

EDUCATION FOR SOCIALISTS

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THE CHINESE REVOLUTION AND ITS DEVELOPMENT

75¢

Introductory Note

There are few questions of contemporary world politics more important and controversial than the problems connected with the development of the Third Chinese Revolution.

This compilation consists of a series of Socialist Workers Party documents and resolutions, as well as articles on the subject from 1955 to 1964, which provide background material on the major issues posed by the events in China.

They outline the Trotskyist position on the process of the permanent revolution in China, the sociological nature of the Chinese People's Republic, the character of the Mao regime and its domestic and foreign policies, and the initial stages of the Sino-Soviet dispute.

The more current part of this material is not included in this bulletin. At its 23rd National Convention in September 1969 the Socialist Workers Party approved a "Resolution on the 'Cultural Revolution'," and a report on that resolution by Joseph Hansen. The text of the resolution is available to SWP and YSA members in SWP Discussion Bulletin Vol. 27, No. 4, July 1969 (55 cents); the text of Hansen's report is available to members in Internal Information Bulletin No. 4 in 1969 (30 cents). These are available from SWP, 873 Broadway, New York, New York 10003.

The items in this publication take the reader from the Third Chinese Revolution in 1949 through the early period of the Sino-Soviet dispute and the party's initial evaluations of that dispute (1964). The documents described in the above paragraph bring the reader through the "Cultural Revolution" and present the party's position on the further evolution of the Sino-Soviet dispute.

November 1969

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THE THIRD CHINESE REVOLUTION AND ITS AFTERMATH

Resolution Adopted by 1955 SWP Convention

The Third Chinese Revolution drove out the Kuomintang regime, ended a century of imperialist freebooting in China. It carried through the tasks of the belated bourgeois democratic revolution, put an end to the country's dismemberment, uprooted the landlord and usurer domination of agriculture, destroyed the Asian relations in the family and swept away other feudalistic rubbish. The country has advanced materially and culturally; has undertaken a struggle against illiteracy, campaign against filth and vermin, etc.

The Third Chinese Revolution has abolished the capitalist state, instituted planning on the basis of government ownership of the key branches of industry, finance, credit, and introduced the monopoly of foreign trade.

By reason of its conquests, the revolution tore China out of the orbit of imperialism, dealing world capitalism an irreparable blow. It drastically altered the world relation of forces between:

- a) The imperialist powers and the colonial and semicolonial countries;
- b) The capitalist countries and the Soviet bloc;
- c) Stalinism and the Social Democracy; and finally
- d) Confronted Stalinism with changing interrelations and new contradictions within its worldwide apparatus.

For the revolutionary vanguard a number of new problems have been thereby posed. We must assay the scale, weight and tempo of the Third Chinese Revolution and the resulting class relations, as well as the limitations imposed by the Stalinist leadership, by the country's heritage of backwardness, by the continued pressure of imperialism and the Kremlin bureaucracy.

The fate of the Third Chinese Revolution, as of mankind, hinges on the extension of the revolution to the advanced capitalist countries. This in turn depends in no small measure on the ability of the workers' vanguard to defend the revolutionary conquests in China as elsewhere, to foresee the dangers to them, internally and externally, warn against them in time, and in general guide the workers toward fusing their socialist struggle with the conquests of the Soviet and Chinese masses, thereby assuring the final triumph of the world socialist order.

The Chinese Revolution and Imperialism

In the sphere of international politics the Third Chinese Revolution has determined in a new way the postwar class relations and forces.

China was the chief prize for which the U.S. had fought the war in the Pacific. With the defeat of Japan, the U.S. monopolists expected to take over China and rule the country through Chiang Kai-shek. In this spacious, undeveloped land they saw a solution to the postwar economic problems of American capitalism. Here was a matchless field for capital investments, a potential market for consumer goods, a rich reservoir of raw materials, an overflowing source of cheap labor. What the U.S. believed it had won in the war and at Yalta, the revolution took instead.

The overturn of 1947-49 blotted out the political and territorial isolation of the Soviet Union. It added almost four million square miles and a population of over 550 million to the Soviet pole of world economy. China and the USSR together represent an unbroken land mass of 12.2 million square miles, nearly one-fifth of the earth's surface, with a combined population of over 750 million. These bare statistics indicate the international impact of the third Chinese revolution.

This revolution proved its power on the world arena. It was China's revolutionary armies that hurled MacArthur's forces back from the Yalu and compelled the U.S. to abandon its plans for the conquest of all Korea. It was the material aid furnished by China, not to speak of the inspiring example her revolution furnishes, that helped the Viet Minh to score its victory over imperialism.

The emergence of China, through the revolution, from semicolonial degradation to the position of a world power -- and by this token the tearing from the imperialist orbit of a huge human and land mass, along with Manchuria, Tibet, North Korea, North Indo-China -- has modified the international relationship of forces, especially the social relations throughout the colonial pole of capitalism.

The impact of the Chinese Revolution on the colonial masses has forced the native bourgeoisies to raise the banner of "neutralism." Nehru personifies this neutralism on the world arena today, just as Gandhi personified passive resistance on Indian soil, and for the same

reason, fear of the masses. The native bourgeoisie can remain in power only insofar as it is able to neutralize the Chinese revolution, that is, keep the permanent revolution confined within China's borders.

The Chinese Revolution and the Imminence of War

The Third Chinese Revolution had other consequences. The wartime alliance between the "democratic" imperialists and the Kremlin bureaucracy broke up when the imperialists decided they no longer needed the Kremlin's aid in containing the European revolution. The imperialists were prepared to take the offensive against the European working class, when the Asian masses imposed on them a struggle on another front. In this struggle, the cold war became punctuated by bloody localized wars -- Indo-China, Korea, Malaya, etc.

The Asian masses were mainly responsible for the postponement of the projected imperialist assault upon the USSR; the U.S. has been forced instead to prepare for a war of far greater scope.

With the new world relation of forces determined in the main by the Third Chinese Revolution the imperialists could no longer be sure of victory in World War III. U.S. strategy, military and diplomatic, has consequently pursued the attainment of overwhelming global superiority.

The Chinese Revolution and the Social Democracy

The Stalinists in Peking, as in Moscow, have used and will continue to use the Third Chinese Revolution in order to improve their relations with the Social Democrats in Britain, as elsewhere. There is nothing the classic reformists hate and fear more than the revolution. They demonstrated this in the course of the Chinese upheaval. They supported the imperialist intervention in Korea. Therein was expressed their dread of the spread of the Chinese Revolution. They could make peace with the Chinese revolution and pretend friendship for it only after Peking avowed its narrow nationalist objectives and when it served the interests of their respective bourgeoisies. A junket to China, an appeal for coexistence, is a cheap price for a left cover, especially when Peking foots the bills.

The Chinese Revolution and the Kremlin Bureaucracy

The Chinese Revolution has confronted the Kremlin bureaucracy with new interrelations where previously it has ruled unchallenged and uncontrolled within the monstrous international apparatus

of Stalinism. The Kremlin bureaucracy was the sole "world leader," lone repository of all knowledge, wisdom, authority, etc., etc. Moscow's political monopoly has been irretrievably lost. Today Peking has at least equal voice and weight.

The world "monolith" of Stalinism has already been carved up into respective spheres of influence by Moscow and Peking, creating unforeseen problems for both partners. Mao & Co. is as nationalist as Khrushchev & Co., but each operates on a different national soil. Imbedded therein are seeds of dissension. The very fact that Peking must rely so heavily on Moscow for economic and military equipment makes Mao & Co. more dependent on the one hand and more resentful on the other.

In line with Stalin's program of socialism in one country, the Communist parties the world over subordinated their interests to the diplomatic requirements of the Kremlin. The Mao bureaucracy, too, aims to build "socialism" in its country. It can no longer subordinate its interests to the interests of the Kremlin. Its material base is no longer derived from Moscow but from its own state power.

