently I asked a Russian friend what he wanted most in the 1970's. "A car," he replied without hesitation.

His answer was literal. But it could also be taken symbolically, for Russians today yearn for a materially more abundant life. They are ready for a consumer society, though the immediate future does not promise them one.

Visible progress has been made in the past 10 years. The average Ivan Ivanovich now is better clothed and housed. His wife fusses with eye makeup. His daughter wears miniskirts.

But his grumble is that, while he earns more than ever before, there is little to buy. He is a more sophisticated spender these days, often scorning the shoddy products on store shelves and waiting patiently for better-quality goods.

Anyone traveling in the Soviet Union can see at a glance the standard of living remains behind that of every industrialized nation of the world.

### Figures tell story

In Moscow one sometimes searches far and wide for such ordinary items as pencils with erasers, washcloths, writing paper, gloves. Streets are relatively empty of passenger cars. Restaurant service, gradually improving, still can be a frustrating experience.

Soviet figures themselves graphically tell the story. As of the beginning of 1969 there were 3.7 watches and clocks for every family (four persons). But there was a radio or radio-phonograph for only every 1.3 families, a camera for every 3.3 families, a television set for every 2.2 families, a vacuum cleaner for every 10 families, a refrigerator for every 4.3 families, a washing machine for every 2.3 families, a sewing machine for every 1.6 families, a motor-cycle for every 12.5 families, and a bike or motorbike for every 1.7 families.

For the second industrial power in the world, such facts are a growing embarrassment and concern. The Soviet leadership would like to demonstrate that a Communist system alone can provide a just, abundant society for all. The growing urgency of this goal in fact is what impels the Kremlin to seek accommodation with the West. How fast it can begin to divert priorities away from defense into consumer production depends, for one thing, on how soon agreement can be reached with the United States on a strategic-arms limitation. For the near future, the Soviet consumer will go on waiting in line.

### Slowdown shown

Reporting to the Supreme Soviet recently, Planning Chief Nikolai K. Baibakov showed a general slowdown of the economy in 1969 and failure of factories and farms to meet many plan targets. Planned industrial growth in 1970 is set at 6.3 percent, the lowest peacetime growth rate since 1928.

Mr. Baibakov promised Russians that in 1970 for the third year running, production of consumer goods is to grow at a faster pace than the output of capital goods—the former by 6.8 percent and the latter by 6.1 percent. Nonetheless, heavy industry continues to get the lion's share of investment. The shift of resources into consumption appears to have slowed. There will be no big push in 1970 except in agriculture.

Higher goals are set for consumer-goods output in 1970, especially in such items as fabrics, clothes, and shoes. But Mr. Baibakov also told the Supreme Soviet, however, that the public demand for furniture, refrigerators, passenger cars, and some other goods "will not yet be fully met."

### Car outlook disappointing

The passenger-car outlook is especially disappointing to Russians, but as planners view priorities there are things more needed than private cars. The 1970 target calls for production of 348,000 automobiles, including the first batch of 30,000 small cars from the new Fiat plant in Togliatti. This is less than half the original goal of 700,000 set for 1970, suggesting there are considerable

construction difficulties at Togliatti. However, car-hungry Russians can take some comfort in the fact car sales to the public will go up 40 percent. Most of the automobiles now produced are either exported or delivered to offices, factories, and farms for official use.

A big spurt in car production evidently will come under the next five-year plan (1971-1976). Mr. Baibakov said 2 million cars a year will be produced by the end of that time.

Perhaps the most progress for the Soviet consumer has been in housing, which was a neglected sector for many years. With assembly-line construction methods, the Russians have made a huge leap in this field, building more than 2 million apartments every year since 1960. This year 103 million square meters of housing was put up, and the goal for 1970, the year the nation celebrates the Lenin Centennial, is 116.3 million square meters.

By the end of 1970, said Mr. Baibakov, every Soviet person will have an average of 10.9 square meters (117.3 square feet) of living space. This is far from luxurious living quarters, but it represents considerable improvement for the Russian.

Housing quality still is extremely poor by Western standards, a condition that Communist planners are trying desperately to remedy. Even new apartment houses soon look drab, with peeling paint, cracking plaster, and sagging floors. Demand for better workmanship grows, however, and mean-

have an apartment of his own and be rid of communal living.

In terms of his earnings, Ivan Ivanovich does a little better each year. The average factory worker now makes 117.5 rubles (\$130) a month, and the planned target for 1970 is 121 rubles. The income of collective farmers, who have yet to catch up with their city cousins, is to rise 4.6 percent, a small increase as compared with the past few years.

Pay rises are often little consolation to consumers, however, if they have nothing to spend them on. Figures show savings deposits are climbing faster than retail sales.

One reason for this purchasing-power growth is buyers are rejecting many Soviet-made commodities. A Soviet newspaper complained recently that unsold stocks in shops and warehouses totaled 5 billion rubles (\$5.5 billion) above the norm; yet sometimes people could not find such common things as razor blades and electric irons.

Such consumer shortages are causing a "social problem," according to Soviet scholars. Studies done by the USSR Academy of Sciences show growing consumer frustrations spoil the worker's mood and affect labor productivity.

Since the regime critically needs to improve the performance of workers before it can hope to streamline the economy, it will have to give increasing attention in the years ahead to satisfying Ivan Ivanovich's rising expectations.

**Newsweek, February 23, 1970**  
**FOR SICK RUSSIA:**  
**A PHYSICIST'S Rx**

In the summer of 1968, shortly before the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia, an extraordinary document filtered out to the West. Written by a leading member of the Soviet elite—Andrei Dmitrievich Sakharov, a brilliant research physicist—it was a long essay boldly criticizing the more repressive aspects of Soviet society and calling for an East-West "convergence" as the only means of ensuring peace and solving world problems. Last week, apparently undeterred that his eloquent appeal had largely gone unheard in his own country, Sakharov spoke out anew—once again in an impassioned plea for unfettered freedom of expression in the Soviet Union.

What prompted the latest outcry from Sakharov was a tough speech recently made by Leonid Brezhnev, in which Russia's Communist Party boss called for tighter political and bureaucratic controls in order to boost the country's lagging economy. Far shorter than his 10,000-word essay of 1968, Sakharov's letter, addressed specifically to Brezhnev, was circulated among dissident So-

viet intellectuals by Samizdat, an underground publishing organization in Moscow that specializes in protest literature. And while there was no way of verifying whether Sakharov was indeed the author—the document merely carried his typewritten name at the bottom—most Western observers in Moscow who saw it felt the letter bore enough similarities to the physicist's previous writing to satisfy them as to its authenticity. Below, excerpts from the letter:

"We have known for a long time that we not only have lost the moon race but also the competition for economic achievement, that the productivity of labor in our country is extremely low, that our country is turning into a European supplier of raw material, that we are holding our own thanks only to the fantastic natural resources of our country and the traditional patience of the peasantry.

"Everybody can see that nobody in this country really wants to work. They only want to throw dust into the eyes of the managers. Fictitious events like jubilees [a reference to the forthcoming celebration of Lenin's 100th birthday] have become more important than genuine events in economic and social life.

"All this is a consequence of the fact

that we, for many years, have lived in an imaginary world, that we deceive one another and cannot bring ourselves to face the truth. At the same time, other countries don't have their heads in the clouds but are building their economies on solid ground and therefore pulling further and further ahead of us.

"There are no friendly meetings where people can speak their minds about this. All of us know that this protracted collective self-deception will unavoidably lead toward catastrophe. All over Russia, people among themselves speak about this problem.

"The cure is suggested by the diagnosis itself. All our lying can only be cured by open public discussion.

"How much initiative, wisdom and enthusiasm will come to the fore if only people will no longer be gagged. In the editorial offices of journals there are dozens of articles, dozens of books in manuscript form, in which there are honest analyses of our life.

"But the door is closed. The pride of Russian literature, Solzhenitsyn, has been expelled from the Writer's Union. The Parliament, so costly to convene, has been turned into a blind voting machine.

"Open public discussion—and only open public discussion—can put sick Russia on the road to recovery."

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THE COMMUNIST SCENE

(21 February - 20 March 1970)

1. Leading Venezuelan Communist Denounces Soviet Model

Teodoro Petkoff, Venezuelan Communist leader of Bulgarian ancestry and until recently a member of the Party's Politburo, is persisting in his criticism of the Soviet Union for trying to impose its will on the international Communist movement. In the long 15th plenary session of the Central Committee of the Venezuelan Communist Party (PCV) from 16 February to 6 March, Petkoff was castigated by the dominant pro-Soviet faction for such heresies as his condemnation of the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia. (In the PCV, orthodox pro-Soviet Communists are sometimes referred to as "soft-liners" for their espousal of the Soviet-approved tactic of legal non-violent political activity in contrast to the "hard-line" characterized by Castro-inspired tactics of violence, insurrection, and guerrilla warfare.) The PCV's condemnation of Petkoff centered on the ideas expressed in his book Checoeslovaquia: El Socialismo Como Problema (Czechoslovakia: The Problem of Socialism) published last fall. Attached are excerpts from his book illustrating his heresies.

Petkoff's main thesis is that the socialism represented by the Soviet Union cannot be and should not be looked upon as the model for Venezuela. Venezuela must adapt socialism to its own national peculiarities. The Soviets invaded Czechoslovakia essentially because Czechoslovakia was building its own model of socialism on its own traditions, not on those of the Soviet Union. (This independent road to socialism has always been and continues to be intolerable to the Soviets, since it challenges the ultimate wisdom of Soviet ideology and consequently the Soviets' claim to leadership of the world Communist movement.)

While derived independently, Petkoff's ideas as well as his position in the Party, bear striking resemblances to those of Roger Garaudy, the prominent French Communist, as well as a number of other European and Asian Communist intellectuals and leaders, whose breaking point came with the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia. Both Petkoff and Garaudy were recently dismissed from their respective Politburos. Both are prominent intellectuals in their own right -- Petkoff as a trained economist, Garaudy as the acknowledged leading ideologue of French Communism. Both are tested and proven militants of Communism, Petkoff until recently as a "hard-line" active guerrilla, Garaudy as a long-time promoter of Soviet orthodoxy in the French Communist party (defending the Soviet invasion of Hungary in 1956, for example). Both risked their careers in the Party by espousing a position critical of the Soviet Union against an orthodox majority of their leadership colleagues. Garaudy's crusade ended by his expulsion from the Politburo and from the Central Committee at the 14th Congress of the PCF in February. He also resigned from his post as head of the Party's Center for Marxist Studies shortly thereafter.



Petkoff earlier lost his Politburo post, and a careful campaign is currently afoot in the PCV to neutralize him even further by maneuvering him out of the Central Committee (see attached accounts of the recently concluded Central Committee Plenum).

There are differences, too. Despite his minority position, Petkoff has substantial support in a small Party with little influence in national politics (typical of Latin American Communist parties), and is a dynamic, young leader; whereas the much older Garaudy has mobilized little practical political support in a large and potentially influential mass party. Another vital difference is that Garaudy was merely one of the most eloquent of a large number of European Communists taking the Soviet Union to task for its invasion of Czechoslovakia, whereas Petkoff's is a lone voice in Latin American Communist parties, which in obedient chorus all (except for the Mexican CP) sang their approval of the Soviet action.

The power of these two men lies in their realistic reappraisal of Soviet aims and pretensions in the world Communist movement, a reappraisal triggered by reflection on the underlying meaning of the Soviets' crushing of the new humane socialism undertaken in Czechoslovakia in 1968. They recognize the inability of the Soviet leadership to adapt to the requirements of the contemporary world outside the Soviet Union (and even within the Soviet Union). They also are aware of the obsolete Soviet insistence on the necessity of adhering unquestioningly and undeviatingly to the Soviet model. This obligation thinking Communists recognize as a barrier to the advance of the very Communism they support, while the "apparatchiks," thinking or not, give precedence to their own political survival, which in turn depends directly on the financial support the Soviet Union provides in exchange for blind obedience.

## 2. Garaudy's New Indictment of the Soviet System

Roger Garaudy, leading intellectual of the French Communist Party (PCF), divested by the Party of his posts in the Politburo and the Central Committee and as head of the Center of Marxist Studies at its 14th Party Congress in February, continued his critical examination of the Soviet Union. His newest effort was yet another book, Toute la Vérité (The Whole Truth) which was released 25 February, hard on the heels of his Le Grand Tournant du Socialisme (The Turning Point of Socialism) which appeared in December. Having been attacked by the Soviets and disavowed by his own Party, Garaudy apparently no longer feels any compunction about revealing what went on behind the scenes in Communist councils, as he does in this newest work. There he repeatedly urged his colleagues, for the sake of the future credibility and viability of the PCF, if for no other reason, to acknowledge the many distasteful and increasingly self-evident truths about the Soviet Union: its centralized, authoritarian, bureaucratically stagnant dictatorship, its insistence that other parties in its sphere of influence and in the free world blindly adopt the Soviet model of socialism, its crushing of the new Czechoslovakian socialism in 1968 because of Soviet fear of innovation, the fact that post-invasion Czechoslovakia is controlled and run step for step by the Soviet Union with the nominal leaders, including Husak, having no say in essential developments.

The French daily newspaper, Le Figaro, on 24 February published substantial excerpts which give a good idea of his main concerns. The original of the Le Figaro article and an English translation are attached.

World-wide, where Communist ideology and the Soviet practical application of it have been experienced for a period of time, there is not only an increasing awareness of basic falsity and irrelevance, but an expression of this recognition by those who know the Soviets best, i.e., the growing corps of Communist intellectuals who, like Garaudy, Petkoff, and the Austrian Communist, Ernst Fischer, have worked in the "apparat," devoting their full energies and idealism to the advancement of Communism. Their testimony can not be ignored; it intrudes itself more and more on believers as well as non-believers. Their views represent those of countless other less articulate comrades.

### 3. Surfeit of Lenin Centennial Adulation

Vladimir Ilyich Ulyanov, better known to the world as Lenin, was born 100 years ago on 22 April. As the founder of the Soviet system, Lenin's memory compels his modern successors -- the Brezhnevs, Kosygin, Suslovs -- to exalt his life work, which is their heritage, particularly since they have no other legitimate claim to rule the 230 million people of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. Their celebration of the Lenin centenary has been mammoth in scope in the USSR, so that the Soviet citizenry has become numb and immune to the massive doses of false, repetitious, uncritical propaganda in praise of the "infallible" Soviet hero. Outside the Soviet Bloc, parallel exertions seem to have produced mainly a tone of false enthusiasm, and even this only among Communists and other opportunists who have something to gain by pandering to the Soviets.

For those who reflect on the insurrectionist genius of Lenin and the monstrosity of a state that arose after he managed to "pick up power lying in the street" (the Bolshevik Revolution), it is an intriguing socio-political question as to whether the USSR today is the logical result of Lenin's prescriptions (as Stalin's daughter Svetlana Alliluyeva so compellingly insists), or it is a perversion of Leninism by Stalin and his successors. The problem may never be satisfactorily resolved, but the massive failure of the Soviet system, by almost any standard of human and social measurement, is a fact that even the most devout of Soviet apologists have difficulty denying.

Some will remember that April is the month two years ago when the Czechoslovak leaders under Dubcek launched their Action Program, the formal elaboration of their effort to give Marxist-Leninist socialism a "human face." The irony will not be lost on everyone that the Soviet Union in the name of Lenin's holy edicts crushed the Czechoslovak effort to give Lenin's precepts new and truly progressive meaning.

[Excerpts from]

Checoslovaquia — El Socialismo Como Problema

(Czechoslovakia — Socialism as a Problem)

by: Teodoro Petkoff

CPYRGHT

pp. 5-7, 27-29, 50, 57-58, 167-170, 173-174, 180-181, 188-189, 192-194.

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## INTRODUCCION

Si alguna virtud tienen los acontecimientos de Checoslovaquia —los que se iniciaron en enero de 1968, cesaron por la intervención soviética y continúan hasta hoy—, es la de contribuir a deshacer entre los comunistas muchos de los mitos ingenuos y confiados, mucha de la imaginaria de Epinal que solíamos asociar con la construcción del socialismo en los países donde los partidos comunistas han tomado el poder. Poco a poco, al precio de dolorosos desgarramientos, una nueva lucidez toma posesión de nosotros. Ahora descubrimos que la edificación del socialismo constituye una labor penosa, llena de obstáculos de todo tipo, en la cual, con no poca frecuencia, las circunstancias concretas han obligado a apartarse de los modelos teóricos establecidos en la literatura marxista. Por reflejo, una comprensión más cabal del socialismo que ya existe, nos conduce a inquietarnos por el socialismo que queremos para nuestro país: ya el socialismo no es posible identificarlo con algún país en particular. Y si tal cosa no es posible, hoy, en el combate, tenemos que descubrir y establecer los rasgos principales del socialismo que deseamos para Venezuela.

Lentamente una noción ha ido abriéndose paso entre nosotros, comunistas: no existe una forma única de socialismo sino varias; el socialismo no es igual en todos los países socialistas. Por otra parte, se profundiza la conciencia en torno a la diversidad de tipos y vías socialistas. La esencia idéntica —supresión de la propiedad privada de los medios de producción, revolución social— no puede ocultar las profundas diferencias en cuanto al grado de desarrollo económico, cultural, político ni las semejanzas en cuanto a la incidencia e influencia que el pasado capitalista o feudal tiene sobre las nuevas sociedades, amén de las modalidades diversas de gestión económica, cultural, política, etc. En lugar del bloque monolítico y uniforme al cual nos acostumbró la propaganda, vemos aparecer un mundo multiforme y variadísimo, en el cual se manifiestan tendencias de desarrollo social con apreciables matices de diferencia entre sí.

Habitados a pensar el capitalismo en términos marxistas, vale decir científicos, un curioso mecanismo mental —hijo legítimo del stalinismo— nos hacía pensar el

socialismo en términos de propaganda. Certeros y agudos en el descubrimiento y utilización de las contradicciones existentes en el sistema capitalista, veíamos al campo socialista como un mundo en el cual toda contradicción social importante había sido liquidada para siempre.

Como resultado de esto, ahora no podemos esconder la perplejidad. ¿Qué ocurre en China? Intuitivamente sentimos que las respuestas simples no son suficientes. No es posible reducir todo a una aberración personal; algo más serio debe estar pasando en aquel país. ¿Qué hay exactamente en Yugoslavia? Porque es evidente que, sea lo que sea, no es capitalismo. ¿Y en Cuba o en Corea? ¿Por qué los juicios a los intelectuales en la Unión Soviética? ¿Después de cincuenta años de socialismo se ha formado una intelectualidad contrarrevolucionaria? Raro, muy raro. ¿Cuáles son exactamente los problemas económicos que brotan en países donde supuestamente no los había y donde la palabra "crisis" había sido eliminada del diccionario económico? Porque ahora nos enteramos de que en Checoslovaquia se ha confrontado una peligrosa crisis económica y el crecimiento del país se halla estancado y en la URSS el ritmo de desarrollo ha marchado en esta década por debajo de los niveles previstos en 1960 y por debajo de los ritmos logrados en el decenio anterior. ¿Qué motiva las tendencias centrifugas en el campo socialista? ¿Puramente el llamado nacionalismo burgués? Sin embargo, los camaradas rumanos dicen algunas cosas que mueven a reflexión.

pp. 27-29

La lucha por descentralizar el plan y por flexibilizarlo significaría, de tener éxito, la probable reducción de la burocracia y la asunción de responsabilidades administrativo-productivas por parte de las capas técnicas integradas a la producción y por los obreros de vanguardia, cultos y avanzados. Ese conflicto está planteado por el propio flujo del desenvolvimiento social del país y tiene hoy en la URSS una manifestación concreta y, por así decir, espectacular: la represión —entendida en sentido más amplio que el puramente policial— sobre la intelectualidad. La razón es obvia. La recuperación del poder por parte de la clase obrera, la democratización económica

exigieran, ya lo hemos dicho, una democratización política y general de la sociedad, un renacimiento de la vida política. Ese proceso objetivo encuentra hoy uno de sus mayores agentes de estímulo en aquel sector que subjetivamente está mejor preparado para resentir la ausencia de vida política y libertad intelectual: la *intelligentsia*. Esta, por su propia condición, por el nivel de su conciencia, por su formación marxista, por su formación cultural y disponibilidad de información, exige ya, como una condición para su desenvolvimiento, la urgente democratización socialista.

La burocracia, que adivina en esa democratización socialista la disminución progresiva de su poder y sus privilegios, se opone rudamente a ella y castiga su manifestación más aparente, la rebelión intelectual, con un rigor que pretende ser escarmentador y que, por lo que se ve, no hace sino avivar la llama. La vieja y en cierto modo gloriosa capa de burócratas, veterana de medio siglo de una tarea titánica, se acerca, históricamente hablando, a su ocaso. La historia de la URSS en los últimos años, el film del juego político en sus sectores dirigentes es el reflejo en ellos de las luchas, fricciones, tensiones y compromisos de las corrientes y tendencias presentes en la sociedad. Pero todo apunta —a largo plazo, tal vez— hacia el debilitamiento ulterior de la burocracia, de los *apparatchiki*, a la limitación de su poder, a la disminución de su importancia económica y por ende de su función, y a un deslizamiento del centro de gravedad del poder hacia la alianza de la *intelligentsia* con las capas de jóvenes técnicos y obreros de vanguardia. Que este proceso esté en sus comienzos, sea débil, lento y lleno de altibajos, de alternativas a veces desesperanzadoras, no quiere decir que no tenga lugar. De la URSS se puede decir con Galileo: "Eppur si mouve...", "Y sin embargo se mueve".

Fácil resultaría "tomar habitaciones en el Gran Hotel del Abismo", —para utilizar la expresión de Lukacs dirigida a Marcuse— y ver en la URSS una sociedad donde los conflictos y tendencias señalados existen pero son neutralizados y seguirán siéndolo por las contra-corrientes de la burocracia. Sería perfectamente válido preguntarse en qué medida no ha cristalizado en la URSS una estructura burocrática que controla cerradamente órganos claves (partido, gobierno, ejército) y maneja los medios de comunicación de masas de manera tal que puede impedir el acceso a las posiciones de poder de los *outsiders*, nulificando la movilidad vertical y bloqueando indefinidamente la concreción política del proceso que hemos descrito.

Pero es precisamente la experiencia checoslovaca de los ocho primeros meses de 1968 la que alimenta la

esperanza. Si en Checoslovaquia fue posible, nada autoriza a imaginar que el socialismo no va a encontrar dentro de sí un segundo aliento que lo saque del punto donde se encuentra y haga nuevamente de él —en su encarnación estatal— un verdadero polo de atracción, no por obligación geo-política sino por la fuerza de la noble idea que materializa, para todas las fuerzas revolucionarias del mundo. Es la existencia de ese proceso interno en la URSS la que mantiene el optimismo y precave contra el escepticismo y el cinismo.

p. 50

En definitiva, el partido comunista que subió al poder en Checoslovaquia era un genuino partido de masas, un auténtico partido de la clase obrera, la mayor fuerza política individual del país, profundamente vinculada a su pueblo —por su pasado y por su acción durante la Resistencia anti-nazi—, con una intelectualidad que se contaba entre las más vigorosas y comprometidas de Europa. Y, para mayor ventaja, ese partido actuaba en un país donde el sentimiento pro-soviético es —o era, porque ahora...— mayoritario entre la población, la cual no olvidaba la actitud de la URSS durante el período que condujo a Munich y a la posterior invasión alemana de Checoslovaquia.

Pero este potente partido comunista tuvo la "desgracia" de subir al poder en años en que, de un lado la guerra fría, y del otro el estilo de Stalin, condujeron a un planteamiento represivo —más allá de las exigencias de la dictadura del proletariado y del terror rojo— de la vida del país y del partido.

pp. 57-58

Pero retomemos el hilo. Hemos señalado entre los rasgos de la crisis política el de la apatía, el escepticismo y la despolitización del pueblo checoslovaco. Sin embargo, tal característica era en realidad la manifestación externa de una íntima, profunda e inexpressada politización, tal como lo demostraron los acontecimientos. Entre las capas intelectuales del país existía, como fruto de la situación, un estado de insatisfacción e inquietud que conducía a frecuentes choques con el régimen y agitaba hondamente la conciencia de las gentes. En verdad, la despolitización aparente no es sino la máscara de una gran intranquilidad y también de un gran desengaño, de un escepticismo creciente ante la diferencia entre las gran-

des frases de los discursos y la vida cotidiana. La "despolitización" escondía tan sólo el hambre de verdadera vida política.<sup>1</sup>

Es importante apuntar que probablemente en Checoslovaquia la necesidad de democratizar la vida política corresponde a un sentimiento tal vez más profundo que en algunos otros países socialistas. Independientemente de la discusión de fondo que se pueda hacer sobre la esencia de la democracia burguesa, ningún marxista puede desconocer el hecho de que la tradición democrática burguesa de una determinada sociedad cuenta mucho a la hora de dotar a esta de un contenido diferente. En el caso de Checoslovaquia, cuya democracia parlamentaria fue particularmente estable en la convulsa Europa de entreguerra, aquella tradición constituye un importante factor de estímulo para la búsqueda de un contenido institucional concreto y no formal para la democracia socialista, entendida esta como superación dialéctica de la democracia burguesa.

