

INTERNATIONAL INFORMATION BULLETIN

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CONTENTS

DRAFT RESOLUTION ON INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVES

(Adopted by the National Executive Committee
of the Socialist Labor League)

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DRAFT RESOLUTION ON INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVES

Adopted by the National Executive Committee
of the Socialist Labour League at its
meeting on the 28 and 29 January, 1961

I. THE CRISIS OF LEADERSHIP

1. The second half of the twentieth century sees world capitalism in a crisis so profound that the whole future of humanity is at stake. Capitalism has long come to the end of its progressive role in human history. The threat of nuclear destruction which now faces mankind is a vivid commentary on a system in decay challenged in its very existence by the spreading tide of revolution. Driven back by the successes of the USSR and China and the national liberation movement in the colonies, the imperialists prepare to gamble the future of mankind against their own chance of survival.

2. The only future for mankind is the victory of the working class in the socialist revolution. A proletarian leadership must be built which can bring to the working class of the world a consciousness of its great historical role. Such a consciousness cannot arise spontaneously; it comes in the course of struggles in which the leadership is theoretically formed as it emerges, is tested and establishes its authority. The survival of capitalism into its present overripe stage is essentially a consequence of the crisis in leadership which besets the working-class movement. The resolution of this crisis is the first responsibility of Marxists.

3. Political leaders of the traditional Social Democratic and Stalinist schools continue to dominate the working-class movement. They have built up powerful bureaucratic apparatuses to discipline and control the class and plausible ideological protection for their renunciation of the goal of working-class power. They stand as the principal barriers on the way to building new revolutionary parties. An understanding of these tendencies is thus of fundamental importance.

4. The Social Democracy, whether stemming, as on the Continent, from Marxism, or in Britain from Fabianism and English empiricism, now stands for the acceptance of the view that capitalism has now become more humane, more concerned with welfare. In deeds -- though words may lag a little behind -- they proclaim the belief that the capitalist state need not be overthrown, and hence work loyally within the framework of capitalist institutions.

The social basis of Social Democracy is to be found in the privileged minority of the world's toiling population in the advanced countries. With this base, and infiltrated by elements from the petty bourgeoisie, the Social Democratic leaderships have demonstrated more clearly since 1945 than ever before in history, their role as capitalist agents in the labour movement. In Western Europe they salvaged capitalism in the immediate postwar years. They have subsequently campaigned for the removal of all specific socialist demands from the party program. In Germany the Social Democracy has come forward openly as a procapitalist party of a radical reform type.

Domestic policy has been a complement to the acceptance by Social Democracy of full support for the world strategy of American imperialism including military alliances and the H-bomb.

5. The material basis for the hold of Social Democracy in the advanced countries (it has never assumed much importance in the less developed countries) has been steadily undermined by the world developments of recent years. Social Democracy's capitulation before fascism; the attractive power, despite Stalinist distortions, of the USSR and new China; the attractive power of the colonial revolution, as well as the direct economic effects of both these factors; inability to answer the needs of the working class even in its main strongholds -- these have contributed to its decline. While still retaining in certain countries the allegiance of the majority of the working class, especially in Britain and Germany, the Social Democratic parties have increasingly tended to be bureaucratic shells, with right-wing leaderships challenged by centrist and left trends and torn by inner crisis. In France the exponents of "classic" Social Democracy have mostly left the Socialist Party. In Italy the centrists, under Nenni, have the mass following. In Britain, since the Scarborough conference, the crisis has reached a new stage. In Germany there is a calm, which is perhaps deceptive, since the adoption of the Godesberg program.

6. The role of Stalinism in the postwar years has been similar in its effects to that of Social Democracy. In a number of countries the Communist Party had become, by the thirties or forties, the mass party of the working class, and had attracted militants moving away from Social Democracy in countries like Britain and Holland. The Stalinist conception that the power of the Soviet bureaucracy could best be preserved by a deal with its wartime capitalist allies shaped the policies of these parties after the war, despite some spasmodic leaps into reckless ultra-leftism. From 1944 onwards in a number of countries, but especially in France and Italy, the Communist leadership was entirely engaged in preventing the working class from taking advantage of the weakness of the bourgeoisie and the virtual collapse of its state power. The upsurge of working-class confidence, backed by the existence of armed partisan formations, broke against the formal opposition of the Communist Party leadership to any action against the bourgeois state or capitalist institutions. The disarming of the partisans, the entrance of the Communist parties into bourgeois coalitions and the call for maximum effort for production took the edge off the class attack and prepared the way for a long series of betrayals whose fruits were to be seen in spreading cynicism and weakening of the Communist parties themselves.

7. In China and Yugoslavia the bulwarks erected against the spread of revolution by international Stalinism were broken down by the elemental force of the popular revolutionary movement, the absence of any viable bourgeois alternative and the corruption and breakdown of the old regimes. Here, then, a real break in the international front of imperialism took place. In Eastern Europe generally the Soviet bureaucracy showed itself ready to collaborate with the old ruling classes and parties in 1944-1945, even with elements heavily compromised with the Nazi occupiers. But these

were too discredited, too obviously tools of Western imperialism for such an alliance to endure. As a result, capitalist property relations were more or less quickly abolished by bureaucratic methods as part of the process of building a defensive front against imperialism as its anti-Soviet aims became clearer in the course of 1946-1947.

8. The death of Stalin, the reforms in the USSR and the aftermath of the Twentieth Congress have not altered the attitude of the Soviet bureaucracy to the world revolution. In fact there is an essential thread of continuity between the policy of Yalta-Potsdam and that of Khrushchev's "peaceful coexistence." The aim is still to contain and channel every upsurge of the masses to enable a deal to be made with the imperialists. Where they are "supported" it is only in order to obtain a bargaining advantage in negotiations.

In the earlier period the policy of arrangement with capitalism arose out of the internal weaknesses of the USSR and the need to buy time. Today it is the very strength of the mighty power which they control which frightens the bureaucracy. The potentiality of Russia's nationalized and planned economy is a standing challenge to world capitalism and thus impels it to an attitude of suspicion and opposition backed by military alliances and the H-bomb. In both cases what is sought is a quiet life -- a stabilization of the internal position by getting a guarantee that there will be no disturbance of world equilibrium which could open up a gulf under their own feet; hence no extension of the revolution can be contemplated.

9. Ideological justification of this position has to be offered both for internal consumption and to stem criticism in the world Communist parties. Its latest form is the attack on "dogmatism"; this campaign is essentially a revision of the Leninist view of imperialism as an epoch of wars and revolutions which can only be ended by the decisive intervention of the proletariat organized in revolutionary parties for the capture of state power and the building of socialism on a world scale. In place of this perspective is held out the idea that this is a period of the "consolidation" of socialism in the USSR in which the superiority of planned economy will prove itself and a peaceful transition to socialism will occur as this becomes apparent. In the meantime, independent working-class action is rejected or subordinated to the task of building a broad alliance, including "peace-loving" capitalists, not to build socialism, but to restore, in the capitalist countries, a peaceful variety of capitalism of a pre-imperialist variety! The real aim, therefore, is a series of new coalition governments of the style of 1944-1947, based on several classes, able to negotiate effective peace and disarmament measures with the USSR. Where necessary everything is geared to such aims. Strike movements are held in check, independent movements against U.S. military alliances, such as that in Japan, are condemned as adventurist, the struggle against colonialism is pushed aside and old chauvinistic slogans are pushed to the forefront. All this marks a sharp historic reversal of everything which the Communist parties were established to fight for. No wonder that the early history and declarations of the Communist International are clothed in secrecy and effectively concealed from the membership.

10. Social Democracy and Stalinism at the same time batten on each other. Much continued working-class support for Social Democracy stems from the ability to play the anti-communist line to which the record of Stalinism offers the necessary confirmation. On the other hand, the Communist parties not only gain from the attractive power of the October Revolution, they also profit from the obvious corruption of the Social Democratic leadership. The problem is not, of course, as some simple souls believe, that the working-class movement is divided and that everything can be put right by a "Popular Front," to be effected by some kind of reconciliation of the leaderships and the clearing up of misunderstandings. Both have to be swept away and replaced. But both are equally adamant in their resistance to any movement which threatens to be an alternative pole of attraction; they are even capable, in such situations, of forming an unholy alliance.

11. In recent years dissatisfaction with both the Social Democrat and the Stalinist leaderships has been growing. This manifests itself in negative ways, such as cynicism, apathy and the desertion of their organizations. The contradictions between the needs of the class and the leaderships are reflected positively in movements which have eluded their control, whether small "unofficial" strikes or big mass movements such as the anti-Kishi demonstrations in Japan.

12. The need to build independent Marxist parties in order to provide alternative leadership is the most urgent task of today. The reorganization of the Fourth International which will reunify all those Marxist groups and parties adhering to basic principles of orthodox Trotskyism must be undertaken immediately.

II. A NEW STAGE IN THE WORLD REVOLUTION

1. The rising tide of the national liberation movement in the under-developed areas forming the historic preserve of the imperialist countries has posed sharp new problems for the imperialists. In general they have had to seek an accommodation with the new forces by making deals with the national bourgeoisie, in order to conserve, and even to extend, their stake in these areas, and to prevent the moving forward of the social revolution with all the repercussions which that would have in the advanced countries themselves. What is a problem for the imperialists is also a challenge to the Marxists who have the task and the opportunity to tie in the movement in the advanced countries with that in the underdeveloped countries and to topple imperialism once and for all. The aim in all these countries must be to assist the building of proletarian parties which carry forward the socialist revolution.

2. In Africa, the past year has seen the revolution moving to a climax. The policy of big capital involves coming to terms with a formally independent African middle-class leadership, but this meets with the opposition of the European settlers. The settlers in Algeria, South Africa, Central Africa and Kenya resist the "liberal" policy, whereby big business seeks to safeguard its capital stake. In so doing, not only do they impede the implementation of this policy, but they also contribute to a radicalization

in the national movement, and the development of a left wing able to see through the compromises which the "moderate" leaders are willing to accept.

3. In Latin America the situation is more advanced, with a mature national bourgeoisie more firmly established and social development at a higher level. Nevertheless, anti-imperialist feelings are deep and becoming more conscious, as was shown by the reception given to Nixon in 1959. Blatant intervention by the United States, such as that which took place in Guatemala, has become more difficult. Stooges of the American companies in a number of Central American states are sitting on powder kegs. The example of Castro's defiance of Yankee imperialism has been powerful, especially amongst the youthful intelligentsia, while in a number of countries there has been a growth in the organization of the working-class movement. It would not be difficult to spark off a chain of political movements in Latin America which would call for the solidarity of the American working class and provide the necessary support for the advance to workers' and peasants' councils in Cuba.