The Chinese Revolution has imposed on the Kremlin an alliance with the most populous agricultural nation on the globe which has weighty needs -- capital goods, heavy equipment for industry, for transportation, mining and agriculture plus equipment to modernize her armed forces. All the things the Kremlin urgently needs itself. After decades of effort to compress Soviet productive forces into the narrow national limits, the Kremlin bureaucracy is suddenly faced with the need to plan in accordance with its new interstate obligations, in the first instance to China.

These are new contradictions shearing the web of the old contradictions of Stalinism and aggravating its crisis.

The Permanent Revolution on Chinese Soil

The Trotskyist line in China flows from the following basic propositions:

The Chinese bourgeoisie, represented by the Kuomintang, would not and could not carry through the tasks of belated democratic revolution, first and foremost solve the land problem and unify the country.

This could be accomplished only by class-struggle methods, only in head-on struggle against imperialism and against the native bourgeoisie, a temporary, unreliable ally at best.

Regardless of the episodic leadership at the time, once the revolution

entered its democratic sequences, it could not be restricted within capitalist limits, but would transgress and transcend them.

Once the revolution unfolded on Chinese soil, it could not remain within national boundaries but would leap over into other lands.

Finally, the triumph of the Chinese Revolution depends on the victory of the workers in the advanced countries.

These fundamental propositions of Trotskyism were confirmed in the negative during the second Chinese revolution, and during the mass upsurges up to 1947; they were confirmed in the affirmative by the third Chinese revolution of 1947-49 and its aftermath. The 1925-27 revolution was wrecked by the Menshevik theory of "revolution by stages" which proclaimed that China was not ready for proletarian dictatorship, that the native bourgeoisie had a progressive mission and a leading rôle to fulfill in the democratic revolution. The Stalinist class-collaborationist line of the "bloc of the four classes" completely subordinated the working class to the bourgeoisie and rejected and resisted agrarian reform in order to enlist the landlord support.

In the struggle of the Russian Left Opposition against Stalinist degeneration the issue of China was next in importance only to that of the USSR. The split of the world Communist movement came as the consequence of it, a split that led to the founding of the Fourth International.

The defeat of the second Chinese revolution imposed the bloody dictatorship of Chiang Kai-shek for the next twenty years. In the course of these decades, the Chinese bourgeoisie exposed itself as an agency of foreign imperialism; the enemy of the Chinese masses incapable of granting any concessions or reforms, or ruling by democratic means; so inept and corrupt that they lost all support in the population, remaining in power only thanks to U.S. imperialism on the one hand, and Stalin, Mao & Co. on the other. Washington supplied funds and arms for Chiang's bloody dictatorship, the Stalinists subjugated the masses to him by their policy.

Mao & Co. -- A Fetter on the Chinese Revolution

By the end of 1936 the Japanese armies conquered the coastal areas of China and extended their tentacles into the mainland; the masses were in open revolt against Chiang. Thousands of strikes and demonstrations of students and workers took place in the cities; the peasants rose in the countryside. The struggle against the foreign invader thus tended

to merge with a war against the native oppressor. Chiang took to the hills, with him a section of the Chinese bourgeoisie; the rest, the landlords in particular, cuddled up to the Japanese. Everything that was vigorous and resolute in China surged from the cities and towns into the countryside to fight this national revolutionary war.

Meanwhile, Chiang was personally directing the war not against the Japanese but against the Stalinist-dominated territories. He was arrested by the Sian garrison. It was Mao, Chou & Co. who liberated him. Precisely at the height of this movement of the masses the Stalinists also abolished their "Soviets," dissolved their "Red Army," abandoned land reform, in brief, subordinated everything, once again, to class-collaboration, in the name of the anti-Japanese struggle. They pursued this line, a component part of the Yalta agreements, throughout the war.

Following the Japanese surrender, the U.S., with Stalin's agreement, sought to impose the old Kuomintang order. A new upsurge came of the Chinese masses, part of the postwar world revolutionary wave. Once more the Chinese Stalinists, as the Stalinists in Western Europe, resisted the pressure of the workers, peasants, students who rallied under their banner for the showdown fight against the existing order. But unlike the European bourgeoisie, who to save their rule welcomed the Stalinists into their cabinets, Chiang repulsed their advances. Instead he opened a war of annihilation against Mao & Co.

But as late as March 1947 (the occupation of Yen-an by Chiang's troops), the CCP still did not raise the slogan for the overthrow of Chiang's regime; did not offer the program of agrarian reform. Only on October 10, 1947 was a manifesto issued in the name of the "People's Liberation Army" openly advocating the overthrow of Chiang, the building of "New China," and announcing agrarian reform through the expropriation of the land of landlords and rich peasants, while exempting the land which belonged to "industrial and commercial enterprises."

Even when in self-defense they were compelled to break openly with the Chinese bourgeoisie and landlords, the Stalinists tried to do so within the framework of their bankrupt line of "the bloc of four classes." The exigencies of the civil war imposed upon the CCP the carrying out of democratic tasks, the agrarian reform, the destruction of feudal relations, etc.

Throughout the revolution, Mao & Co. continued to impose arbitrary restrictions and limits upon its course. The agrarian reform was carried out "in stages" and was completed only when the assault of American imperialism stimulated the opposition of the landlords during and after Korea. By imposing arbitrary restraints on the revolution Mao & Co. thereby safeguarded their bureaucratic control over it.

They came into collision with the masses at every ascending sequence of the revolution, at every critical stage. Their objective was to restrict the struggle as much as possible to the military plane. It was above all in this way that they could prevent the Chinese workers from emerging on the arena as an independent force.

The Chinese workers, in big cities and small alike, were demoralized and rendered apathetic by the bureaucratic-military conduct of the civil war, by the deliberate discouragement of workers' struggles, by orders to await liberation through the arrival of the "Liberation Army," by the courting of the "industrial and commercial" capitalists, etc.

The Stalinist Deformation of the Third Chinese Revolution

The Third Chinese Revolution was deformed by the Stalinist leadership and control. The agrarian reform was made to appear as a gift from the bureaucracy to the landless and poor peasants; so was the "liberation" of the workers; so was the overthrow of the Kuomintang regime; so was the subsequent unfoldment of the revolution -- beyond the democratic sequences, beyond capitalist relations -- and the proletarian conquests it brought.

The Stalinist deformation of the revolution rendered its development more costly, convulsive and protracted. The armies and regime of Chiang could have been knocked down like rotten pieces of wood had the CCP at any time summoned the masses in the cities to rise. The Chinese Stalinists were able to ride into power because the Chinese working class had been demoralized by the continuous defeats it suffered during and after the second Chinese revolution, and by the deliberate policy of the CCP, which subordinated the cities, above all, the proletariat, to the military struggle in the countryside and thereby blocked the emergence of the workers as an independent political force. The CCP thus appeared in the eyes of the masses as the only organization with political cadres and knowledge, backed, moreover, by military force.

The CCP leaders are declassed petty-bourgeois, their cadres were trained in the course of the long history of CCP's struggles against the permanent revolution, coupled with the systematic physical annihilation of Trotskyists. Schooled in Stalinism, they started taking shape as a bureaucracy in the course of this struggle.

After the defeat of the second Chinese revolution, they withdrew from the cities and established an armed peasant base. For a span of over 20 years, they used this armed power to rule over the backward and scattered peasant masses. In this manner the uncontrolled, cynical, self-willed bureaucracy consolidated. They applied to the revolution the methods of deceit and ultimatism, in order, at every stage, to safeguard their interests, their power, their privileges. Each success rendered them more contemptuous and fearful of the masses, more convinced they could cheat the class struggle with impunity.

Their great asset was the link in the popular mind with the 1917 Russian Revolution. The masses felt they were repeating on China's soil what the Russian workers and peasants had done. The prestige of the Soviet Union, coupled with Soviet industrial successes and Soviet victories in World War II, proved decisive in aiding Mao & Co. to maintain their political monopoly over the revolution. To safeguard this monopoly they physically annihilated every oppositional element, first and foremost the Chinese Trotskyists. The blowing up of Chen Tu-hsiu's grave epitomized the Maoist fear of the day of reckoning for their crimes of 1925-27, repeated from 1936-47, which sustained Chiang's rule so long.