<sup>1</sup> Los dirigentes del partido que en Bulgaria me hablaban con pesar de la despolitización de la juventud búlgara parecen no comprender que la juventud está despolitizada porque toda la vida del país lo está. El juego político, el libre debate, que debiera ser expresión máxima del autogobierno —que virtualmente no existe— está reducido a lo sumo al Comité Central del partido comunista, mientras que las grandes masas están ausentes de toda vida política real. Sin debate político, con elecciones donde es imposible la escogencia, con la educación marxista reducida a la fatigosa memorización de textos marxistas, con el Komsomol transformado en una organización de boy-scouts, ¿cómo sorprenderse de que la juventud no se interese en la política? ¿En cuál política habrían de interesarse? ¿La de los discursos y los desfiles? Lo de Checoslovaquia, empero, revela bien a las claras que esa juventud aburrida de la caricatura de vida política y de educación marxista, estaba más que preparada para una verdadera actividad política, para un verdadero renacer de la vida política socialista.

pp. 167-170

Afirmamos que el socialismo no estuvo en peligro en Checoslovaquia. Por el contrario, el socialismo, en los ocho meses del "nuevo curso", experimentó un considerable reforzamiento. El partido recuperó su prestigio y su fuerza de masas. Reafirmó su dirección sobre el pueblo checoslovaco.

Afirmamos que el partido comunista checoslovaco entró a resolver, dentro de un espíritu marxista y comunista, los difíciles problemas de la democracia socialista y que las soluciones presentadas y puestas en práctica constituyen la razón principal de la recuperación de su fuerza y prestigio.

Afirmamos que el partido comunista checoslovaco abordó con audacia la cuestión de su hegemonía y de su papel general en la sociedad socialista. El reconocimiento de la participación de otras fuerzas políticas revolucionarias y la lucha por mantener la hegemonía y la dirección del PC en un proceso de masas, de cara a ellas, entre ellas, por y para ellas, constituye una lúcida aplicación de los principios de Lenin en la materia y una demostración de la confianza en las masas y en los análisis del marxismo-leninismo, así como en la capacidad de atracción de los ideales socialistas.

Afirmamos que el partido comunista checoslovaco implementó de manera leninista la cuestión de las relaciones entre cultura y sociedad, entre intelectuales y partido, y que ello ayudó grandemente a recuperar la confianza de la brillante, consistente pero desengañada intelectualidad checoslovaca.

Afirmamos que los peligros contrarrevolucionarios existentes en el país estaban siendo neutralizados mediante la lucha de masas y la participación de estas en el combate por el nuevo curso, por una nueva sociedad, por un retorno a los antiguos ideales del socialismo. Sostenemos que las debilidades que en este aspecto se hayan podido cometer no comprometían en absoluto la estabilidad del régimen.

Afirmamos que el partido comunista checoslovaco enfrentó firme pero comprensivamente las presiones provenientes de su flanco izquierdo y que por vía persuasiva logró ganar para sus posiciones de prudencia a esos sectores impacientes.

Afirmamos que el partido comunista checoslovaco enfrentó con firmeza pero también con un claro espíritu de tolerancia y amplitud los manejos conspirativos de su ala conservadora. Impidió las venganzas y la retaliación y con innegable sentido democrático y socialista efectuó los cambios necesarios de personas en el aparato gubernamental y partidista sin recurrir a los métodos policiales del pasado.

Afirmamos que la incomprensión del actual grupo dirigente de la URSS ha sido el principal factor de inestabilidad en Checoslovaquia. La conducta del gobierno soviético exasperó las contradicciones, estimuló las posiciones negativas o chovinistas y permitió a la contrarrevolución mimetizarse bajo las banderas de la defensa de la patria.

Afirmamos que el partido y el gobierno checoslovacos en ningún momento plantearon el desconocimiento de las opciones socialistas del país y el pueblo. Una y otra vez fueron ratificadas la naturaleza socialista del régimen, la propiedad social de los medios de producción, la hegemonía del partido comunista, la negativa a permitir una oposición antisocialista organizada, la política de alianzas del país centrada en la amistad con la URSS y la pertenencia y cumplimiento de las obligaciones del Pacto de Varsovia.

Finalmente, afirmamos que la clamorosa confirmación de todo cuanto hemos dicho la constituye la actitud del partido y el gobierno checoslovacos ante los ejércitos del Pacto de Varsovia y ante la propia invasión en tanto que hecho político. La orden de no enfrentar violentamente a los invasores, acatada casi en un cien por ciento por el pueblo checoslovaco, demuestra bien a las claras que el partido tenía control de la situación y era obedecido por la población. Pero hay algo más: la actitud de los comunistas checoslovacos, humillados, atropellados, tratados como delincuentes, fue en todo momento la de no ahondar más el abismo abierto entre Checoslovaquia y sus "hermanos". La negativa a dejarse arrastrar por la tentación de la lucha, del martirio, del "ejemplo"; la búsqueda angustiada de una solución negociada con los soviéticos, dan evidencia, dramáticamente, de la voluntad de Dubcek y sus camaradas de no romper con el campo socialista, de no romper con la URSS, de no interponer un océano de sangre entre el pueblo checoslovaco —ya suficientemente amargado— y los pueblos de los otros cinco países. Esta es una prueba —dolorosa y terrible— de la capacidad internacionalista del nuevo equipo dirigente checoslovaco, de las prometedoras esperanzas que una tal concepción entrañaba para el futuro.

pp. 173-174

No es posible finalizar este trabajo sin responder a una pregunta que desde el comienzo está planteada en el ánimo del lector: ¿por qué si la invasión constituye un error tan trágico, fue cometido por los soviéticos? ¿Por qué la URSS se jugó concientemente su prestigio en una aventura tan desastrosa?

En fin de cuentas, esta es la *ultima ratio* de quienes consideran acertada o necesaria la intervención. Si los soviéticos lo hicieron, razones poderosísimas debían existir puesto que una gente tan responsable no puede co-

meter deliberadamente una estupidez semejante. Es la razón de la fe, la razón de la confianza ciega en la URSS; los restos de un pasado simple e ingenuo en el cual la palabra de la URSS era la palabra sagrada de la patria del socialismo, de los herederos de Lenin, de los heroicos constructores del socialismo.<sup>1</sup>

Felizmente —o infortunadamente, depende del punto de vista de cada quien— ese pasado está hecho añicos. Después del XX Congreso del PCUS todo es diferente. Ya no se puede seguir siendo comunista de fe católica. Ahora es más difícil ser comunista. Ahora es preciso pensar, es preciso investigar. No hay fórmulas ni esquemas elaborados por sabios de otras partes que nos cuadren perfectamente. Ser comunista ahora, cuando ya no es tan obvia la bella farsa de Vaillant-Couturier —"el comunismo es la juventud del mundo"—, cuando el movimiento comunista conoce poderosas tendencias centrifugas, cuando contradicciones impensadas desgarran al movimiento y al campo socialista, comporta un compromiso entrañable con los ideales y una lucidez casi dolorosa para *entender*, para explicar por qué, a veces, es tanta la distancia entre los ideales y la realidad. Sólo entendiendo como marxistas podemos precavernos hoy de la desilusión, del escepticismo y de la renuncia.

<sup>1</sup> Por cierto que la razón de la fe podría también utilizarse con los partidos comunistas que condenaron la intervención. ¿Acaso partidos tan respetables como el italiano y el francés, por ejemplo, no merecen un mínimo de credibilidad? La posición de estos partidos debiera hacer reflexionar a aquellos partidos incondicionales de la invasión.

pp. 180-181

En el plano de la política mundial la intervención luce aún más negativa, si ello es posible. El ahondamiento de las divisiones y contradicciones que afectan al movimiento comunista mundial; el enfrentamiento de la URSS y el PCUS con partidos comunistas tan importantes como el italiano, el francés, el español y el japonés, amén de casi todos los partidos comunistas europeos y de algunos de otros continentes; el debilitamiento de la autoridad moral de la URSS y el reflejo de ello sobre los partidos comunistas (ya se vio lo que pasó en Suecia, en Austria y en Finlandia), todo esto no es sino una parte de los daños que ha causado al movimiento revolucionario mundial la acción soviética.

Pero hay algo más grave y de muy inquietantes implicaciones. La invasión de Checoslovaquia prácticamente consagra la división del mundo en esferas de influen-

cia y el respeto mutuo de ellas por parte de ambas superpotencias. No es casual que los imperialistas yanquis hayan reaccionado sólo *pro forma* en este asunto. Muy gustosos aceptaron la oportunidad que se les ofreció de esperar reciprocidad para sus propias e inevitables intervenciones en aquellos países de su esfera de influencia que intentan cambios revolucionarios. Las implicaciones de esto para el futuro del movimiento revolucionario podrían ser gravísimas y muy negativas.

Aunque las responsabilidades de una potencia que tiene en sus cohetes parte de la suerte del género humano son muy grandes y obligan a una prudencia y a una cautela que países más pequeños y menos poderosos no suelen tener, la alternativa al holocausto mundial no puede ser el congelamiento del *status quo*, ni la cristalización de las esferas de influencia, ni la política de bloques. De ello deriva una suerte de pacto tácito —que no puede sin embargo, llevarnos a la simpleza de proclamar la colusión entre Estados Unidos y la Unión Soviética— que entre las intervenciones en Santo Domingo y en Checoslovaquia “legaliza” más o menos definitivamente la política de esferas de influencia.

El balance, a estas alturas, no puede ser más desolador.

pp. 188-189

La Unión Soviética es un producto histórico muy específico. Lejos está de ser una suerte de encarnación universal y absoluta de la idea del socialismo. Nació dentro de condiciones históricas muy particulares y el socialismo allí se ha desenvuelto según lineamientos peculiares e irrepitibles. La Unión Soviética constituye un modelo socialista particular, concretamente limitado por coordenadas históricas absolutamente propias.

Varias veces hemos apuntado que el socialismo se implantó por primera vez en un país de insuficiente desarrollo capitalista, muy atrasado en el campo, muy artesanal y pequeño burgués, con una clase obrera relativamente reducida y un elevadísimo peso específico del campesinado. Ese país fue posteriormente devastado por la guerra imperialista y por la guerra civil y se construyó a sí mismo dentro de lo que para la época se conocía como el cerco capitalista.

Y luego, en la URSS tuvo lugar esa deformación burocrático-policial que es el stalinismo y con ello se configuró un tipo de socialismo de características singulares. Es fácil comprender ahora, después de cincuenta años de experiencia socialista en la URSS y de la existencia de otros países socialistas, que el socialismo soviético no es el modelo único de socialismo y que sus rasgos particulares, muchos de ellos determinados muy estrechamente por las condiciones en que le tocó crecer, no son rasgos comunes a todas las modalidades del socialismo y algunos de ellos ni siquiera pueden ser considerados como rasgos del socialismo en general.

pp. 192-194

Identificar a la URSS con el socialismo constituye un peligroso expediente. Como, por lo demás tampoco se puede identificar aquel con ningún país en particular. El socialismo es el conjunto de todos los países socialistas existentes pero también bastante más que esa constelación de ellos. Pero muchísimo más inadecuado aún es establecer identidad entre el socialismo y la dirección del PCUS. La experiencia histórica debiera enseñarnos a ser muy cautos en esta materia, puesto que los cambios políticos ocurridos en la URSS se caracterizan, entre otras cosas, porque cada nuevo equipo dirigente niega y denuncia casi absolutamente al anterior. Una vez el socialismo habría sido Stalin, luego Malenkov, después Jruschov y ahora Brezhnev. Empero, si la encarnación del socialismo viene a ser lo que cada uno de estos dirigentes dice de su antecesor, bien pobre cosa vendría a ser el socialismo. Y esto no es una caricatura. Bien sabido es que una de las deformaciones más curiosas del socialismo contemporáneo es la que pretende hacer de los dirigentes comunistas de algunas potencias socialistas una suerte de santones, de Papas indiscutidos, sedicentes vicarios de Marx y Lenin en esta tierra<sup>1</sup>.

¡Cuán lejos veía Federico Engels cuando en su libro sobre la guerra campesina en Alemania, casi al desgaire, de pasada, entre dos guiones, dejó consignada la profundísima observación que sirve de epígrafe a estas conclusiones!

<sup>1</sup> No deja de llamar la atención —y ser sintomático al mismo tiempo del grado de dogmatización que ha alcanzado el movimiento comunista mundial— que ahora resulte habitual utilizar como términos de comparación metafórica para aquél algunas categorías de la Iglesia católica. ¡Y lo peor es que la viceversa también es usual!

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Finalmente, cualquier actitud crítica hacia los problemas del socialismo en construcción no puede separarse de una consideración sobre la marcha de la revolución en nuestros países. Es discutible la relación entre la política soviética y la revolución mundial pero lo contrario es también cierto: la revolución mundial dejó durante decenios sola a la URSS. No es, desde luego, un problema moral. Con escasas excepciones asiáticas y una latinoamericana, los revolucionarios no hemos cumplido por años nuestro deber para con el socialismo, para con la URSS.

Y no es casual que el máximo de incondicionalismo hacia la política soviética y sus cambios, que la mayor reducción de la capacidad crítica hacia los problemas del socialismo, se encuentre precisamente allí, en sectores y personas de dudosa contribución a la factura de su propia revolución. Por eso, para terminar con una frase consagrada, para los revolucionarios latinoamericanos, la actitud crítica hacia la URSS, para ser no sólo moralmente válida sino también políticamente efectiva, debe ser a la vez una actitud auto-crítica.

[Excerpts from]

Checoslovaquia -- El Socialismo Como Problema  
(Czechoslovakia -- Socialism as a Problem)

by: Teodoro Petkoff

CPYRGHT

pp. 5-7

Introduction

If there is any virtue in the Czechoslovak events -- which began in January 1968, which continued on through Soviet intervention and which persist to this very day -- it is that they contributed to the undoing of the ingenuous and trusting myth held among many communists as well as much of the imagery of Epinal which we usually associated with the construction of socialism in the countries where the communist parties are in power. Little by little, at the price of painful lacerations, a new lucidity took possession of us. Now we discover that the construction of socialism constitutes a painful effort, full of obstacles of all kinds, in which concrete circumstances, with some frequency, forced us to move away from the theoretical models established in Marxist literature. On reflection, a more all-encompassing understanding of socialism, such as it exists now, causes us to worry about the kind of socialism which we want for our country: today, socialism cannot be identified with any particular country. And if this is not possible, today, in our struggle, then we must discover and establish the main features of the kind of socialism we want in Venezuela.



Slowly, a notion began to spread among us communists: there does not exist just one, unique form of socialism, but various such forms; socialism is not equal in all socialist countries. On the other hand, there is an increasingly profound awareness of the diversity of socialist types and ways. The identical essence -- suppression of the private ownership of the means of production, social revolution -- cannot conceal the profound differences in terms of the degree of economic, cultural, and political development, nor the dissimilarities in terms of the incidence and influence which the capitalist or feudal past has on the new societies, except for the various modalities of economic, cultural, political, etc. management. In place of the monolithic and uniform bloc, to which propaganda has accustomed us, we now see appear a multiform and highly varied world in which social development tendencies with considerable patterns of difference among each other manifest themselves.

Accustomed to thinking of capitalism in Marxist terms, that is to say, in scientific terms, there is a rather strange mental mechanism -- the legitimate child of Stalinism -- which causes us to think of socialism in terms of propaganda. Sure of ourselves and keen in our discovery and utilization of the contradictions existing in the capitalist system, we looked upon the socialist camp as a world in which any major social contradiction has been wiped out forever.

As a result of this, we cannot now hide all of this perplexity. What is happening in China? Intuitively, we feel that simple answers are not enough. It is not possible to reduce everything to a personal aberration; something more serious is going on in that country. What exactly is the situation in Yugoslavia? Because it is obvious that,

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whatever it is that is going on there, it is not capitalism. And what about Cuba or Korea? What explains the sentences meted out to the intellectuals in the Soviet Union? Has a counterrevolutionary intelligentsia been formed after 50 years of socialism? Strange, very strange indeed. What exactly are the economic problems that are emerging in countries where they supposedly do not exist and where the word "crisis" has been deleted from the economic dictionary? It seems that we now find out that a dangerous economic crisis developed in Czechoslovakia and that the country's growth has been stagnating while the growth rate of the USSR has fallen below the levels anticipated in 1960 during this past decade and even below the growth rate achieved during the decade prior to that. What motivates the centrifugal tendencies in the Socialist camp? Is it merely the call of bourgeois nationalism? Nevertheless, the Romanian comrades are saying some things that cause us to reflect.

[pp 27-29]

The struggle to decentralize the plan and to make it flexible would mean -- if it is to be successful -- the probable reduction of the bureaucracy and the assumption of responsibilities in the administration and in production by the technical strata involved in production and by the educated and advanced vanguard workers. This conflict is created by the very flow of social development in the country and has a concrete and, so to speak, spectacular manifestation today in the USSR: the repression -- understood here in the broadest sense, not just the purely political sense -- of the intelligentsia. The reason is obvious. The recovery of power by the working class, as well as economic democratization, as we said before, would require a political and general

democratization of society, a rebirth of political life. This objective process today has one of its major stimuli in that sector which is subjectively best prepared to resent the absence of political life and intellectual freedom: the intelligentsia. Because of its very own status, because of its level of awareness, because of its Marxist upbringing, because of its cultural education and because of the availability of information, this intelligentsia, as a prior condition for its development, demands socialist democratization on an urgent basis.

The bureaucracy, which feels that this socialist democratization means the progressive diminution of its power and its privileges, forcefully opposes this and punishes its most apparent manifestation, the intellectual rebellion, with a strictness that claims to be a warning and that, as far as we can see now, only stimulates the call for democratization. The old and to some extent glorious stratum of bureaucrats, veterans of half a century filled with a titanic past, is, historically speaking, approaching its sunset. The history of the USSR in recent years, the film of the political game being played in its leading sectors -- these are the reflection of the struggles, frictions, tensions, and commitments of the currents and tendencies present in society. But everything -- perhaps in long-range terms -- points toward the ultimate weakening of the bureaucracy, of the apparatchiki, to the limitation of their power, to the diminution of their economic importance and, finally, to the decrease of their functions, as well as to a shift in the center of gravity of the government toward an alliance between the intelligentsia and the strata of young technicians and vanguard workers. The fact that this process is, in its beginning, weak, slow, and full of ups and downs and sometimes desperate alterna-

one can say of the USSR: "But it moves, just the same." "And, still she moves."

It would be easy to "take a room in the Grand Hotel of the Abyss" -- to use the expression of Kukai addressed to Marcuse -- and to see in the USSR a society where conflicts and tendencies exist but are neutralized and will continue to be so by the countercurrents of the bureaucracy. It would be perfectly valid to ask oneself to what extent there has not crystallized in the USSR a bureaucratic structure which tightly controls the key agencies (party, government, army) and which manages the mass communications media in such a way that it can bar "outsiders" from access to power positions, wiping out vertical mobility and indefinitely blocking the political concretion of the process we described.

But it is precisely the Czechoslovak experience during the first 8 months of 1968 which feeds this hope. If it was possible in Czechoslovakia, then there is no reason for imagining that socialism will not, within itself, find a second wind which will propel it from the point where it is now and which once again will turn it -- in its state incarnation -- into a true pole of attraction, not by force of geopolitical factors but rather by the force of the noble idea which it expresses, for all of the revolutionary forces of the world. It is the existence of this internal process in the USSR which upholds optimism and which warns us against skepticism and cynicism.

[p 50]

The CP which came to power in Czechoslovakia definitely was a genuine mass party, an authentic party of the working class, the biggest

individual political force in the country, profoundly linked to its people -- because of its past and because of its action during the anti-Nazi Resistance -- with an intelligentsia that was one of the most vigorous and committed in Europe. Moreover, this party was operating in a country where pro-Soviet feelings are -- or at least were, at that time -- held by a majority of the population which never forgot the attitude of the USSR during the entire period leading up to Munich and the period after the German invasion of Czechoslovakia.

But this powerful CP had the "misfortune" of coming to power during years when the Cold War, on the one hand, and the style of Stalin, on the other hand, led to a repressive development in the life of the country and the party -- beyond the requirements of the dictatorship of the proletariat and of the Red Terror.

[pp 57-58]

But let us pick up the thread again. Among the features of the political crisis, we singled out apathy, skepticism, and depolitization among the Czechoslovak people. However, this characteristic in reality was the external manifestation of a very intimate, profound, and unexpressed politization, as demonstrated by the events later on. Among the intellectual strata of the country there existed -- as a fruit of the situation -- a state of dissatisfaction and concern which led to frequent clashes with the regime and which profoundly stirred the conscience of the people. In truth, the apparent depolitization is but the mask for a great restlessness and also a great disappointment, a growing skepticism in view of the difference between the big phrases in the speeches and daily life such as it really is. "Depolitization" only

concealed the hunger for true political life, (1)

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(1) The party leaders who talked to me in Bulgaria about the depolitization of the Bulgarian younger generation do not seem to understand that the younger generation is depoliticized because the entire life of the country is just that. The game of politics, the element of free debate, which should be the maximum expression of self-government -- which, by the way, virtually does not exist -- is reduced at the summit to the Central Committee of the CP, while the vast masses are absent from any real political life. Without political debate, with elections in which it is impossible to choose, with Marxist education reduced to the tiresome memorizing of Marxist texts, with the Komsomol [Communist Youth Organization] transformed into a Boy Scout organization -- how could anyone be surprised that the younger generation is not interested in politics? In what politics should they be interested? The politics of speeches and parades? The example of Czechoslovakia however reveals very neatly that this tired youth, presented as a caricature of political life and Marxist education, was more than ready for true political activity, for a true rebirth of socialist political life.

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It is important to point out that the need for democratizing political life in Czechoslovakia probably corresponds to a feeling that is perhaps more profound than in some of the other socialist countries. Independently of the basic discussion that might be developed on the essence of bourgeois democracy, no Marxist can ignore the fact that bourgeois democratic tradition in a certain society counts for much when it comes to giving that society a different content. In the case of Czechoslovakia -- whose parliamentary democracy was particularly

stitutes an important factor stimulating the search for a concrete and not formal institutional content for socialist democracy, this term here being understood as the dialectical overcoming of bourgeois democracy.

[pp 167-170]

We assert that socialism was not in danger in Czechoslovakia. On the contrary, during the 8 months of the "new course," socialism was quite considerably strengthened. The party recovered its prestige and its strength among the masses. It reasserted its leadership over the Czechoslovak people.

We assert that the Czechoslovak CP began -- in a Marxist and communist spirit -- to solve the difficult problems of socialist democracy and that the solutions presented and implemented constitute the principal reason for the recovery of its strength and prestige.

We assert that the Czechoslovak CP boldly tackled the question of its hegemony and its general role in socialist society. The recognition of the participation of the other revolutionary political forces and the struggle to maintain hegemony and the leadership of the CP in a mass process, face to face with them, among them, by and for them, constitute a lucid application of the basic principles of Lenin to this subject and a demonstration of the confidence in the masses and in the analyses of Marxism-Leninism, as well as in the attraction capacity of socialist ideals.

We assert that the Czechoslovak CP in a Leninist manner implemented the question of relationships between culture and society, between in-

... fidence of the brilliant, consistent, but disappointed Czechoslovak intelligentsia.

We assert that the counterrevolutionary dangers existing in the country were being neutralized through the mass struggle and the participation of the masses in the fight for the new course, for a new society, for a return to the old ideals of socialism. We maintain that the weaknesses, which may have emerged in this respect, did not in any way compromise the stability of the regime.

We assert that the Czechoslovak CP firmly but comprehensively confronted the pressures coming from its left wing and that, through persuasion, it managed to win these impatient sectors over to its positions.