4. In the advanced countries the colonial struggle has had an immediate and direct effect in France, and a steady, but indirect, effect in Britain and the USA. The impact of the war drive has been much more obvious and has invoked a greater reaction, especially among the youth, who see the ominous cloud of nuclear annihilation hanging over their future. Inevitably the youth react the most sensitively and openly. They draw their own conclusions about the complicity and inaction of the old leaderships and by-pass them altogether in mass movements new in form and different in content from those of the recent past. Especially significant have been the demonstrations in Japan against the U.S. Security Treaty and the defeat of the Labour Party leadership's defense policy at the Scarborough conference; these mark a turning-point in the postwar era. The possibility is now opened out of the working class of the advanced countries forging a policy independent of that of the national bourgeoisie and Social Democracy. Such a policy is very different from the putting of "pressure" on capitalist leaders and the search for alternative "peace-loving" bourgeois politicians, which is the line of Stalinism. In other words the way is open at last for an independent class line with a prospect of success. The key to the revolutionary strategy for the 1960's is provided by the dialectical relationship between the working-class struggle in the advanced countries and the anti-imperialist struggle in the under-developed countries.

5. A decisive difference between the postwar period and the twenties and thirties is that imperialism as yet has been unable to inflict an overwhelming defeat on the working class and crush its organizations and capacity for struggle. Despite some superficial appearances and the congenital pessimism of faint-hearts and defeatists, the working class in the advanced countries has never been in a better position to fight, unencumbered by bitter memories of defeat or the demoralization of mass unemployment. Moreover such a period has been an unfavourable one for Social Democracy and Stalinism in important respects. Social Democracy flowered in a period

of growth and victory for imperialism. Stalinism battered on the defeats of the interwar years. Neither has gained in the last period because of the change in objective conditions. Nevertheless, the fighting capacity of the working class, which is real and manifests itself at times with great vigor, has to be evoked, mobilized and organized; that is a task of leadership which, for obvious reasons, the Stalinists and Social Democrats have been unable to fulfil.

6. In the underdeveloped countries -- colonies, semi-colonies and newly "independent" states -- revolutionary events have been almost continuous for over twenty years. At times there have been vast mass upsurges, at others partisan combats. New movements have mushroomed and whole new strata have entered the arena of conscious political participation. So far the mass pressures have been largely canalized by the national bourgeoisies -- ably assisted by the Communist parties in countries like Indonesia and India -- thus permitting the imperialists, while having to relinquish direct rule, to conserve their economic stake by agreement with new states ruled by the national bourgeoisie. At the same time the old imperialist countries have lost relatively and absolutely to the United States -- never bearing the stigma of direct rule -- which has been able to penetrate into these areas in a variety of ways. Development aid and active military support for the national bourgeoisie have provided the basis for the extension of American influence and private investment, strategic and economic considerations being closely interwoven. In many areas American capital is able to engage in exploitation of the underlying peasantry and proletariat even more intensive than that of the old imperialisms.

7. The new stage, with the rapid multiplication of "independent" states, dependent in greater or lesser degree upon outside aid, is obviously a transitory one. The very weakness of the new rulers, their inability to meet the needs of the masses, the corruption and class distinction which they inherit from decaying colonial society, nourish the ferment below them. At the same time, the stage of political independence attained through most of Asia and in parts of Africa stirs the colonial revolt in other countries. Hence the tenacity of the Algerian fighters, the struggle in the Congo, the ferment in South Africa and the day of reckoning which is at hand all over the domains of imperialism.

8. The absence of proletarian parties with a strategy of permanent revolution has enabled political independence to be gained under the leadership of parties of the national bourgeoisie. Yet even the most mature of these, such as the Indian National Congress, have been unable to carry through even the most elementary of national tasks. This arises from a number of factors, notably their own links with the old property relations inherited from imperialism and their own precariousness as a social class. Thus thorough agrarian reform becomes impossible because of the actual political alliance between the weak bourgeoisie and the landlords and rural moneylenders. Capital from the foreign imperialist monopolies cannot be dispensed with. They dare not nationalize foreign-owned properties. Indeed they have to call in more outside capital to cope with pressing problems of development. Inefficiency, corrup-

tion and waste are rampant. The masses starve while spectacular projects are put in hand. Education remains the preserve of a privileged elite.

9. Spreading chaos leading to social unrest, inability to cope with pressing problems leads the new regimes in a bonapartist direction. The appeal to the strong man or junta, backed by the armed forces and able to balance between the classes has already taken place in Pakistan, Indonesia and Burma. Essentially this solves nothing. It strengthens the state machine, runs up against the same economic problems and prepares the way for the next overturn which substitutes a new junta for the formerly incumbent one.

10. The existence of the world confrontation of the two power blocs has offered the more skilful bourgeois leaderships certain opportunities for maneuver which they have used to some advantage. Economically, this means ability to obtain aid from both sources -- using one offer to get a better one from the other side and so on. Politically it has given the opportunity to play a balancing role for just as long as international developments do not force a firm commitment to one side or the other. The very precariousness of the governments of the national bourgeoisie makes it impossible for them to constitute a third camp. At decisive moments they have to take sides -- and there is no doubt that their interests lie with the world bourgeoisie, of which they are in fact the weakest section. For many, in any case, the nature of the commitment is in no doubt at all.

11. The Stalinist conception of the colonial movement in the postwar period has been to accept the leadership of the national bourgeoisie and to give them assistance. The departures from this basic line have been only temporary, either forced by circumstances or tied in with shifts in the tide of world events. At any rate in the past decade the Communist parties have been tied to the nationalist leaderships as open supporters or as a loyal opposition. The Stalinist parties thus act as barriers to the completion of the colonial revolution and have assisted imperialism to recoup some of its losses and stabilize its position, temporarily, by alliance with the new independent governments. In some cases there have been early and disastrous effects of such gambles. In Iraq, for example, support for Kassem is being paid for in attacks on working-class organizations and the release of pro-Western, pro-imperialist politicians from jail. Indeed, in the Middle East, according to Khrushchev, the Arabs are "not ripe for Communism," hence a policy of "popular fronts" with all sorts of unreliable elements.

12. The consequences of Stalinist support for the national bourgeoisie are demonstrated by the situation in Indonesia. Here, where there is the second largest Communist Party outside the Soviet Union, Sukarno was able to assume dictatorial powers after being backed by the Communist Party which held off the revolutionary upsurge of the masses.

13. The Stalinists further prevent the fusing of the colonial revolutions with the struggle in the metropolitan countries; the signal example being their attitude to the Algerian revolution.

Caught in the dilemma of opportunist diplomacy -- which imposes the stifling of real resistance to the regime in France at the same time as Algerian nationalism is conciliated -- they have obstructed the course of the Algerian revolution. The current needs of Soviet diplomacy determine the role which the mass movements under Communist control have to play. Thus in the "Bandung" countries they are harnessed to the task of putting pressure on the bourgeois governments through "peace" campaigns in the hope that they will vote with the USSR at the United Nations and stay out of U.S. military alliances.

14. Marxists support the nationalist movements in the underdeveloped countries, aid the struggle for independence, call for the fight against imperialism to be carried through to a finish and seek to mobilize the workers in the advanced countries to this end. However, only a Marxist party leading the working class can link the revolution in these countries with the international revolutionary movement, thus enabling it to accomplish its tasks by the strategy of permanent revolution. Such parties must be built as alternative working-class leaderships of the national movements. If the bourgeoisie or petty bourgeoisie retain the leadership and form governments, these will eventually turn on the workers and peasants with the help of the imperialists, in order to defend their own position.

15. The fundamental point that, for the colonial revolution to become "permanent" the proletariat must take the lead bears repetition. We repudiate the conception that nationalist movements -- such as the FLN in Algeria or the July 26 Movement in Cuba -- can be transformed into proletarian parties. Such parties, while participating in the struggle for national freedom and independence, must be developed as independent Marxist organs of working-class struggle.

16. The doctrine which teaches that the colonial revolution will automatically extend as an independent entity must be rejected as criminally false. The imperialists, the Stalinists, the national bourgeoisies and their representatives are all opposed to the development of the independent class power of the proletariat which is needed to make the colonial revolution part of the world socialist revolution. Without the leadership of a working-class party the colonial revolution will stop short incomplete; the Congo events show that retreats and setbacks are possible. The development of a proletarian movement in the underdeveloped countries and a powerful anti-imperialist upsurge in the metropolitan countries themselves will measurably restrict the capacity of the imperialists to make the adjustment necessary to prolong their economic hold over former colonies. Moreover, the carrying forward of the economic development of the underdeveloped countries themselves is only possible as a result of a social revolution leading to the establishment of a planned and nationalized base for industrialization and agrarian reorganization. Both the revolutionary process and the carrying out of such an economic program requires close support from the working-class movement in the advanced countries. A strategic necessity for the next stage of the colonial revolution is the revival of the revolutionary proletarian movement in the working class in Europe, Japan and the USA.

17. Only such a revival can take the colonial struggle, as well as the struggle against the bureaucracy in the Soviet bloc and the antiwar movement throughout the world out of the deadening framework of the "two blocs" which has dominated world politics since 1945. It must be firmly said, therefore, that the role of the mass struggle in the colonial territories, the role of the anti-nuclear war and anti-U.S. policy struggles in Japan, Britain and other countries is not to swell the ranks of mythical "uncommitted" countries and to add to them one or more advanced country. Nor is the role of the antibureaucratic movements in the Sino-Soviet bloc to force a more "liberal" policy from the existing leadership. We oppose the petty-bourgeois approach that finds expression in such slogans as "positive neutralism," "peace above politics" and "a detente that will weaken authoritarian structures and strengthen progressive forces on both sides," etc. These are attempts to find a way round the class struggle and international solidarity, the vain search for short cuts and easy ways, which are the hallmarks of petty-bourgeois politics. Such attempts work on and through the existing leaderships and conceive of some new combination which can peacefully resolve conflicts and reconcile warring classes and interests. They bear the imprint of Stalinist pop-frontism, the peace appeals of Stockholm and elsewhere and the ideology of anti-monopoly coalitions. Their methods are those of putting on pressure by petitions and appeals, using the masses only as a means to bring the more "reasonable" sections of the ruling class to come to an agreement.

