

## A Bomb for Good Score

It plainly is not true that all the American G.I.'s in Vietnam are brutes. Nor is it true that those who are brutes are full-time brutes.

Consider that "about a third of our ordnance was dumped in the water, and that is a conservative estimate." This recollection is Alex Waier's, a recent Navy pilot, now an assistant analyst with Dow Chemical Company. His account was reported by AP from *The Bay City (Mich.) Times* of August 15. It will serve as eternal testimony to Americans' being sensitive, merciful and compassionate individuals even while committing the worst cruelties.

Which other nation's war aircraft would have the humanitarian sense to throw every third bomb into the ocean instead of on people's heads? And to think that the Gooks are still complaining! Show them a finger, and they want the whole hand! The way they have it figured out from all those mind-poisoning communist books, they would probably want us to dump two out of every three bombs! Conniving ingrates that they are! You just cannot trust them.

Actually, as one could expect of a sports-minded people, our third-bomb mercifulness is tied to a score-keeping game, but then we have both our fun and our good hearts, too. When you happen to be a crew member on a carrier off the Vietnam shore, you certainly want your team to be the winner the way you had always favored your school team. So when, as a pilot, you are told by your commanders to beat another carrier's record on numbers of sorties, you are all for it. "One time our squadron commander actually got us in the wardroom and told us point blank, 'We're out to beat the record of the Enterprise.'" What then can one do having run out of targets to be destroyed? Naturally, one dumps the remaining bombs in the water, or bombs the same railroad car 15 times, each time reporting "target destroyed," the target usually being described as a "suspected radar site."

In the final analysis, everybody has a reason to be happy. Those who want the war, have it with two out of three bombs; those who oppose it, don't have it in one out of three. The sporting spirit of the nation is upheld and so is proverbial American goodness. Even the Vietnamese should be grateful for two out of three rather than three out of three. Also satisfied should now be those who used to be puzzled by war statistics. They had wondered how the Vietnamese could have accumulated as many radar installations, railroad cars, etc. as are reported destroyed? Well, the American method of humanitarian destruction explains everything.

## The Cost of Integrity

Can a non-commercial press exist in America? One whose point of view is not that of a business enterprise? One whose editorial policy need not be acceptable to advertisers? That is beholden to no one? That rejects even such fetters as come with concern for circulation building?

We doubt it, at least for the foreseeable future. But, as if to contradict our own doubt, we have been trying to maintain a small periodical that meets the outlined criteria. It has not been easy to do this, the difficulties being diverse and many. Those of a political nature we have grown to expect. They leave our spirit untouched and our resolve undiminished. The financial ones do have a disheartening effect, partly because they absorb time and energy needed for the publication's primary functions.

This year the financial difficulties are greater than ever. This is due to the near doubling of the production cost in the last two years. No one but our readers have helped us before; and there is no one but our readers to whom we can, or wish, to turn now. But this time we must ask for even greater generosity. Not only does the needed amount of \$28,000 exceed our past deficits, but it will probably have to come from a reduced number of individuals. This may be due to the editorial positions we have taken on a number of issues. The very first area of disagreement is some people's limit of tolerance, and economic sanctions follow. This is a price we accept without wavering.

But that much the greater is the challenge of our supporters. Considering their number, the amount needed is high. It will be forthcoming only if the response is generous and quick.

America may not be interested in building a press of integrity; but the few of us are. Let us, then, make that sacrifice which is needed to sustain a forum that succumbs to no economic interests, to no political group, and not even to its own readership.

## The Fall of Valor

by Ira Morris

It now appears that members of the Green Berets who have not yet "killed a Commie for Christ" are called on to knife to death a captured VC before an audience of fellow-paratroopers. This follows closely the custom observed among many aborigines of calling on youth to kill an enemy before being admitted to adult tribal membership. True, the Green Beret contingent is a very special branch of the U.S. Army, just as the SS was a special branch of the Wehrmacht. Ritualistic murders are not in the average G.I.'s line of duty, yet the general nature of the war, with its reliance on anti-personnel weaponry, selection of non-military bombing targets and the total disregard of civilian welfare and safety, does make of our Vietnam venture a genocidal experiment comparable to the Nazis' extermination of the Jews. This fact is generally recognized by all nations and most people outside the United States.

A psychological inability to equate one's own country with the murder-nations of the past causes Americans to claim merely accidental involvement in the deaths of well over a half million Vietnam civilians. The bombing and destruction of a Vietnamese village is a "military necessity"; the fact that

a hundred civilians are burned to death there is incidental to the fact that it harbored a Vietcong suspect. Given this military mentality and the heavy toll of air warfare, it is likely that even without atomic escalation, between a quarter and a third of Vietnam's population will have been annihilated by the year 1970.

Yes, it is really *we* who are doing this, under the pretext of saving the Vietnamese from themselves—we who have called ourselves humanitarians, benefactors of mankind, respecters of the individual! The saddest thing about it all for Americans is the compelling necessity to re-shape our idea of ourselves, abandoning the illusion nurtured since childhood that, for all its faults, America was somehow better than the other predatory, scheming nations. We have been disclosed not only as hypocrites, but as the most brutal and unprincipled of all!

So now we must go forward with that new enlightenment, we Americans who refuse to leave matters to the cynical escalaters in Washington. We are clear-sighted because we now know the nature of our enemy and understand that he is in Washington D.C., not in Hanoi.

Ira Morris's latest novel, *La Borgia* has just been published in England by Chatto & Windus.