We assert that the Czechoslovak CP firmly but with a clear spirit of tolerance and with a broadminded approach confronted the conspiratorial manipulations of its conservative wing. It prevented vengeance and retaliation and, with undeniable feeling for democracy and socialism, it effected the necessary changes in terms of personnel in the government and party apparatus, without resorting to the police methods of the past.

We assert that the lack of understanding on the part of the current leadership group in the USSR was the principal factor for instability in Czechoslovakia. The conduct of the Soviet government aggravated the contradictions, stimulated negative or chauvinist positions, and enabled the counterrevolution to conceal itself behind the banners of the defense of the fatherland.

We assert that the party and the government of Caechoslovakia at no time proposed the idea of ignoring the socialist option of the country and the people. Time and again there was ratification



of the socialist nature of the regime, of the social ownership of the means of production, of the hegemony of the CP, there was a refusal to permit an organized antisocialist opposition, there was confirmation of the alliance policy of the country centering around friendship with the USSR and membership in and compliance with the obligations of the Warsaw Pact.

Finally we assert that the clamorous confirmation of everything we have said is represented by the attitude of the Czechoslovak party and government with respect to the armies of the Warsaw Pact and with respect to the invasion as a political fact. The order not to confront the invaders with violence, complied with almost one hundred percent by the Czechoslovak people, very clearly shows that the party did have control over the situation and that it was obeyed by the population. But there was something more: the attitude of the Czechoslovak communists -- humiliated, attacked, treated as criminals -- was at all times aimed at not further widening the chasm between Czechoslovakia and its "brothers." The refusal to be swept along by the temptation to fight, to achieve martyrdom, and to follow the "example"; the anxious search for a negotiated solution with the Soviets, these give dramatic evidence of the will of Dubcek and his comrades not to break with the socialist camp, not to break with the USSR, not to put an ocean of blood between the Czechoslovak people -- who were already sufficiently embittered -- and the peoples of the other five countries. This is painful and terrible proof of the internationalist capacity of the new Czechoslovak leadership team, of the promising hopes which such a concept contained for the future.

It is impossible to conclude this work without answering one question which has been in the reader's mind from the very beginning: if the invasion was so tragic a mistake, why did the Soviets do it? Why did the USSR deliberately risk its prestige in so disastrous an adventure?

In the final analysis, this represents the ultimate argument of those who believe that the intervention was right or necessary. If the Soviets did this, then there must have been some extremely powerful reasons to do so since people as responsible as they cannot deliberately perpetrate such stupidity. This is reason based on faith, the reason that springs from blind confidence in the USSR; this represents the remnant of a simple and naive past in which the word of the USSR was the sacred word of the fatherland of socialism, of the heirs of Lenin, of the heroic builders of socialism, (1).

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(1) Of course, reason based on faith could also be used with regard to the communist parties which condemned the intervention. Could it be that such respectable parties as the Italian one and the French one, for example, do not merit even a minimum of credibility? The position of these parties should constitute food for thought for the unconditional supporters of the invasion.

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Fortunately -- or unfortunately, depending upon the individual's viewpoint -- that past has been smashed to bits. One cannot go on being a communist and a Catholic at the same time. Right now, it is more difficult to be a communist. Right now it is necessary to think and to investigate. There are no formulas or schemes worked out by wise men elsewhere who could perfectly apply to our situation here. Being

longer as obvious -- "communism is the youth of the world" -- when the communist movement is experiencing powerful centrifugal tendencies, when unexpected contradictions break out in the movement and in the socialist camp, being a communist now involves a rather intimate compromise with ideals and an almost painful clarity for the purpose of understanding, for the purpose of explaining why and wherefore there is sometimes so much of a gap between the ideals and the reality. Only by thinking as Marxists can we today save ourselves from disillusionment, skepticism, and renunciation.

[pp 180-181]

In terms of world politics, the intervention looks even more negative, if that is possible. The deepening of divisions and contradictions affecting the international communist movement; the confrontation of the USSR and the CPSU with such important communist parties as the Italian, French, Spanish, and the Japanese one, apart from almost all of the European communist parties and some of those on other continents; the weakening of the moral authority of the USSR and the thinking of the communist parties on that topic (we have already seen what happened in Sweden, Austria, and Finland) -- all of this is but a part of the damage inflicted by Soviet action upon the world revolutionary movement.

But there are some much more serious and much more worrisome implications here. The invasion of Czechoslovakia practically sanctioned the division of the world into spheres of influence and the mutual respect of these spheres by both super powers. It is no coincidence that the Yankee imperialists only "pro forma" reacted on this subject. They

reciprocity for their own and inevitable interventions in those countries in their sphere of influence which might attempt to achieve revolutionary changes. The implications of this, for the future of the revolutionary movement, could be most serious and very negative.

Although the responsibilities of a power, which holds in its rockets a portion of the fate of mankind, are very great and necessitate prudence and caution, the kind that smaller and less powerful countries usually do not have, the alternative to the worldwide holocaust could not be the freezing of the status quo, nor the crystallization of spheres of influence, nor a bloc policy. From this there derives a kind of tacit pact ~~xxxx~~ -- which however cannot cause us simply to proclaim collusion between the United States and the Soviet Union -- which, between the interventions in Santo Domingo and in Czechoslovakia, would more or less definitely "legalize" the policy of influence spheres.

Right now, the situation could not look more desolate.

[pp 188-189]

The Soviet Union is a very specific historical product. It is far from a kind of universal and absolute incarnation of the idea of socialism. It was born amid very special historical conditions and socialism there developed along peculiar lines that cannot be repeated. The Soviet Union constitutes a particular socialist model, concretely limited by historical coordinates that are absolutely its own.

We pointed out several times that socialism was established for the first time in a country with insufficient capitalist development, a country that was very backward in the rural areas, with a very strong artisan and petty-bourgeois class, with a relatively small working class,

a country in which the peasantry had an extremely high specific weight. That country was afterward devastated by imperialist war and by the civil war and built itself up during what was known as the capitalist encirclement at that time.

Therefore, there had to take place in the USSR that bureaucratic-police deformation which is Stalinism and which developed a kind of socialism with singular characteristics of its own. It is easy to understand now -- after 50 years of socialist experience in the USSR and of the existence of other socialist countries -- that Soviet socialism is not the only model of socialism and that its particular features -- many of which are determined very closely by the conditions under which they had to develop -- are not features common to all modalities of socialism and that some of them cannot even be considered as features of socialism in general.

[pp 192-194]

Identifying the USSR with socialism is a dangerous expedient. Nor could one identify socialism with any other country in particular. Socialism is the combination of all of the existing socialist countries but it is also something more than this constellation of these countries. But it is even more inadequate to establish an identity between socialism and the leadership of the KX CPSU. Historical experience should teach us to be very cautious on that topic since the political changes which have occurred in the USSR are, among other things, characterized by the fact that each new leadership team denies and almost absolutely denounces the preceding team. Once upon a time, socialism supposedly was Stalin, and then Malenkov, and then Khrushchev, and now Brezhnev. But, if the

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incarnation of socialism comes down to being what each one of these leaders says about his predecessor, then socialism would be a very poor thing indeed. And this is not a caricature. It is well known that one of the most curious deformations of contemporary socialism is the one which pretends to turn the communist leaders of some socialist powers into a kind of saint, a kind of pope who cannot be disputed, the so-called vicars of Marx and Lenin on this earth (1).

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(1) And we must point out that it is quite customary nowadays to use some categories in the Catholic Church as terms of metaphoric comparison -- which, by the way, is symptomatic of the same degree of dogmatization which the International Communist Movement has reached. And the worst of it is that the exact opposite is also usual now!

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How long ago it seems now when Friedrich Engels, in his book on the German Peasant Wars, inserted the profound observation which serves as an epigram for these conclusions, between two hyphens, almost as a gesture of contempt!

Finally, regardless of the individual's critical attitude toward the problems of socialism under construction, one cannot overlook one consideration on the march of the revolution in our countries. There is no disputing the relationship between Soviet policy and the world revolution but the opposite is also true: For decades the world revolution was carried on by the USSR alone. It is therefore not a moral problem. With a few exceptions in Asia and Latin America, we revolutionaries have for many years failed to do our duty toward socialism and toward the USSR. And it is no coincidence that the maximum degree of unconditionalism toward Soviet policy and its changes, that the greatest reduction of critical capacity toward the problems of socialism, is found precisely

there, in sectors and persons who have made a doubtful contribution to the bill of their own revolution. This is why -- to conclude with a phrase that is sacred to the Latin American revolutionaires -- the critical attitude toward the USSR must at the same time be an attitude of self-criticism, so that it may not only be morally valid but so that it may also be politically effective.

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# Problemas del Comunismo Vistos Desde Venezuela

Por Mario Foretti

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ROMA, enero. — Últimamente, Moscú tiene problemas con libros. Hace poco llegó a Occidente un manuscrito del escritor soviético Amalrik que prevé la caída del imperio soviético para 1985. Mas, no sólo los escritores soviéticos disidentes sino también algunos dirigentes de renombre del movimiento comunista en Occidente causan problemas al Kremlin. Uno de ellos es Roger Garaudy, de Francia, cuyo libro, "El Gran Giro del Socialismo" fue condenado por el diario "Pravda". Otro es Teodoro Petkoff, líder del PC de Venezuela quien reclama "una política basada en la independencia crítica." Para los comunistas venezolanos, Petkoff analiza las causas de la tragedia de Dubcek en su libro recientemente publicado en Caracas.

En Roma como en Caracas, el libro de Petkoff — "Checoslovaquia: El Socialismo Como Problema" — es ampliamente discutido. El autor es el líder de la fracción izquierdista del PC venezolano que se enfrenta con el Secretario General Jesús

Faria, pro-soviético. Petkoff fue guerrillero de las así llamadas FALN-s, entre 1962 y 1964. Capturado, escapó en 1967 de la prisión San Carlos junto con Guillermo García Ponce, de la "guardia vieja" y Pompeyo Márquez, jefe del grupo moderado. Petkoff renunció a la lucha armada y cree en la "diversidad de tipos y vías socialistas." Visiblemente, se encuentra bajo la influencia del comunismo italiano, citando a Togliatti y sobre todo a Paietta, varias veces.

Aplicar el molde económico soviético en Checoslovaquia, resultó ser un grave error, opina Petkoff. Checoslovaquia era ya un país industrializado, cuando se lo introdujo dentro del molde concebido para impulsar el desarrollo de países atrasados. "Como resultado de todo esto" — dice Petkoff —, "el equipo industrial checoslovaco, colocado a nivel mundial antes de la segunda guerra, es hoy uno de los más anticuados; ningún otro país socialista ha alcanzado el grado de estrangulamiento que ahoga a la economía checoslovaca." Después

de la llegada al poder de Dubcek, continúa Petkoff, se intentó una reforma global hasta entonces entorpecida por Novotny. El autor opina que "la inteligencia checoslovaca ha actuado en todo este periodo como verdadera conciencia de la nación."

Más adelante, Petkoff analiza "la justificación de la invasión", sobre la cual "en Checoslovaquia existía un serio peligro contrarrevolucionario." Frente a eso, está el hecho de que "esas manifestaciones fueron firmemente rechazadas por el gobierno checoslovaco." "Fue precisamente sobre la base de ese renacimiento del socialismo que el PC en Checoslovaquia pudo hacer frente a los peligros contrarrevolucionarios y mantenerlos firmemente bajo control". Se rataba de "la recuperación por parte del PC de la confianza y la buena voluntad de las masas." Sin embargo, la hipótesis soviética era la de la penetración y descomposición del partido hasta hacerlo "cambiar de color"; como si veteranos comunistas y militares que son

héroes de la Unión Soviética, por algún misterioso proceso de alquimia política se habrían trasmutado en agentes del capitalismo. Si no fuera tan trágico sería cómico dice Petkoff.

Finalmente, pregunta: "¿Por qué la URSS se jugó conscientemente su prestigio en una aventura tan desastrosa?" Petkoff cree que "lo que enfrentó a soviéticos y checoslovacos, fue una concepción diferente del socialismo." Estaba en peligro la concepción soviética del socialismo. "La invasión" — continúa — que militarmente constituyó un éxito impresionante, políticamente terminó en un fracaso tanto o más impresionante", en Checoslovaquia y en el plano de la política mundial.

El grupo de Petkoff está integrado de la juventud comunista de Venezuela, y por Germán Lairret, Freddy Muñoz, Manuel Caballero, Antonio José Uriba y Alfredo Máneiro. Hace diez meses, Petkoff fue excluido del Politburo, por "desviación", pero él se considera todavía miembro del Comité Central.

EL UNIVERSAL, Caracas  
1 February 1970

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Problems of Communism as Seen from Venezuela

Moscow has been having problems with books lately. A short time ago, there arrived in the West a manuscript by the Soviet author Amalrik predicting the downfall of the Soviet empire by 1985. It is however not only the dissident Soviet writers but also some renowned leaders of the communist movement in the West who are making problems for the Kremlin.



One of them is Roger Garaudy, of France, whose book The Great Turning Point of Socialism was condemned by the daily Pravda. Another one is Teodoro Petkoff, Venezuelan CP leader who calls for "a policy based on critical independence." For the Venezuelan communists, Petkoff analyzed the causes of the tragedy of Dubcek in his book recently published in Caracas.

In Rome, as in Caracas, Petkoff's book -- Checoeslovaquia: El Socialismo Como Problema -- is being widely discussed. The author is the leader of the left-wing faction of the Venezuelan CP which has lined up against pro-Soviet Secretary-General Jesus Faria. Petkoff was a guerrilla fighter in the so-called FALN [Armed Forces of National Liberation] between 1962 and 1964. He was captured but escaped in 1964 from San Carlos prison along with Guillermo Garcia Ponce, of the "Old Guard," and Pompeyo Marquez, head of the moderate group. Petkoff renounced the armed struggle and now believes in the "diversity of socialist types and roads." Quite visibly, he is under the influence of Italian communism, quoting Togliatti and especially Pajetta on several occasions.

Petkoff thinks that it was a grave error to apply the Soviet economic mold to Czechoslovakia. Czechoslovakia was already an industrialized country when it was inserted into the mold conceived to impel the development of backward countries. "As a result of all this," says Petkoff, "the Czechoslovak industrial plant, which was on the world level, before World War II, is today one of the most antiquated; no other socialist country has reached the degree of strangulation which today stifles the Czechoslovak economy." After Dubcek came to power, continued Petkoff, the government tried to institute an overall reform which until then had been prevented by Novotny. The author thinks that "the Czechoslovak intelligentsia acted during this period as the true conscience of the nation."

Further on, Petkoff analyzes "the justification for the invasion," according to which "there existed a counterrevolutionary threat in Czechoslovakia." In opposition to this, there is the fact that "these manifestations were firmly rejected by the Czechoslovak government." "It was precisely on the basis of that rebirth of socialism that the Czechoslovak CP was able to confront the counterrevolutionary threats and to keep them firmly under control." This then involved the "recovery of the confidence and the good will of the masses by the CP." However, the Soviet assumption was that there was a penetration and decomposition of the party to the point where it 'would change color'; as if veteran communists and militants, who are heroes of the Soviet Union, by some mysterious process of political alchemy, could somehow have changed into agents of capitalism. "If this were not so tragic, it would be funny," said Petkoff.

Finally, he asks this question: "Why did the USSR deliberately risk its prestige in so disastrous an adventure?" Petkoff believes that "the thing that caused the confrontation between the Soviets and the Czechoslovaks was a different concept of socialism." The Soviet concept of socialism was in danger. "The invasion," he continues, "which was an impressive success militarily, ended up politically in a failure that was all the more impressive," in Czechoslovakia and on the level of world politics.

Petkoff's group consists of the communist youth of Venezuela and of German Lairer, Freddy Munoz, Manuel Caballero, Antonio Jose Uriba, and Alfredo Maneiro. Ten months ago, Petkoff was expelled from the Politburo for "deviation" but he still considers himself a member of the Central Committee.

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EL SIGLO, Bogota  
11 January 1970

## Presentación del Autor

Teodoro Petkoff, descendiente de búlgaros, nació el 3 de enero de 1932 en Maracaibo. En 1948 ingresó al PCV (Partido Comunista Venezolano) y trabajó en el diario "Tribuna Popular". Economista, graduado en la promoción de 1960, fue Presidente del Centro de Estudiantes de Economía. Diputado al Congreso Nacio-

nal en 1960-61, fue el primer parlamentario allanado como consecuencia del juicio que se le siguió a raíz de los sucesos de octubre y noviembre de 1960.

En la época de Pérez Jiménez estuvo preso en tres ocasiones (años 50, 51 y 53) y permaneció oculto en los últimos 14 meses de dicho régimen. Bajo el gobierno de Acción Democrática estuvo detenido durante cinco meses, año 1963, hasta su fuga del Hospital Militar.

Posteriormente fue detenido

en Boconó, Estado Trujillo, cuando bajaba de un frente guerrillero, permaneciendo dos años, siete meses y veintidós días en el Cuartel San Carlos, hasta su famosa fuga junto con Pompeyo Márquez y Guillermo García Ponce. Antes de terminar el período Raúl Leoni tuvo una tercera detención que duró 40 días.

Es miembro del Comité Central del PCV, y lo fue del Buró Político de dicho Partido desde 1964 hasta el XIII Pleno realizado a comienzos del año pasado.

Ha publicado una traducción de "El Arte de la Guerra", de Sun Tzu (1965) y próximamente circulará un conjunto de ensayos (traducción de diversos autores) sobre problemas económicos del socialismo y reformas económicas, editado por el Instituto de Investigaciones Económicas de la Universidad Central de Venezuela.

Petkoff es casado y tiene cuatro hijos. Su hermano Luben, que rompió hace algún tiempo con el PCV y está en las guerrillas.

EL SIGLO, Bogota  
11 January 1970

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### Biographic Sketch of Teodoro Petkoff Given

Teodoro Petkoff is of Bulgarian extraction and was born on 3 January 1932 in Maracaibo. He joined the Venezuelan CP in 1948 and worked for the daily Tribuna Popular. An economist who graduated with the class of 1960, he was president of the economics student center, deputy to the National Congress in 1960-1961, and he was the first member of Parliament to be seized as a result of the judgment handed down in connection with the events of October and November 1960.

During the administration of Perez Jimenez, he was arrested on three occasions (in 1950, 1951, and 1953) and he was jailed during the last 14 months of that regime. Under the Democratic Action government, he was imprisoned for 5 months in 1963 until he escaped from the Military Hospital.

Later on, he was arrested in Bocono, State of Trujillo, as he came down out of the mountains from a guerrilla front; he spent 2 years 7 months and 21 days at the San Carlos Barracks, until his famous escape along with Pompeyo Marquez and Guillermo Garcia Ponce. Before the end of the Raul Leoni administration, he was jailed a third time, for 40 days.

He is a member of the Central Committee of the Venezuelan CP and he was a member of that party's Politburo from 1964 until the 13th plenum which was held early last year.

He published a translation of El Arte de la Guerra by Sun Tzu (1965) and soon thereafter he circulated a collection of essays (a translation of various authors) on economic problems of socialism and on economic reforms, put out by the Economic Research Institute of the Central University of Venezuela.

Petkoff is married and has four children. His brother Luben, who broke with the Venezuelan CP some time ago, has joined the guerrillas here.

TRIBUNA POPULAR, Caracas  
12-18 March 1970

# RESOLUCION SOBRE EL LIBRO DE TEODORO PETKOFF Acerca de Checoslovaquia y el Socialismo

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El libro "Checoslovaquia, el Socialismo como problema" del camarada Teodoro Petkoff expresa sólo su opinión personal. Y los conceptos emitidos en este libro se hallan en contradicción con postulados fundamentales sobre la construcción del socialismo, el papel de los Partidos Comunistas, el internacionalismo proletario y la política internacional aprobada por el Comité Central del Partido Comunista de Venezuela. En consecuencia, el Comité Central del PCV expresa su desacuerdo con el contenido de este libro.

En este sentido, el XV Pleno del Comité Central llama al Partido a discutir y a unirse en torno a cuestiones básicas de nuestra política internacional:

1. — El PCV ratifica la tesis de que el imperialismo es impotente para recuperar su pérdida iniciativa histórica e invertir el signo del desarrollo del mundo contemporáneo. La dirección principal de la evolución de la humanidad la determinan hoy el sistema socialista mundial, la clase obrera internacional y todas las otras fuerzas revolucionarias.
2. — El sistema socialista mundial es la fuerza decisiva en la lucha antiimperialista. Todas las luchas de liberación cuentan con el insustituible apoyo de este sistema, sobre todo con el de la Unión Soviética. La Gran Revolución Socialista de Octubre, la edificación del socialismo en la URSS, la derrota del fascismo alemán y del militarismo japonés en la segunda guerra mundial, la victoria de la revolución en China y en otros países de Europa y de Asia, la creación del primer Estado socialista de América, la República de Cuba, el surgimiento y desarrollo del sistema socialista mundial, integrado por 14 Estados, y la irradiación universal del socia-

lismo han creado la premisa para acelerar el progreso histórico y han abierto nuevas perspectivas al avance y al triunfo del socialismo en todo el planeta.

El socialismo ha mostrado a la humanidad la perspectiva de su liberación del imperialismo. El nuevo sistema social, basado en la propiedad social de los medios de producción y en el poder de los trabajadores, es capaz de asegurar un desarrollo económico planificado, exento de crisis, en beneficio del pueblo; de garantizar los derechos sociales y políticos de los trabajadores, de crear condiciones para una verdadera democracia auténtica, para la participación real de las vastas masas populares en la administración de la sociedad, para el desarrollo universal de la persona humana, para la igualdad de derechos de las naciones y la amistad entre ellas. Ha quedado demostrado en la práctica que únicamente el socialismo puede resolver los problemas cardinales de la humanidad. La aportación del sistema socialista mundial a la causa común de las fuerzas anti-imperialistas proviene,

ante todo, de su creciente poder económico. El rápido desarrollo de su economía a un ritmo superior al de los países capitalistas, las posiciones de vanguardia que ha alcanzado en varias esferas del progreso científico-técnico y la apertura del camino al cosmos por la Unión Soviética, son frutos concretos del trabajo creador de los pueblos de los países socialistas que determinan en gran medida la superioridad de las fuerzas de la paz, la democracia y el socialismo sobre el imperialismo.

3. — El mundo socialista ha entrado en un período de desarrollo en el que surge la posibilidad de aprovechar a plenitud las poderosas reservas que contiene el nuevo sistema. Esta conclusión es ratificada con el esfuerzo que se realiza en cada uno de los países socialistas por corregir los errores cometidos en el curso de la construcción del socialismo, por introducir modificaciones en la vida económica, en el funcionamiento estatal y en el ejercicio de la democracia socialista que permitan el aprovechamiento al máximo de todo el potencial que el régimen socialista ha venido demostrando en la práctica y que al corregirse las fallas podrá tomar nuevos y mayores ritmos de desarrollo en todos los órdenes de la vida nacional e internacional.

La experiencia muestra que las transformaciones socialistas y la edificación de la nueva sociedad constituyen un proceso complejo y prolongado, no exento de contradicciones.

Más para el Partido Comunista de Venezuela el nacimiento y desarrollo del mundo socialista son parte integrante de la lucha de clase en el ámbito mundial. Y está consciente de que los enemigos del socialismo no cesan en sus intentos de minar las bases del poder estatal socialista, frustrar las transformaciones socialistas de la sociedad y restablecer su dominio. Rechazar decididamente esos intentos, es una función indispensable del Estado socialista, apoyándose en las grandes masas populares, dirigidas por la clase obrera y su vanguardia comunista.

4. — La defensa del socialismo es un deber internacionalista de los comunistas. El internacionalismo proletario es una de las grandes fuerzas revolucionarias de nuestra época. Con la vigorosa presencia del sistema socialista mundial, a cuya cabeza marcha la Unión Soviética, con el crecimiento del movimiento obrero y de la liberación nacional, la importancia y la fuerza del internacionalismo proletario se ha acrecentado en forma que hace posible que hoy cualquier pueblo por débil-económico, política y militarmente que sea, si logra su unidad interna, puede derrocar a sus enemigos, consolidar su poder popular y reconstruir la sociedad sobre nuevas bases.

El PCV es parte de este gran movimiento nacional que combate por la paz, la democracia, la liberación nacional, el socialismo y el comunismo.

El PCV educa a sus militantes en las ideas del apoyo solidario a los pueblos que construyen una nueva sociedad o que combaten por alcanzar el poder popular.