18. Here, too, success depends upon the creation of Marxist parties. Spontaneous political action by the working class, even on the high level displayed in 1956 in Hungary and Poland, which included the setting up of workers' councils, cannot itself secure victory. For this there is need of a Marxist movement which grasps the social nature of the bureaucracy and can explain it at the same time as it organizes the forces for the seizure of political power. Without the backing of such a movement, organized on an international basis, isolated national actions, however, heroic, will as in 1956, be doomed to failure. For instance, while the crisis of Stalinism is likely to explode on the "periphery," in Eastern Europe, it must rapidly penetrate into the Soviet Union itself if the domination of the bureaucracy is to be broken. At the same time powerful proletarian movements in the West will be needed to prevent the intervention of imperialism and to profit from the opportunities for heightened struggle which will be opened up.

The colonial peoples will defeat imperialism only by establishing workers' states. Victorious revolution in the advanced countries would not only provide a tremendous stimulus to such struggles but would enormously facilitate the planning and development of their economies, aid the consolidation of workers' power and prevent its degeneration. Joint struggles of this character will be a great stimulus to the political revolution of the masses in the Soviet Union, China and Eastern Europe.

19. The building of parties in the Soviet sphere is bound up with the international developments and with the building of strong Marxist parties in the countries of advanced capitalism. From them

ideas and assistance can penetrate through censorship and suppression into the Stalinist countries as revolutionary events begin to erupt and provide guide lines to workers and students in movement. Then Trotskyist ideas and organization will rapidly win support and lend purpose and cohesion to the struggle against the Stalinist apparatus and ideology. In such a struggle the confusion and splits in the bureaucracy will be all the greater the more firmly and decisively the working class is organized against it.

III. THE BELGIAN STRIKE AND ITS LESSONS

1. The main points relating to the building of a revolutionary movement, the need for an alternative leadership, with a policy and program based on the historical experience of Marxism, which this resolution makes have received striking practical demonstration in the Belgian events of December 1960 and January 1961.

2. The Belgian strike, taking place in an advanced capitalist country which has enjoyed expansion and prosperity, is one of the most significant events in the capitalist world since the war. Here, on a small scale, took place a dress rehearsal of the situation likely to confront the working class in the other countries in the coming period. The lessons to be learned from it are of the utmost importance and the most general kind. If those lessons are learned in time, other working classes may avoid having to experience the bitterness of defeat and the sacrifices of the Belgian workers will not have been in vain.

3. The strikes were detonated by the economy law brought before Parliament by the Eyskens Catholic-Liberal coalition government. This law was intended to place onto the shoulders of the Belgian working class -- including government employees and white collar workers -- the burdens of Belgian capitalism. Belgian capitalism is old, and in some ways inflexible. It has the worst record on the continent for new industrial investment and for the increase in industrial production. It has to cut costs and improve productivity if it is to compete with its rivals both within the Common Market and on the world market. The events in the Congo, while not bringing big losses for the moment, aggravated the creeping crisis and determined the capitalist class and its government to take sharp measures to safeguard profits and to demonstrate its mastery of the internal situation. The law was a move in a sharpening class struggle, which it brought to a head.

4. In the working class, especially in the centers of heavy industry in Wallonia, a powerful mass pressure developed for a show-down which the leaders of the Socialist Party and the Confederation of Labor could not resist. Ignoring moderate appeals for token strikes or a postponement until the reassembling of Parliament on January 3, the pressure for strike action had by the middle of December become irresistible in many centers and trades. It was not a general strike which was planned and called for from the top; it was spontaneous, in the sense of being forced on leaders from below and developing according to the level of consciousness in the different layers of the working class.

5. The reformist leaders, masters of an organization powerful and close-knit as far as material means are concerned, were suddenly placed in a position which they had not sought. The Socialist Party leaders, who had never led much more than a routine demonstration or a move through the corridors of Parliament were largely effaced. The trade-union leaders, powerfully entrenched in their regional strongholds, came to the fore, Renard of Liege claiming the most attention.

6. Neither section of the traditional leadership was able to find a way out of the confines of parliamentary horse-trading and bourgeois institutions generally. There were no slogans apart from stopping the passage of the law. There was no policy or program expressing the will of the working class to do battle. The main object of the leaders, to judge by their actions, was to ride the wave, adapt themselves to the condition of the moment, respond to the mood of the rank and file and hang on until some formula was found which could bring a way out.

7. In the trade-union strongholds of Wallonia, where the strike was solid and the possibility for dual power existed, the trade-union leaders went furthest in the direction of concessions to the pressure from below, while keeping the movement under close control. Here, then, a fighting posture was adopted, but without the essential preliminary of finding a tactic and staking a claim for power. With the masses keyed up and geared to the leadership, nothing happened beyond demonstrations and speeches obviously devised as a reflection of day-to-day currents and moods. In fact, the movement, however powerful in appearance, turned round in a closed circle beyond which stood the gendarmerie, the army and a government apparently prepared to fight on.

8. Consistent with their reformist nature, then, the leaders hesitated, drew back or just waited, hoping that words and threats would bring down the walls of Jericho. Seeking a way out which would save face with their followers and convince themselves of their own self-righteousness, the Walloon leaders turned to federalism. The linguistic and religious cleavage presented, as it were, a ready-made excuse which in the circumstances could be made to appear plausible. In fact, the hold of the Church in the Flemish-speaking North and the inability of the Socialist unions to break away the relatively low-paid, less class-conscious Flemish workers from the Catholic trade unions follows, in part, from lack of leadership in the past. Of course, if you believe in spontaneity in the South you have to wait for it in the North -- which will mean waiting a very long time. In the meantime, the attitude tends to be to write off the Flemish workers as backward, as a kind of reactionary mass doomed to remain tame instruments of clerical reaction. In the meantime, surveying their predominance in the South, the leaders fall back on a change in the political structure of the country which would give them a majority and ability, so they assume, to carry out "socialist" experiments. The dream of a West European Yugoslavia is obviously a fantasy borne of impotence.

9. In the meantime, the position of the Walloon leaders does nothing to break the hold of clericalism, does nothing to build a bridge to the Catholic workers, many of whom, in the early stages,

had shown a willingness to strike even at the price of breaking with their own trade unions. Indeed it tends to reinforce the hold of the church and contribute to the miseducation of the Flemish workers.

10. This was only the most spectacular of a series of empirical adaptations which the trade-union leaders, as the most radical wing, were led to make. Of the latter, Renard especially, showed a chafing at parliamentary limitations, at the same time as he put forward, as a program, no more than that already accepted by the Socialist Party.

11. The solidarity and enthusiasm of the working class was not matched by audacity on the part of the leaders, as could well have been predicted. The energies of the class were dissipated in listening to speeches, of the kind usually made only on Sundays, in processions and chiefly in waiting for something to happen, nobody knew quite what. Instead of waiting to see what the government would do, workplaces could have been occupied, works and strike committees set up, defense guards formed and a basis laid for extending the struggle. Lacking such a lead and seeking their own path forward the militant sections turned to aimless violence and window-smashing, sabotage and so on. The will to struggle was dissipated, those sections with the least stamina, as in Brussels, soon turning away and going back to work.

12. The leaders, then, hung back. They did not, in fact, accept the responsibility of leadership, and their unwillingness to seek a way out of the impasse played into the hands of the government. Eyskens and his colleagues played a shrewd game and conserved tremendous assets. They had the radio and a large part of the press, which still appeared despite the "general" strike. They had the gendarmerie, as well as the police, and brought back from Germany part of the NATO contingent. Plenty of repressive power was in evidence, or it was common knowledge that it was kept in the background. It was used in such a way as not to exacerbate class feeling and no doubt with a knowledge of the likely reaction of the strike leaders. Hence there was no attack at the heart of the working-class organizations, the leaders were not arrested and their movements do not seem to have been restricted. The government policy seemed to be that of letting the movement burn itself out.

13. That is what happened. The length of time which it took largely depended upon the degree of class consciousness in different regions or layers of the class. Thus it weakened quickly from its peak in the North apart from two or three places. In Brussels it rose to a peak and assumed a mass character but was not sustained owing to the lack of perspective. In the South, the most solid area, where the strike was pretty well total, it lasted, with the workers determined to the end, for four weeks, in the last two of which they were increasingly watching the movement elsewhere disintegrating.

14. Tremendous opportunities clearly existed in Belgium if a leadership had been in existence to counter that of the Socialist Party and trade-union apparatus. No such alternative existed or

emerged, nor could it have done unless careful and sustained work had been applied to this task over a number of years.

15. The position of the Communist Party offered, and could offer, no such alternative. Its policy was completely subordinated to the requirements of the "parliamentary road to socialism." Its slogans did not go outside the limits set by the Social Democracy and were well within those of the left wing. It coupled respect for parliamentary forms with a pathological desire to win acceptance on the Common Action committees set up by the Socialist Party and trade unions. Its call to the coalition parties to dissolve parliament and have new elections, in order, amongst other things, to conserve the prestige of "our" parliamentary institutions was a measure of its degeneration. It operated the policy of putting on pressure and generally acting as a shadow of the reformists. Given that this was done when a political general strike was under way, the decline of the Communist Party as a political force was clearly to be seen.

16. On the left wing of the Socialist Party, especially its youth movement, and to some extent in the trade unions, a leftward current has been evident for some time but has failed to dislodge the old-line leaders. This section was likewise unable to break out of the impasse despite the raising of what seemed to be more radical slogans. Its essential weakness lay in the fact that it had not built, and apparently had not sought to build, an alternative leadership, which, however small, could have built up a recognized and authoritative position with the militant workers. Such a revolutionary cadre force could have become of central importance in the strike. It did not exist because the policy of the left wing, formally critical of "centrism" both before the strike and during its course, has been a classic expression of just such a current. In practice it was also for putting on pressure, it sought to feed ideas and policy through the rank and file, or directly, to the trade-union leaders such as Renard, with whom it had, apparently, established a relationship based upon convenience and not upon any real agreement about tactics or policy. In fact, Renard showed up his "friends" by being himself only prepared to push, and that not very effectively, one part of the left program -- that for "structural reforms" in line with the minimum program of the Socialist Party.

17. Though the left wing may have gained some support, and may grow as a result of the experience of the strike it is clear on analysis that it shares responsibility for the failure of the strike.

18. The experience of the left wing, centered on "La Gauche," is especially instructive in view of the other points made in this resolution. This paper represented an application in practice of the Pabloite method and tactic which meant submerging the Trotskyist cadre in a centrist tendency in the Socialist Party. This has obviously resulted in a series of compromises in which, in order to win what can be represented as an "influential" position, clarity on principles and program has been lost. Becoming prisoners of the centrists, looking more and more like them until the difference was only formal -- a matter of vocabulary and a more analytical treatment of problems -- was the unhappy face of Belgium's Pabloites.