The Permanent Revolution Prevails

What prevailed in China was not Mao's program; not the line of coalition with Chiang, but that of struggle against him; not the solution of democratic tasks hand in hand with Chiang, but by class-struggle methods, even though deformed, against Chiang, against the landlords, against the "bureaucratic" capitalists -- and against imperialism.

Despite Mao's schema that "New China" would follow a course different from that of the 1917 Russian Revolution, in China, as in the USSR, the revolution could not be kept within the capitalist framework, especially not after U.S. military assault and blockade. Mao, who began by nationalizing "only bureaucratic capital" had to turn against his capitalist allies, nationalize the key branches of economy, impose the monopoly of foreign trade, institute planning, and mobilize the workers to save the revolution-

ary conquests.

Despite Mao's attempts to confine the revolution within China's borders and effect an agreement with the imperialists, the revolution could not be contained, the imperialists could not be neutralized.

And finally, the revolution had to be defended against the counterrevolutionary intervention on Korean soil of a coalition of imperialist powers headed by Washington.

The collision of Stalinism with each of the sequences of the permanent revolution on Chinese soil has deformed the revolution and obscured its proletarian nature.

The Class Character of China

When the CCP established itself in power in the fall of 1949, it continued to cling to its program of a "bloc of four classes" and its theory of a "revolution in stages," i.e., the passage of China through an allegedly "new" stage of capitalist development. The ties connecting China with capitalism were cut when the American military forces drove toward the Yalu and the imperialists clamped an economic blockade on China. The CCP was then left no choice except to seize the imperialist assets in the country and to open, at the same time, a campaign against the native capitalists (the "Three-Anti and Five-Anti" movements).

The course of the civil war had, at a preceding stage, forced the Mao bureaucracy to abandon its efforts at a coalition with the Kuomintang and to assume power instead. The objective dynamics, the inner logic of the struggle against imperialist intervention forced the bureaucracy to break with capitalism, nationalize the decisive means of production, impose the monopoly of foreign trade, institute planning, and in this way clear the road for the introduction of production relations and institutions that constitute the foundation of a workers state, which China is today, even though a Stalinist caricature thereof. China is a deformed workers state because of the Stalinist deformation of the Third Chinese Revolution.

The contradiction between the conquests of the revolution and the bureaucratic rulers is the central internal contradiction of Chinese society, determining its movement. At the same time, it is the point of departure for the Trotskyists to base their policy for China.

Revolutionary China is today characterized by the following contradictory relations:

(1) China's productive forces are

backward; in industry the light goods sector predominates; the economy remains overwhelmingly agricultural and raw-material producing; in consumer goods, trade and other fields capitalist relations dominate "as per plan" -- in brief, China's productive forces are far from adequate to give the statized property a socialist character.

(2) The tendency toward capitalist accumulation on the part of native capitalists plus the tendency toward primitive accumulation created by universal want seeps through innumerable pores of the first Five-Year Plan.

(3) Norms of distribution preserve a bourgeois character and are at the bottom of a new differentiation of Chinese society.

(4) The economic growth, while slowly bettering the situation of some sections of the toilers, promotes a swift formation of privileged layers in city and village.

(5) In agriculture the ever increasing demand the regime is compelled to make upon the peasants while it is unable to supply them with manufactured goods is bound to bring it into a head-on collision with the peasantry.

(6) Exploiting the social antagonisms, along with their prestige as leaders of the revolution, the Chinese Stalinist bureaucracy has entrenched itself as an uncontrolled caste alien to socialism.

(7) The revolution, deformed by the ruling bureaucracy, manifests its proletarian character in the new property relations and planning; the superiority of these new productive relations and institutions is bound to assure a stormy growth of industry and of the Chinese proletariat, numerically and qualitatively, increasing its specific social weight and bringing it into conflict with Stalinist methods of rule, management and administration; in these new conditions, the young Chinese proletariat will grow not only in skills and culture but above all in socialist consciousness.

(8) The Mao regime which appears popular today must come into an ever growing conflict with the workers who are first awakening to their central role in Chinese society, and who do not suffer from the feeling of isolation and the succession of world defeats which the Russian bureaucracy was able to exploit so successfully.

(9) Today the Third Chinese Revolution is at an historic turning point, with the Mao leadership seeking to impose on revolutionary China the nationalist course of Stalinism in the Soviet Union.

(10) A further development of the accumulating contradictions can just as well lead to socialism as back to capitalism.

(11) On the road to capitalism the counterrevolution would have to break the resistance of the awakening and growing Chinese proletariat.

(12) On the road to socialism the workers would have to abolish the bureaucracy along with the Mao leadership that now heads it.

China's Future Course

In terms of political organization the Mao bureaucracy succeeded in the very course of the Third Chinese Revolution in imposing a totalitarian state power. They are now seeking to intrench this bureaucratic superstructure on the proletarian foundation, on the conquests of the revolution. This insolvable contradiction, which characterizes the USSR, and which renders the regime that of permanent crisis, is now being reproduced on Chinese soil, posing before the Chinese workers the iron necessity of political revolution against the bureaucratic caste.

So long as the Chinese Revolution faced the tasks of the belated democratic revolution the Peking leadership was able to display unity and cohesion. But the revolution has a logic of its own. The 1955 split in the leadership came precisely at the moment when the regime had to tackle the unpostponable task of industrializing the country.

It had to decide how this was to be accomplished in so backward a country. The Chinese Revolution found no extension into the advanced countries.

How then is this industrialization to be accomplished? China cannot tap the capital resources of world economy -- these remain in the hostile hands of world imperialism, mainly the U.S. The Kremlin can supply, at best, inadequate aid. The remnants of Chinese capitalism can contribute little, if anything, to China's industrialization, despite the new constitution adopted September 1954, which envisages "four economic" categories: state-owned property; cooperative property; ownership by "individual working people [read: well-to-do peasants and bureaucrats]"; and capitalist ownership. (Articles 5, 11, and 12.)

After six years in power the Mao leadership has staked everything on building a self-sufficient industry, with China's own resources. Unable to find a solution for China's economic needs along the capitalist road, the Mao regime has taken the Soviet economic road.

But there is another reason for this course rooted in the social nature of Stalinism as a declassed petty-bourgeois formation. "The control of the surplus product opened the bureaucracy's road to power" (Trotsky). To secure its income, power and privileges, the bureaucracy must assure itself this monopolistic position as the disposer of the nation's surplus product. "He who disposes of the surplus product has the power of the state at his disposal" (Trotsky).

Lacking a base of its own in the productive process, the Stalinist bureaucracy tends to make alliances with the petty-bourgeoisie. But here again the class struggle asserts itself. The bureaucracy quickly comes into collision with the peasantry. In the matter of the national surplus product the bureaucracy and the petty-bourgeoisie, regardless of the national soil of the revolution, quickly change from allies into foes. Such a collision is shaping up today in China. It is a collision with a 400-million mass of individual cultivators of midget plots.

Under different conditions and peculiarities, Peking's 1955 economic policy reproduces in its basic essentials the economic policy Stalin originally promulgated for Russia, and for the same basic reasons.

The March 1955 Conference adopted a resolution which sets the following objective:

"In the course of three Five-Year plans we can build a socialist society. However, in order to build a state with a high level of socialist industry, it will require several decades of stubborn and intense work. We can say that it will take fifty years, that is, the second half of the 20th century. Such is the great historic task -- the great and glorious task -- which we must solve." (Leading editorial in April 5 Peking People's Daily as reported by The Moscow Pravda on April 6, 1955.)

For the Stalinist line to triumph in the Soviet Union, a counterrevolution was required. This counterrevolution had to destroy physically the entire generation that led the Russian Revolution to victory under Lenin and Trotsky. Before he could impose his bureaucratic regime, Stalin had to destroy the Leninist party and International.