El PCV es consciente de que cada éxito de cada pueblo en su lucha contra sus enemigos, fortalece nuestros combates en el interior de nuestro país, así como cada revés o derrota afecta indirectamente a nuestro movimiento nacional. Hoy no puede concebirse lucha aislada contra la dominación imperialista y por el socialismo. Todos los destacamentos que actúan dentro de fronteras nacionales y todos los combates que se libran en cada uno de nuestros países, se encuentran estrechamente vinculados, son dirigidos contra un enemigo común: el imperialismo, particularmente el imperialismo norteamericano; son por un objetivo común: la liberación nacional y el socialismo.

El PCV participa en una lucha de clase en el interior de nuestro país y, a la vez, forma parte de la lucha de clase mundial que se libra entre el socialismo y el imperialismo. Esta interrelación de nuestros combates no puede ser olvidada un sólo instante.

5. — El PCV desea mantener y mantiene relaciones amistosas con todos los partidos comunistas y obreros y movimientos revolucionarios que actúan en el mundo. Busca por todos los medios mantener esas relaciones independientemente del juicio que le pueda merecer algún aspecto de la política de tal o cual partido. Es, en pocas palabras, una política internacionalista, de amistad fraterna y de independencia que vincula estrechamente los intereses nacionales de nuestro partido y nuestro pueblo con los intereses generales de todos los demás Partidos Comunistas, movimientos revolucionarios y pueblos del mundo.

El PCV se guía por la política de la no injerencia en los asuntos internos de ningún partido. Y estima que cada partido es autónomo para trazar su propia política, decidir su táctica y su estrategia, escoger su propia vía revolucionaria y sus formas de lucha. Al clarificar en forma autónoma nuestra propia política sabemos apreciar, y asumir críticamente, las experiencias de los demás partidos hermanos.

6. — El PCV rechaza toda forma de antisovietismo, pues considera que cualquier debilitamiento de las posiciones revolucionarias y socialistas de la URSS es un debilitamiento del movimiento revolucionario mundial, y del venezolano en particular. El antisovietismo no puede tener cabida en las filas del Partido Comunista de Venezuela. El antisovietismo es un arma del enemigo para

atacar contra el campo socialista, contra el movimiento revolucionario.

El PCV debe educar a nuestro pueblo en la solidaridad con todo el campo socialista, debe rechazar toda calumnia antisoviética, debe mostrar el papel de la Unión Soviética como amiga inquebrantable de todos los pueblos que luchan por su libertad, debe divulgar la gloriosa historia del pueblo soviético a todos los pueblos liberados y a todos los movimientos revolucionarios del mundo, debe reconocer la inapreciable ayuda que el PCUS ha prestado al PCV en situaciones difíciles como las que hemos vivido en el curso de los últimos años.

El PCV debe cuidar y estimular sus relaciones fraternales con el Partido Comunista de la Unión Soviética, con el Partido de Lenin, con el destacamento que primero asaltó la fortaleza del imperialismo e inició la construcción de la nueva sociedad socialista marcando así el rumbo a la humanidad en el curso del último medio siglo.

La Unión Soviética es la base material más importante para el movimiento revolucionario mundial. Esta conclusión no puede empañarse por los errores cometidos durante la construcción del socialismo y del comunismo en la URSS, ni por una actitud crítica que se pueda tener ante determinadas posiciones del Estado y Partido Soviético. En lo posible tales diferencias deben ser tramitadas de Partido a Partido, e internamente en el seno de nuestro Partido.

Sin idealizar a la Unión Soviética por la defensa de su patrimonio es hoy por hoy un deber internacionalista que no puede descuidarse ni atenuarse en ningún momento.

7. — El XV Pleno del Comité Central ratifica la Resolución del X Pleno, agosto de 1968, sobre los sucesos de Checoslovaquia.

El PCV comprendió y comprendo las razones por las cuales tropas del Pacto de Varsovia tuvieron que entrar en Checoslovaquia. El curso de los acontecimientos de entonces a esta fecha confirman la justicia de la decisión del Comité Central del PCV.

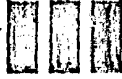
El Décimo Pleno del Comité Central (agosto de 1968) declaró que dentro del internacionalismo proletario es perfectamente justificable la ayuda militar, política y económica de los otros países socialistas a cualquiera de éstos que esté amenazado por la conspiración imperialista y saludó la decisión de la Unión Soviética, Polonia, Hungría, República Democrática Alemana y Bulgaria, de no permitir que los guerrilleros norteamericanos y sus aliados de otros países capitalistas arrancaran ningún país del mundo socialista.

El PCV saludó en dicha resolución la condena de los errores cometidos en la construcción del socialismo en Checoslovaquia que

lesionaba la política del Partido y el desarrollo de la sociedad, así como a la democracia socialista, que, como dice el c. Husak, "causaron el estancamiento y la crisis en nuestra sociedad (checoeslovaca, nota nuestra) y en todos los sectores de la misma". El movimiento comunista internacional seguramente recibirá una explicación más detallada del por qué sucedieron tales fenómenos negativos y el por qué después de 20 años de socialismo se había llegado en este país a una situación tal. El Décimo Pleno del Comité Central exhortaba a una profundización del análisis autocrítico, lo cual hoy podemos observar en numerosos materiales y resoluciones de los órganos dirigentes del Partido Comunista de Checoslovaquia.

Hoy el XV Pleno del Comité Central considera que corresponde a los comunistas y al pueblo checoslovacos insistir en la corrección de los errores, intensificar el esfuerzo por la construcción del socialismo en su país, por el desarrollo de la democracia socialista. Y que, por lo que toca al PCV, su posición internacionalista le impone la solidaridad hacia estos esfuerzos y comprender

que la superación de las consecuencias de los errores cometidos durante largos años será también parte de un largo proceso que los comunistas de Venezuela deben confiar terminará en forma exitosa para los camaradas checoslovacos.



El Comité Central del PCV en el curso de la preparación del Congreso discutirá la Tesis Internacional en torno a la cual habrán de unirse los comunistas venezolanos.



El XV Pleno del Comité Central del Partido llama a continuar la discusión sobre los problemas más candentes del movimiento comunista y obrero internacional, sobre la lucha de clases que se libra a escala mundial entre el socialis-

mo y el imperialismo y sus repercusiones en nuestro país.

A tal efecto ratifica la decisión del XIV Pleno del Comité Central mediante la cual aprueba y somete a la consideración de todo el Partido las resoluciones de la Conferencia Mundial de Partidos Comunistas y Obreros celebrada en Moscú en junio de 1969.

El Comité Central exhorta al c. Teodoro Petkoff a rechazar públicamente la provocadora utilización que de su libro vienen haciendo destacados agentes del enemigo, los anticomunistas y antisoviéticos de todo pelaje.

El Comité Central estima que el trabajo elaborado por los camaradas Pedro Ortega Díaz y Antonio García Ponce, a instancias del BP, sin que tenga carácter resolutivo del CC, es una contribución al proceso de discusión y en consecuencia debe ser incluido entre los materiales que han de ser sometidos a consideración de los organismos de base del Partido.

Caracas, 5 de marzo de 1970.  
COMITE CENTRAL DEL PARTIDO  
COMUNISTA DE VENEZUELA.

TRIBUNA POPULAR, Caracas  
12-18 March 1970

[Excerpts]

Resolution [of the PCV] on Teodoro Petkoff's Book  
Concerning Czechoslovakia and Socialism

CPYRGHT

The book "Czechoslovakia-Socialism as a Problem" by Comrade Teodoro Petkoff expresses only his personal opinion. The ideas put forth in that book contradict fundamental postulates on the building of socialism, the role of communist parties, international proletarianism, and the international policy approved by the Central Committee of the Venezuelan Communist Party (PCV). Consequently, the PCV Central Committee expresses its disagreement with the contents of the book.

For the Venezuelan Communist Party the birth and development of the socialist world are an integral part of the world class struggle. And the PCV is aware that the enemies of socialism are unceasing in their efforts to destroy the bases of state socialist power, to frustrate the socialist transformation of society, and to reestablish their own reign. To pointedly reject these efforts is an indispensable function of the socialist state, based on the great popular masses led by the working class and its communist vanguard.

The PCV wishes to maintain and does maintain friendly relations with all the communist and workers' parties and revolutionary movements active throughout the world. The PCV looks to every means to maintain these relations without regard for what it may think of some policy aspect of this or that party. In short, this is an internationalist policy of fraternal friendship and independence that brings the national interests of our party and people into close contact with the general interests of all the other communist parties, revolutionary movements, and peoples of the world.

The PCV rejects any kind of anti-Sovietism because it feels that any weakness in the revolutionary and socialist position of the USSR is a weakness in the world revolutionary movement, in the Venezuelan revolutionary movement in particular. There is no place for anti-Sovietism in the PCV ranks. Anti-Sovietism is a weapon of the enemy against the socialist camp and the revolutionary movement.

The 15th plenum of the Central Committee ratifies the resolution of the 10th plenum, dated August 1968, on the events in Czechoslovakia. The PCV understood then and understands now why troops of the Warsaw Pact had to enter Czechoslovakia. The course of events from that date up to the present reaffirms the correctness of the PCV Central Committee's decision.

The 10th plenum of the Central Committee said in August 1968 that within the context of proletarian internationalism military, political, and economic aid by the socialist countries to one of their number that is threatened by imperialist conspiracy is perfectly justifiable. That plenum applauded the decision by the Soviet Union, Poland, Hungary, the German Democratic Republic, and Bulgaria not to allow the U.S. warmongers and their allies in other capitalist countries to rip away any country of the socialist world.

The Central Committee calls on Comrade Teodoro Petkoff to reject publically the provocative use to which his book is being put by well-known agents of the enemy, the anti-communists and anti-Soviets of all descriptions.

The Central Committee feels that the document drawn up by Comrades Pedro Ortega Diaz and Antonio Garcia Ponce at the request of the Politburo, although it does not constitute a resolution of the Central Committee, is a contribution to the discussion process and as a result should be included among materials to be submitted for the consideration of the basic party committees.

LE FIGARO, Paris  
24 February 1970

# DANS "TOUTE LA VÉRITÉ", ROGER GARAUDY ACCUSE

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« L' A question ne sera pas posée », disaient les juges de l'affaire Dreyfus. La question a tout de même été posée. Et l'historien lui a donné réponse. » Telle est l'épigraphie du nouveau livre de M. Roger Garaudy, qui paraît cette semaine chez Grasset sous le titre « Toute la vérité », et dont Le Figaro présente aujourd'hui les extraits principaux.

Elle suffit à donner le ton de l'ouvrage. Et le texte lui-même pourrait se passer de tout commentaire. Ce livre est conçu comme un témoignage, pour l'histoire. Et Roger Garaudy, déjà chassé du Bureau politique et du Comité central du P.C., et qui court à présent le risque d'être exclu de son parti, attend de l'histoire qu'elle lui donne un jour raison.

Il faut cependant souligner certains traits de ce livre, qui disparaîtraient, si l'on n'y prenait garde, derrière les critiques extrêmement graves que Roger Garaudy lance contre les dirigeants actuels de l'Union soviétique.

A différentes reprises, Roger Garaudy souligne qu'il est et qu'il reste un communiste. « Contrairement à ce qu'on a calporté à mon égard, depuis trois ans dans nos fédérations, écrivait-il le 14 septembre 1969 dans une lettre au Bureau politique, je ne suis nullement en désaccord avec les buts ni avec la politique de notre parti, je pense que les méthodes que nous employons ne permettent pas de réaliser efficacement cette politique et d'atteindre ces fins. »

Il sait qu'on va le taxer d'anticommuniste. Mais dit-il, « l'antisoviétisme, c'est l'attitude qui consiste à discréditer, en son principe même, le socialisme tout en reprochant à l'Union soviétique chaque coup qu'elle porte au capitalisme. Ce que je reproche aux dirigeants soviétiques, ce sont les coups qu'ils portent aux partis communistes et à l'ensemble du mouvement socialiste. »

Dans sa conclusion, Roger Garaudy revient avec une force particulière sur son cas personnel. Il avait déjà écrit quelques pages auparavant que le portrait-robot du criminel né, brossé par les dirigeants soviétiques, s'appliquait aussi bien à Dubcek, à Fischer, qu'à lui-même, comme il s'était appliqué dans le passé à Boukharine ou Artur London (l'auteur de « L'Aveu »).

« Nous avons le devoir, dit-il, de sauver l'espérance. Nous n'y parviendrons pas par le silence mais par la clarté (...) Nous avons besoin de militants adultes (...) Voilà pourquoi, avec déchirement, mais avec la certitude de servir au nécessaire renouvellement, j'écris ce livre, et je l'écris d'abord pour mes camarades. »

« Les 350.000 militants de notre parti, dit-il encore, constituent la force politique la plus grande et la plus saine de notre pays. Rien de valable pour l'avenir ne peut se faire sans eux, et encore moins contre eux. Même si l'on va contre moi jusqu'à l'exclusion, je ne puis donner à personne d'autres conseils que celui-ci : si vous aimez l'avenir, adhérez au Parti communiste français. »

Voilà ce qu'il faut lire, aussi, dans le livre de Roger Garaudy, pour le bien comprendre.

Nous en publions donc, ci-dessous, des extraits. Nous nous sommes efforcés de suivre fidèlement le développement de l'ouvrage, en essayant de n'en pas altérer le sens général. Outre les textes connus, il contient des inédits — dont les lettres envoyées par l'auteur aux dirigeants du P.C. français — qui constituent des documents capitaux.

Michel Bassi.

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## " L'U.R.S.S. veut imposer à tous les partis communistes l'alignement sur son « modèle » de socialisme centralisé, autoritaire et bureaucratique "

L'OUVRAGE de Roger Garaudy s'ouvre par une préface où l'auteur explique le problème « dans toute son ampleur tragique ».

Une publicité tapageuse et parfois malsaine a été faite autour de mes divergences avec la di-

rection du P.C.F., surtout à l'occasion du congrès ; où l'on a trop souvent traité de cet événement en termes d'affrontements personnels. Il est temps de prendre avec sérénité conscience de l'enjeu : un renouvellement du P.C.F., tâche qui ne s'est nullement ache-

vée avec son XIXe congrès, mais qui ne fait, au contraire, que commencer.

Le premier grand débat intérieur au parti communiste, « première mise en cause fondamentale de sa stratégie révolutionnaire et de celle de l'ensemble de

l'opposition démocratique en France », a été ouvert par les mouvements de mai-juin 1968. Le deuxième grand débat a été soulevé par l'affaire tchécoslovaque.

Ce qui est vrai, écrit Roger Garaudy, c'est que pour que ce parti (communiste) joue un rôle moteur déterminant dans l'entre-



prise commune de la gauche française, il est nécessaire qu'il change profondément, non pas ses objectifs, ni son programme, mais ses méthodes de pensée et d'action; que ses analyses de la société contemporaine et de son développement se fondent, non sur les schémas importés de pays où les perversions stalinienne ont sclérosé et émoussé l'instrument de recherche élaboré par Marx et Lénine, mais sur la méthode vivante mise en œuvre par Marx, puis par Lénine, et qui est la science de dégager des contradictions présentes le possible futur; que sa conception du « centralisme démocratique » ne se réduise pas à l'une seule de ses composantes: le « centralisme ».

L'auteur reproche au parti communiste les « occasions manquées »: les événements de mai-juin 68 auraient dû permettre non pas la révolution, mais un bond de l'union des ouvriers et des intellectuels, de la classe ouvrière et de la jeunesse.

Parce que le P.C. n'a pas su, après les crimes de l'époque stalinienne, repenser « fondamentalement les conditions dans lesquelles une telle déformation du marxisme a pu se produire », l'intervention militaire en Tchécoslovaquie a été une nouvelle surprise qui a jeté le désarroi chez les militants.

Et Roger Garaudy attaque. Il attaque les successeurs de Staline qui ont mis tout en œuvre pour tourner la page.

Cette politique a conduit peu à peu à couvrir n'importe quel crime d'Etat, pourvu que le système ne soit pas en question: à réprimer en Union soviétique même, non seulement les écrivains, mais quiconque met en question le système, à cautionner l'antisémitisme en Pologne, et à restreindre la délation, la censure et les épurations en Tchécoslovaquie.

L'entreprise a pris une ampleur telle que pour assurer leur hégémonie fondée sur le dogme du modèle unique, les dirigeants soviétiques, comme les dirigeants chinois, se sont engagés dans une politique fractionnelle à l'échelle mondiale, n'hésitant pas à exiger en chaque pays l'épuration de ceux qui résistaient à cette politique de puissance, au nom d'une politique de principe, et à organiser délibérément la scission dans les partis communistes où cette résistance était trop forte.

Tout se passe, de la Finlande à l'Espagne et à la Grèce, comme si, pour les dirigeants soviétiques, le danger principal était la victoire d'un socialisme au visage trop humain, dont on craindrait, comme hier à Prague, la contagion.

## SÉQUELLES DU STALINISME

Dans une première partie, l'auteur revient alors sur les occasions manquées de mai-juin 1968 et produit une série de documents dont son intervention au comité central de Nanterre, le 8 juillet 1968.

La deuxième partie s'intitule « L'engrenage tchécoslovaque ».

« En janvier 1968, dit-il, est né en Tchécoslovaquie une grande espérance. » Et voici une nouvelle série de documents, dont l'intervention de Roger Garaudy au comité central de La Courneuve, le 19 avril 1968, ainsi que la fameuse interview qu'il avait accordée à l'agence tchécoslovaque C.T.K.

Cette interview lui valut un désaveu du bureau politique du parti communiste français, le 27 août 1968. Le 2 septembre, Roger Garaudy écrivait une lettre au bureau politique. Il en révèle aujourd'hui la teneur sous le titre: « L'U.R.S.S. n'est pas infailible. » C'est un document capital.

Chaque jour qui passe a montré que les actuels dirigeants du parti communiste de l'Union soviétique foulent au pied tous les principes, pas seulement ceux qui devraient régir les rapports entre partis, mais ceux qui devraient régir la pensée et l'action de tout communiste (...).

Poser ces questions nous amène à réfléchir sur les séquelles du « stalinisme », c'est-à-dire de cette forme spécifique du dogmatisme qui consiste à ériger en schéma universel et unique la forme de socialisme que l'histoire a imposée en Russie, dans un pays où il y avait interférence entre les problèmes de la construction du socialisme et ceux de la lutte contre le sous-développement, avec tout ce que cela comportait de centralisation économique à outrance et de limitation de la démocratie.

La lettre est catégorique: « Tout compromis de notre part est impossible avec le crime communiste contre le socialisme (...).

Comment rendre autrement son

usage au socialisme qu'en se désolidarisant sans équivoque d'une équipe qui bafoué ouvertement tous les principes? (...)

Chaque violation des principes par les Soviétiques a été par nous abordée avec beaucoup de timidité. Ici Roger Garaudy rappelle le procès Sinlanski-Daniel et l'antisémitisme ronalissant en Union soviétique.

C'est ainsi qu'en confondant l'esprit de parti avec l'une seulement de ses composantes: la discipline, l'on est allé de faiblesse en acceptation, de silence en complicité et que l'on a laissé se développer cette foi aveugle en une infailibilité soviétique.

Crime contre le socialisme, l'affaire tchécoslovaque déclenche une crise du mouvement international. Roger Garaudy produit alors l'intervention du chef de la délégation italienne, M. Berlinguer, à la conférence internationale de Moscou (5-17 juin 1969).

Le mouvement communiste doit avoir son unité non seulement à l'échelle nationale, mais aussi à l'échelle internationale. Une unité qui, loin d'être le résultat d'une coercition venant de l'extérieur, c'est-à-dire d'une transposition mécanique d'options étrangères, se développerait dans la diversité et l'originalité des expériences des divers pays, s'alimenterait de l'esprit critique mutuel, pulserait ses forces dans l'indépendance de chaque parti. (...)

A l'appui des déclarations du délégué italien vient l'intervention du secrétaire général du parti communiste espagnol, M. Santiago Carrillo, à cette même conférence de Moscou. Roger Garaudy la cite sous le titre: « Il n'y a pas de Mecque du socialisme ».

« Nous voudrions souligner, écrit M. Carrillo, que, à la différence de ce qui se produit dans nos partis, le mouvement communiste international n'est pas dirigé selon le principe du centralisme démocratique. Les problèmes de principe ne peuvent pas être résolus ici ni par vote ni par majorité. »

Ainsi Roger Garaudy a-t-il voulu démontrer qu'il n'était pas seul, d'une part, à réclamer une mise à jour des théories marxistes, et, d'autre part, à reprocher à l'Union soviétique de ne pas respecter l'indépendance des partis dans l'élaboration de leur ligne politique.

Blâmé à nouveau le 9 septem-

bre 1969 pour avoir accordé une interview au journal Yougoslave *Kommunist* et s'être mis en contradiction avec les engagements pris devant le Comité central, Roger Garaudy écrit au bureau politique le 14 septembre. Et il publie cette lettre sous le titre: « Est-ce de l'antisémitisme? »

Il accuse d'abord le parti de falsifier ses textes. Puis il déclare: « Il est vrai que l'on me reproche de n'avoir pas tenu l'engagement pris lorsque je fus blâmé le 21 octobre 1968 pour avoir dénoncé l'intervention en Tchécoslovaquie comme une « chute du stalinisme »: l'engagement de me taire. C'est là le fond du problème. Je le dis tout net. Il n'est plus possible de se taire, car le silence devient complicité. Aujourd'hui, en Tchécoslovaquie, les communistes qui n'acceptent pas le modèle socialiste d'importation sont accusés de trahison, assassinés moralement... en attendant mieux. Si certains dirigeants tchécoslovaques renient le 10 décembre 1969 leurs résolutions d'août 1968 et sous la pression de l'occupant ils « épurent » leur parti pour lui faire admettre ce reniement, n'est-ce pas le signe que l'on applique maintenant à tout un peuple la méthode employée au temps des procès célèbres où l'on obtenait même des accusés, par chantage à l'esprit de parti, l'aveu de fautes qu'ils n'avaient pas commises? (...)

Certes, dans le rapport actuel des forces, l'antisémitisme fait nécessairement le jeu de l'impérialisme et de la réaction. Il serait criminel de s'y abandonner (...).

Est-ce affaiblir le parti communiste français ou au contraire écarter un obstacle à son rayonnement que de demander qu'il dise clairement: le socialisme que nous voulons instaurer en France n'est pas celui que Brejnev impose à la Tchécoslovaquie?

## IL N'EST PLUS POSSIBLE DE SE TAIRE

L'auteur affirme qu'à la conférence de Moscou certains problèmes essentiels n'ont pas été résolus: le schisme chinois, l'intervention en Tchécoslovaquie. Et d'autres n'ont pas été posés: celui de la pluralité des modèles du socialisme et celui de la nécessité de leurs recherches à partir des structures propres à cha-



que pays.

En étudiant ces questions sur le plan national, je suis parvenu à une double certitude :

— on ne peut, en France, rien faire de valable sans le parti communiste français ;

— on ne peut rien faire si notre parti ne se transforme pas lui-même profondément dans le sens d'une démocratie permettant la libre circulation des idées et l'éveil des initiatives de chacun.

La critique de Roger Garaudy se porte alors sur les méthodes de fonctionnement du parti communiste français. Il réclame non pas l'organisation de tendances, mais une discussion ouverte sur chaque problème fondamental.

Au comité central d'Ivry en septembre 1969, Roger Garaudy va s'écrier : « Il n'est plus possible de se taire. »

Il décrit la situation en Tchécoslovaquie et ajoute : Nous devons aujourd'hui, devant les mesures prises à Prague, voir clairement :

1) qu'elles signifient une restauration du stalinisme et qu'elles portent en elles le retour aux crimes anciens ;

2) qu'elles n'émanent pas des communistes tchécoslovaques.

La situation ainsi créée par les dirigeants soviétiques en Tchécoslovaquie porte au rayonnement du socialisme en général et à notre parti en particulier, un tort plus grand que le comportement des dirigeants chinois (...). Si nous laissons croire par notre silence que nous acceptons cette image repoussante du socialisme, nous porterions à notre parti un coup très grave. (...)

Nous devons dire sans équivoque à notre peuple : le socialisme que nous voulons instaurer en France n'est pas celui qui est aujourd'hui imposé à la Tchécoslovaquie.