More, it meant that they were unable to give a lead in the situation arising from the strikes, both because of their past mis-orientation and of their adoption of a minimum program while the strike was on. In particular, they lost the opportunity, in the course of going through experiences with the working class, to bring it to a higher level of consciousness by staking out demands corresponding to its class needs in the given historical period. The "Transitional Program" can obviously not coexist with a "minimum program"; to adopt the latter -- even if with (very private) reservations -- meant falling down on an essential responsibility. Not least, then, the Belgian events show the need to make this distinction perfectly clear and reveal the danger which arises when the wires are crossed. The general experience fully confirms the criticism which has been made of Pabloism in the past.

19. On the most general level the Belgian events teach that the prime necessity is to build a revolutionary cadre. This task cannot be evaded by any consideration of immediate tactical success or to win approval from centrists or other tendencies. It cannot begin if major theoretical questions are not brought forward for discussion or if efforts are made to form combinations in which principled questions are put to one side. It cannot begin by support for centrist "personalities" or the establishment of relationships which involve concessions. It is not too late for the Belgian movement to learn, especially because of the existence of a vigorous socialist youth movement, at present considerably influenced by Pabloism. There is a need to discuss with Belgian comrades the lessons of the strike and to get them to see it, not as a peculiar and episodic event, but as a revelation of what needs to be done.

20. Internationally the lessons are of even more importance and the full discussion of them is part of the theoretical preparation which the Trotskyist movement must undertake.

IV. THE STRUGGLE FOR SECURITY AND STABILITY IN EUROPEAN CAPITALISM

The Advanced Countries Hold the Key

1. A breakthrough in the advanced countries, with the best immediate prospects in Japan and Britain, is the strategic key to the present stage of the world revolution. We hold no brief for the mechanical theory that renewed expansion in European capitalism has condemned the workers of these countries to an epoch of backwardness in the revolutionary process. The economic and political life of these countries experiences the repercussions of all the advances of the colonial revolution as well as the paradoxes and strains resulting from the arms program and the partnership of their ruling classes with American imperialism. Moreover the boom of the fifties is now showing signs of slackening; the world market is growing more slowly than before and intensified trade competition is now taking place between the big manufacturing countries.

2. Until the first world war, the great states of Western Europe were the dominant sectors of the capitalist world market, each of their economic structures being shaped by the particular

historical conditions under which they had assumed their place in it. Britain was the old, overripe imperialism with a world empire knit together by golden threads radiating from the City of London, but with an industrial structure showing signs of age and inflexibility. The most dynamic element was the new Germany which had taken political form with the defeat of France in 1870-1871 and whose economy was geared to the needs of the magnates of coal and steel who were the real power behind the saber-rattlers. The weakest, economically and militarily, was France, mature like Britain, but much less intensively industrialized; in the grip of demographic stagnation and with an economy which could properly be called rentier in character, the French bourgeoisie sought security in alliance with Czarist Russia and the erstwhile rival, Britain. Britain, France and Russia lined up on the basis of common interest against the extending tentacles of imperial Germany and her Central European ally and satellite, Austria-Hungary.

3. After the powers had been locked together for four years in bloody conflict, the shape of Europe changed, and so did its place in the world. Three empires disintegrated. Russia saw the triumph of the Bolsheviks in 1917 and passed out of the orbit of world capitalism with the defeat of the armies of intervention. In Germany great opportunities were presented for working-class revolution; they were lost through the treachery of Social Democracy and the failure of revolutionary leadership. Capitalism was restored to Germany, but on weakened foundations; the bourgeoisie, which acquired full power for the first time, faced a combative working class. France suffered devastation and a loss of manpower which she could, of all countries, the least afford; her ruling class suffered from a protracted crisis of confidence which issued into the capitulation of 1940. Of all the European countries Britain was in many ways the only gainer from the 1914-1918 war; her imperialist possessions and position had been safeguarded from the predations of Germany and she had added substantially to her empire. But the triumph was costly; it was paid for in a sharp deterioration of her world position signaled by the industrial stagnation of the interwar years and the constant struggle of sterling to look the dollar in the face.

4. Europe as a whole had declined both absolutely and in relation to the concurrent rise of the United States to a dominant position in the capitalist world. The emergence of Japan as the first Asiatic contender for great power status and a serious economic competitor underlined the fact that Europe was no longer the center of the globe. The growth of the Soviet Union demonstrated, despite all the distortions of Stalinism, that capitalism was not the only conceivable world system, and gave notice that it would have to fight for its existence.

5. The fear of Bolshevism mingled with international rivalries in Europe and the ambivalent relationships maintained with the United States, to produce the complex pattern of interwar diplomatic history. When capitalism's acute crisis in Germany led to the ruling class's resort to fascism, their counterparts in France and Britain were presented with a dilemma: whether to regard resurgent German imperialism, contemptuously rejecting Versailles, as the main danger, or to ally with it in the face of the threat of revo-

lution. Out of this dilemma came Munich and Vichy but also September 3, 1939, and a renewed war of unparalleled dimensions.

6. The immediate result of the war of 1939-1945 was that capitalism was brought to its knees throughout Western Europe. The bourgeoisie stood condemned for responsibility for the war, and the economic crisis which had preceded it and which had nurtured fascism. Economic collaboration with the Nazis had been widely practiced on the continent. At the same time the people were in arms and the state power was waiting to be picked up. Owing to the deliberate choice of the Communists and their allies it was left to be picked up by the Anglo-American military government and the bourgeois politicians they brought in their baggage trains or collected from the social ruins.

7. Despite its crisis of confidence, its cowardice and incompetence, the old ruling class was thus able to retain or recover its power; never has a ruling class had such historical good fortune.

It is true that the ruling classes took over countries which had been devastated by war, whose links with the world market had been ruptured for years and which were in a state of economic penury. The decline of Europe seemed even more irrevocable than after the first world war.

Yet within a comparatively short period economic life was restored to its prewar level and began to outstrip it, testifying to the recuperative power of modern industrial society, not to the inherent vigor of capitalist relations. Indeed capitalism was on crutches everywhere. It had to be supported by state measures and by the tacit agreement of the labor movement to assist in restoring the profitability of those sectors which it was not absolutely indispensable that the state should take over outright.

8. This task could not have been accomplished without the massive inflow of American assistance, first as loans and then in the form of aid under the Marshall Plan. American capitalism, raised to the level of a world power with the help of two wars in which its productive capacity had increased by mighty leaps, was strong enough to bear a large part of the capitalist world on its shoulders. And it needed to do so for a number of reasons. While it was true that the European capitalist countries were its rivals on the world market, U.S. capitalism could not afford to see them knocked out of the capitalist world economy by social revolution or by absorption into the USSR. Not only would that threaten the U.S. world position, it would mean the end of Western Europe as investment fields and markets -- a situation which had grimly but reluctantly been accepted in hard bargaining with the USSR as far as Eastern Europe was concerned (a bargain in which Stalin "gave away" the West including Greece and a 50 percent share of Yugoslavia). So Western Europe became necessary to capitalist America both as a military pivot point and as an economic ally. Moreover, the aid which was syphoned into war-disrupted European economies was no strain on American capacity; indeed it helped to avert the postwar slump which was generally expected to appear sooner or later. The

menace of the USSR meant that America could not afford to see Western European capitalism weakened and that it was important to succour it at any cost, even if that meant running certain economic and political risks.

9. Consequently American policy was directed to the economic recovery of Europe. Interstate co-operation was encouraged and assisted. As the Cold War worsened, so the occupation zones in Germany were merged into a new Federal State which provided the political context for the spectacular revival of German economy which was to take place in the fifties. Everything was done, too, to restore Europe's links with the world market, since this was necessary if new life was to be breathed into capitalism there. While some American policy-makers tried to impose policies on the European governments which they would not have chosen for themselves, once the latter got on their feet they had sufficient bargaining counters to be able to assume a certain autonomy. At the same time, the European bourgeoisie was clearly bound to the American ruling class by myriad ties. As the Cold War proceeded, through the Berlin airlift and the Korean war, so dependence on American military aid and the need for a common strategy brought into being a number of European supra-national organizations. The key role was played by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization: a new Holy Alliance designed to deal with "communist aggression" and "internal subversion," but, unlike its nineteenth century predecessor, having at its disposal a considerable military striking force, and with a political and economic base stretched across Europe to the borders of the Soviet bloc. NATO was progressively adapted to the needs of nuclear warfare and provided a stronghold for the military caste which, in all capitalist countries, had emerged considerably strengthened by a decade or so of war and war preparations. NATO represented the determination to buttress Western capitalism with the cement of armed power, in which the contributions of the separate states were inextricably related in common strategic plans.

10. Side by side with the military strengthening of Europe went a renewed economic upsurge. The stimulation given to the economy by the needs of postwar reconstruction, the drive to rebuild foreign trade links, the release of new techniques and the influx of dollars was carried forward by unprecedented peace-time arms expenditure. From this point, in the fifties a genuine capitalist boom, centered on civilian investment and a great extension of the market for consumer goods, carried production and trade forward to new heights.

11. Within a quite short time, therefore, the whole situation and prospect of West European capitalism had changed fundamentally. Its position in the world capitalist market was restored and continuous further improvement took place. The prestige of capitalism, so seriously compromised by association with crisis, war and fascism was more or less rapidly refurbished. The outward signs of expansion and prosperity led those socialists who by nature desired a compromise with capitalism, or whose theoretical equipment was rudimentary and poorly assimilated, to believe that capitalism had changed its nature. New theories were built to justify and explain policies which were already in existence, policies which in fact had

themselves contributed markedly to the continued existence of capitalism in Europe at all, let alone under conditions of prosperity.

12. However, there was no doubt about the reality of the prosperity. European capitalism had once again become able to extract and realize surplus value on an expanding scale from the numerous and highly skilled proletariat which it had at its disposal. There was really no miracle about it, even in Germany. Nor did it signify at all that capitalism was inherently more secure, or more stable. In fact at the heart of the new found prosperity was a series of contradictions.

13. In the first place the whole series of policy measures which had served to bring it into being were conditioned by the fact that on a world scale capitalism faced a life-and-death challenge which belied the essential conditions for security. The willingness of the American ruling class to pump aid into Europe, both civilian and military, and to maintain an army on the continent, was a direct result of the Soviet threat. The military spending, which had played a crucial role early in the expansion, and still has a sustaining effect on European economies, arose from the same source. The willingness of the French and British governments to accept the rehabilitation of Germany -- their major economic competitor on the continent -- first economically, then as a political and military equal, arose from the same fears. The establishment of a series of supra-national institutions, though accompanied by a great outpouring of verbal and printed expositions of a supposedly "European" ideology, was an unpleasant necessity. Somewhere in Strasbourg existed and still exists a Council of Europe where members of European Parliaments convene to weave idealistic verbal patterns which are quickly lost to view behind smoking factory chimneys. . . and rocket sites. Probably few people are aware even of its existence.