As against this, the same basic cadre under Mao who rode the revolutionary wave to power are now following in Stalin's footsteps in China. For this reason, the implication and consequences, at home and internationally, of Peking's shift in line are far more difficult to

understand, especially for the Chinese masses and the rank and file of the Chinese Communist Party.

In the Soviet Union, the issues were debated over many years, and the struggle of the Russian Left Opposition, led by Leon Trotsky, illuminated the nature and meaning of Soviet developments, despite all of Stalin's falsifications, repressions, and frame-ups.

The differences over policy in China have been confined to narrow top circles. The disputes are shrouded in secrecy, camouflage and misinformation.

The March 1955 Conference ordered the immediate setting up of nationwide purge machinery -- via the creation of special "control commissions" -- on central, regional, district and local levels. Thus the purge of two of the top leaders (Kao Kang and Jao Shu-shih) signaled the introduction of the purge system.

The similarity between Peking's internal regime and that set up by Moscow is further underscored by the recent introduction of ranks and insignia in the Chinese armed forces. This rise of an officer caste epitomizes the process of social stratification that is taking place under the Mao leadership. Unable to satisfy the needs of Chinese workers and peasants, from whom fifty years of toil and sacrifice are now demanded, exhausting its mass base, the regime deliberately seeks to create for itself special points of support, above all in the armed forces. This tendency will become more and more pronounced.

The program of industrialization and the crisis in agriculture compel the Mao bureaucracy to seek the active support of the Chinese proletariat. But the interests of the bureaucracy collide with the interests of the workers. Moreover, while carrying out the plan, the bureaucracy compels a section of the workers to toil in capitalist enterprises, under working conditions that assure profit to the private owners.

The mobilization of the Chinese working class goes hand and hand with ideological terror against opposition from the left, above all, against the Trotskyists. In a programmatic speech before the National Assembly, September 1954, Vice-Chairman of the Central People's Government Council, Liu Shao-chi said:

"In order to undermine our cause in building socialism, our cunning enemies hired certain people who -- like Trotskyists and Chen Tu-hsiu-ites -- pretend to be 'Left' but attack our specific steps and measures in carrying out the socialist transformation of our

country. They say that we have 'not made a thorough job of it,' that we are 'too compromising' and that we have 'departed from Marxism.' With such nonsense they try to confuse the people. They suggest that we sever our alliance with the national bourgeoisie and immediately deprive them of all they got. They also complain that our agricultural policy is going 'too slow.' They want us to break our alliance with the peasants. Aren't such ideas sheer nonsense? If we did what they want, it would please only the imperialists and traitor Chiang Kai-shek." (People's China, No. 19, 1954, page 17.)

This latest attack against the Trotskyists represents the bureaucracy's political preparation for manipulating the struggle of the workers under the new conditions. Mao & Co. never harmonize their program and policies with the tempo of the class struggle, with the needs and aspirations of the masses. On the contrary, the bureaucracy is in constant collision with the masses. Important for the revolutionary left is this, that the bureaucracy itself reveals the profound roots the Trotskyist program has in the working class. And it is this permanent conflict of the regime and the workers that will in the end bring about its downfall.

Peking's New Policy

The Maoist policy at home finds its extension in the foreign policy.

The Stalinist chieftains in China are animated by a twofold fear: the fear of imperialist assault and the fear of the permanent revolution.

Mao & Co. are now continuing an already well-established line of status quo, "peaceful coexistence," etc., for the next "fifty years."

This nationalist policy is bound to have the most reactionary consequences in foreign policy. For it means the policy of "neutralizing" the world bourgeoisie, for the sake of China's industrialization. It means a deliberate course to convert China from the main bastion of the colonial revolution into a prop for the preservation of imperialist rule in the remaining colonial possessions in Asia and elsewhere and a guarantee to the native bourgeoisie that they can bank on native Stalinists, via Peking and Moscow, to bolster their regime.

The political gist of Peking's economic policy, formally adopted at the March 1955 National Conference, is summed up in the proclamation of the "theory" of neutralizing the world bourgeoisie.

At Bandung in April 1955 Chou served notice that the Chinese Stalinists

were prepared to derail the colonial revolution for the sake of "socialism in one country" (China) just as Stalin derailed in the post-Lenin era the proletarian revolutions in Western Europe in the name of "socialism in one country" (Russia).

Conclusion

The impact of the Third Chinese Revolution, the social transformations it brought about, the blows it delivered to world capitalism, have been second only to those of the 1917 Revolution in Russia. The "Russian question" has been the main axis in world politics for nearly four decades; it now has found its extension and deepening in the "Chinese question."

World imperialism which could never come to any lasting agreements with the Soviet Union is even less capable today of coming to any lasting agreements with the Soviet Union and China who have been thrown together into an alliance which neither Peking nor Moscow dares upset.

If the U.S. imperialists have not waged all-out war against them up to now, it is for one reason, and one reason

only -- the test of strength on the Korean battlefields convinced them that they could not win such a war at this time. This is the chief reason for today's stalemate, which can only be temporary. Either U.S. imperialism will plunge into all-out war or the Chinese Revolution will find its extension into other countries, above all, the advanced capitalist countries and end capitalism forever.

One thing is certain, there is no solution along the course of the Peking and Kremlin bureaucracies. Their narrow nationalist course, their coexistence line, brings them into conflict with the needs of the world socialist revolution, but it will not save them from imperialist assault. The interests of the working class in the capitalist countries, just as the interests of the workers of China and the Soviet Union, are expressed in the program of the permanent revolution, the program upon which the Fourth International is founded.

[Reprinted from SWP Discussion Bulletin, A-31, October 1955.]

DRAFT RESOLUTION ON CHINESE COMMUNES

Resolution Adopted by SWP Secretariat in 1959

We consider the Chinese Revolution the most important development since the Russian Revolution of October 1917. We are for the unconditional defense of the People's Republic of China and have maintained that position at all times, including the decisive period of the Korean War. In all conflicts between China and world imperialist reaction we take the side of China without demanding that the Chinese people first meet democratic or socialist norms.

We defend the Chinese revolution from the standpoint of the interests of the world socialist revolution. This requires us to analyze the social and economic forces and to determine their varying and often contradictory movement. The same applies to the stages of the developing Chinese revolution. As in the Russian Revolution we support those forces, phases and aspects that serve the cause of world socialism.

For example, we were partisans of national unification, the peasant uprising, the overturn of Chiang Kai-shek's dictatorship and its imperialist backers, the abolition of warlordism and landlordism, the monopoly of foreign trade, nationalization of industry, introduction of planned economy, collectivization of agriculture, and renovation of social relations, including the freeing of women and children from patriarchy.

We have never been partisans of the accompanying bureaucratic deformations. As our resolution "The Third Chinese Revolution and Its Aftermath," adopted in 1955, states: "The contradiction between the conquests of the revolution and the bureaucratic rulers is the central internal contradiction of Chinese society, determining its movement. At the same time, it is the point of departure for the Trotskyists to base their policy for China."

This dialectical approach governs our attitude to the "rural people's communes" sponsored by the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party in August 1958, with modifications approved by the Central Committee at its Sixth Plenary Session, December 10, 1958.

As defined by the Central Committee, the "rural people's communes" constitute "a new social organization...which combines industry, agriculture, trade, education and military affairs and in which government administration and commune management are integrated." According to the same source, "Within a few months starting in the summer of 1958, all of

the more than 740,000 agricultural producers' cooperatives in the country, in response to the enthusiastic demand of the mass of the peasants, reorganized themselves into over 26,000 people's communes. Over 120 million households, or more than 99 percent of all China's peasant households of various nationalities, have joined the people's communes." Further: "What we describe as getting organized along military lines means getting organized on the pattern of a factory....The forces of large-scale agricultural production, like the forces of large-scale industrial production, constitute an industrial army. The modern industrial army was organized by the bourgeoisie, each factory being like a military camp. The discipline for the worker standing before the machine is as rigid as that in the army.... We are now applying this system to the rural areas, thus establishing a socialist industrial army for agriculture based on democratic centralism, which is free from exploitation by the landlords and rich peasants and is elevated above the level of small-scale production." The institution of "people's communes" thus involves primarily the mobilization of China's vast rural labor force, its expansion, organization for work on most efficient lines possible in the given conditions, and its application to China's most pressing tasks. These include (a) the rehabilitation and extension of agriculture and public works; (b) the achievement of higher rural self-sufficiency in production of simple tools and food; (c) the supply of greater agricultural surpluses for state use, principally in industrializing China.