Le 26 septembre 1969, devant les militants de la région parisienne, M. Georges Marchais déclarait : « Roger Garaudy cache depuis longtemps ses désaccords, à la direction du parti. »

L'auteur rapporte ces propos avec ce simple commentaire : « En toute objectivité. »

La troisième partie de l'ouvrage s'intitule : « Retour au stalinisme ? » L'auteur nous trouve toute une série de documents inédits, notamment les lettres de Roger Garaudy au bureau politique à propos des pro-

cess antisémites de Pologne et de la préparation du congrès du parti communiste français. Sur ce dernier point, le projet de thèse est critiqué de façon extrêmement nette.

Et il écrit dans sa lettre : « Comment peut-on soumettre ce tissu d'abstractions et de formules apologetiques et triomphalistes qui n'engrènent à aucun moment sur la réalité concrète à l'ensemble du parti ? »

« Normalisation ou mise au pas », tel est le titre de la quatrième partie du livre. C'est sans doute la plus importante. Car Roger Garaudy va démonter pièce à pièce le système de « normalisation », c'est-à-dire l'ensemble des pressions exercées, par les dirigeants soviétiques, pour tenter d'imposer à tous les partis communistes l'abandon sur leur mode de socialisme centralisé, autoritaire et bureaucratique.

Dans les pays socialistes, les pressions peuvent aller de la sanction économique et du boycott général (comme ce fut le cas pour la Yougoslavie en 1948) à l'invasion et à l'occupation militaire (comme ce fut le cas pour la Tchécoslovaquie en 1968).

Dans les pays capitalistes, les moyens politiques sont plus variés et plus subtils : lorsqu'un parti communiste est orienté de telle façon que le « modèle » de socialisme vers lequel il tend risque d'être assez démocratique pour créer un risque de contagion et lorsqu'il a condamné l'intervention en Tchécoslovaquie, les dirigeants soviétiques n'hésitent pas à aider contre lui le régime au pouvoir, même si c'est un régime fasciste : nous le montrerons pour l'Espagne et pour la Grèce (...).

Ailleurs et suivant le rapport des forces à l'intérieur des partis, les dirigeants soviétiques organisent délibérément la scission et par conséquent l'affaiblissement du parti communiste, comme en Autriche, ou bien se contentent de pousser à l'exclusion totale du parti ceux qui dénoncent leurs agissements.

Vient ensuite, en une série d'exemplaires impressionnants, la démonstration.

Premier exemple bien sûr, la Tchécoslovaquie. Roger Garaudy cite la lettre adressée de Varsovie par les dirigeants bulgares, hongrois, polonais et de la République démocratique allemande au comité central du parti communiste tchécoslovaque, le 15 juillet

1968. Et il commente :

Dans ce document se trouvent ainsi résumés contre Dubcek tous les chefs d'accusation qui serviront à caractériser n'importe quel communiste refusant de confondre le centralisme démocratique et la politique de son parti avec la version stalinienne qui a été donnée de ses principes dans le modèle centralisé, autoritaire et bureaucratique réalisé à partir de 1925 en Union soviétique.

## L'AIDE A FRANCO ET AUX COLONELS GRECS

Des lors, l'ouvrage de Roger Garaudy se transforme en un réquisitoire. Sous le titre sans équivoque de « l'accuse », il expose le scénario de ce qu'il appelle la restauration en Tchécoslovaquie. Puis il prend d'autres exemples. La Finlande d'abord, « où, dit-il, au lieu d'essayer de regagner la grande masse saine du parti à une juste politique, une lutte fractionnelle et systématique est menée avec les puissants moyens que confère l'appui soviétique ».

L'Autriche ensuite, où Brejnev accomplit la promesse de transformer en groupuscules les partis communistes qui oseraient soutenir les Tchèques contre le diktat de Moscou. L'Autriche où fut créé autour de MM. Fischer et Marek « un climat de pogrom ».

Cette méthode classique pour monter, chez des milliers de militants honnêtes et attachés au parti, un réflexe conditionné : celui du rejet, réussit pleinement.

L'Italie à présent, où cependant les tentatives de « normalisation » sont tenues en échec jusqu'ici par une direction qui entend maintenir fermement son indépendance. Mais les dirigeants soviétiques n'en ont pas moins créé des revues à leur entière dévotion.

En abordant les cas de l'Espagne et de la Grèce, Roger Garaudy lance des accusations encore plus graves. Il montre jusqu'où peut aller Moscou contre ceux qui « n'identifient pas l'attachement à l'Union soviétique avec une soumission aveugle à ses dirigeants actuels ».

Pour punir le parti communiste espagnol de sa lutte pour son indépendance, ils n'hésitent pas, après la conférence de Moscou, à changer d'attitude à l'égard de Franco : d'origine depuis la fin de la guerre d'Espagne, pendant plus de trente ans, ni l'Union soviétique ni les autres pays socialistes n'avaient reconnu Franco, voici que, pour la première fois, au début de janvier 1970, le ministre des Affaires étrangères de Franco, Lopez Bravo, est reçu à Moscou par un vice-ministre des Affaires étrangères. Les fascistes espagnols ne dissimulent ni leur joie ni leurs intentions. (...) Quelques jours plus tard, en pleine grâce des mineurs des Asturies, les mines de charbon destinées à briser la grève ne partent pas exploitées des mines des Etats-Unis, mais de ceux des pays membres du pacte de Varsovie : de la Pologne.

Il faut donc se méfier de son dessein en Grèce la référence à la « normalisation » tout plutôt que la victoire d'un parti communiste ayant de l'organisation d'une société socialiste une conception différente de celle des dirigeants soviétiques.

En Grèce le processus est le même, si les moyens sont différents. Manolis Glezos et la résistance grecque avaient flétri l'invasion de Prague. Il fallait les punir.

Les grands moyens, en Grèce comme en Espagne, après avoir organisé la sécession du parti, consistent à aider ses bourreaux. Le 14 décembre 1969, la presse fasciste grecque annonçait triomphalement que l'ambassadeur soviétique à Athènes venait, avec le ministre grec de la coordination Makarezos, de poser la première pierre de la centrale électrique de Keratsini, au Pirée.

Alors Roger Garaudy conclut avec solennité : Je porte ainsi une accusation grave et je pèse mes mots : j'accuse les actuels dirigeants soviétiques de préférer n'importe quel régime et de le soutenir plutôt que d'agir à l'occasion d'un parti communiste quel qu'il soit lorsqu'il risque de tendre à un socialisme différent du modèle soviétique et le mettant en cause. Ils n'acceptent ce risque que lorsque leur politique de puissance est en jeu (...).

Peut-être les dirigeants soviétiques de tenir par leur comportement, du bassin minier des Asturies à la Macédoine, de Prague à Carnaxos, la belle et juste image du socialisme.

LE FIGARO, Paris  
24 February 1970

Book review by Michel Bassi:  
"In 'The Whole Truth' Roger Garaudy Accuses...."

"'The question will not be raised,' said the judges of the Dreyfus affair. The question was put all the same and history provided an answer for it." This is the keynote of Roger Garaudy's new book published by Grasset this week under the title of Toute la verite [The Whole Truth] from which Le Figaro presents important excerpts today.

These are sufficient to set the tone of the work. The text itself could go without any comment. This book is conceived as testimony for history. Roger Garaudy, already ousted from the politburo and central committee of the PCF [Parti Communiste Francais; French Communist Party] and who is presently running the risk of being shut out from his party altogether, is waiting for history to demonstrate that he was right.

It is all the same necessary to underscore some features of this book, features that would tend to become blurred if one were not careful behind the extremely serious criticisms that Roger Garaudy is leveling against the present leaders of the Soviet Union.

On several occasions Garaudy stresses that he is and remains a communist. "Contrary to the rumors circulated about me for the past 3 years in our federations," he wrote on 14 September 1969 in a letter to the party's politburo, I am in no way in disagreement with the objectives nor with the policy of our party. But I believe that the methods that we are using do not make it possible for us to apply this policy effectively and to attain these goals."

Garaudy knows that he will be charged with being an anti-communist. However, he says, "anti-Sovietism is the attitude which consists in discrediting socialism in its very essence while reproaching the Soviet Union with every strike that it deals to capitalism. What I reproach the Soviet leaders for are the blows that they deal to the communist parties and to the socialist movement over-all."

In his conclusion Roger Garaudy reiterates his personal case with particular force. He had already written a few pages earlier that the cliché portrait of a born criminal painted by the Soviet leaders applied to Dubcek and Fischer as well as to himself, as it had been applied in the past to Bukharin or Arthur London (the author of The Confession).

"It is our duty," he writes, "to protect hope. We shall not manage to do that through silence but through clarity . . . . We need adult activists . . . . This is why it is with emotional conflict but with the certainty of serving the cause of our needed renewal that I am writing this book and writing it for my comrades first and foremost.

"The 350,000 activists of our party," he continues, "represent the greatest and soundest political force of our country. Nothing of any consequence for the future can be done without them and still less by moving against them. Even if I am to be attacked to the point of being excluded from the party, I cannot give anybody any other advice than the following: If you like the future, join the French Communist Party."

Thus, one must also take this into account in Roger Garaudy's book to understand it well. Accordingly, we publish below excerpts from the text. We have strived to adhere faithfully to the development of the work by trying not to alter its general meaning. Besides familiar thoughts, the work contains hitherto unpublished ones -- including the texts of the letters sent by the author to the leaders of the PCF -- which represent documents of major significance.

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"The USSR Wishes to Have All Communist Parties Follow Its 'Model' of Centralized, Authoritarian, and Bureaucratic Socialism"

The opus of Roger Garaudy opens with a preface in which the author explains this problem "in all its tragic magnitude."

"Noisy and at times unsound publicity was given to my disagreements, with the leadership of the PCF, especially on the occasion of the party congress at which this disagreement often took the form of personal confrontations. It is time to consider calmly what is at stake: a renewal of the PCF, a task which was in no way concluded with the party's 19th Congress but which, quite the contrary, has no more than begun."

The first major internal debate of the PCF, "the first fundamental challenge to its revolutionary strategy and that of the democratic opposition in France over-all" was opened by the events of May-June 1968. The second major debate was triggered by the Czechoslovak affair.

"What is true," writes Roger Garaudy, "is that for this (communist) party to play a primary motivating role in the common endeavor of the French left it is necessary that it be radically altered, not in its objectives nor its program but in its ways of thinking and action; that its analyses of contemporary society and of its development be based not on imported

models from countries where Stalinist perversions have become ossified and have undermined the method of research elaborated by Marx and Lenin but on the living method followed by Marx and then by Lenin which consists in the science of identifying the contradictions that may possibly arise in the future so that Lenin's concept of 'democratic centralism' may not be reduced to only one of its components, 'centralism.'"

The author reproaches the communist party with "missed opportunities": the events of May-June 1968 should have led not to revolution but to a leap forward in the direction of unity of the workers and intellectuals, of the working class and youth.

Because the PCF was unable, after the crimes of the Stalinist era, to rethink "in a fundamental manner the conditions in which such distortion of Marxism could occur," the military intervention in Czechoslovakia was a new surprise which threw the activists into disarray.

Roger Garaudy continues his attack. He challenges the successors of Stalin who did everything to turn a new page.

"This policy has led little by little to covering up any type of public offense provided that the system not be challenged; to repressing in the Soviet Union itself not only writers but whoever should question the regime; to supporting anti-semitism in Poland; and to restoring the system of informing, censorship, and purges in Czechoslovakia.

"This campaign has assumed such proportions that in order to insure their hegemony based on the dogma of the single model the Soviet leaders, like the Chinese leaders, became involved in a decisive policy at the international level, not hesitating to require in each country a purge of those who opposed this policy of force in the name of a policy of principle and to bring about deliberately a split in the communist parties where this opposition was too strong.

"The Soviet leaders consider everything -- from Finland to Spain to Greece -- as if the major danger were the victory of a socialism with too human a face, one whose contagion is to be feared as in the case of Prague."

### Sequels of Stalinism

In the initial section of his book, the author thus returns to the missed opportunities of May-June 1968 and produces a series of documents including his message to the central committee of Nanterre on 8 July 1968.

The second part of his work entitled "The Czechoslovak Mesh" includes the following comment.

"In January 1968," Garaudy writes, "a great hope was born in Czechoslovakia." And at this point the book introduces a new series of documents, including Roger Garaudy's speech to the central committee of La Courneuve on 19 April 1968 as well as the transcript of the famous interview which he had granted CTK, the Czechoslovak news agency.

This interview resulted in a disavowal by the politburo of the French CP on 27 August 1968. On 2 September Roger Garaudy wrote a letter to the politburo. He now discloses its tenor under the heading "The USSR Is Not Infallible." It is a major document.

"Each passing day has shown that the present leaders of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union are trampling all principles under foot, not only those which should regulate relationships among parties but also those which should guide the thought and action of every communist . . . .

"Asking these questions leads us to reflect on the sequels of 'Stalinism,' that is to say of that specific form of dogmatism which consists in presenting as a universal and single model the form of socialism which history imposed in Russia, in a country where there was conflict between the problems of building socialism and those of fighting underdevelopment with all that this implies by way of economic centralization to the n-th degree and of limitations on democracy."

The letter is categorical: "Any compromise on our part with the crime committed against socialism is impossible . . . .

"How can we show the true face of socialism otherwise than by divorcing ourselves unequivocally from a team which openly jeers at all its principles? . . .

"Each violation of principle by the Soviets has been approached by us very timidly." Here Roger Garaudy recalls the Sinyavsky-Daniel trial and nascent anti-semitism in the Soviet Union.

"In this way, by confounding party spirit with just one of its components, discipline, communists allowed themselves to slide from weakness to acceptance, from silence to complicity, and permitted this blind faith in Soviet infallibility to develop."

A crime against socialism, the Czechoslovak affair has unleashed a crisis for the international communist movement. Roger Garaudy then produces the speech of the head of the Italian delegation, Mr Berlinguer, at the international conference in Moscow (5-17 June 1969).

"The communist movement should have its unity not only at the national but also at the international level. This is a unity which, far from being the result of coercion from outside, that is to say of the mechanical transplanting of foreign options on the domestic context, would develop in the diversity and originality of the experiences of the various countries, would be nourished by a mutual critical spirit, and would draw its strength from the independence of each party . . . ."

The speech of the secretary-general of the Spanish CP, Mr Santiago Carrillo, at this same Moscow conference backed the statements of the Italian delegate. Roger Garaudy quotes it under the heading "Socialism Has No Mecca."

"We would like to stress," Mr Carrillo said, "that contrary to what occurs in our parties, the international communist movement is not guided according to the principle of democratic centralism. Problems of principle cannot be solved here either by ballot or by majority rule."

This is how Roger Garaudy seeks to demonstrate that he was not alone on one hand in demanding an updating of Marxist theories and on the other in charging the Soviet Union with not respecting the independence of parties in the drawing up of their policies.

Censured again on 9 September 1969 for having granted an interview to the Yugoslav newspaper Kommunist and violated commitments made to the central committee, Roger Garaudy wrote his letter to the politburo on 14 September. He reproduces this letter under the heading "Is This Anti-Sovietism?"

First he accuses the party of falsifying his text. Then he declares: "It is true that I am charged with not having kept my word to keep quiet given at the time I was censured on 21 October 1968 for having denounced the intervention in Czechoslovakia as 'the f i s t of Stalinism.' But I state it very clearly: it is no longer possible to keep quiet, for silence becomes complicity. Today in Czechoslovakia the communists who do not accept the imported socialist model are accused of treason, are morally assassinated . . . as they wait for better days. While some Czechoslovak leaders reneged on 10 December 1969 on their resolutions of August 1968 and, under the pressure of the occupier, 'are purging' their party in order to make it acknowledge this reneging, is this not the sign that there is now being applied to an entire people the method used at the time of the famous trials at which the prosecution obtained even from the accused, through blackmail of the party spirit, their admission of errors which they had not committed? . . . ."

"To be sure, in the present relationship of forces, anti-Sovietism necessarily redounds to the benefit of imperialism and reaction. It would be criminal to give oneself over to it . . . ."

"Is it to weaken the French Communist Party or contrariwise to remove an obstacle to its expansion to demand that it state clearly that the socialism which we wish to establish in France is not that which Brezhnev has imposed on Czechoslovakia?"

"One Can No Longer Keep Quiet"

The author asserts that at the Moscow conference certain vital problems were not solved -- the Chinese split and the intervention in Czechoslovakia -- while others were not posed -- that of the several models of socialism and that of the need to seek them starting with the structures unique to each country.

"In studying these questions at the national level I have arrived at a twofold certainty:

"One cannot do anything worthwhile without the French Communist Party in France; and

"One cannot do anything if our party itself does not change radically on its own initiative in the direction of a democracy allowing the free exchange of ideas and an awakening of initiative on the part of each individual."

Roger Garaudy's criticism then turns to the operating methods of the French CP. He demands not the regimentation of trends but an open discussion on each fundamental problem.

To the central committee of Ivry in September 1969 Roger Garaudy declaimed: "One can no longer keep quiet."

He describes the situation in Czechoslovakia and adds: "We should today, in the face of the measures taken in Prague, see the following clearly:

"1. That they signify a restoration of Stalinism and that they involve a relapse to former crimes;

"2. That they do not originate with the Czechoslovak communists.

"The situation thus created by the Soviet leaders in Czechoslovakia brings to the luster of socialism in general and of our party in particular a greater tarnish than the behavior of the Chinese leaders . . . . If we allowed it to be believed through our silence that we accept this repulsive image of socialism we would deal our party a very severe blow . . . .

"We must say without equivocation to our people: the socialism which we seek to establish in France is not that which is imposed on Czechoslovakia today."

On 26 September 1969, before the activists of the Paris region, Mr Georges Marchais declared: "Roger Garaudy has been hiding his disagreements with the party leadership for a long time." The author reports these remarks with this simple comment: "In all objectivity."

The third part of the work is entitled "Return to Stalinism?" There again we find a whole series of unpublished documents, specifically the letters from Roger Garaudy to the politburo in connection with the anti-semitic trials in Poland and the preparation of the French Communist Party's congress. On this point the draft thesis is criticized in a very distinct manner.

Garaudy writes in his letter: "How can one submit to the entire party membership this web of abstractions and apologetic and triumphalist formulas which do not come to grips at any point with concrete reality?"

"Normalization, or Bringing to Heel" is the title of the fourth part of the book. It is undoubtedly the most important section. For Roger Garaudy demonstrates here step by step the system of "normalization," that is, the sum total of pressures exerted by the Soviet leaders "to try to have all communist parties follow their model of centralized, authoritarian, and bureaucratic socialism."

"In the socialist countries the pressures can range from economic sanctions and a general boycott (as was the case with Yugoslavia in 1948) to military occupation (the case of Czechoslovakia in 1968).

"In the capitalist countries the political methods are more varied and more subtle. When a communist party is oriented in such a way that the 'model' of socialism toward which it inclines runs the risk of being democratic enough to create a threat of being contagious and when it has condemned the Soviet intervention in Czechoslovakia, the Soviet leaders do not hesitate to help the regime in power against the party, even if it be a fascist regime. We shall demonstrate this in the case of Spain and Greece . . . .

"Elsewhere and depending on the power relationships within parties, the Soviet leaders deliberately organize splits and consequently the weakening of the communist party as in Austria, or they content themselves with pushing for the total exclusion from the party of those who denounce their actions."

The evidence follows in a series of impressive examples. The first, naturally, is Czechoslovakia. Roger Garaudy cites the letter sent from Warsaw by the Bulgarian, Hungarian, Polish, and East German leaders to the Czechoslovak CP's central committee on 15 July 1968. He comments:



"In this document there are thus found in a brief against Dubcek all the counts that will serve to characterize any communist refusing to confuse democratic centralism and his party's policy with the Stalinist version of these principles emanating from the centralized, authoritarian, and bureaucratic model achieved since 1925 in the Soviet Union."

Assistance to Franco and the Greek Colonels

From that point Roger Garaudy's work becomes a list of charges. Under the unequivocal heading of "I Accuse," he exposes the scenario of what he calls the restoration in Czechoslovakia. Then he cites other examples. First of all he mentions Finland "where," he writes, "instead of an attempt to win the great, rational mass of the party back to an equitable policy, a factional and systematic struggle is being waged with the powerful means represented by Soviet backing."

Then comes Austria where Brezhnev fulfilled his promise to transform into minigroups those communist parties which would dare to support the Czechoslovaks against the dictate of Moscow. This is the case of Austria where "a pogrom-like atmosphere" was created around Mr Fischer and Mr Marek.

"This traditional method of creating a conditioned reflex among thousands of honest activists devoted to the party -- this policy of rejection is fully successful."

There is Italy at present where attempts at "normalization" have however been held in check up to now by a leadership which firmly intends to maintain its independence. But the Soviet leaders have nonetheless managed to stage demonstrations indicating complete devotion to their line.

In broaching the cases of Spain and Greece, Roger Garaudy makes even more serious charges. He shows just how far Moscow can go against those who "do not identify attachment to the Soviet Union with blind submission to its present leaders."

"In order to punish the Spanish Communist Party for its struggle for independence, the Soviet leaders did not hesitate, after the Moscow conference, to change their attitude toward Franco. Whereas since the end of the Spanish civil war, for more than 30 years, neither the Soviet Union nor the other socialist countries had recognized Franco, now for the first time in early January 1970 Franco's Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lopez Bravo, was received in Moscow by a deputy minister of foreign affairs. The Spanish fascists hid neither their joy nor their intentions . . . . Some days later, at the height

of the Asturian miners' strike, freighters loaded with coal designed to break the strike sailed not only from ports in the United States but also from ports in Warsaw Pact member countries such as Poland.

"One sees to what methods the Soviet leadership stoops in order to break the resistance to 'normalisation' rather than strive for the victory of a communist party having a different concept of the organization of a socialist society from that of the Soviet chiefs."

In Greece the process is the same even though the means used have been different. Manolis Glezos and the Greek opposition had lashed out at the Prague invasion. They had to be punished.

"The third degree in Greece as in Spain, after having organized a split in the party, consisted in helping its executioners. On 14 December 1969 the Greek fascist press announced triumphantly that the Soviet ambassador to Athens had, along with Mr Makarezos, just laid the cornerstone for the Keratsini power plant at Piraeus."

Eventually, Roger Garaudy is to conclude solemnly:  
"I thus bring a serious charge and I weigh my words. I accuse the current Soviet leaders of preferring no matter what regime and of supporting it rather than helping the rise of any communist party whatever when it threatens to favor a socialism different from the Soviet model and to challenge the latter. The Soviets accept this risk only when their power policy is at stake . . . ."

"I accuse the Soviet leaders of tarnishing by their actions ranging from the Asturian mining basin to Macedonia, from Prague to Caracas, the beautiful and equitable image of socialism."

NEW YORK TIMES  
11 April 1968

CPYRGT  
CPYRGT

## Excerpts From Reform Program of the Czech Communist Party

**PRAGUE, April 10 (Reuters)**  
—Following are excerpts from a summary of the Czechoslovak action program as distributed by C.T.K., the Czech press agency

The main thing is to reform the whole political system so that it will permit the dynamic development of Socialist relations, the combination of a broad democracy with a scientific, highly qualified management, the strengthening of the social order, the stabilization of socialist relations and the maintenance of social discipline.

The basic structure of the political system must at the same time provide firm guarantees against a return to the old methods of subjectivism and highhandedness from a position of power.

The basic orientation of Czechoslovak foreign policy is alliance and cooperation with the Soviet Union and the other Socialist countries.

The political parties of the national front are partners whose political work is based on the joint political program of the national front and is naturally bound by the Constitution of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic.

### Will Develop Political Life

The Communist party of Czechoslovakia will use every means to develop such forms of political life that will insure the expression of the direct say and will of the working class and all working people in political decision-making in our country.

The national front as a whole and all its components must have independent rights and their own responsibility for the management of our country and society. Voluntary social organizations must be based on really voluntary membership and activity.

The implementation of constitutional freedoms of assembly and the formation of societies must be insured this year so that the possibility

of setting up voluntary organizations, special-interest associations, societies, etc., is guaranteed by law.

It is not possible to prescribe by an arbitrary interpretation from a position of power what information may or may not be given to the working people, which of their opinions can or cannot be expressed publicly, where public opinion can play a role and where it cannot.

The Central Committee of the Communist party of Czechoslovakia considers it necessary in the shortest possible time to define more exactly than hitherto by a press law when a state body can forbid the propagation of certain information (in the press, radio, television, etc.) and exclude the possibility of factual preliminary censorship.