14. Lip-service to the notion of United Europe has become a political necessity for European governments, bound together in history's most formidable military alliance ever seen in peacetime and blessed by the Vatican itself. This necessity arises not from the strength, but from the weakness of capitalism's foundations. Ten years of artificial co-operation has not stamped out three centuries of European history. The age-old process of jockeying for positions of political and economic advantage has simply taken on new forms. Whenever the economic situation reveals the possibility that the market may cease to expand or start to contract capitalist interests push for national advantages in the struggle. Military men, and those who pay them, quite ready to see their own position and interests safeguarded by arms and soldiers of other countries, are hesitant to let their own forces pass under the control of others. Only the temporary coincidence of aims provided by the supposed Soviet invasion threat has brought about military co-operation.

15. Each of the big three European states conserves its own national designs and pushes them on every convenient occasion, sometimes brashly, as in the case of de Gaulle, sometimes discreetly, as with Adenauer and Macmillan.

The case of France is especially instructive. The colonial wars in Indo-China and Algeria, which have fed back a festering stream into the murky waters of French social relations, have made the country the "sick man of Europe" of the mid-twentieth century. It is true that there has been rapid economic development, a big increase in production, and extension of modern industrial methods, and, since de Gaulle took over, a strengthening of the balance of payments position. This progress, however impressive on the surface, has only contributed further social strains which threaten to rip apart the whole fabric and prepare the conditions once more, for the intervention of the working class on the scene as a revolutionary force. The divisions within the ruling class, and the fury of the petty bourgeoisie at the adjustments which modernization of the state and the economy was thrusting upon them, prepared the way for de Gaulle. The insoluble problem raised for French imperialism by the challenge of the Algerian social revolution brought the whole state machine to the point of breakdown in May, 1959, and thus prepared the way for the entrance of de Gaulle.

16. While the President, with the bonapartist-type role to which he is adapted by his personality, and which the state of French society offers him, has been able to bring no fundamental solution to the problems of French capitalism. Now entering its seventh year, the Algerian war continues amid ever-growing apathy, cynicism and more recently open opposition of a distinctly new kind. The state of Algerian society permits of no easy compromise solution. The presence of the settlers and the mood of the officer corps offers no prospect for a negotiated peace on terms which even the most conciliatory of the FLN leaders could now accept. The war continues, and as it does so the position of de Gaulle becomes open to challenge. The struggle for the succession, long underway behind the scenes, is now waged brazenly in the open. In the much-strengthened state apparatus, in the army, in political circles, conspiracy and plotting have become established occupations. Fascist groups raise their heads and display their potentialities.

Such a situation cannot endure. Disquiet, which first manifested itself among the intellectuals, is spreading to wider circles. The stock of the general is falling. No one is in sight who can play the role which he played in May, 1958, uniting divergent elements in the ruling class and the old parties and enlisting the mass support of the petty bourgeoisie and parts of the working class.

17. Poignancy is added to the situation by the intransigence of de Gaulle with regard to NATO. While needing the support of the Americans as much as anyone else, the present French government jealously seeks to preserve its independence. Behind this lies the fact, firstly, that France has half a million men tied down in the Algerian war and the government fears that the weight of France in Europe will suffer thereby. Secondly, the Algerian ulcer, which French capitalism itself dare not cut out, invites attention from outside, i.e., from America or the United Nations, to ensure that Algeria does not fall under Soviet influence or go the way of Cuba; this has to be countered at all costs. It is not, therefore, simply that de Gaulle is proud and nationalist. But it is true that the possible consequences of such an independent course, if pursued to

its logical conclusion, has caused nightmares to some French capitalists and their political representatives. Hence a new source of division in the ranks of the French ruling class, summed up as in Britain, between having one's own nuclear striking force or sheltering (if that is the right word) behind the Americans.

18. The capitalist system in Western Europe can be no stronger than its main constituent parts. The French link is, to say the least, doubtful. Knowing this, French diplomacy aims to balance between the British and the Germans, and sell its acquiescence to American plans as dearly as possible. In recent years, and especially since de Gaulle took over, relations with Britain, by virtue of her closer position to America politically -- deriving from greater material strength -- has sought to use this to prevent the European states from pursuing policies which threatened to harm her interests. British policy thus seeks to prevent any power or group of powers from gaining ascendancy on the continent in a way which could harm her trade and political influence, or weaken relations with the Commonwealth and the Sterling Area. The attempt of the European governments, with American backing, to bring about closer economic relations through a customs union brought resistance from Britain, despite its obviously attractive features. Even the French, or at least sections of the French capitalist class, were hostile for some time; since it seemed that the major benefits would accrue to Germany. This reluctance was eventually broken down and, as the European Common Market seemingly showed that important economic advantages could be obtained by French industry, the French government became a stalwart of the new organization. It did so, however, for national ends, just as the British had stood aside, and then formed the Free Trade Area of peripheral states to the Six of the Common Market, for national economic reasons.

19. But economic interests need the backing of state power. A complex series of diplomatic moves has been going on in Europe precisely with this intention. The main lines of force can be said to run from London and Paris to Bonn, a testimony to the great specific weight of Federal Germany in postwar Europe. The British government sees West Germany both as a rival and as a counterweight to French hegemony in Europe which, given de Gaulle's position on the nuclear striking force and NATO is regarded as undesirable. In any case, though de Gaulle may have delusions of grandeur, the very upsurge of Germany, and the great astuteness of Adenauer and his colleagues, makes anything like French hegemony out of the question.

20. For its part, Bonn has treated de Gaulle's approaches with studied caution. Confident of the economic power released in the "miracles" of the fifties Bonn feels able to wait. In the Common Market German production has little to fear from French competition and much to gain in the extended market offered as the tariffs of the other members are lowered. At the same time German exports to the countries of the Free Trade Area are almost as great and there is no desire to see them fall. This has meant a willingness on the part of the German government to seek a compromise with Britain, or at least to leave the way open for the entry of Britain at some later date. For their part, the British government, behind which business opinion is divided, does not want either an open breach or a Europe in which French power will be augmented.

21. The rise of Germany is continuous and purposive. The rulers of Federal Germany appear to be both confident and willing to bide their time. The slow formation of the new German army in the last fifties might have been taken to indicate the pacifism of German public opinion. It was nothing of the kind. Strauss and his colleagues knew that an army formed and equipped at that time would be out of date by the sixties, as out of date, in fact, as most of the French army is -- hardly competent to deal with the Algerian "rebels," let alone a modern war. Strauss, and the military men, wanted a first-class army, including the nuclear weapons without which even the best drilled force does not qualify for that title nowadays. They are on the way to getting them, and, no doubt, in a few years' time not only will the Bundeswehr be the most compact and effective striking force in the West but its nuclear weapons will be provided from German factories.

22. The rearming of West Germany under its reactionary government, with many ex-Nazis in key positions both civil and military, constitutes a special threat to the Soviet Union and to the other countries of Eastern Europe. The staggering possibilities of the remilitarization of the strongest industrial capitalist state in Europe are not correctly assessed by the Communist parties, and are glossed over by West European capitalists for whom Germany is an ally against the Soviet Union. The Communist parties' campaign against West German militarism has been calculated to evoke a purely nationalist response from the audience to which it is addressed, in direct contradiction to the principles of working-class internationalism. Such propaganda, while formally absolving "the German people" from blame, makes no analysis of the reasons why the working class has not prevented remilitarization. The present weakness of the German working-class movement must be seen against a background of tragic historical experience resulting from the betrayals of Social Democracy and Stalinism, which opened the way for Nazism. The destruction of the working-class movement from 1933, the military successes of Nazism in the early years of the war, and the plundering of Europe under Hitler's "New Order," all contributed to the difficulty of overcoming the ideology of racism and nationalism after 1944.

The small Communist vote in postwar elections shrank progressively, until, without any mass feeling being aroused, the Communist Party -- which had once had strongholds in West Germany -- was driven underground. The strong antiwar movement which developed in the fifties lost momentum and the emergence of the Bundeswehr seems to be accepted, if not approved, by the masses. What has gone wrong? In both cases Soviet policy has a good deal of responsibility. Communist support never regained its prewar level partly because of the lessons of Stalinism; the behaviour of the Russian occupying forces, the expulsion of Germans from the Sudetenland and the East, the nature of the regime in East Germany, the continuous flow of refugees -- these spoke louder than Stalin's words and cancelled out the memories of decades of working-class struggle more thoroughly than the propaganda of the Nazis had done. Then, in 1956, the Hungarian uprising, coming only a few years after the similar movement in Berlin, helped to convince many reluctant Germans that their rulers were right when they spoke of the menace from

the East and the need to rearm. The fruits of Stalinism are bitter indeed.

23. However, the German situation is by no means hopeless despite the fruits of Stalinism and the record of betrayal by the Social Democracy, finally sealed by the adoption of a new program from which all traces of socialism and class struggle are expunged. There were many reasons why, in the postwar years many Germans should turn away from politics and seek to rebuild their shattered existence. In doing so they unwittingly contributed to the restoration of German capitalism. But this system can do no more than win the temporary allegiance of the mighty German working class. The class struggle reasserts itself every day in factory, mine, building site and office. The German working class will rediscover its strength and throw off the leaderships which have betrayed it. But the task will be difficult and it seems unlikely that the first steps in struggle against European capitalism as a whole will come from Germany. That is why the working-class movements of France and Britain have a particular responsibility, firstly not to be diverted by anti-German feeling in response to the propaganda of the Kremlin or of their own ruling class, and above all to give aid and encouragement to German workers in struggle whenever they can. For example, though blame has been attached to the Soviet Union for the dampening down of antiwar feeling in West Germany in the fifties, this great movement was also partly dissipated as a result of the lack of support which it received in Britain and France. A labor movement which supports German rearmament or NATO or the H-bomb can teach the German people nothing.

24. It cannot be assumed that German capitalism has somehow discovered the secret of eternal boom. It is true that the impact of the 1957 recession was very slight. But the very fact that German prosperity has been bound up with a great expansion of investment and exports means that it could be extremely vulnerable to slump. The failure of markets at home and abroad to expand -- and the home market does not grow as rapidly as industrial production, hence the importance of exports -- could give the signal for a check to investment and to prosperity. Even without deep depression, a period of insecurity, of sudden shifts and changes, would, under the specific conditions prevailing in Germany contribute to the militancy of the labor movement and aid the emergence of a new leadership.