Sources and Limits

The objective sources of this forced march as well as the limits of what it can accomplish are found in four contradictory relationships: (1) between imperialism and the Soviet bloc; (2) between China and the other members of the Soviet bloc; (3) between Chinese industry and agriculture; (4) between the Chinese proletariat and peasantry. These relationships are influenced by the central contradiction between the conquests of the Chinese revolution and the bureaucratic rulers.

(1) Through its control of the world market, imperialism has barred the entire Soviet bloc from commodities needed to facilitate industrialization. This has forced the peoples in these countries to make the transition under untold privations, hardships and difficulties, including bureaucratic parasitism. The Chinese Revolution decisively strength-

ened the Soviet bloc, but China's enormous needs also brought additional strains. The imperialists sought to increase these by walling off China as tightly as possible. Primary responsibility for the extraordinary efforts forced upon the Chinese people, including the current mobilization of agricultural labor along military lines, thus rests with world imperialism. The successes of the Soviet bloc, due primarily to planned economy, are all the more spectacular in face of the imperialist blockade. What the Chinese people, virtually barehanded, have been able to accomplish, thanks to the overturn in social relations, offers the most instructive contrast to the relative stagnation in countries like India where a capitalist class, subservient to imperialism, still rules.

(2) The united front of the Soviet bloc countries has greatly bolstered their defense against imperialist aggression. On the one hand, the overturns in Eastern Europe and especially in China enabled the Soviet Union to more than hold its own in the cold war. On the other hand, the People's Republic of China, under the shield of Soviet military might, has been far freer than was the Soviet Union in the early days to turn to domestic problems, and has had the advantage of limited Soviet economic and technical assistance, enabling it to register phenomenal rates of growth in the most varied fields. The benefits of this cooperation suggest its extension through the integration of economies and a common plan for the entire area from the Baltic to the Pacific. The main obstacle to this step, which would constitute the greatest leap forward in this sphere since the introduction of planned economy in the Soviet Union, is the bureaucratic caste. The parasitic interests of this caste stand in opposition to the economic need for a unified joint plan that would give China the maximum help possible.

(3) The most difficult problem facing China is to bridge the gap between industry and agriculture while modernizing an industrially backward country. Both industrial and agricultural production must be raised sufficiently to maintain a normal exchange of goods between city and countryside while at the same time guaranteeing the surplus needed for industrialization. The millions in the armed forces must likewise be fed, clothed and housed and the bureaucratic apparatus consumes more than its share of the national income. The enormous disproportion between agriculture and industry lends special acuteness to the problem. The destruction of landlordism enabled the Chinese peasantry to rapidly increase production, relieving the immediate threat of famine which has periodically plagued China. The introduction of collective farms and mutual assistance brigades assured further

increases in agricultural production, signifying for the Chinese people an end to hunger and the beginning of encouraging surpluses.

This was a most important development. The appearance of these surpluses made possible a rapid differentiation in the peasantry. The surpluses also opened the possibility of narrowing the labor force directly engaged in crop raising and shifting the surplus of peasants thus formed. Industry was too undeveloped to absorb them. A possible substitute was big public works projects. To do this required amalgamating the collectives into "rural people's communes," wiping out the small plots and family holdings of livestock and poultry. This might be received with reluctance among those peasants who had settled down; but simple cooperation applied on a scale involving tens and hundreds of thousands of laborers assures success in projects beyond the scope of collectives, particularly in flood control irrigation, and water transport; and these have an immediate effect, apparent to all, in the productivity of agriculture. The structure of the "rural people's communes" also enables the government to bring nationwide planning to bear in agriculture through administrative measures; and gives it direct control of the surplus. Thus the decision to form "rural people's communes" is a reflection of the compelling necessity to extract the most from the country's main resource: labor power applied to the soil.

At the same time, the unplanned and unforeseen institution of "rural people's communes" indicates a certain breakdown of overall planning insofar as it affects the balancing of relations between industry and agriculture. This is evident in the assignment of industrial tasks to the rural organizations. What industry cannot supply agriculture, agriculture must supply for itself. The breakdown of balanced planning extends even to the division of labor within the communes. A striking instance is provided in the December 10 resolution where the Central Committee specifies the tasks of the communal kitchens. These must not only prepare "varied and appetizing" food, they must help supply it. "The communal eating establishments should have dining rooms, and they should efficiently run their own vegetable gardens, bean-curd mills, bean-noodle mills, and condiment shops; they should raise pigs, sheep, chickens, ducks and fish."

A similar symptom is apparent in industry. In putting "the emphasis on the repair of existing railroads" instead of the projected construction of new lines, Red Flag, the theoretical magazine of the Chinese Communist Party, called on the railroad officials to help themselves by producing iron and steel on their own and

making their own rails, machine tools, and cement instead of relying wholly on other industries for these.

A section of the top leadership of the Chinese Communist Party appears to take a realistic view of the problem which it is hoped the "rural people's communes" will help solve, for along with the characteristic exaggerations, such statements as the following are included in the December 10 resolution: "Three years of hard battle plus several years of energetic work may bring about a great change in the economic face of the country. But even then there will still be a considerable distance to go to reach the goals of a high degree of industrialization of the entire country and the mechanization and electrification of our country's agriculture; and there will be an even longer distance to go to reach the goals of an enormous abundance of social products, of a great lightening of labour and of a sharp reduction of working hours."

In this "hard battle" the peasant "communes" can play an effective role by extending cooperation, division of labor and planning in the countryside. They can facilitate the development of handicrafts and small manufacture thereby helping to relieve the demand for goods which industry is still too undeveloped to provide. They can help bring a more rational organization of essential domestic labor through communal kitchens and nurseries. They can assist in organization of military defense and education. But they can at best only ameliorate, not end, the lack of balance in exchange relations between industry and agriculture. The solution to this problem, as Trotsky long ago stressed in the case of the Soviet Union, cannot be isolated from the fate of the socialist revolution in the more advanced industrial countries now ruled by capitalism. Even after 40 years, the Soviet Union has not yet solved this problem. For China the same problem is even more complex and acute.

(4) The final major contradiction is especially important in determining the limits of the forced march in agriculture. This is the relationship between the Chinese proletariat and peasantry. The decisiveness of this alliance was heavily stressed, and correctly so, in our 1955 resolution.

After the defeat of the 1925-27 revolution, which centered in the cities under the impulse of the proletariat, the next great upsurge occurred in the countryside in the form of peasant uprisings. When the peasant armies marched on the cities, they were greeted by the working class, which supported them in overthrowing the Chiang dictatorship. The ascendancy of the proletariat in the reconstituted alliance began when the petty-bourgeois Mao regime, under

the needs imposed by the Korean War, found itself compelled to take such far-reaching measures as to qualitatively alter the state structure. But the ascendancy of the proletariat has not yet been consolidated politically; the deformed workers state has not yet enjoyed the benefits of either a workers regime or proletarian democracy.

Strains in the alliance appeared early. When the workers began formulating their own demands and to move under their own power upon the destruction of Chiang's rule, they were ordered back. At a later stage, when peasants flocked from the countryside to the cities seeking work, they were ordered to return. In the absence of democratic means of expression, it is difficult to determine the depth and seriousness of such rifts. Nevertheless, the fate of the Chinese revolution hinges on preventing them from deepening and disrupting the alliance.