# Fifty Years of Socialist Power: Achievements and Prospects

by Donald Clark Hodges

In commemorating this anniversary of the October Revolution I should like to present a general, critical assessment of contemporary socialist societies in terms of human achievement and the prospects for an even better life ahead. Instead of constructing a detailed balance sheet of the credits and debits of the Soviet Union in particular, I try to provide a theoretical basis for judging recent developments and trends within the entire socialist order, which has expanded to include one-third of the earth's population and the geographical and industrial heartlands of Asia as well as Europe.

The question at issue involves a general description of fifty years of socialist power and projections of future development. On the basis of available data, we can say that the alleged dictatorship of the proletariat in the Soviet Union and the peoples' democracies is not a proletarian dictatorship in the strict sense of a dictatorship of labor, but rather a republic of the working class inclusive of all wage and salary earners. Although Marx did not distinguish carefully between a proletariat and the working class of which it is a part, a textual analysis of the relevant passages of *Capital*, the *Communist Manifesto*, and *Wage-Labor and Capital* provides ample support for identifying Marx's proletariat with the class whose labor increases capital because its labor-power is transformed into variable capital. However, at least in the United States, this stratum represents a large but relatively decreasing segment of the working class.

Despite the prominent role of ex-workers and trade unionists within the central committees and politburos of communist parties in Eastern Europe, a noticeable tendency in recent years is for the composition of the leadership to shift in favor of scientific, engineering and managerial personnel. This shift in the locus of power has been accurately described in New Left circles as a change from politocracy to technocracy. During the formative years of building socialism in each country, bureaucratic power was shared among trade-union, party and government officials, by professional revolutionaries and the political leaders of mass organizations.

Donald Clark Hodges, Professor and Chairman of the Department of Philosophy at Florida State University, has just returned from a second extensive tour through Eastern Europe, where he presented a series of lectures at the invitation of the Trade Unions, Sociological Institutes and Political Science Faculties of several East European countries.

Subsequently, with the political and military consolidation of socialist regimes attention was turned to problems of economic growth and to the technical organization and planning of industry and agriculture. For a time these new responsibilities were shouldered by the militant Old Guard, but increasingly they found it difficult to compete with professional managers and engineers.

What we increasingly find in socialist countries, then, are governments not by a trade-union bureaucracy or labor aristocracy, but by, of, and for the intelligentsia. As a result, the abolition of specifically capitalist relations of exploitation has tended to leave intact the system of bureaucratic privileges and wage and salary differentials, with little prospect of reducing them during the next few decades. Instead, the tendency of so-called workers' self-management in Yugoslavia and of the new economic reforms in Eastern Europe is towards steeper income differentials, moderate as they may seem, and even greater bureaucratization at regional and local levels. And, since these reforms also point towards an increased role for the market and a strengthening of commodity relations, there is even further reason to believe that the socialist new order is a far cry from Marx's first stage of communism or socialism in Lenin's sense.

In view of the shift from politocracy to technocracy, which is far from threatening continued bureaucratic authority under socialism, we may conclude that Marx and Lenin were mistaken in their conception of the proletariat as a potentially new ruling class. As we have already intimated, theories of the proletariat are far less plausible than theories of a working class as the class of the future. Saint-Simon, Durkheim and Gessel have more to recommend them than the classical Marxists on this score. Even more convincing are theories of a bureaucratic new class formulated by Bakunin, Machajski, Mosca and Weber, and the related theories of techno-bureaucracy or simply technocracy from Veblen through Lasswell and Burnham. The concept of worker or producer is too loose to describe the ruling strata in socialist countries. Saint-Simon, we may recall, included within this category everyone but dependents, clergy, nobility, judges, officials and the idle rich in the erroneous conviction that the interests of bankers, entrepreneurs, managers, scientists and

manual workers were fundamentally one. Even should we follow Marx by excluding working capitalists from this category, the extension of the concept to include all wage and salary earners also mistakenly suggests an enduring community of interests between them.

Nonetheless, the abolition of capitalism represents for the first time in civilized history a reversal of the long-run tendency for income differentials to become progressively steeper with economic development. Furthermore, it signifies the assumption of power not by a minority class like the bourgeoisie, but by wage and salary earners comprising the bulk of a nation or at least a potential and imminent majority within contemporary states. Thus socialist regimes bring us nearer to a classless society without, however, constituting a merely transitory or transitional step between capitalism and communism. In other words, the October Revolution represents not only the birth of a new social order, but also an entirely new epoch in the history of civilization and, hopefully, the beginning of the end of thousands of years of economic exploitation and corresponding political oppression. At least there are strong grounds for currently believing that this is the case on the basis of extrapolations from present conditions and tendencies within socialist countries. Moreover, the new epoch of history ushered in by the October Revolution represents the emergence of democracy of a new type in which majorities not only express their consensus through periodic elections, but also control policy through mass organizations and trade unions having a direct voice in socialist governments.

## The Struggle against Technocracy

For a possible exception to the tendency of socialist societies to transfer power from a politocracy to a class of technocrats there is, of course, the phenomenon of Maoism. Mao's and Lin Piao's recent campaign to put politics first and to give it precedence over professional expertise comes in response to efforts by professional managers, scientists, engineers and technicians to follow the Soviet model of industrial development. At the same time, the pro-Maoist forces conceive of this struggle as one between an entrenched socialist but largely revisionist bureaucracy and the popular forces championed by a younger generation pressing for mass democracy and debureaucratization along the lines recommended by Lenin. The strug-