25. The relationship of Britain to continental Europe has, since the war, obviously become much more intimate. For the British ruling class a closer union with their counterparts may be necessary in the face of common danger, but they do not cease to regard each other as rivals. Diplomatic handshakes, hypocritical smiles and carefully worded speeches should deceive no one about the real relations between the European great powers. Relations between the workers of these countries should be quite different. They should not allow their rulers to play them off against each other in wage bargaining or in the course of political maneuvering. Indeed they have a true common interest in destroying capitalism in the region which was its birthplace and in creating a unified economy on a socialist basis which really will permit a full development of the

productive forces and bring the advantages of a large single market to which so much lip-service is nowadays paid. The United Socialist States of Europe is the watchword which the working class of Britain and all Europe must inscribe on their banner.

26. The situation in Britain, indeed, long the center of the most conservative Social Democracy, offers immense opportunities. In a way not approached in France or Germany the traditional relationships in the labor movement are being undermined and the old leaderships are being seriously challenged. Powerful tendencies have appeared which, with correct leadership can break from class collaboration once and for all. The gathering of mass forces behind the campaign for unilateral nuclear disarmament is of a different character to the centrist and Stalinist peace movements of the past. The struggle against the H-bomb and American bases means a break with bipartisan foreign policy and thus with class collaboration. It is highly significant, therefore, that large trade unions, as well as a growing mass youth movement, have been swung behind a policy involving a break with the bourgeoisie and their right-wing accomplices in the labor movement. Fresh forces have been entering these struggles free from the shackles of cynicism and routine or the goal of political career-making. They have shown themselves quite ready to defy the old-line leaders and to seek new means of struggle.

27. The right-wing Labor leaders have been halted in their steps to gear the party program completely to the current needs of British imperialism. They have been unable to win the striking out of socialist economic demands as their German colleagues did at Godesberg with little resistance. At the same time there is increasing realization that their willingness to accept complete subordination to American strategic needs and permanent U.S. bases in Britain is historically incompatible with the making of real inroads into British capitalism.

28. A further issue is raised by the fact that a working-class defense policy is incompatible with a situation in which the big monopolies control the arms industry. Even the House of Commons Committee on Public Accounts has had to admit that there is no real accounting principle observed in the arms orders involving new weapons. Massive and concealed profits are being made from missiles and their components. A program of expropriation of the arms industry can have an irresistible appeal. But such a takeover would cut deeply into the most profitable sections of British industry in engineering, electronics and chemicals and thus leads on logically to an all-out onslaught on capitalism with revolutionary implications.

29. The bringing of large trade unions behind such demands means that there is now a movement afoot which is very different from the routine demands of the centrist left of the traditional type. Twenty years of full employment have built up working-class organization and self-confidence, which makes an employers' offensive on wages and conditions more difficult than ever before. This built-in strength is of far more fundamental importance than the fact that in some sections there has been a complacent tendency to accept "prosperity" as permanent.

30. The trade-union bureaucracy, like the Labor Party Parliamentary leaders, tries to confine struggles to the negotiating table, even co-operating with the employers against shop stewards and rank-and-file organizations. But the militants in mining, engineering, the ports and elsewhere will gain strength from the left-wing trend in the field of foreign affairs and defense even if, at the beginning of the process, these two trends are separate and appear, superficially, to be opposed to each other. For example, the announcement that Polaris bases were to be built on the Clyde might have appeared to workers in a high unemployment area as a new source of jobs and higher wages. But the existence of a growing movement against nuclear war preparations has effects locally as well as nationally. It is likely that industrial action against this political-strategic move will mark a new stage in the struggle for jobs and wages as well as against the H-bomb.

31. The attempt of British manufacturers to escape from the confident and highly organized workshops of the Midlands to areas where wages are lower and competition for jobs keener has also met with resistance. Such moves represent the search for means to keep down costs in view of the increasing difficulty of maintaining car exports; they therefore arise directly out of the deep-seated problems of British capitalism.

32. It is the task of revolutionary leadership in Britain to link issues of these kinds and to bring the movements against the H-bomb, colonial atrocities and the decay of culture into relation with the general crisis of capitalism. By its active participation in rank-and-file movements of the workers and linking them up with the international and colonial struggles it can build a mass revolutionary movement and Marxist party in Britain. The preparatory tasks undertaken especially by the Trotskyists in the Labor Party and through their theoretical and propaganda work are the basis of the construction of a revolutionary party.

33. Such a revolutionary party, having won the confidence of the mass movement, will assert the political independence of the working class. With this perspective, it criticizes the various petty-bourgeois and centrist trends which, from theoretical confusion, pessimism and lack of confidence in the class, seek another way. The Socialist Labor League recognizes the prime importance of a struggle to defeat the class which treasures the H-bomb and the American alliance as the only protection of its social existence. That struggle leads up to the taking of state power. Charting such a course, the British working-class movement will call on the workers of Germany, France, the USA and Japan to fight a united campaign against war preparations. At the same time it will sever all ties of domination over colonial and dependent territories and lend active support to the defeat of the reactionary European settlers. It will withdraw support for the national bourgeoisie and Bonapartist leaders in the underdeveloped countries since they block the victory of the colonial revolution.

V. TRENDS IN THE WESTERN HEMISPHERE

1. The performance of the American economy in the period since the last recession has been far from spectacular. In the course of

1960 it ran into a phase of stagnation, hitting especially the steel industry and the durable goods industries. Spreading unemployment has been a feature of the last quarter of the year until it reached a peak higher than at any time since the war. The failure of the U.S. economy to grow at more than 3 to 4 percent per annum is felt all the more acutely in view of the rapid rates of growth achieved in the USSR. The apologists for American capitalism draw some consolation from the high wage level and generally higher standard of living, and claim that the growth rate is not so important. Nonetheless, without continued growth profitable investment opportunities decline, the system loses its mainspring and has to be sustained by continued injections of Federal help which largely takes the form of opening up a means for the realization of surplus value through the arms program.

2. In the period since the war the involvement of the American economy with the world market has become more intimate than ever before. Europe had to be preserved for capitalism. American economic policy and strategic policy were geared closely together with the aim of providing the world conditions for the continued existence of American capitalism. Isolation was no longer practicable, nor was the involvement merely an economic question -- it was backed by a closely coordinated network of American bases, by places and missiles poised for instant action and fleets ploughing the oceans of the globe. This was to be the American century but only if the world revolution could be held in check and pushed back.

3. American alliance with the weakened ruling classes of Europe saved capitalism in its old home, but it was not without its problems. For one thing the revival of European economy, however much desired by the American ruling class, has led to a relative growth in the political bargaining power of the European ruling classes. The greater economic self-dependence of European capitalism has also had a number of new consequences. For one thing American private capital has been attracted into Europe on a greater scale than ever before, taking advantage of a market growing more rapidly than in the U.S. and the lower labor costs which prevail there. Thus in 1960, while investment at home has been falling off, investment in manufacturing industry overseas, especially in Europe, has grown. Moreover, though some American manufacturing plants abroad compete effectively in the U.S. market, there has also been, in 1960, a growth of U.S. exports to Europe and Japan. Indeed, the continued economic boom in these areas has helped to counteract the sagging market at home both for raw materials and capital equipment. The involvement of the U.S. economy with the world capitalist market takes many new forms which have potential consequences unlike those to which we have become accustomed in the past.

4. A sharp reflection of this has been the weakening of the dollar as a result of the large and continuing balance of payments deficits of the past two years. The vulnerability of the dollar reflects, in part, the greater strength of other currencies, especially the mark, as well as the world commitments of American strategy involving high military expenditures and aid to underdeveloped countries. Higher interest rates in European centers has also led to

transfer of funds and these speculative movements have become frenzied when dollar devaluation has seemed likely -- as happened between July and September 1960 -- further contributing to the dollar hemorrhage. To meet this situation some cuts have been made in overseas spending and attempts have been made to shift some of the foreign aid responsibilities to other NATO countries. In the meantime U.S. exports have to be stimulated -- which means increased competition for the European and Japanese exporters already faced by sagging sales. At the same time American business becomes increasingly dependent on the state of the economies in which these sales are made. Thus if continued expansion in Western Europe has helped to soften the recession in the USA so far, the onset of a recession in Europe could play back on the American economy in a way not previously experienced. It is wrong to think of world capitalist economy as being set in a particular mould once and for all.

5. However, it is a big step from underlining these current difficulties of American capitalism to tracking its imminent decline as a world force. The difficulties of the dollar must be seen against the background of America's vast productive power and strategic position reinforced by growing capital investment throughout the capitalist world and especially in the advanced countries. They do not threaten the existence of capitalist property relations to the same extent as do the problems of the old imperialisms, despite their apparent economic progress in recent years. But the inability of the U.S. economy to grow rapidly or to dispense with massive arms spending shows that even the strongest capitalism is in crisis. Each recession leaves a higher irreducible margin of unemployment, each boom narrows the field for new investment. Surplus value is still being extracted and realized at an expanding rate, but the rate of expansion is slowing down and stagnation, if not deep slump, is the order of the day. The prestige of capitalism tends to shrink even in the USA, then, as it fails to face up to the Soviet challenge and to use rationally the technological possibilities of the century.

6. Meanwhile American capital faces the largest proletariat in the world which it has inevitably called into existence. The American working class has built up a high wage level and powerful organizations to bargain to maintain and increase these levels within the limits imposed by capitalism itself. It has not been able to transcend the bounds fixed by its proletarian status. It has more means of consumption available, but it is still wage labor. It has skills, but these are liable to rapid depreciation as a result of technological advance, as a result of the decline of whole industries or in times of recession. Meanwhile the concentration of industrial power in the hands of giant corporations is immense and the objective conditions are being prepared for socialism.