In a country where the two classes are of such disproportionate size and social weight, the satisfaction of peasant needs becomes all the more decisive to the maintenance of favorable relations. As in the Russian Revolution, this was secured in the opening stage of the Chinese Revolution by fulfilling the peasant demand for redivision of the land. The peasantry responded by rapidly increasing production, thus ending the threat of famine.

But production on the basis of individual ownership was insufficient to meet the needs of a relatively isolated planned economy whose primary task was industrialization at an extremely high rate in an undeveloped country devastated by years of rapacious plundering, imperialist invasion and civil war.

The problem was met by organization of collective farms at a forced-march pace.

For a number of reasons, some of which have already been indicated, this enormous step in the direction of establishing socialist forms in the countryside, likewise proved inadequate, and the still more sweeping measure of establishing "rural people's communes" was undertaken. Even though this "big leap" appears to have the approval of the peasantry, who are quite capable, as Chinese history eloquently demonstrates, of combining in elementary tasks transcending their individualistic outlook, it is by no means guaranteed that a retreat may not be required at the next stage.

The actual willingness or lack of willingness of the peasantry to proceed down the road of collectivization constitutes one of the most important limits to what the "rural people's communes" can achieve. To toy with the idea that the great mass of peasants have sufficient

socialist consciousness to proceed smoothly from collective ownership to "ownership of the whole people," meaning the direct appropriation of the entire labor product by the state in return for the state's providing the means of subsistence to the peasantry, can break the bond between the workers and peasants upon which the whole existence of the workers state depends. Our support of the "rural people's communes" must, therefore, be governed by the readiness of the peasants to accept them.

The Central Committee's December 10 resolution, while repeating the theoretical nonsense about a "transition from socialism to communism," itself warns against a series of mistakes stemming from this very theory. "This transition will be realized, by stages and groups, on a national scale only after a considerable time." Moreover, "It must be stressed that during the course of a necessary historical period commodity production by the people's communes and the exchange of commodities between the state and communes and among the communes themselves must be greatly developed. Such production and exchange of commodities are different from those under capitalism, because they are conducted on the basis of socialist public ownership and not in an anarchic way on the basis of capitalist private ownership. Continued development of commodity production and continued adherence to the principle of 'to each according to his work' are two important questions of principle in expanding the socialist economy." Observance of such reservations about the "rural people's communes" would render meaningful the warning contained in the very next passage: "Some people, attempting to 'enter communism' prematurely, have tried to abolish the production and exchange of commodities too early, and to negate at too early a stage the positive roles of commodities, value, money and prices. This line of thinking is harmful to the development of socialist construction and is therefore incorrect."

Political Course of the Regime

In a workers state which replaces the system of individual capitalist enterprise with nationalization and planning, correct leadership and correct policies are decisive in the long run. The claim of the CCP that socialism has already been achieved in China and that the "rural people's communes" represent a transitional form to communism is not only a theoretical error of the most profound character but the source of gross blunders and mistakes in organizational and administrative practices. Its source is the theory of "socialism in one country" taken from Stalin by the leaders of the CCP. It has already produced a series of costly errors. As our 1955 resolution states: "The

collision of Stalinism with each of the sequences of the permanent revolution on Chinese soil has deformed the revolution and obscured its proletarian nature."

The CCP leadership took power in the name of its program of a "bloc of four classes" and its Menshevik theory of "revolution in stages." It held the view that China had to pass through an allegedly "new" stage of capitalist development. However, when the imperialist forces marched toward the Yalu River and placed an economic blockade on China, the leaders were compelled to abandon the program they had proclaimed. In view of the backwardness of China's industrial development, the scarcity of capital and the low level of productivity, the CCP was obliged to introduce measures of the democratic revolution plus socialist forms.

This was not done in one step, however. The CCP leadership started by attempting to conciliate the bourgeoisie, the richer peasants, and even landlords. Whereas the New Economic Policy in the Soviet Union represented a necessary retreat after a period of thoroughgoing revolutionary struggle and "military communism" imposed by the Civil War, the Chinese Communist Party clung to its petty-bourgeois nostrums, abandoning them only under the enormous pressure of the developing revolution.

By 1955 the policy of permitting the remaining segment of Chinese capitalists to retain their exploitive position had to be given up. But the campaign against the "five evils" did not suffice to bring the growing sector of state industry into harmony with the sector of capitalist enterprise which was also expanding. Under pressure of the Chinese working class and the deepening need to industrialize, the CCP began a campaign to "socialize" both industry and agriculture. Joint private-state enterprises in the cities and cooperatives and collectives in the countryside were started.

In the ensuing struggle between the capitalists and the state, the CCP oscillated between attack and conciliation. In January 1956 the CCP declared an end to guaranteeing profits for the capitalists. Within a month, under pressure from the urban rich, it rescinded the decree. But concessions to the bourgeoisie in no way solved the problem of accumulating adequate capital in the hands of the state for industrialization. For this it was imperative to turn to the peasantry and organize agriculture along collective lines.

The first peasant cooperatives were established on the pattern set for the joint private-state enterprises. Shares in the collective product corresponding to their private holdings were issued to

the peasants. This served to preserve the layer of newly rich peasants which had arisen as a result of the division of the land. At the same time it fostered the appearance of a new layer of economically privileged peasants in the cooperative administration. In addition, a new differentiation between rich and poor cooperatives began to emerge. Most important of all, these steps stood in the way of mobilizing the peasant masses on sufficient scale for the vast national projects required to raise productivity on the land, feed the peasants, supply them with the necessary simple tools and provide the surplus product needed to feed the cities and to industrialize.

Again the leadership of the CCP moved empirically and abruptly. It passed its now famous directive "in response to the enthusiastic demand of the mass of peasants" amalgamating the cooperatives into 26,000 "communes."

The resolution of the contradiction between the conquests of the revolution and the bureaucratic rulers is the task of the Chinese workers. It is expressed in the program of the vanguard calling

for the institution of proletarian democracy. They will find additional bases of support for their political demands in the experience of the "communes" as these reveal on a new plane and in a still more glaring way the empirical, maneuverist, nationalistic and bureaucratic character of a petty-bourgeois leadership trained in the school of Stalinism.

Politically advanced workers in the U.S., while defending the progressive character of the "rural people's communes" and wishing them success, can best demonstrate their international class solidarity and help the Chinese people in the difficult tasks before them by resolutely continuing their own class struggle. In its general propaganda the Socialist Workers Party places high such demands as "Hands Off China," "Recognize the People's Republic of China," and "Extend Long-Term Credits to China." It will find it easier to advance the socialist cause the better it defends the Chinese Revolution.

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The Chinese Communes

by Daniel Roberts

AFTER slowing down their plans for economic growth in 1957, the Chinese Communist party leaders decided on another big push, which they named the "Great Leap Forward" in industry and agriculture. A new five-year plan was begun in February 1958. In this plan, they announced, the first three years would be the hardest. They called for the greatest exertions possible by the industrial workers and the peasantry.

Mobilization of the greatest possible labor force among China's 650 million people was the keynote struck at the Second Session of the Communist party's Eighth Congress in May 1958 and in articles and speeches in the following months.

In early September, in connection with the Quemoy-Matsu crisis, the government mobilized millions of militia for military duty. It will be recalled that after a few weeks of bombarding the offshore islands, the Chinese government tapered off the shelling. The immense army that had been recruited was not disbanded but turned to labor.

The previous month, Mao Tse-tung had visited Honan province, where 27 cooperative farms, including 43,000 people, in four townships, had merged to form the Weihsing (Sputnik) commune. The commune had taken over all land, had announced an irrigation program for the area under its jurisdiction and had brought all non-farming work under the same unified control.

Mao declared that this experiment convinced him that the commune pattern was the best form of economic organization for the countryside. The Communist party at once proceeded to organize communes all over China. By the end of September about one-third of the Chinese peasants were reported to have dissolved their cooperative farms into the larger commune units. By December about 27,000 communes were reported, embracing about 98% of the peasantry. They replaced some 800,000 cooperative farms, although originally Mao had declared that the changeover would take several years.