Legal norms must more exactly guarantee the freedom of speech also for minority interests and opinions (again within the framework of Socialist laws and in harmony with the principle that decisions will be taken according to the will of the majority). The constitutional freedom of motion, particularly the travelling of our citizens abroad, must be guaranteed exactly by law. This means in particular that a citizen should have the legal right to long-term or permanent sojourn abroad and that people should not be groundlessly placed in the position of emigrants. At the same time, it is necessary to protect by law the interest of the state, for example as regards the drain of some categories of specialists, etc.

### Rehabilitation Procedure

Hitherto the rehabilitation of people—both Communists and non-Communists—who were the victims of legal violations in past years has not always been carried out in all its political and civic consequences.

The Central Committee of the Communist party of

Czechoslovakia supports the proposal that the procedure in these questions and the problems of legal consequences be incorporated in a special law.

Our republic, as a joint state of two equal nations—Czechs and Slovaks—must consistently insure that the constitutional arrangement of relations between our fraternal nations and the status of all other nationalities of Czechoslovakia develops as demanded by the strengthening of the unity of the state, the development of the nations and nationalities themselves and in keeping with the needs of socialism.

It is therefore necessary to work out and pass a constitutional law, which will embody the principle of a symmetrical arrangement as the goal to which our development after the 14th Congress in the new constitution will aim, and which will, in a new way, on the basis of full equality, solve the status of Slovak national bodies in our constitutional system in the nearest future—before the elections to the National Assembly and the Slovak National Council.

In the interests of strengthening the unity, conference and national individuality of all nationalities in Czechoslovakia—of Hungarians, Poles, Ukrainians and Germans—it is indispensable to work out a statute stating the status and rights of the various nationalities, guaranteeing the possibilities of their national life and the development of their national individuality.

The basic orientation of Czechoslovak foreign policy was conceived and confirmed at the time of the national liberation struggle and in the process of the Socialist reconstruction of our country.

This is alliance and cooperation with the Soviet Union and other Socialist countries. We shall make efforts to deepen further friendly relations with our allies—the countries of the world Social-

ist community—on the basis of mutual respect, sovereignty and equality and international solidarity.

The action program will be implemented in a complex international situation, the future development of which will be influenced by the realization of some important principles of the program.

On the other hand, the process of revitalization of Socialism in Czechoslovakia will also enable our republic to have a more active effect on this international development.

### Fight Against Imperialism

In the struggle of Socialist and democratic forces against the aggressive efforts of world imperialism, we stand resolutely on the side of progress, democracy and Socialism. This point of view will also govern our attitude to the most burning international problems of the present day as well as our share in the world struggle against the forces of imperialist reaction.

Czechoslovakia will formulate her own standpoint on fundamental questions of world policy. In this, Czechoslovakia will proceed from the real balance of international forces and the knowledge that it is an active part of the revolutionary process in the world.

In its relations with the developing countries, Socialist Czechoslovakia will contribute to the further development of the antiimperialist front and according to its forces and possibilities will support all nations fighting against imperialism, colonialism, neocolonialism, for the strengthening of their sovereignty and national independence and for economic development.

We shall therefore continue to support the courageous struggle of the Vietnamese people against American aggression. We shall also try to achieve a political solution of the crisis in the Middle East.

With respect to the developed capitalist countries we shall actively apply a policy of peaceful coexistence.

#### A Two-Germany Policy

We shall consistently base our policy on the existence of two German States, on the fact that the German Democratic Republic, as the first Socialist state on German soil, is an important peace factor in Europe, on the need to support realistic forces in the German Federal Republic and at the same time resist the neo-Nazi and revanchist tendencies in that country. The Czechoslovak people want to live in peace with all nations.

The Communist party of Czechoslovakia will more actively work in the field of the international Communist

and working-class movement. We shall lay special emphasis on friendly ties, mutual consultations and exchange of experiences with the Communist party of the Soviet Union, the Communist and Workers parties of the Socialist community, with all other fraternal Communist parties.

Since the end of the nineteen-fifties, Czechoslovak society has entered a new stage of development. This fact has gradually formed a political line that we want to apply and develop in a creative way. It is characteristic for the present stage that:

¶ There no longer exist antagonistic classes and the main feature of internal development is becoming the process of rapprochement of all social groups of our society;

¶ Existing methods of management and the orientation of the national economy have become outdated and urgently require changes, that is an economic system of management that would be able to enforce a change toward intensive growth;

¶ It will be necessary to prepare the country's link-up into the process of the scientific technical revolution in the world, which requires especially intensive cooperation between workers and peasants and the intelligentsia and which will lay great demands on people's knowledge and qualifications, on the implementation of science;

¶ Broad space for social initiative, an open exchange of views and the democratization of the whole social and political system is becoming

literally a condition of the dynamics of Socialist society—a condition for holding our ground in competition before the world and honorably fulfilling our obligations to the international working-class movement.

A major reason for the fact that outdated methods of managing the economy were maintained was the deformation of the political system.

In addition to this there were the unfavorable external circumstances at the beginning of the sixties, when a serious economic imbalance occurred.

The immediate cause of past shortcomings was the fact that, because there was too great a concentration of decision-taking in the party, there was an exceptional

BALTIMORE SUN  
11 April 1968

CPYRGHT

### Czechoslovakia: More

Czechoslovakia's attempt to have both freedom and communism becomes more and more remarkable. From the Kremlin the pace of events must look headlong. To the West it seems bizarre. Communism and freedom are, in our opinion and in our international experience, contradictory terms. Yet the new Government in Prague is not a group of wild men. It is a body of calculating politicians who believe

that they have correctly read the opportunities of the time, and the temper of their country. Their actions now add up to being the most important development in Eastern Europe since World War II, with wide implications for the future of Europe and the future of communism.

Item: The Czechoslovak Communist party, which retains firm domination, now plans a strict separation of the functions of state

security and internal public security. This, if carried through, would mean an end in Czechoslovakia of the police state which all Communist nations (including in a modified degree even Yugoslavia) have up until now been.

Item: The ruling party calls further for legal guarantees of freedom of movement for Czechoslovak citizens, particularly in movement out of the country. It is speculated that the main purpose of this is economic, to enable Czechs and

Slovaks to take temporary jobs abroad. If so, all the better, and relaxation is still relaxation.

Granted that experiments toward freedom in Communist countries have been tried before, and have oftener than not been followed by a new repression, as liberties threatened to get out of control, Czechoslovakia continues to be a source of wonderments and hopes—and perhaps in the Kremlin of deepening anxiety.

WASHINGTON STAR  
14 April 1968

## The Czechs and the Curtain

The change in Czechoslovakia is taking on the aspects of a major nonviolent revolution in what used to be, in Stalin's time, the monolithic world of communism. Nothing could better illustrate the continuing deterioration, ideologically and otherwise, of the once-formidable Iron Curtain.

Under the leadership of Alexander Dubcek, successor to the ousted Antonin Novotny, the Czech Communist Party now has come forward with a 24,000-word "action program"—a manifesto—that promises to punch the biggest hole to date in that curtain. Among other things, it calls for an end to "the old high-handedness" of the Stalinist-minded Novotnys, and it declares as follows: "Every citizen . . . must know with certainty that his political convictions and opinions, his personal beliefs and activities cannot be the subject of attention of the state security service."

In other words, or at least so the new manifesto affirms, Czechoslovakia's secret police are henceforth to deal only with problems of external security; they are not to intrude—as they have done with a vengeance under Novotny—upon the private lives of the people. The people, moreover, are from now on to enjoy the right to travel freely through the world, and to stay abroad for as long

as they wish. They also are assured, again according to the "action program," that their courts are to be liberated from party-line political control and that their press is to be subjected to much less censorship.

And there is further reason for encouragement. Although the Communist Party is to remain dominant, the projected Dubcek reforms include electoral changes that should blow a good bit of fresh democratic air into the country. Also, the "action program" envisions a sharp reduction of centralized economic control and the enactment of special measures, including profit incentives, calculated to set up a system of limited free enterprise. As for the world at large, in terms both of economics and political policy, the new Prague regime apparently intends to emulate the independent course followed by Romania and Yugoslavia.

It is not surprising, in these circumstances, that hard-line Communist regimes like Ulbricht's in East Germany and Gomulka's in Poland are reportedly worried about the danger of the Czech contagion spreading to them. Nor is it surprising that the Kremlin is showing some worry, too. Never has Marxism-Leninism seemed more on the defensive, more in disarray.

CPYRGHT

THOUGHT, New Delhi  
7 March 1970

CPYRGHT

## A RIVER DAM OF SORROWS

By A CORRESPONDENT WHO WAS RECENTLY IN EGYPT

**E**GYPT is an agricultural country. Traditionally, the fertile Nile Delta has been its lifeline. Is it in the danger of being decimated?

Paradoxically, the question has become insistent in the wake of Soviet built Aswan Dam. Rainfall in Egypt as a whole is deficient. Human existence in the country depends on irrigation from the Nile. The Aswan Dam was built in the expectation that it would make it possible for Egypt to store large quantities of water which would from year to year minimize or even out the effect of a dry season. However, what was expected to be a boon threatens to be a bane. In the years since its construction a grave economic and health hazard has developed. Many Egyptians who seldom get into print have in fact begun calling the Dam their country's "greatest single disaster."

It is so easy to be extravagant with phrase in the Arabic language. But fairly ascertainable facts suggest that this seeming phraseological extravagance is the nearest description of some of the sadder consequences of the Aswan Dam. Here are some of them:

Apart from the unavailability now of the up-river silt in the Nile Delta, the clear water released from the Lake Nasser (produced by the Dam) is scouring the river channel which weakens the base of the barrages on the river. Barrages are similar to locks. They raise the water level up to the point from where it floods into the surrounding fields. These barrages face the threat of being washed away, if counter-measures are not taken before it is too late.

Equally serious is the rapid erosion now eating away the Nile Delta itself—big chunks are already beginning to break away. The Dam catches the silt from the river which before was distributed

over the irrigated land. The changing composition of the soil is manifest from the poorer drainage which is lifting the saline underground water. The process may eventually produce a brackish salt desert where we had the fertile Nile Delta.

The lack of silt in the Upper Nile is having a serious effect on Egypt's fishing industry too. Offshore fishing has virtually been destroyed. The reason is the decrease in the number of shrimp and sardines which lived on plant life fertilized by silt. Another misfortune of the offshore fishing was the oil drilling in the Gulf of Suez.

The Aswan Dam is also imposing its dire penalty on the health of the Egyptian people. There has been an alarming increase in the number of snails in the Upper Nile Valley. These snails are carriers of the Iarasite Bilharzia that causes in humans a chronic and debilitating disease. These snails live only in soil that is damp all the year round. The Aswan Dam provides permanent irrigation in Upper Egypt where it never existed before. The result is growing infestation of Bilharzia in nearly one-third of the Egyptian population.

The Aswan Dam was the result of Soviet Russia's planning and execution. It is amazing the country that popularized economic planning should have had no use for unified economic analysis. The Dam is a crying example of resultant serious oversights. Soviet Russia itself has had several instances that could have been salutary. For instance, the construction of a whole series of dams down the Volga River has so severely cut down the flow of its waters that the level of the Caspian Sea has dangerously been dropping. Not only has the fishing industry there been endangered but the sea in several parts has also become difficult for shipping.

NEW YORK TIMES  
19 January 1969  
(Sierra Club Advertisement)

### Rampant Technology

The Aswan High Dam was dreamed up to prevent the Nile from overflowing its banks as it had yearly throughout history. (It was thought such a great idea that countries vied for the honor of helping build it; the U.S. foremost among them.) The goals were electricity and year-round irrigation, thus greater productivity. No one, including the U.S., thought much about certain *side effects*, which may ultimately prove the most important:

—Since the natural floods have been halted, life-giving nutrients that were formerly delivered to the land and the Mediterranean sea are now piling up in a reservoir above the dam, unusable.



As a result the Eastern Mediterranean sardine fishery is already doomed.

As for the land, the lack of nutrients, plus the waterlogging caused by old irrigation, plus salinization, *may actually decrease productivity*. Newly irrigated lands have the same fate in store.

—A particular snail has begun to thrive in the warm irrigation canals. The snail hosts a worm which causes schistosomiasis, a debilitating, often fatal disease. In one region around the dam, the incidence of this disease used to be 2%. It has now risen to 75%.

—At Aswan, we may also see repeated the awful developments at Kariba Dam, East Africa. At Kariba, rafts of hyacinths and reeds have spread over much of the reservoir's surface. It has been estimated that if this growth should cover just 10% of the reservoir at Aswan, the plants could actually transpire into the desert air enough water to stop *all* flow into the lower Nile.

Looking at the bright side again: In a few centuries, the dam will fill up with silt, and end its useful life. Then, the river will flow right over it, creating a huge, perhaps lovely, waterfall. Tourists will enjoy the view.

THE WASHINGTON POST  
20 March 1969

# Egypt Hunts Drug To Halt Spread of 'Scourge of Nile'

CPYRGHT

Los Angeles Times

ALEXANDRIA, Egypt—The ancient disease bilharziasis—known as the scourge of the Nile—may strike six million more Egyptians when the huge Aswan Dam irrigation project gets under way, according to World Health Organization officials here.

The disease, which has plagued Egyptians since the days of the Pharaohs, already infects 20 million people in the Middle East—as well as an estimated 200 million in other parts of Africa, Asia and Latin America.

Ironically, the disease flourishes in the still, gentle waters of irrigation projects—and new irrigation developments invariably bring a sharp incidence in bilharziasis among farmers.

This is because the waters that bring life to the desert also carry the tiny snails that harbor the blood fluke bilharziasis.

Officials at the World Health Organization's eastern Mediterranean headquarters here are launching a two-pronged offensive against the disease, emphasizing both treatment and prevention.

It has been only recently that a drug has been developed that can kill the flukes in the human body without producing deleterious side effects. Similarly, new molluscicides have been developed to kill the snails without damaging other fauna and flora in the waters.

But W.H.O. medics have all they can do to keep abreast of the disease—which tends to spread as new irrigation projects are opened in Egypt, Iraq and Iran.

At a recent bilharziasis symposium in Cairo, Dr. Khalid El-Hadidi estimated that the loss to Egypt in working hours and medical care due to the disease was more than \$200 million annually.

Another W.H.O. expert describes the affliction this way: "Bilharziasis brings a man to the edge of the grave, and, while he is in a weakened condition, another disease pushes him over the edge."

Bilharziasis, also known as schistosomiasis, is carried by a water-borne larva first identified by a German physician, Theodore Bilharz, an assistant professor at the Cairo School of Medicine, in 1851.

Entering directly through the skin of humans—while they are working, washing, or bathing in the river—the larvae move into the victims' blood streams.

The larvae then settle down to years of depositing eggs in vital organs. Once the eggs enter the bladder and intestines they are passed out of the body and, in areas of primitive sewage disposal, reach fresh water, hatch and start a new cycle.

"The snails that carry the parasites are very tough," say W.H.O. officials. "They are hermaphroditic and therefore can reproduce without mates. One snail can produce 50,000 descendants in four months' time."

Today, the aim of tropical medicine specialists here is to find, on the one hand, a drug that will cure the victim of blood flukes without damaging side effects and, on the other, to develop a chemical that can kill the snails without destroying other water life.

Recently, in two pilot projects—one in Iran and the other in Alexandria—the drug Abilhar has proven successful in destroying bilharziasis eggs in the human body.

In the past, W.H.O. workers have also tried draining irrigation ponds or even sending shocks of electricity through the water to kill the snails. But it was to no avail.

In recent weeks, however, researchers have reported good results with Bayluscide—a molluscicide which is able to kill the snails in river water without destroying other forms of life.

"It now appears," says an official at the World Health Organization, "that the Dark Age of bilharziasis is over. We hope we can apply these new techniques at Aswan. The scourge that Egyptian peasants once considered another cross to bear in their lives may be lifted from their backs in the near future."



NATIONAL OBSERVER  
4 August 1969

## The Dangers to a Dam

# Aswan Faces a Test of Its Footing

Egypt took a gigantic gamble in building the High Dam at Aswan. Some say a life-death gamble. This month the dam faces a critical test when the 310-mile lake that has been forming behind it reaches its maximum level.

The dam is designed to triple Egypt's cultivatable land, spur industrialization with cheap hydroelectric power, and alter a life style along the Nile River that is little changed since the time of the Pharaohs. It could do all this.

But the dam contains the geologic seeds of its own failure in the soft soil that extends hundreds of feet beneath it. If the dam should suddenly collapse—a tiny but real possibility—a wall of water would sweep down the narrow, heavily-populated Nile Valley to Cairo and the Mediterranean.

### Taking the Risk

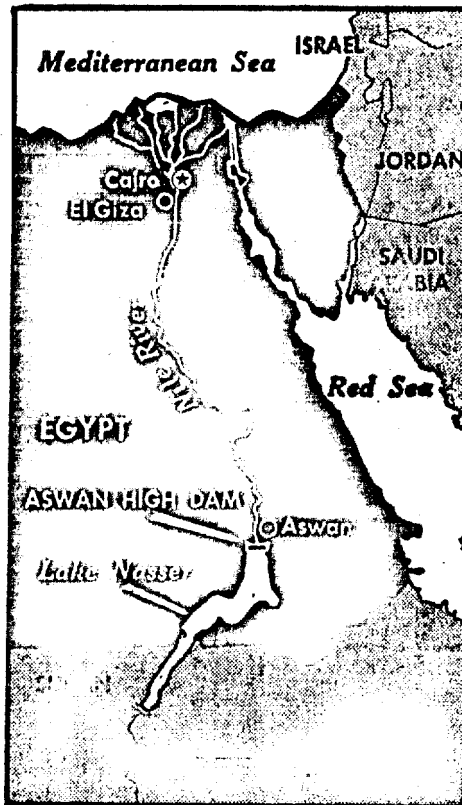
Egyptian President Gamal Abdel Nasser chose to live with such a possibility when the first Russian excavators started chipping at the Nile's russet-colored granite gorge above Aswan nine years ago. Egypt is the Nile, and if the river's annual flooding and periods of drought were ever to be controlled by man, a dam would have to be built capable of storing several year's accumulation of river flow.

"Neither risk nor price has been too high for this," the British Journalist Tom Little wrote in his book, *High Dam at Aswan*, observing that in 1965 the High Dam had already become irrevocably entwined in the goals of Colonel Nasser's revolution.

The assumed threat to the dam, of course, was Israel and the possibility of a bombing foray. But the \$1 billion super dam may be more vulnerable on geologic counts.

The High Dam is one of the world's tallest rock-fill structures, extending 364 feet above the river bed. But unlike the United States' Hoover Dam, a shell of concrete and steel that rises 726 feet high, the drama of the Aswan High Dam's measurements is in its sheer bulk. It is 3,180 feet thick at its base, spans the river gorge at its top for 2.2 miles and contains 47,300,000 cubic yards of material. That's enough rock and sand to make 17 pyramids the size of Cheops' tomb near Cairo. Or fill up 25 Empire State Buildings.

But the dam sits on a bed of sand and



muck more than 500 feet deep. It could, just possibly, wash away.

The dam's foundation problem, of course, was well known to the engineers who built it. Four years ago Mr. Little wrote: "The river flowing from the south could percolate through the sandy base until it found an outlet and, in doing so, cause hollow natural 'pipes,' which would undermine the dam in due course." But the Russians and Egyptians evidently were satisfied that the steps taken to remedy the problem would work.

The primary remedy was insertion of a "grout curtain" into the river bed extending from the dam's clay core down to the granite bedrock. A mixture of cement and clay was forced under pressure into the "glutinous mattress" under the dam through hollow, perforated drills in a pattern to create a hoped-for impervious "curtain" that would block any seepage under the dam.

### Soviets Step In

The need for some kind of seal was foreseen in 1953 when a West German company, Hochtief Dortmund Union, took the first river-bed core samples and made preliminary plans of the dam for the Cairo government. The German proposals included an elaborate alternative—freezing the muck by layers in order to install a concrete shell. But an international board of consultants, headed by an eminent American soil-mechanics specialist, Dr. Karl Trezaghi, discarded the concrete shell idea as impractical in 1954, and instead recommended reliance on the grout curtain.

In 1956 the United States reversed its decision to help finance the High Dam, and two years later the Soviets stepped in to provide a third of the dam's cost through two long-term loans for equipment and technical assistance. The Russians inherited the German plans and the recommendations of the international board, but chose to shift the site 500 yards south and eliminate the grout curtain. The grout curtain was put back in the plans only after stubborn Egyptian insistence.

Even then, however, the Egyptians apparently had second thoughts because in May 1963 the Cairo government invited an American engineering geologist based in Beirut, Lebanon, to visit the Aswan site and examine new core samples of the river bed. John W. Foster, now a resources consultant in Washington, D.C., told the Egyptians such a dam would never be built in the United States because of the site problem. He also informed them, in what was apparently a revelation, that Aswan was in a zone of continuing seismic activity.

"By that time," Mr. Foster now recalls, "the frenzy for accomplishment and the deep commitment made engineering objectivity impossible. They would not have pulled back no matter what they discovered. To cancel the project at that time was politically unthinkable."

Construction of the High Dam began on Jan. 9, 1960, and by the spring of 1963 the project was midway in its earth-moving phase. Erection of the coffer dam to divert the river also was well under way.

Today the dam complex is nearly completed. The dam itself was finished last year, but the power house will not get its 12th turbo generator until sometime next year. Eight generators are now reportedly

in operation. With all 12 running they will be able to churn out 2,100,000 kilowatts.

The impact of such a surge of additional power for Egypt is almost immeasurable. Cairo's electrical supply, for example, was doubled in 1966 with the completion of a thermal station that produces only 261,000 kilowatts.

#### The Time of Testing

Next month the lake, which juts southward into neighboring Sudan, will reach its maximum planned level, creating a hydrostatic head (the difference between the levels of the lake and the downstream river) of 207 feet. If there is to be any seepage under the dam, it should begin soon, and Mr. Foster, among others, is waiting with a feeling of both hope and apprehension.

"Many grout curtain operations in the United States have been less than successful in dams of much smaller construction," Mr. Foster says. "The technique is normally never attempted in depths of

more than 200 feet. [The depth at Aswan is more than 500 feet.] Hence there is no engineering precedence to give assurance that it will work at Aswan."

Several months ago there were news reports that the High Dam had started to leak. The source of the report was a luncheon anecdote told in Washington by Secretary of State William P. Rogers as a joke, it turned out, to illustrate that the United States was not responsible for all the bad news in the world.

But to Mr. Foster, one of the few Americans who commands an intimate knowledge of the High Dam's site problem, Mr. Roger's remark was no joke.

"The High Dam at Aswan," Mr. Foster says, "is a brave venture. The risks are excessively high, too high for our [American] blood, and possibly too high for Egypt's too. In all probability the dam will serve a long and useful life. But the fact exists—it would not have been built in the United States."

—LAWRENCE MOSHER

JERUSALEM POST,  
June 1969

## Is Aswan Dam leaking?

By YAACOV BEN-ISRAEL  
Jerusalem Post Correspondent

UNITED NATIONS.—Last Monday's "Washington Post" carried the following news "footnote" which was also published in the "Los Angeles Times" and on Tuesday in the "New York Post":

"Secretary of State William P. Rogers has reported that the briefing officer who every morning gives him a rundown on the overnight cables never tells him any good news.

"I asked him if there never was any good news," Rogers said the other day, and he replied: "Mr. Secretary, there is never any good news, but there is sometimes some bad news for which we are not to blame. There is a report that the Aswan dam is leaking"."

Some newspaper readers dismissed the story as a mere jest, but several others recalled that reports of bad trouble at Aswan have been

circulating here for six months now. The first report is believed to have been one by European science writer J.H. Andel, published in New York's German-Jewish magazine "Die Aufbau" last November 22. This stated that the water level at Aswan was not rising as scheduled, and that independent scientific investigation has led to the conclusion that water was both evaporating faster than expected, and seeping through two major cracks in porous earth formations away into the Red Sea to the east, and the Libyan desert to the north.

The report added that Egyptian and European geologists who had conducted the investigation were uncertain whether the cracks had been there before, only allowing water to escape, or whether pressure of water accumulating in the lake had caused the cracks, in which case it might well at some future date break through granite slopes on the other side of

the lake, with disastrous results for all Egypt.

These disclosures, supposedly obtained from "opposition" circles in Cairo — since the Egyptian Government, fearing an anti-Soviet explosion, was treating the information as a state secret — were buttressed by another report by Andel in "Aufbau" on March 7 of this year. This said that a recent check on two "control tunnels" in the Aswan Dam revealed that sand was filling the tunnels up, with prospects of severe damage to the entire dam. The report added that Soviet advisers had suggested wrapping the dam up in a concrete "curtain" to ward off danger, but that the Egyptian Government turned the idea down because it entailed an expenditure of \$125m. In desperation Cairo had now asked for expert advice from West Germany.