7. The outstanding factor in the American situation is the weakness of the independent political movement of the working class and the smallness of the Marxist party. Yet for the world defeat of capitalism a frontal onslaught on its main stronghold in the Western hemisphere is indispensable. Therefore great responsibilities devolve upon the American movement, responsibilities which can-

not be fulfilled without absolute clarity and a firm political line. The SWP works in an environment which has many features which can debilitate and discourage individuals and movements. The strength of the American ruling class, the high standard of living for those who succeed in the rat race, the corruption of the union bureaucracy, the lack of political traditions of independent struggle, among the workers, divisions between different layers and groups, divided by racialist ideology and discrimination, the pervading influence of the capitalist propaganda machine, the betrayals of the old-line leaderships, the easy slide into pragmatic methods and theoretical accommodation -- all these dangers beset those who seriously desire to build a socialist movement in the United States. But all these factors must be understood in their interrelationships. The revolutionaries in the SWP need periodically to take a hard look at themselves and check over their political work constantly. In a position of relative political isolation, of constant battle against the current, a diversion from true course can creep up unsuspectingly. A search for a shorter way, for alliances which may impose accommodation with alien trends, for regroupments without solid theoretical bases, for programmatic adaptations to suit what are assumed to be American peculiarities -- these have constantly derailed American socialists in the period since 1917. The attention of the leaders of the SWP must be constantly directed to such dangers as they may affect their own policy and thinking.

8. Nonetheless, in recent years some advances have been made and there are signs of a break in the American ice-block deep down in several key layers of society. Among the youth there has been growing criticism of the American way of life and an audience for various trends which reflect its cultural barrenness. A school of critical writers has emerged from petty-bourgeois bohemia and has canalized much of the protest into individualist and negative channels. Considerable success has attended critical studies of various aspects of American society which show how it alienates men and dehumanizes them, but without pointing, or even desiring to point, any way out. Social pessimism and escapism are rampant, enmeshing the radical youth but at the same time leading the best of them to seek a way forward and a positive political alternative. Socialist ideas have been received more readily in the universities. The threat of nuclear war has stirred an anti-H-bomb movement into being similar to its British counterpart if, as yet, less important.

9. But the most important developments have been among the oppressed groups of American society, especially the Negroes. Breaking through the routinism and accommodation associated with the "talented tenth" who in most areas dominate the big organizations such as the NAACP, new forces and new leaders have come from the ranks of the students, youth and industrial proletariat. By direct action and mass campaigns against segregation and for human dignity a magnificent example has been shown to the American working class in general. Without being carried forward with mass support from the organized workers, white and colored, the movement could only achieve small and partial successes, but it has started something rolling which can have great consequences. It has been shown that it is absolutely vital to strike deep roots into the Negro masses from whom come the most exploited sections of indus-

trial and farm proletariat, who suffer all kinds of political and economic discrimination and who can provide fresh forces and an invaluable accretion of revolutionary energies. The same can be said of a number of other minority groups who form part of the sub-proletariat on North American soil, especially the Puerto Ricans and the Mexicans. Sustained work among these sections is absolutely vital.

10. In various industrial battles, some small and limited, others nationwide such as the 1960 steel strike, the American working class has itself shown a great fighting spirit and an unexcelled capacity for sacrifice and solidarity. The potential of the American working class remains unlimited. It is therefore a priority task to bring to it the political understanding which can use this potential for a struggle against the wage system which supports the American ruling class, itself the strategic underpinning of capitalism as a world system. There is no room for politics based on exceptionalism or exclusiveness. The very international ramifications of American capital -- which clearly are designed in part to undercut the wages and conditions of American labor -- impose an international outlook.

11. The electoral campaign in 1960 brought a change of administration with a fairly evenly divided popular vote. Undoubtedly many American workers voted the Democratic ticket in the hope of change in American policy both abroad and in respect to antilabor legislation at home. The SWP did extremely well to pose a third choice and attack those currents in the radical movement which openly or shamefacedly backed the Democratic Party, including the CP. The new President takes over in a period of growing embarrassment for American capitalism. The internal economic problems grow more acute, but they assume their full significance only in the international setting of the conflict between the two incompatible world systems. Under these conditions the political custodians of American capitalism have little power of choice; by and large their policies are determined by the power of the monopolies. It is already evident, for example, that Kennedy will, if anything, increase the arms budget and further strengthen the armed power of the USA. Promises on removal of antilabor legislation made during the campaign are unlikely to be honored because the internal mechanics of Democratic politics makes that impossible any way. While it is likely that Kennedy will more readily increase the Federal budget and use government supports for the sagging economy more liberally than his predecessor there are strict limits here too. Moreover, the Republicans were unable to reverse a trend which issued from the dire straits of the economy back in the thirties. In fact outside the arms program, the Federal budget is relatively small; the bulk of civilian public expenditure is controlled by state and local government not necessarily affected by the change in presidency or by the Keynesian ideas which are current among the "brains trusters." In any case, the international problem of the dollar sets limits to reflationary policy based on lower interest rates and budget deficits. A further flight from the dollar could make devaluation, or possibly the demonetization of gold, inevitable and strike a blow at American financial standing and international prestige. These dilemmas of American policy reveal great opportunities for exposing

the crisis of capitalism, the linking up of separate struggles and the bringing of the growing unemployed army into action together with their employed brothers.

12. In terms of American conditions there is no justification for presenting the struggle for peace as something separate from the struggle of the classes. There is not the faintest prospect of a "peace-loving" section of the American capitalist class appearing. The influence of Stalinism, while now extremely weak as far as the numerical strength of the Communist Party USA are concerned, still manifests itself in the radical movement. It shows itself in the acceptance of the "peaceful coexistence" conceptions of Khrushchev, in illusions about disarmament agreements and the United Nations along the lines of the petty bourgeoisie and "new left" currents in Europe. Such trends seek to bypass the class struggle, put their faith in Summit talks and arrangements between leaders and hope that the claws of American imperialism will somehow be drawn without a real fight. Phraseology and programmatic statements which compromise with these illusions must be condemned, as much as should be any failure to point out the actual reactionary role of the Soviet bureaucracy at the present stage. Of course, with anti-Communism fostered by the vestiges of the Social Democracy and injected into the trade-union movement and intelligentsia via the State Department, the banner of defense of the Soviet Union against imperialism must at all times be held aloft by the Marxists. But this cannot mean compromise with the Soviet bureaucracy, with its slogans and arguments or with its American stooges. Nor for that matter should the opportunist taking up of Leninist theories by the Chinese lead to sight being lost of the fact that the Chinese leadership is also an historical impediment to the spread of revolution in the Far East at the present time.

13. Further opportunities for building the international revolutionary forces in the United States are offered by the fact that the world involvement of American imperialism has evoked a widespread popular resistance in many countries. The State Department has tried to find and support docile political leaders overseas with whom it could deal on questions such as the establishment of military bases, missile sites and airfields ringing the Soviet Union. In general, especially in the less developed areas, this has necessitated dependence upon the most reactionary forces in the old feudal classes or the national bourgeoisie. However, such regimes are basically precarious, frequently corrupt and incompetent, maintaining themselves by graft, police rule and oppression of political opponents. No wonder, therefore, that one explosion after another has taken place in these adjuncts of the "Free World" from Korea to Cuba. In the past year or two American-propped regimes have been dislodged in Turkey, Korea and Cuba. Mass demonstrations have occurred in Japan and even in Formosa against American policy. Latin America is seething with resistance to Yankee imperialism. All such signs reveal the revolutionary possibilities in the present world situation.

14. The toppling of unpopular regimes has been largely the result of the leadership of students, youth and some radical sections of the working class. They have not, however, been followed

by the installation of revolutionary governments but merely of new teams selected from the petty bourgeoisie and the military and civil bureaucracy. Consequently the revolutionary drive displayed in the mass upsurge has subsided without concrete results. The whole weakness has been the lack of a revolutionary Marxist leadership in these countries, thus underlining the prime task of creating such a leadership on a firm basis in preparation for the coming struggles. Such struggles, however, must scrupulously avoid a chauvinistic anti-Americanism. The main enemy must be clearly indicated as the national bourgeoisie and American imperialism. At the same time the best contribution which the American working class can make to these movements, as well as to prevent them taking an anti-internationalist course, is to sharpen the struggle against their own ruling class and to raise slogans in defense of the revolutions abroad.

15. Nearest at hand to the USA of these revolutionary movements has been the unseating of the Batista regime in Cuba, followed by the nationalization of American property in the island by the Castro government. The Cuban movement has many specific features which deserve careful study and appraisal. Its leadership was petty bourgeois and intellectual in composition, but it passed through the school of guerilla warfare and assumed the dimensions of a far-reaching popular struggle which gained a momentum of its own and passed inevitably into social measures. However, Cuba was a semi-colony of American imperialism, which restricted it to a one or two-crop economy and geared it to the world market of capitalism in a one-sided relationship. Poverty and unemployment were widespread. The Batista regime was cruel, corrupt and hated; its association with the big American companies which dominated Cuban economic life was clear. As an island, despite its nearness to the American coast, intervention to support Batista was particularly difficult. In Central America, for example, anti-American regimes can be dealt with more easily by calling on neighboring stooge governments to give the necessary facilities to "exiles" and American-hired mercenaries as happened in Guatemala. With Cuba such methods have not so far proved successful. Moreover, the situation internationally is today far less propitious for open American intervention than it was at that time. The Soviet-Chinese bloc is relatively much stronger. The colonial revolution has advanced. Within the U.S. itself, the Negro movement has made great strides. Opposition to U.S. domination has grown in Latin America as a whole. Prudence has dictated, therefore, a waiting policy, combined with a propaganda offensive against Castro in the States and on a world scale and a series of threats of action which have not passed beyond the stage of words. Finally, there is no doubt that the movement in Cuba itself has deeper popular roots, that the level of popular consciousness is higher owing to the existence of a large proletariat and that the leadership has been fully alive to the possibilities which the situation has offered.

16. It is of paramount importance to defend the Cuban revolution -- but at the same time to call for its extension, both in depth through the setting up of a regime based upon workers' and peasants' councils and geographically by taking up the same issues in other parts of Latin America, and particularly in the Central

American states which have similar problems and are openly dominated by the big American monopolies. There is no doubt that the Cuban revolution has already had a considerable influence throughout the hemisphere. It has many lessons to teach in the way of tactics and is proving that America can be opposed. But it is a far cry from this to defining Castro's Cuba as being already a workers' state or even in its present form as a regime which is capable of survival.

17. American radicals have been particularly susceptible to the appeals of the Cuban revolution. For the first time they have at hand and available for investigation an anti-imperialist movement with undoubted achievements to its credit. The faith and enthusiasm of the Cuban workers and peasants, the frankness and simplicity of the leaders themselves, the contrast not only between Cuba and every other regime in Latin America, but also with the decadent, cynical and money-ridden climate of the United States itself accounts for the sometimes over-enthusiastic acceptance of the Cuban revolution in its present form. However, it is necessary to check carefully over the facts and possibilities.