Together with the change of farm organization from cooperative to commune, a drastic change in the way of life has been introduced, designed to mobilize agricultural labor to the maximum degree. All adults from sixteen years up are included in the labor pool. Mothers leave their younger children in nurseries to be tended by the old people. Everyone eats in mess halls to save cooking time of housewives.

In short, the Chinese countryside has been mobilized for what Mao Tse-tung has called a "three-year hard battle against nature." "Huge forces can now be deployed wherever and for whatever work is needed," says Elsie Fairfax-Cholmeley, who reports on the communes in the *New World Review*. (Feb. 1959.) And R. H. S. Crossman, who like Mrs. Fairfax-Cholmeley visited several communes last fall, speaks of shifting huge forces about.

The Chinese Communist party itself talks of an "agricultural army." The CP leaders stress that this is a figure of speech, and is not to lead to military methods of command by party cadres over the peasantry. However, some of the party's rhapsodies about the communes portray a literal militarization of farm labor.

Thus one nationally distributed party magazine describes the following scene: "At daybreak, bells ring and whistles blow to assemble . . . In about a quarter of an hour the peasants line up. At the command of company and squad commanders, the teams march to the fields, holding flags. Here one no longer sees peasants in groups of two or three, smoking and going slowly and leisurely to the fields. What one hears are the sounds of measured steps and marching songs. The desultory living habits which have been with the peasants for thousands of years are gone forever . . . Individualism has absolutely no market here." (Quoted by Stanley Rich in the *New Republic*, Jan. 5, 1959.) The communes operate on the basis of the "five togethers" — "eat together, live together, work together, study together and play together."

The communes are assigned a series of tasks in their own territory — agricultural production, development of industry (we shall see later of what this consists), afforestation, soil and water conservation, electrification, education, care of the old people, etc. They are also to supply forces for work on national projects such as harnessing major rivers, cutting new canals in certain regions, etc. And, indeed, these national projects take vast numbers of laborers. Here are some examples culled from official *Hsinhua News Agency* releases: Over 750,000 engage in a huge water-conservation project in Anhwei. (Probably on the project to reharvest the Huai River, whose levees were dynamited by Chiang Kai-shek's forces during the civil war.) In the Yangtze River Delta area, 300,000 plant tree saplings along the banks of the new canals. In Inner Mongolia, 278,000 work as part of the force seeking to harness the Yellow River.

In the communes, pay is to be in kind and in money. All are to receive free a minimum of food for subsistence, plus housing, some clothing, nursery care for children and a variety of services ranging from haircuts to burial. The communes are also instructed to set up a fund out of the surplus for wages in cash. These are to be paid to women personally instead of to their mothers-in-law as was the practice under the patriarchal family, which evidently survived in places despite previous claims by the Chinese CP that it had been completely eradicated. It seems that even in the cooperative farms, patriarchal family rules persisted.

The Communist party states that the communes are not transient forms of organization tied to the "three-year hard battle" but the forms in which China will evolve from "socialism" (which the CP claims they are building now) to

communism. By merging economic and political administration, the commune is supposed to bring about the gradual elimination of state compulsion over persons and usher in the mere "administration of things." Development of commune industry supposedly presages the merger of urban and rural areas. Compulsion on all to perform some manual work for a stated period (including doctors, engineers, teachers, etc.) is supposed to wipe out the difference between manual and mental work. Pay in kind and in cash is supposed to represent a stage in applying the communist principle "from each according to his abilities, to each according to his needs." In short, the communes as now constituted are touted as the road to communism in China.

It is noteworthy, however, that the Chinese CP decided to "delay" the introduction of the communes in the cities. Here, the party spokesmen admit there is too much resistance. People have yet to be convinced, the CP leaders say.

What is the significance of the Chinese communes? What should be the attitude of revolutionary socialists the world over toward them?

IF THE communes were really an attempt to take the peasants straight to communism, they would deserve to be roundly condemned. Merger of town and country, unity of hand and brain work, emancipation of women in a socialist sense, replacement of the bourgeois family by a higher form, abolition of private property on the land — all these are irrational and utopian objectives as long as China's technological development and industrial equipment remain low. Communist social relations can evolve only on the basis of a technology that stands higher in its development and

universal application than the heights reached under capitalism in the advanced industrial countries.

It is impossible to create a communist mold and hope that communism will then flow into that mold. Historical development cannot be forced like that. All that can result from the attempt is a caricature that serves to bring the name of socialism and communism into disrepute in China and throughout the world. It could bring the Chinese workers' state to the brink of ruin. In my opinion there is more to the communes than appears in these irrational slogans, as I shall indicate shortly. But it still needs to be underscored that there is danger that a wing of the Chinese Communist party high command, intoxicated by the slogan of marching straight to communism, will persist on building communes long after basic changes of course need to be introduced. In the meantime, these slogans sow confusion about what socialism really is.

Revolutionary socialists condemn any attempt to drive the peasantry by force to "communism." But they can give full support to the "three-year hard struggle against nature" — an economic forced march in agriculture that is imposed on China, if it is to conquer famine and if it is to lay the basis for advancing to a modern industrial status. China reported famines in major areas of the country as recently as 1953. The 1956 harvest, too, was bad. The CP leaders speak about the "virtual solution of the food problem" in 1958 — which means that it is not yet actually solved. (*Hsinhua News Agency reports*, Nov. 22, 1958.)

The real blame for China having to wage this costly battle against nature falls on England, Japan, France, Germany, Czarist Russia, and above all, the United States — or, more particularly, on the ruling classes in these countries. They sapped China's strength by carving up the country into spheres of influence, by exploiting it mercilessly, by promoting the rule of local warlords, then by propping the venal, dictatorial Chiang Kai-shek regime, and by upholding the semifeudal landowners and usurers.

Today, the imperialist cold war against China — waged by blockade, nonrecognition, and refusal of economic aid — forces the Chinese people to repair the damage by their own efforts and to climb out of economic backwardness through heroic exertions.

The magnitude of the problem confronting China can be gauged by the need to feed 650 million people on an arable land area considerably smaller than America possesses.

Arable land in China at present is roughly equivalent to the area of a rectangle bordered by the U.S.-Canadian frontier, the Mississippi, the Gulf of Mexico, and the eastern edge of the Rocky Mountains — or about a fifth of the total land area of the United States. It is worked by about 500 million peasants. The great bulk of China's population is concentrated in that amount of land surface, too.

In addition, Chinese agriculture must supply raw material for China's industry and a surplus both of food and industrial raw material (cotton, hemp, silk, etc.) for export. China must solve these problems without food credits abroad (despite the \$9 billion worth of surplus food in U.S. granaries). It must solve the problem with little agricultural machinery and with almost no chemical fertilizer.

How then can the problem be solved at all? In China's favor is its traditional intensive agriculture, maintained for 4,000 years, an agriculture with a know-how that brings highest per-acre yields in the world. "Chinese agriculture is primarily distinguished by its intensity," says the *Encyclopedia Britannica*. (1946 Edition, Vol. 5, p. 544.) "This is made possible only by the unremitting labor which the struggle for existence demands and the traditional skill born of 40 centuries of transmitted experience." For 4,000 years, Chinese farmers produced a yield per acre approached in Great Britain only in the nineteenth century, when British farming methods became the model for the Western world.