Some U.N. observers, who are willing to take Secretary Rogers' quip seriously, are asking: How grave is the danger to Aswan — and to Egypt?

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# Egypt's High Dam Is Nearing Completion

By J. D. F. Jones

London Financial Times-UPI

CAIRO—They are beginning to tidy up the site at Aswan under the full fury of the summer heat of Upper Egypt.

Soon, the great high dam will be completed. By the time the last granite facing is in place and the 12th generator installed—by June 1970 if all goes well—the project will have taken precisely 10 years.

The dam is beginning to resemble the neat scale models shown to every visitor since the foundation stone was laid by President Nasser in January, 1960.

Already the man-made Lake Nasser is stretching far into the desert behind the dam, well into the Sudan. Eventually it will stretch some 300 miles.

## Some Units Operating

Six of the 12 units in the power station tucked under one side of the dam wall are already running and another four will have been installed by the end of this year. By then, all the transmissions system and substation work will have been completed, and the last two generators will be installed by the middle of 1970.

Each unit has a capacity of 175 million watts, which in theory gives the high dam an installed capacity of 2.1 billion watts, but in practice three of the units are to be kept in reserve.

Egypt has, however, been benefitting from the dam since soon after the 1967 Middle East war, a stroke of fortune for the country in view of the damage since done to its power installations in the fighting along the Suez Canal.

Cairo, for example, received its first supplies of "Aswan electricity" in November, 1967, and Alexandria in March, 1968.

## Stormy History

The political history of the high dam has been a stormy one, with the Russians taking over responsibility as the sole provider of assistance after Britain and the United States withdrew promises of loans (which led to nationalization of the Suez Canal and rumors about the progress—or lack of it—in construction of the dam).

It was suggested, for example, that the Russians have had major technical problems; that the lake will soon be silted to the brim with Nile mud; that the dam wall was leaking; that the project was behind schedule; that the transmission system had been a disastrous failure.

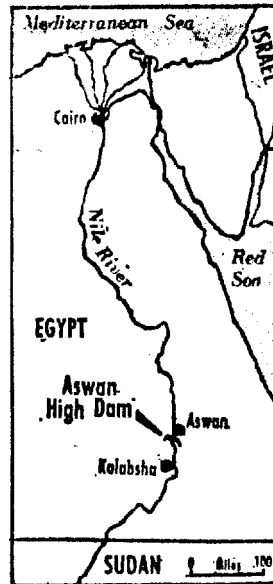
It was also suggested that the dam was a terrifying security risk for Egypt, because a bombing attack could flood the entire Nile valley and sweep Egypt into the sea.

Most of these rumors seem to have been either false or exaggerated. Latest reports of serious leaking or seepage from the lake have been investigated and the High Dam Authority insists that the loss of water from the enormous lake is in fact about half the original estimate of the planners.

## Siltage Trap

No one denies that a dam on the Nile is bound to be a siltage trap, which is why the dam was made extra large to allow for storage of the mud. But this does not mean that the dam will soon be useless. Its "life" is estimated at between 500 and 1,000 years.

The trapping of the silt will of course have a profound impact on the behavior of the Nile below the dam. The sediment deposited by the river in flood was good soil for countless generations of Egyptian farmers. Now the water will be moving faster and will have a more vigorous cutting effect on the valley and the banks.



The engineers have taken account of this, too. The value of the lost silt has been estimated at \$600,000 a year, low enough to be easily replaced by fertilizers. A number of other dams and barrages have been planned for lower downstream to help control the pace of the water.

The river falls 240 feet between Aswan and the sea, and this drop can be used to generate more electricity once the high dam is fully utilized.

There are already three barrages below Aswan and the present plan is to build seven more. The purpose is to "flatten" the slope of the water and reduce the destructive power of the current.

This, however, is a problem for the future. The 1967 war and the troubles since have slowed the industrial demand for electricity in Egypt. It now looks as if the high dam will be able to meet the country's needs until well into the 1970s.

The most urgent recent problem concerns the transmission system, and here there has been

some truth in the rumors about faulty Russian design. The trouble involves the insulators on two high tension lines which convey power to the cities in Lower Egypt.

The power supply to Cairo, for example, has been curtailed by "flashouts," the result of excessive salinity under some geographical conditions. The High Dam Authority says this has been remedied.

What no one in Cairo is willing to discuss is the precise damage the Israelis have already done to the Egyptian power system. At least one retaliatory raid did great damage to the transmission lines, obvious targets for attack.

As for the other possible target in wartime—the High Dam itself—it has been designed to resist bombing. But the question remains whether the Israelis would, in any circumstances, be prepared to sabotage so enormous a civil project. If the dam wall were breached, it would cause a disaster beyond comprehension.

One question still has to be answered: What will be the size of the bill? The original estimate for the entire project (including the irrigation works, reclamation and resettlement of 62,000 Nubians) was \$1.045 billion. The Soviet Union has contributed about \$270 million of the foreign currency component in terms of equipment and men, at 2.5 per cent.

The final figures are certain to be far higher. But the Egyptians will be able to point to the fact that the high dam adds \$5.64 million a year to the annual Gross National Product, and also to the fact that they gained this by deciding to go ahead with the High Dam with the help of the Russians.

NATURAL HISTORY  
February 1969

# SCHISTOSOMIASIS

## The Disease of Slowed-Down Waters

The problem of pest outbreaks is not the only one that can be anticipated in the costly public works projects designed to irrigate tropical lands. Perhaps the most dramatic and formidable of the impediments to the promised well-being of the people affected by these large-scale projects is the spread of debilitating disease in the wake of the coming of perennial irrigation. Chief among these is bilharziasis (also known as schistosomiasis or blood fluke). Here is a largely man-made plague that can defeat the best attempts at technological development in the impoverished nations of Africa, Asia, and South America. Upon the replacement of age-old, simple techniques of irrigation in Egypt, for example, snails in increasing numbers invaded the quiet, slow, warm waters now available in the secondary and tertiary canals and ditches that bring irrigation water to the fields. Certain species of snails are the secondary hosts of schistosomes, parasitic worms causing bilharziasis. There is very close correlation between the endemic areas of this disease and the areas now under perennial irrigation. Before the establishment of such projects, irrigation was largely seasonal and basin type (where floodwaters were collected in basins and gradually used in the growing season following the floods). Here, any invasion of snail populations was necessarily largely seasonal and short-lived. Now there is an increase in the extent of the habitat favorable to snails throughout a large part of the year. Available figures show that upon the establishment of perennial irrigation schemes dependent on a permanent supply of water, the incidence of this disease increases tremendously, usually from just a few per cent to well over one half of the population, sometimes even approaching 100 per cent.

In an infected person the disease usually takes one of two forms: urinary (or bladder) schistosomiasis, which is caused by the helminth (parasitic worm) *Schistosoma haematobium*, and intestinal schistosomiasis, which is chiefly due to *S. mansoni*. In the former, the worms lay eggs near the ends of blood vessels surrounding the bladder; these eggs then begin to penetrate the bladder wall. If they are successful, they will be discharged in the urine; if not, they will be trapped in the wall of the bladder, giving rise to further complications. On contact with water, they hatch, producing free-swimming forms

known as miracidia, which then set about finding a suitable snail species that will harbor them for the next major period of their lives. They enter the snail's body where they undergo a complex series of changes and further multiplication. They eventually emerge as a free-swimming form called cercariae, now in search of human and other animal hosts. To enter the body they penetrate the skin of a host who has had contact with infested water. If such water is swallowed, cercariae can penetrate the gastric tract. In either case, they reach the liver, where they grow and mate. Now they are ready to enter the bloodstream and make their way to the plexus of the bladder, completing the transmission cycle.

In the case of *S. mansoni*, the life history is similar, except that the host snail species differs, the adult worms inhabit the mesenteric plexus, and the transmission to snails occurs via the feces instead of the urine.

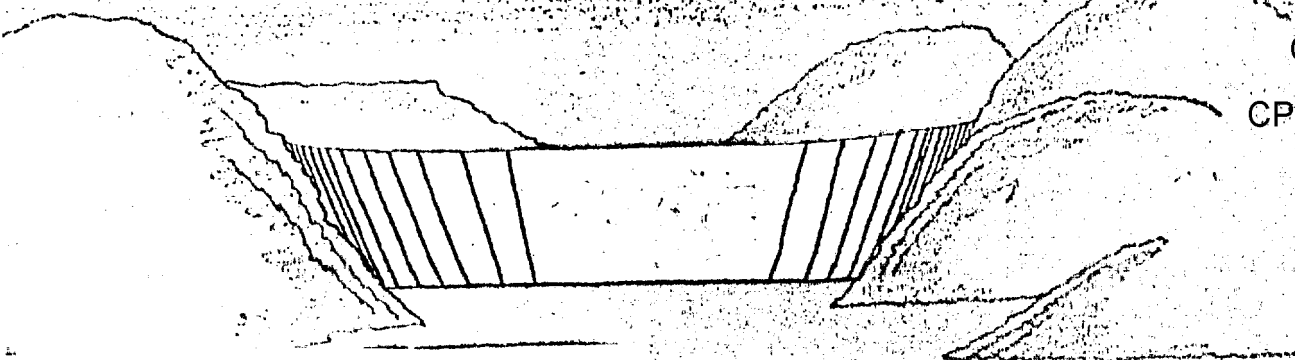
In the urinary form of the disease, haematuria (blood in the urine) is usually present. There is now some evidence that the disease may be a cause of cancer of the bladder; thus, some mortality ascribed to the latter may in fact be due to the former.

By far the more serious form is the intestinal. Dr. Shiff reports some fatality due to liver and spleen enlargement. Unfortunately, the spread of modern agricultural practices that depend on stabilizing the water resources (i. e., dam building and irrigation) carries the heavy price of the health of most of the very population it is supposed to benefit. Dr. Shiff reviews the situation in Rhodesia where not only an increase in the quantity but also an ominous increase in severity of infection is reported. Stabilized water favors the host snails of *S. mansoni*. In addition, in extending the range of habitat of the snails and providing more stable breeding grounds, the chances of constant reinfection are increased, resulting in a heavier worm load per infected individual.

The tremendous, continuing increase in the incidence of bilharziasis is one more manifestation of a biological dilemma: the basic vulnerability of an artificial ecosystem. Disease and suffering for millions of people are a direct outcome of the attempt to control the processes of nature with the simplistic solutions that modern technology offers in the form of simple, managed ecosystems in place of the intrinsically complex natural systems.

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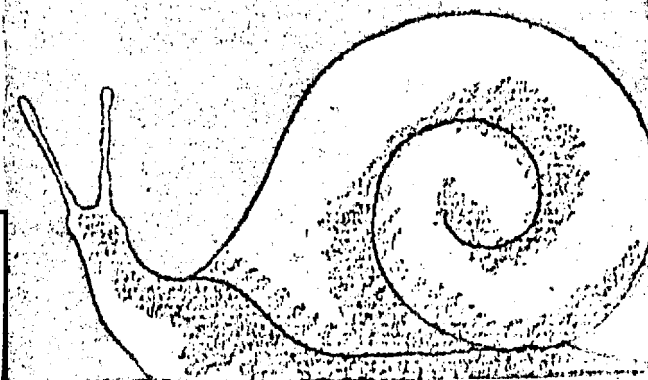


## Control in Egypt and the Sudan

by Henry van der Schalie

The World Health Organization program called Egypt 10, designed to carry out four phases of bilharziasis control in one area (the Qalyub tract), determined that, of the 32,000 people living in the six villages of the 5,000-acre tract, at least half the population in most of the villages was infected with the disease. The following programs were instituted: (1) a sanitation program designed to provide potable water by building 150 wells and pumps and 5,000 borehole latrines to prevent eggs of the schistosomes from getting to the canals and drains; (2) a medical program by the government, in which patients found to be positive were given Fouadin intramuscularly (70,000 shots were given); (3) a program of health education to apprise the people of the nature of the disease and what they would need to do to prevent infection; (4) a snail control program, following the principle that a preventive campaign would constitute the best possible defense. This last phase of the program involves some of the ecological consequences and reveals the difficulty of obtaining better co-ordination and co-operation.

A direct correlation exists between the kind of irrigation practiced by people in endemic areas of bilharziasis and the incidence of human blood fluke. The delta, with its extensive perennial irrigation, has a fabulously high incidence of both *Schistosoma mansoni* and *S. haematobium*, while the Nile above Cairo, with basin irrigation, shows very spotty and low incidence of *S. mansoni* (imported from the delta) and *S. haematobium* was estimated at only 5 per cent. The change now projected for the Upper



Nile, when the new High Dam is completed, warrants some real concern; therefore, I sought funds two years ago to study the possibility that the new dam might well prove to be a liability rather than an asset; but these plans were ended by the war. It is quite certain that the incidence of urinary schistosomiasis (*S. haematobium*) would greatly increase and the intestinal form (*S. mansoni*, now not widespread) would eventually invade the 500-odd miles of river floodplain converted to perennial irrigation. Too little assessment has been made of the effect of large dams, the attendant irrigation schemes that they promote, and the slow and steady rise in bilharziasis that usually follows such developments.

One of the best exposés of the relation of perennial irrigation to the increased incidence of bilharziasis is that of W. H. Greany (1952), writing about the Sudan, a vast savanna until the Sennar Dam was built and some 900,000 acres were transformed to

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form the Gezira Irrigated Area. This is a large agricultural scheme whose irrigation system runs parallel to the Blue Nile south of Khartoum. Three years after irrigation was introduced, both *S. mansoni* and *S. haematobium* were well established and on the ascendancy among the population. If one compares the Sudan with conditions in Egypt, one finds some very basic similarities in the two regions: (1) the people are mainly Islamic and practice the rites of their religion (ablutions, *wadu*, or washing before prayers); (2) they often use canal water for bathing, washing clothes, and tending the *gamoosa* (water buffalo), which youngsters almost daily take into the canals; and (3) they work in the fields in similar irrigation systems designed to grow cotton and other staple crops. However, in several ways the areas are strikingly different, giving more hope for protecting the health of the people in the Sudan than in Egypt. The Sudanese have room to build homes and sanitary facilities; they enjoy a higher standard of living, and with the comparatively lower incidence of bilharziasis are more vigorous in coming to grips with their problems.

Egypt, over hundreds of years, has become unbelievably infested with bilharziasis. Health conditions in rural Egypt were documented in the delta region by John Weir and his associates in 1952 at Sindbis, near the Qalyub Egypt 10 tract. They provided the first meaningful mortality and morbidity data and showed that the life expectancy of women in that region was 27 years and that of men was 25. In Egypt the countryside of the delta is virtually rotten with the disease. The overpopulated area with its farm population in horribly crowded villages, the lack of sanitation and the near impossibility of building proper facilities for potable water and waste disposal, the many unfortunate daily practices that allow for an amazing exposure to infection—all contribute to make the conditions in the areas where perennial irrigation exists almost impossible to control. The amazing ramifications, as they relate to politics, economics, education, agricultural practices, etc., compound the problems.

The Sudan in many ways typifies the emergent countries of Africa where bilharziasis remains at a low ebb until irrigation is developed, after which snail hosts and aquatic vegetation flourish. Migrant laborers carrying the infection move into the area, and the habits of the people encourage a steady rise in the incidence of bilharziasis. The problem of control in the Sudan is also serious and difficult, but the area lends itself much better to control work than Egypt, and prospects look brighter. In the Sudan there is room not only for people to live but also to provide such sanitary facilities as wells and latrines. However, while roughly a million acres

are now cultivated, the area between the White and the Blue Nile will allow for the development of two million more acres, thus increasing the chances of the spread of bilharziasis. Since the disease has not spread so widely as it has in the Lower Nile or delta of Egypt, the Sudanese may be more vigorous with a more healthy attitude toward initiating constructive reforms. Key aspects such as education, medication, sanitation, and potential snail control seem to be kept more in focus where support for collateral and integrated activity is needed.

The various findings of Egypt 10 regarding these facets of the problem are instructive. In an Egyptian village it is almost impossible to provide sanitary facilities. Borehole latrines were installed under Egypt 10, but soon became open cesspools because the water table was so high. People were obviously not able to cope with them even in the few houses where they could be properly installed. Few seemed to realize that those latrines can serve only about nine months; it was well-nigh impossible to re-establish latrines once they had filled up, and they became frightfully putrid in high summer temperatures. Unfortunately, it is precisely under the hot summer conditions that it is essential to provide the population with indoor latrines. Co-ordination between the several aspects of the project failed; the program could probably have profited from assistance available in parallel programs such as are now sponsored by AID.

Health education undoubtedly serves as one of the best ways to inform the people of the endemic area about the nature of the disease. In the Sudan, in 1954, there were some excellent village councils of people active in their communities. The paucity of leaders available in the Egyptian villages—usually only the mayor, the imam (the religious leader), the school teacher, and an occasional person from another profession—made work in the community very difficult. Yet, the adults and the children were aware of the program and whatever means were available were mustered for the benefit of the protective aspects of the work.

In terms of the medical aspects, the control of bilharziasis is proving very difficult, although many drug houses have been working for a number of years to find a suitable drug. Most drugs currently in use have serious side effects, including possible death. Attaining a cure is often questionable, because the disease is so debilitating. Two major obstacles appear in the medical approach to control: (1) The eggs, in failing to find their way out of the body, cause serious pathological changes in the liver, spleen, colon, and other organs; thus drugs are of little help in advanced cases; and (2) in endemic regions poverty is so great that few can



obtain medication unless the government provides such help. The government program is too onerous an experience, usually amounting to a loss of twenty whole days in a month. While the programs are usually administered by medical personnel, the first line of defense obviously is not within that field.

In the last analysis, snail control seems to offer some hope for reducing the incidence of the disease. The actual number of snails infected in nature is surprisingly low. In the Egypt 10 project, the highest rate of infection among the *S. haematobium* snails brought in from the fields was 0.3 per cent! This low incidence appeared in more than 14,000 snails collected from many stations in the 5,000-acre tract. Yet, the incidence among humans in the six villages ran over 50 per cent for most of them and that in Barada was at least 70 per cent. Evidently, sometime after the middle of May a few infected snails, widely scattered (not necessarily near the villages), produce enough cercariae to almost saturate the population because of the amount of contact people in the countryside have with infested water.

It is important to note that most snails in Egypt lose their infections in the winter, and it has been brought home all too well in our Ann Arbor laboratory that chilling snails in the aquariums, come the fall of the year, cancels out the infections. In a recent WHO report (1965), a paper by C. H. Barlow (1939) stated: "For 5 years the writer and his men have worked barehanded in the El Marg area during January, February and March without becoming infected. Constant crushing and dissecting of snails have presented a picture of such inactivity of whatever cercariae exist that an assumption of security seems warranted." In two consecutive years of observations, for which there are good data, the team in Egypt 10 found that there were practically no snails shedding infectious cercariae until the

middle of May! This observation obviously has great significance in all planning in epidemiology. Yet, in an excellent series of reports by the teams in Egypt 49 there is virtually no mention of this very important functional relationship in the epidemiology of this disease.

To summarize, bilharziasis poses a very serious problem in both Egypt and the Sudan. Integrated programs are needed if any hope for its control is to be justified. Few diseases demand more collaboration in more fields and at every level. International programs too often fail to make their programs mesh with bilharziasis control, and within the infected country the scourge of this disease enters practically every field of human endeavor. Programs within an agency such as WHO concentrate on the immediate aspects (usually medicine, sanitation, education, and snail control), but many other important fields must also be involved. It is clear that the *perennial* system of irrigation is most explosive in producing a high incidence of bilharziasis, a fact well exemplified in the Sudan. Problems become difficult because in primitive conditions all facets of living have their own special relation to the control problem. In brief, the need for integration and planning seems overwhelming, but the prospects for obtaining relief are dim. In the meantime, the emerging countries in Africa face frightening increases in the incidence of bilharziasis.

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## Host and Parasite in Rhodesia

by C. J. Shiff

It is reasonable to presume that the schistosomes have been parasites of man for some considerable part of his evolutionary history. Under the ecological conditions that prevailed in the past, the interrelationship between both primary and secondary hosts and the parasite itself had evolved toward an equilibrium; thus the schistosomes were in a position to maintain their numbers among the

sparse and nomadic populations of man and the temporary and rather unstable populations of aquatic snails, without causing excessive stress on the infected persons.

This pattern of host-parasite relationship probably existed in Rhodesia until rapid economic and agricultural development resulted in settlement and massive increase of the human population. Recently, soil and water conservation procedures in that country have produced major changes in the over-all hydrological picture. The construction of dams has stabilized water flow and resulted in fewer flash

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been an increase in the extent of the snail habitat throughout the country. Because the water bodies are more durable, aquatic snail populations can increase as a result of the general amelioration of the environment.

Where agricultural projects are based on irrigation, large populations now live in close relationship with stable water systems; snails invade and breed, water contact and pollution increase, and these, in turn, produce a major upsurge in the prevalence of bilharziasis and, what is probably more serious, increases the worm load of infected persons.

*The Aquatic Environment and Schistosome Transmission*

An association between the level of schistosome transmission and the geographical extent of surface water was noticed as early as 1915, when Orpen (1915) recorded a 31 per cent infection among 592 prisoners, the majority of those infected coming from the northern, damper parts of the country. This pattern was strikingly demonstrated more recently by Clarke (1966) who analyzed the age prevalence of both *Schistosoma haematobium* and *S. mansoni* in several different communities in Rhodesia. In Table 1 the association between climate, topography, extent of water availability, and prevalence of the parasite (*S. haematobium*) are clearly shown. In particular, the high prevalence seen in an established irrigation scheme some 40 years old (Table 1, No. 5) in the hot lowveld, approximately 2,000 feet above sea level, shows the degree of

these conditions there is not the appreciable decrease in prevalence among the older age groups that characterizes all other populations surveyed, even the newly established irrigation scheme (Table 1).

The pattern of transmission seen in Table 1 is further accentuated in Table 2, which deals with the prevalence of *S. mansoni* in the same localities. Where water bodies are inclined to be unstable and temporary, as with communities 3 and 4, the parasite is rare. It becomes more common in communities associated with stable water bodies, especially where temperature and contact increase. Again the prevalence in community 5 shows a particularly high rate of transmission.

The close association between *S. mansoni* and the communities living close to stable water systems is a direct result of the ecology of *Biomphalaria pfeifferi*, the intermediate host snail involved, in the transmission cycle. The response of a species to a set of environmental conditions can be measured by rearing individuals under those particular conditions and calculating from the age-specific birth and death rates the parameter *r*, the intrinsic rate of natural increase. It can be inferred from these data that *B. pfeifferi* is better adapted to existence under the stable, well-buffered temperature conditions normally found in large water bodies. *Bulinus globosus* another intermediate host snail, on the contrary, shows the characteristic adaptation to temporary habitats. It can breed rapidly during relatively short periods when conditions are ideal, and thus build up sufficient numbers to survive ensuing catas-

TABLE 1. Prevalence of *Schistosoma haematobium* infections in several communities in Rhodesia. After Clarke (1966).

COM-MUNITY NUMBER	OCCUPA-TION	ALTITUDE	HYDROLOGY	AGE GROUPS								
				UNDER 4	4-6	7-9	10-12	13-15	16-20	21-40	OVER 40*	
1.	rural mine-workers	middleveld <sup>a</sup> 2-4000'	well watered perennial <sup>b</sup>	No. examined % +ve	25 16	49 61	58 78	46 80	26 88	15 80	68 24	41 5
2.	rural mine-workers	highveld over 4000'	well watered seasonal <sup>b</sup>	No. examined % +ve	32 3	62 16	74 34	54 63	52 69	33 52	45 29	52 8
3.	rural mine-workers	middleveld 2-4000'	well watered seasonal	No. examined % +ve	18 6	40 20	66 33	106 57	77 53	78 44	22 18	20 10
4.	rural mine-workers	highveld over 4000'	poorly watered seasonal	No. examined % +ve	18 Nil	25 12	100 13	76 13	13 39	15 29	114 13	102 1
5.	irrigation (old)	lowveld under 2000'	well watered perennial	No. examined % +ve	9 89	76 96	55 98	25 96	13 92	21 90	101 72	35 57
6.	irrigation (new)	lowveld under 2000'	well watered perennial	No. examined % +ve	30 30	87 30	66 54	38 74	42 67	106 55	237 33	116 7

<sup>a</sup>As Rhodesia is a tropical country prevailing temperatures increase as altitude decreases.