18. The absence of a firm theoretical foundation on the part of the Castro leadership is by no means a virtue. It has led, and will lead, to the improvisation and eclecticism in the face of intractable problems. It means that the popular masses are not being educated to a full understanding of the situation internally and in its international implications. Faith in a leader is no substitute for such understanding, on the contrary, it puts what has so far been achieved at the mercy of an assassin's bullet. It can lead to deceptions and retreats. But it is no accident that while popular in its basis, the revolution is not popularly controlled or led. The leadership is socially derived from the petty-bourgeois intelligentsia. It has proceeded against American imperialism only as a result of immediate necessity, and not with a clear program of expropriation of capital. The future of the economy remains in question. Marxists campaign for the creation of a revolutionary working-class leadership which will fight on a program of workers' and peasants' councils to take over the economy, together with a campaign throughout the American continent to defend and spread the Cuban revolution. The defense of that revolution is a prime task of socialists throughout the Americas, but its future lies in the realization of the slogan of a United Socialist States of America.

VI. THE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL

1. The major task of building a revolutionary leadership on a world scale involves the reorganization of the Fourth International and therefore a consideration of the Pablo group. In its documents and activity the distinguishing features of Pabloism can be summed up as an impressionistic method which tries to assess quantitatively the so-called "objective factors" and in this way minimizes the role of the masses under revolutionary leadership. This scraping before "objective" forces leads to talk of "irreversible" and "irresistible" processes. In the case of the Soviet Union it is responsible for extreme conclusions about the "pressure" of the masses which will allegedly force the bureaucracy to "liberalize"

itself and restore Soviet democracy. The term "political revolution," when used at all by the Pabloites, is not connected with the construction of the revolutionary leadership. In the capitalist countries it leads to over-estimation of the Stalinist forces and the belief that under certain circumstances mass pressure will similarly operate to bring the Communist parties to power. Events have already considerably discredited such a prognosis, but it still means a withholding of confidence in the proletariat and a minimizing of the task of creating a new revolutionary leadership. At an earlier stage the same impressionism produced the theory of an inevitable, indeed, imminent, world war. The same method is expressed today in formulations such as the following:

"Through the fact of the historical lateness of the revolution in the capitalist countries, which is the result of the dialectical interaction between the treason of the leadership and the new economic evolution of capitalism, the colonial revolution is objectively the motive force of the world revolution combined with the growing strength of the workers' states."

2. Our analysis has nothing in common with such abstract and confused verbiage, typical of the commentator who stands aside from events and allots the leading and subordinate roles in them to whomsoever he wills. In the present epoch of imperialism the Marxist begins the study of social contradictions with the role of the working class itself; the intention being to establish leadership in the given conditions. For example, any stabilization in the metropolitan countries is, as has been shown, strictly relative, dependent upon a series of world forces which are running strongly against capitalism and complicating the underlying contradictions of imperialism. The economic upswing of the fifties was not something in itself which bore witness to the inherent health of capitalism or the restoration of its vigor on a permanent basis. Moreover this upswing has been the basis for the consolidation of working-class organization, not a weakening of the class.

3. The greatest danger confronting the revolutionary movement is liquidationism, flowing from a capitulation either to the strength of imperialism or of the bureaucratic apparatuses in the labor movement, or both. Pabloism represents, even more clearly now than in 1953, this liquidationist tendency in the international Marxist movement. In Pabloism the advanced working class is no longer the vanguard of history, the center of all Marxist theory and strategy in the epoch of imperialism, but the plaything of "world-historical factors," surveyed and assessed in abstract fashion. The draft resolutions of the Pabloites for their international conference are very explicit on this point. The present stage of the world revolution, according to them, is particularly characterized by the growing strength of the workers' states and the great power generated by the colonial revolution; the struggle in the advanced countries, because of changes in the character of modern capitalism, is relegated to a definitely subordinate position. Here all historical responsibility of the revolutionary movement is denied, all is subordinated to panoramic forces; the questions of the role of the Soviet bureaucracy and of the class forces in the colonial revolution are left unresolved. That is natural, because

the key to these problems is the role of the working class in the advanced countries and the crisis of leadership in their labor movements.

A correct revolutionary orientation towards these questions is now a vital and urgent necessity, because in Japan and Britain there have begun great struggles which raise directly before the organized working class the issue of class leadership. In each case these issues are forced by the special manifestations of imperialism's latest crisis in these particular countries; the struggles around them will inevitably intensify and will spread to the other imperialist countries, including the USA. Any retreat from the strategy of political independence of the working class and the construction of revolutionary parties will take on the significance of a world-historical blunder on the part of the Trotskyist movement.

4. The Fourth International must be supremely conscious of their own historic responsibilities, in that a revolutionary proletarian leadership can only be built through a constant fight for correct policies and in competition with other tendencies, not in an attempt to find a common denominator. Each national group begins with the international program, with the method and basic ideas as summed up in the Transitional Program of the Fourth International. They recognize that there are no separate national roads to socialism, and that the struggles in the old imperialist countries, in the USA, in the colonies and former colonies and in the Soviet sphere are interdependent. The political and industrial situation in each country is overshadowed by the world tendencies.

5. The building of a revolutionary party in any country starts from an adherence to an international program and strategy. But the tactics and manner in which we intervene in struggle must result from a concrete discussion beginning with class relations in that country itself and bringing in all the relevant considerations. Thus it would be futile to set off with a universally valid tactic derived from a generalization of world tendencies. For example, it is not possible in this way to prescribe an entry tactic in all countries where mass Social Democratic or Communist parties exist. Each case must be considered in the light of the historical factors in the given country, the stage of the class struggle, the needs of the masses and the state of the movement itself; the entry tactic may well be correct, but it has to be based on such a thorough examination of the situation.

6. The revolutionaries must link their activity with the class in its day-to-day struggles, as itself a decisive factor in the situation. Trotskyists do not therefore sit back and examine as impartial observers; they are participants who help to shape the events themselves. We must recognize, moreover, that all other tendencies in the working class are the result of victories for non-proletarian policies based on victories for imperialism and defeats for the class.

7. Our movement in each country must elaborate from its own experience and study of the struggle of the classes a program of

transitional demands which will provide a focus for all those sections which are thrown into conflict with the bureaucracies of the political parties and trade unions. A program of unity of class struggle lines must be used to demonstrate to the working class in its own experience that their fight against the class enemy cannot be victorious without throwing off the bureaucratic leaderships. While participating in all movements and struggles which raise the consciousness of the workers, the strictest organizational discipline and ideological unity of the Trotskyist movement must be maintained. The whole purpose of such participation is to construct a Marxist leadership, of and for the class, which will win acceptance and lead to the development of a mass party.

8. However small their numbers, Trotskyists strive to intervene in class struggles and participate in the major experiences of the class. This intervention is not undertaken from the point of view of being with the "main stream." It is prompted by the aim of assisting the working class to an awareness of the need for a revolutionary alternative. Whether or not this involves entry into a mass political party it always involves independent intervention in the struggle. In fact this is a prime duty in order to strengthen the work of the traditional parties.

9. The idea that Marxists enter Social Democratic or Communist parties in order to transform them into revolutionary parties must be rooted out. Marxist tactics towards these parties have nothing in common with the politics of the pressure group or ginger group. This places them in opposition to the Pabloite teaching that a "Government of workers' parties, Communist Parties, Social Democratic Parties" can represent the "first steps" of the dictatorship of the proletariat or its "ante-chamber." Where such parties control the mass of the working class as in France, Italy or Britain, Marxists have correctly posed "Take the Government" as a central slogan from time to time. But we believe that it is necessary to put it forward as a stage in the experience of the working people. The call is intended not to prop up the Reformist or Stalinist leaders but as a step towards breaking their grip on the mass movement. Such governments, with their inevitable half-measures and betrayals, can be a necessary step in the education of the working class and in leading them towards the revolutionary alternative.

10. The labor bureaucracies -- where they have state power as well as where they batten on the working class in the imperialist countries -- will not be washed out of the movement by a spontaneous development or by broad propaganda groupings of a centrist type. Anxious to preserve their power and privileges, their own narrow interests conflict with those of the masses. Even when forced to lead struggles, or when, in order to defend these privileges they are forced to uphold working-class conquests, they do so with their own methods. And these methods, seek to avoid, at all costs, the mobilization of the class power of the working masses.

11. The 1953 split in the international Trotskyist movement revealed the existence of two irreconcilable tendencies in relation to the all important question of world strategy and the construction

of revolutionary parties. Pabloism represents a left-centrist tendency moving away from Trotskyism. Whilst on some questions its line appears similar to that of the orthodox Trotskyist movement, its orientation is in practice entirely different. As a result the basic political differences have tended to increase since the period of the split. There can be no compromise with Pabloism as a political tendency. On the contrary, the education of the international Trotskyist movement, especially the young cadres now joining that movement in various countries, can only be assured as the result of the most thoroughgoing discussion on what Pabloism represents.

12. The sharpness and suddenness of the 1953 split resulted in considerable confusion in a number of countries. Even now there is evidence that some of this confusion still persists. It must be resolved as soon as possible. Any attempts however to reunify the movement by organizational means will only result in further splits. The Socialist Labour League is not against unity, but it is against a spurious unity which is not based on fundamental political agreement following a full international discussion. The reorganization of the Trotskyist movement into one single world party can only be accomplished through such discussion. We do not believe, therefore, that the proposal for a Parity Committee as envisaged in 1958 can any longer serve as the main line of our approach to this problem.

13. The reorganization of the Fourth International must proceed immediately by the preparation of a thoroughgoing discussion in which all sections affiliated to the International Committee and to the International Secretariat should submit resolutions and contributions which would be circulated throughout the international movement as widely as possible. This discussion should begin not later than May 1961 and should be organized by the setting-up of a small sub-committee comprising an equal number of people from both tendencies, whose task would be to see that the various material was widely circulated and that the rank and file in all sections were given the opportunity of considering it. At the end of one year, a pre-conference of the international movement should be held in order to ascertain the measure of agreement or otherwise that had arisen as a result of the discussion. New statutes for the international movement could then be put forward.

14. A feature of this discussion would be a thoroughgoing examination of the tactical question of entry and the experiences of various sections involved in work inside the Social Democratic parties and Stalinist organizations. Such a discussion would have immense educational value for the entire movement.

15. The Socialist Labour League submits this resolution for international discussion. We stand for the reorganization of the international Trotskyist movement at a time when there are immense opportunities which can be realized through the reestablishment of an authoritative world leadership. We ask all sections to give this their immediate attention.

A separate resolution on the Soviet Union, China and Eastern Europe will be considered by the National Committee of the Socialist Labour League at its meeting on March 11 and 12.

It will be available for discussion towards the end of March.

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