<sup>b</sup>The distinction between perennial and seasonal is based on availability of water from permanent sources or temporary ponds filled by seasonal rains.



COMMUNITY NUMBER		AGE GROUPS							OVER 40
		UNDER 4	4-6	7-9	10-12	13-15	16-20	21-40	
1.	No. examined	6	27	45	50	24	Not done	29	11
	% +ve	Nil	41	78	58	58	done	38	18
2.	No. examined	33	61	73	53	52	33	106	51
	% +ve	3	7	10	43	44	18	15	20
3.	No. examined	10	37	60	84	67	50	21	20
	% +ve	5	3	5	6	3	12	14	5
4.	No. examined	14	26	100	75	14	9	95	95
	% +ve	Nil	Nil	5	3	Nil	Nil	6	6
5.	No. examined	8	70	51	23	15	24	95	32
	% +ve	50	83	92	87	67	50	59	30
6.	No. examined	30	87	66	38	42	106	237	116
	% +ve	13	11	17	50	24	16	10	17

trophes such as flooding or desiccation, both features of the season pattern in this latter biotope.

The impact of development in rural Africa has produced an illness of increasing severity. Increasing *S. haematobium* infections, with concomitant kidney and bladder damage, are slowly being superseded in the population by an increase in the even more dangerous parasite, *S. mansoni*, as populations of *B. pfeifferi* flourish in the now stable water bodies being introduced throughout the country. The difference between temporary and stable habitats shows in differential effects on humans. White school children from rural areas are inclined to swim and fish in farm dams, while their counterparts, the black school children, have more contact with river water in the rural areas. In a recent survey of 490 white children in Victoria Province, the ratio of *mansoni* to *haematobium* was 3:1. In Bantu children from the same province the *mansoni* to *haematobium* ratio was 1:9.6.

A recent survey among the population of a small irrigation scheme in the Zambesi Valley (hot, lowveld) indicated that, of 193 people examined, 89 per cent were infected with *S. mansoni* while only 20 per cent showed signs of *S. haematobium*. Prior to the survey eleven deaths had occurred among children between 5 and 13 years of age and a further 16 children, all exhibiting similar symptoms of hepatosplenomegaly, were given treatment for *S. mansoni*.

As can be expected, with the more intense cycle of infection, people are now carrying increasingly heavier burdens of the adult schistosome worms. As a result of this an increased number of unusual symptoms and sequelae of bilharziasis are being noticed. Bird (1965), in reporting on cases of spinal complications in bilharziasis, mentions that until 1963 the literature reported a total of 26 cases of

*S. mansoni* and 11 of *S. haematobium* with these ramifications. In 1964, Bird himself experienced a total of eight such cases, one of which was terminal. Later, Zilberg (1967) noted a case of *S. mansoni*-induced paraplegia in a child, while cerebral abnormalities were seen in three other cases (Zilberg *et al.*, 1967). A further seven undocumented cases of paraplegia, presumed to be of bilharzial origin, were reported to the Rhodesian Ministry of Health in 1967. This indicated that in the last four years almost as many cases of spinal complications due to schistosomes have been reported in southern Africa alone as were reported for the whole globe up to 1963 (excluding *S. japonicum* infections).

#### Future Outlook

With the rapid increase in population in central and southern Africa, development of agriculture will depend more and more on irrigation, especially in the drier parts of the country where rainfall is unreliable. In Rhodesia, from 1964 until recently, the amount of irrigated land has increased by nearly 100,000 acres. There are now 126 irrigation schemes ranging in area from 20 to 3,000 acres in rural areas reserved for Bantu settlement. These derive water from dams of various sizes, perennial rivers, or from subterranean sources. However, regardless of the source of water, the aquatic biotope is stabilizing, a process carrying with it the certain spread and intensification of this crippling disease.

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# KARIBA DAM

Professor Scudder has spent many years studying the ecological consequences of major water development projects in Africa. In a previous work, he documented the problems of relocation brought upon the Nubians of the Nile Valley. After trying for a long time to cope with the conditions created by the earlier Aswan Lake in 1933, the Nubian farmers found the fluctuation in the water flow so unpredictable, due to constant manipulation by the hydroelectric engineers, that the majority had to abandon farming, their traditional means of subsistence. After describing the serious changes induced by the Kariba Dam, between Zambia and Rhodesia, Professor Scudder reflects upon the possibility that here, too, the cultivation of floodplain alluviums by the Zambians may have to be abandoned.

The Kariba Dam was the first of the major African impoundments. With a storage capacity of approximately 130 million acre-feet and a surface area of over 1,700 square miles, Lake Kariba became the largest man-made lake in the world when it filled to capacity in mid-1963.

Looking to the future, one can foresee that all the major rivers of Africa, Asia, and Latin America will be dammed, along with many of the lesser ones. The construction of Kariba started a trend that will no doubt alter the African landscape and affect the lives of millions of people. In an undertaking as large as the creation of these huge bodies of water and the ensuing manipulation of the water flow in the rivers, it is natural to expect serious consequences. Since the construction of these dams is usually undertaken for a single purpose—the creation of large amounts of electricity for use in emerging urban-industrial complexes—the effects on agriculture are considered of secondary importance. This is accentuated by the assumption that since the majority of the people involved in the unavoidable relocation are subsistence farmers, there is no serious harm done insofar as the gross national product (GNP) is concerned, if these people end up being forced away from the land. However, the serious fallacy in this assumption is clear from the following paper. The products of subsistence farming never enter the economists' GNP equations because there is no income: the products are consumed locally. But when these crops fail and there is a

famine, the central governments can count on a heavy burden, provided that relief programs can be organized to reach the hinterlands. Hence it is fallacious to claim that subsistence output contributes nothing to the national wealth.

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## The Ecological Hazards of Making a Lake

by Thayer Scudder

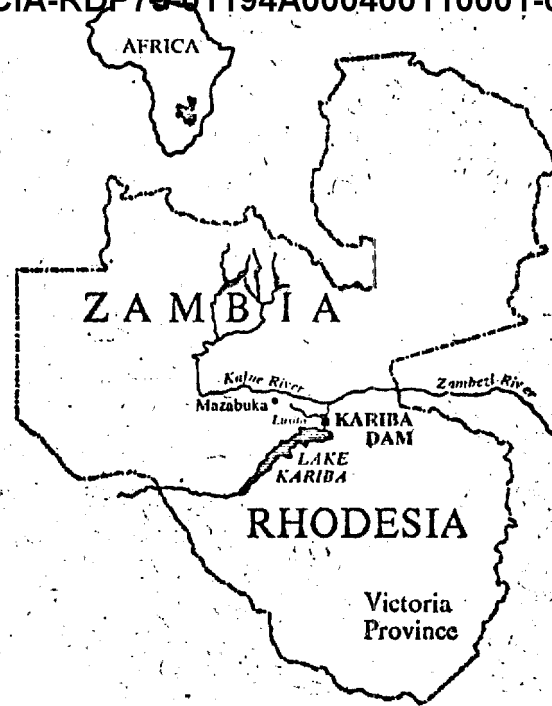
The impact of the Kariba Dam on alluvial cultivation below the damsite is an example of how man's engineering capacities can drastically reduce the productivity of an existing ecosystem. A glance at figures 1 and 2 is sufficient to show the extreme irregularity that has been introduced into the annual regime of the Zambezi River between Kariba gorge and the Kafue River as a result of the dam. Although commercial agriculture is of virtually no importance at present in the stretch of river involved, this is of little comfort to those thousands of Africans who desire to cultivate the fertile alluviums on a twice annual basis for their own subsistence. Here we have a pattern of increased risks for the farmer in an already high-risk environment. It is too early to predict how the farmer will respond, although it is already obvious that he has suffered far more loss from man's manipulation of the Zambezi than he ever did during any equivalent time period in the past.

For the first three years (October, 1958–September, 1961), there was no Zambezi flood between the dam and the Kafue confluence; indeed, no water was released in the first seven months that the dam was sealed, except for a small trickle in March/April, 1959. During the rainy season, the

agricultural implications of having the Zambezi restricted to its primary channel throughout this period were inconsequential for alluvium previously cultivated. On the other hand, the area that could be cultivated during the dry season was greatly reduced because of the absence of annual flooding. During the 1961-62 season, the dam-controlled regime approximated the original flow pattern for the first time since impoundment began. While this must have been a relief to those farmers who had suffered during the previous three dry seasons, it proved disastrous for those who had begun to cultivate rainy season gardens on the lower-level alluviums. This land had never been cultivated during the rains in the past because of flooding during the annual rise of the Zambezi. When this pattern was approximated in April, 1962, through nearly a sixfold increase in river flow over the previous month, these new gardens were inundated by over ten feet of water within a single day. (According to the District Assistant for Lusitu, this loss of crops subsequently led to a food shortage in the Lusitu village of Kadabuka, which was most dependent on the gardens concerned.) The next year the man-made flood of the Zambezi came in February, again destroying crops in these lower-terrace alluvial gardens, but fortunately not rising sufficiently high so as to destroy the extensive maize gardens planted in the Lusitu Delta.

The case was altogether different, however, during 1963-64. Then three sluice gates were alternately opened and shut throughout most of the rains, so that virtually none of the Zambezi and tributary delta alluviums could even be planted during the most important agricultural season. Furthermore, since the river dropped rapidly in March, and no rain fell during April, dry-season crops planted at that time on the higher alluviums would have been subsequently heat struck. The next three years continued a similar pattern of extreme irregularity, with 1965-66 being a particularly disastrous year for the alluvial cultivator. Then early planted, rainy season crops would have been flooded out by the December rise, whereas most late-planted crops would have been destroyed by the April peak. Furthermore, planting during the middle of the season would, of course, have been impossible, because the water level remained up during most of December and January. As if this were not enough, those crops planted during the first part of the dry season would have also been flooded out, this time by the opening of two sluice gates in June. Under the circumstances, it is hard to imagine how those regulating the flow of water through the dam could have acted in a way more detrimental to downriver agriculture.

At this point it is important to emphasize, in all fairness, that Zambian population densities in the



downriver area are low except in the Lusitu area where relocation was responsible for creating one of the highest rural densities in the country. Furthermore, practically all of the food grown on riverine alluviums is for local consumption. On the other hand, I am not aware that those planning for Kariba even considered the implications of alternate outflows for the future development of the downriver area. Nor am I aware that they considered the costs of possible food shortages arising from the present regime for the local people and for the government. I am protesting not so much against what happened as against the narrow viewpoint of those responsible for planning installations like Kariba. This project was essentially a unipurpose scheme. The population to be relocated was seen, not as a resource, but as an expensive nuisance, whose very existence was unfortunate. As for the future lake, it was strictly a by-product of the dam, whereas the needs of downriver inhabitants were considered only where backed up by political power, and then were seen as constraints by those who viewed the Kariba Project almost entirely as a means for generating power.

My study of a single Tonga village in 1956-57 showed that the large majority of farms in the

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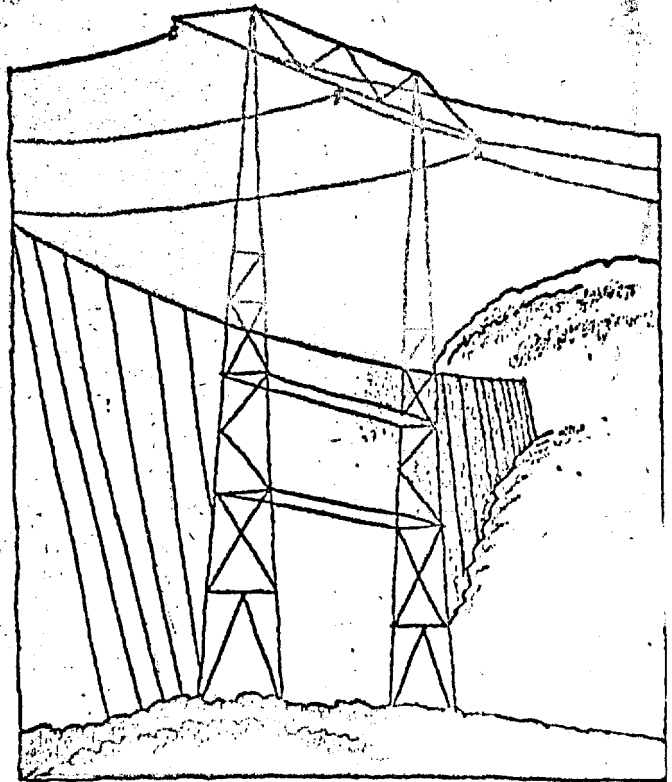
Middle Zambezi Valley cultivated roughly one acre per capita, the expected harvest being sufficient to support the population during most years (Scudder, 1962). Unfortunately, just prior to relocation, the valley did not provide this minimum, in large part because of population increase and land degradation. (As used in this paper, land degradation includes both sheet and gully erosion and reduced fertility arising from overcultivation and overgrazing with or without accompanying erosion.) Though the annually inundated alluvial soils could support permanent cultivation for an indefinite period, over 20 per cent of the farmers in our five river villages did not have any access to such lands. Furthermore, of those who did, only a small proportion controlled large enough acreages to meet their consumption needs. In other words, most of the population also relied on the cultivation of less fertile, upper-level alluviums and on colluvial and karroo soils, which had to be periodically fallowed. Though the Tonga were quite familiar with the amount of fallowing that their various garden types required to restore fertility, lack of additional land was responsible for the overcultivation and hence exhaustion of certain alluvial gardens by the 1930's. This process continued during the 1940's, when certain farmers began to pioneer less fertile karroo soils well back in the bush. By 1957, most of the better karroo soils within walking distance were under cultivation, while extensive areas of upper-terrace alluvium were so degraded as to be under indefinite fallow. Although the situation would have continued to deteriorate, since the exhaustion of the karroo soils was only a matter of years away, relocation intervened. The overtaxed lands were flooded, and the people were moved toward the valley's outer margin or into the Lusitu area below the damsite.

Resettlement, however, did not solve the land problem. In fact, for many villages in the southern portion of the valley, it only made it worse; since those soils least susceptible to degradation through cultivation had been permanently flooded along the banks of the Zambezi and the lower reaches of the major tributaries. Table I shows the amount of land available for relocation within the valley. Under the local system of agriculture, less than 40 per cent of this land could support semipermanent cultivation (category 1),<sup>1</sup> which involves five to ten years of continuous cropping, followed by a fallow period of approximately equal length. The rest (category 2),

<sup>1</sup>This land consists mainly of deep woodland soils which had been only partially cultivated prior to relocation. Though their origin is still in doubt, apparently Bainbridge and Edwards (1963) believe that they were derived from non-karoo parent material, being transported into the valley from the adjacent escarpment and plateau. Mostly sandy clays, they are quite susceptible to erosion.

ranging in quality from fair to poor, could support, at best, cultivation for about six years, followed by a twenty-year fallow. With almost all of the arable land in the valley surveyed, this meant that semipermanent cultivators needed an absolute minimum of two acres per capita, whereas bush fallow cultivators needed five or more. The situation was by far the worst in Mwemba, where 9,000 people had access to approximately 20,000 acres of category 2 soil, much of which fell in the less fertile and more easily erodible grades. To meet their needs, at least 40,000 more acres were needed.

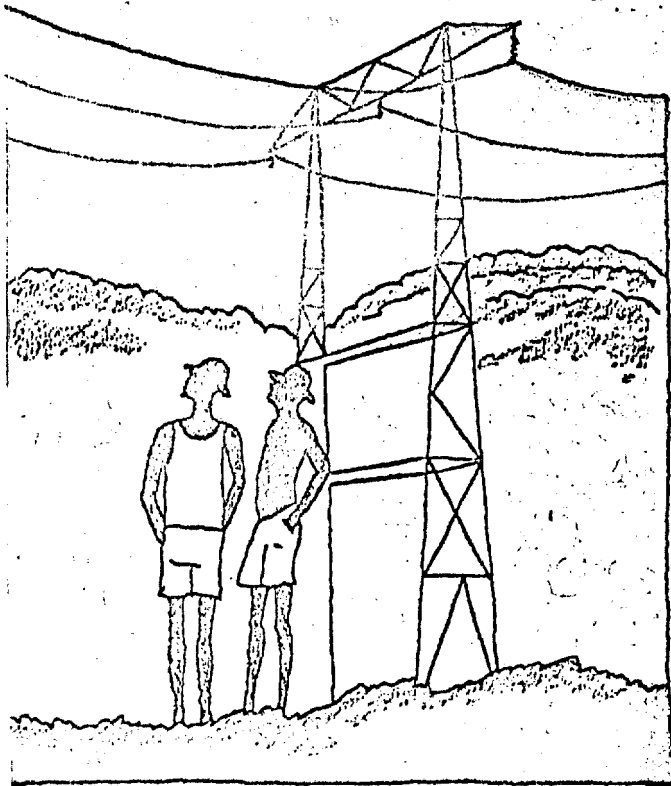
The problem of land shortage presented by relocation was obvious from the start to all government



officials concerned. After resettlement had been completed, it was known that approximately one-third of the population would find themselves in serious straits within ten years. The rest were more fortunate, although there was little room for population increase in some areas, and all areas could easily become degraded in the years ahead through erosion, overcultivation, and overgrazing.

The Department of Agriculture's response to this situation was to emphasize erosion control and agricultural intensification, although there was general agreement that the situation in the south of Mwemba was hopeless without further relocation. Two types of erosion control were stressed. The first would involve a prohibition of cultivation within 25

yards of the banks of major tributaries. The need for such an ordinance was obvious to all ecologically oriented personnel familiar with the tributary system on the plateau, in the escarpment, and in the valley. Referring to Mazabuka District on the plateau, Bainbridge and Edwards reported that "The amount of run-off, coupled with sheet and gully erosion that takes place during the heavy rains, is quite frightening." With much of their grass cropped right down to the roots, dambos along the upper reaches of rivers like the Lusitu are increasingly subject to abnormal flash floods. In the escarpment country leading down into the valley, the same authors refer to air photographs that "show clearly the denu-



ation of the protective strips of woodland along the stream banks and the spreading of the cultivation away from the streams up the steep slopes." Without a protective cover, flash floods each year remove more of the soil, with the authors estimating that within ten to fifteen years "there will no longer be sufficient soil left in the escarpment to carry the present population." In the valley, flash floods periodically sweep the now unprotected banks of the major tributaries. When the Lusitu rose to record heights in a matter of hours in March, 1963, the extensive riverbank areas under cultivation since relocation were severely eroded. Clearly, this would not have occurred if the riverine fringe vegetation had not been systematically removed through the

upper, lower, and perhaps middle reaches of the Lusitu. The second type of erosion control would stress the construction of contour ridges to keep relocation-area soils *in situ*.

The core of the program of intensification was a two- or four-crop rotation supplemented by the use of cattle manure, applied on departmental demonstration gardens and on the holdings of Peasant Farmers and Native Authority Improved Farmers. The first ten Peasant Farmers were selected by the District Commissioner in 1959. After receiving credit from a revolving fund under the DC's jurisdiction for their equipment and cattle needs, they became the responsibility of the Department of Agriculture. At first, each Peasant Farmer was restricted to a 20-acre holding. While building this up, he was supposed to follow a four-crop rotation, involving equal acreages of maize, sorghum, cotton, and a green-manure crop. Supplemental manure (at three tons per acre) was to be applied annually to half the acreage planted in grain, with each farmer told to build up a herd of twenty cattle to meet his ox traction and manure needs. The NA Improved Farmers had much smaller holdings on which they could receive a one pound sterling bonus per acre, provided they followed a simple, grain-legume rotation and manured half the grain plot each year.

If actually practiced, the recommended measures most likely would have been effective in maintaining soil fertility and preventing erosion. However, the degree of acceptance by the farmers has been minimal. No ordinance prohibiting cultivation within 25 yards of tributary beds was enacted. Even if it had been, it is unlikely that enforcement would have been possible. Throughout their known history, the Tonga have always cleared tributary banks, except for occasional shade and fruit trees, in order to cultivate the fertile alluvial soils. After relocation and the loss of Zambezi and delta alluviums, these soils became even more desirable, with tributary-bank clearing extended throughout much of the valley. While those Tonga involved were well aware of the resulting dangers of erosion, they saw no option but to continue as in the past, since no acceptable substitute for riverbank cultivation was presented to them.

While contour ridging was not actively opposed, the Native Authority was unwilling to back it publicly through its own regulations. Well aware that the valley residents did not really understand the basis for contouring, the Native Authority did not wish to associate itself with a potentially unpopular measure, since their support had always been low, especially after this relocation, which the NA councilors and chiefs had been pressured into supporting by the central government. Though some 1,230

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miles of ridges, protecting their farms, were dug under the jurisdiction of agricultural staff members by October, 1964, they never received popular understanding, let alone sufficient support to provide for their maintenance. A year later, construction of the ridges apparently stopped in the Lusitu area, and thereafter I recall seeing only occasional references to them in agricultural reports. Though I do not know how these ridges are faring today, some Lusitu farmers broke them down in connection with the cultivation and extension of their gardens.

Intensification in the valley has fared no better as a degradation control device. Out of a total district farming population of well over 10,000 men, to the best of my knowledge there have never been more than 25 Peasant Farmers and 75 Improved Farmers. Moreover, the degree of intensification among these has decreased, if anything, through the years. According to the Agricultural Assistant at Lusitu, in 1965, those wishing to become Rural Council Improved Farmers wanted to grow unrotated cotton. In 1967, most Peasant Farmers had sown cotton or maize in plots that they were supposed to plant in green-manure crops. In the Kayuni block of the Lusitu, the most enterprising of the five Peasant Farmers was monocropping cotton during a four-year period, after which he planned to carry on a cotton-maize rotation. He had also stopped applying manure, although here the reason, as with other progressive farmers, was the breakdown of his Scotch cart, for which it was literally impossible to get parts owing to the Rhodesian crisis. Moreover, he had substantially increased his acreage with twenty acres now planted in cotton and nine in maize, versus only three in sun hemp and one in groundnuts during the 1966-67 season. As for the application of manure at the village level, no one in the village that I have been observing over the past ten years had applied it during the previous season or any other season. The same applied to any form of rotation. Indeed, I doubt that it is an exaggeration to state that no more than 1 per cent of the valley farmers have ever regularly practiced either animal manuring or crop rotation.

The present relocation areas just cannot support the existing population under these agricultural practices. In South Mwemba, the population has exceeded the carrying capacity of the land, and is once again subject to periodic food shortages that are bound to get worse with time. To prevent this, the government has decided to again relocate at least 6,000 people, and it is only a matter of time before this resettlement occurs. Elsewhere, the situation is still within the control of the local population, since exhausted fields can still be replaced by uncultivated land around the margins of the reloca-

settled. On the other hand, I expect all available land to be utilized within the next ten years unless there is a major reduction of population or a change in agricultural techniques. In the highly favored Lusitu area, the surplus population is already crossing into the previously unsettled Mpendele-Mutulanganga area. Although no one in my own Lusitu study village had joined this movement by 1967, some of the men had begun to clear distant gardens on the far side of the Lusitu. In all cases, no intensification was occurring; rather pioneer farmers were simply re-establishing the same extensive system of bush fallow cultivation.

Although the problem outlined in the last few paragraphs is a severe one, it is not my purpose in this paper to propose possible solutions. Rather I wish to emphasize, in closing, that what we are dealing with here are two incompatible systems of agriculture. One, proposed by the Department of Agriculture, is satisfactory from an ecological point of view, except that it is not acceptable to the farming population. The other, while satisfying to the farmer, has serious, indeed catastrophic, ecological implications under present population conditions. The problem is to design a compromise system acceptable to all involved.

Throughout Africa, research stations have tended to develop new techniques without taking into consideration the total context within which the farmer, for whom these techniques are designed, lives. Ecologists, I think, tend to make a similar mistake when they propose alternative land-use systems without asking the questions, "Can these support the existing human population, which, after all, is the ecological dominant in the area?" Or, "If not, is there an alternative way of life available for the people, which they are likely to accept?" If, for example, cattle pastoralists are to be driven out of an area to be used for game cropping or conservation purposes, the same concern must go into planning an acceptable future for them as relates to other communities within the habitat. Failure to do this is not only morally indefensible, but is also apt to be politically unacceptable. In other words, a technical or ecological solution to problems of environmental degradation is not of much use unless it is understood and implemented by the relevant people at the local and national levels.

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