The rational kernel in the program of the Chinese communes is to rehabilitate traditional Chinese agriculture. For that is what the CP directives amount to, even if the party

leadership rarely acknowledges it. Deep plowing (turning the soil to a depth of as much as five feet), layer by layer fertilization, intensive collection of manure; i.e., sewage particularly, (which is now to take priority over all commune projects including steel making), heavy use of composts, combination irrigation and rain — all these are the traditional methods of Chinese agriculture. The CP spokesmen in one place say that "The planned reduction of the arable land and the production of sufficient farm products by concentrating on a smaller area of land is a new method that has now been discovered." (*Peking Review*, Dec. 16, 1958, p. 12. My emphasis.) However, they correctly state in another place that "the experiences accumulated by the Chinese peasants should be summed up to become China's new soil science." (*Hsinhua News Agency* Jan. 1, 1959, p. 43.) A recent Conference on Soil Science criticized the once-hailed but now-abandoned program to cultivate virgin soils as a "divorce from the actual production practices of the Chinese peasants." "The Conference noted that China's bumper harvests [in 1958] were the result of careful cultivation, heavy manuring, close planting and other measures. Of these, careful cultivation and the use of large quantities of organic fertilizer were characteristic of China's farming." Actually, "close planting and other measures," are also part of traditional Chinese farming. These techniques won ungrudging admiration from F. H. King, Chief of the Division of Soil Management, U. S. Department of Agriculture, back in 1909. King's book, *Farmers of Forty Centuries*, describes the traditional practices in remarkable detail.

Now, what happened? Why is the Chinese Communist party calling for the *introduction* of methods that are traditional Chinese practices? Are the leaders trying to take credit for having "directed" people to do what they were doing anyway? The most likely explanation, in my opinion, is that in the fifty years since King described Chinese agricultural methods, there has been a partial breakdown of the system. Civil war beginning in 1911, decades of warlordism, the Japanese imperialist invasion, twenty years of civil war before the Chinese CP emerged victorious over Chiang Kai-shek, the Korean conflict — all these undoubtedly brought impairments.

In addition, the corrupt Kuomintang regime neglected the upkeep of levees, dams and canals, which are so vital to Chinese agriculture. (King estimated in 1909 that there were fully 200,000 miles of canals in China, Korea and Japan. "Indeed," he wrote, "it is probable that this estimate is not too large for China alone." In an area 175 by 160 miles, in the Yangtze Delta, he estimated no less than 25,000 miles of canals.)

Furthermore, the long years of war and revolution were marked by ravaging inflation that repeatedly broke the economic bonds between city and country, bringing with it a lessening incentive for the farmers to maintain the highest possible per-acre yield. (A similar result happened in Great Britain at the end of the nineteenth century, when the price of farm products collapsed, and the labor cost of maintaining intensive agriculture became thereby prohibitive.) The 1949 U.S. State Department *White Paper* on China reports that agricultural production had shifted from cash crops to crops for local consumption, and that one of the outstanding needs in China is *chemical fertilizer*, indicating a breakdown of the traditional fertilizing methods and of the traditional rhythm of agriculture through which all organic waste was returned to the soil. The current feverish campaign to collect "night soil" and animal manure and to make traditional "chemical" fertilizer out of bone, eggshell, ashes, and feathers, is further indication that such a breakdown took place.

(In the Feb. 23 *New York Times*, Tillman Durdin reports that in Fukien 250,000 persons and in Heilungkiang 700,000 have been designated for fertilizer and manure work. "In Honan Province, Governor Wu Chih-pu led 6,500 functionaries on manure-collecting forays into the country-

side. They scraped together 2,000 tons of manure and decaying vegetable matter." In Shantung more than 32,000 workshops have been set up to make fertilizer. "They consist of fireplace cauldrons in sheds of reed matting thrown up in a few days and use such things as saltpeter, feathers, bones, hair, ashes, old leather, eggshells and lime as raw materials." In Ahnwei, 200,000 "small plants" have turned out 400,000 tons of fertilizer. The campaign has not been without its adverse effects. The *People's Daily* recently reported that in some Shantung areas, "acute hardship had been caused because many kangs, the traditional type of North China brick beds heated by slow-burning fires underneath — had been torn down in the high-pressure drive to accumulate material for manuring.")

Lacking food credits abroad, or the possibility of obtaining sufficient supplies of chemical fertilizer, the Chinese government was compelled to restore China's traditional farming methods and rehabilitate its technical basis in rivers, dams, canals, reservoirs and supplies of fertilizer. Lacking machinery, only a full mobilization of available manpower could perform the task. The old methods not only had to be restored wherever they had become impaired, but had to be extended to areas where they had not been used before.

In a visit to a commune in Ankuo, Elsie Fairfax-Cholmeley reports essentially on this aspect. (*New World Review*, Feb. 1959.) The program for the communes in this area "included the building of 300 reservoirs, an increase in the number of wells with mechanical pumps from 38 to 1,391, and the digging of many ponds." (The pumps she refers to are probably the traditional Chinese "chain pumps" operated by footpower.) "Land once waterlogged was drained. Plowing on 70,000 acres was deepened from the former five or six inches to one foot . . . Huge quantities of green manure, pond mud, sewage and other fertilizer were amassed." In experimental plots the earth was dug to a depth of five feet and bottom fertilizer was added at a rate of sixty tons an acre. In the spring, 70,000 peasants from various cooperatives (this was before their merger into communes) "had banded together to deepen a river bed and build new canals connecting with farmland." In short, Ankuo, was adopting China's traditional farming methods.

The most ambitious of all projects pursued by the Chinese government in its agricultural policy is to bring the Hwang Ho — the Yellow River — under control. This is a crucial project. Periodically over forty centuries the state power has attempted it. But the Hwang Ho remained "The Ungovernable," and it continued to justify its other designations, "The Scourge," and "China's Sorrow," too.

Unlike the Yangtze and the Pearl, the Yellow River mixes its blessings with calamities in the form of floods. In one such flood in 1887, the river killed almost a million people. And yet, in other years, the North China plain through which it runs suffers drought. As a result, in the northern areas, drought alternates with flood every five or six years. Periodic famines are the result. Entire armies of laborers are now at work on the program to harness the Hwang Ho. Last fall, the government claimed that it succeeded in preventing a flood, though the waters reached the flood heights of earlier years.

Road building and railroad construction are also vital for China, in contrast to the past when it relied most heavily on its waterways for transportation.

Finally, among other projects the communes are to undertake, which would be designed "public works" in this country, are afforestation and the development of fisheries. Both are traditional countryside endeavors in China, although afforestation never replaced the forest lands cut down in the past. It barely sufficed to supply organic matter for green manure and wood for fuel. Fisheries have been traditionally associated with agriculture. Ponds dug for irrigation were also used for breeding fish. This in turn added to the value of the pond mud as fertilizer.

THE communes, according to the Chinese CP program, are supposed to develop "industry" simultaneously with agriculture. Some of the pronouncements set the immediate goal as half and half — one half of the labor force to be involved in work in the fields and the other half in industry. Furthermore, the party proclaimed the "policy of simultaneously employing modern and indigenous methods of production." (*Peking Review*, Dec. 28, 1958, p. 6.)

The Chinese Communist party leadership, not in Lenin's, but very much in Stalin's tradition likes to embellish and disguise. In its parlance, a shed becomes a factory and making hoes or wheelbarrows becomes machine industry.

Here is an example cited by R. H. S. Crossman. "In a corner I spotted five old ladies sitting in a circle and asked what they were doing. 'That,' I was told, 'is the ball-bearing section. Sure enough, a thin iron rod had been cut into slices a centimetre thick, and each old lady was rounding a slice with a pestle and mortar, while a couple of boys were polishing the finished article. 'They aren't up to much yet and they don't last long in our cartwheels,' I was told." (*New Statesman*, Jan. 10, 1959.)

The list of "industrial" activities conducted by the communes falls mainly into two categories. One of these is the processing of agricultural products, such as flour, vegetable oil, rice wine, beer, etc. These are traditional activities of the Chinese countryside, employing cumbersome and laborious methods. (The CP refers to them as "indigenous" methods.) This does not in the least negate their value. On the contrary, China will have to multiply by many times traditional products made through traditional methods, while modern methods can only be introduced slowly as long as China is cut off from foreign aid. (Soviet agreements with China cover importation of modern machinery and equipment for steel and other heavy industry.)

The other main category of commune "industries" is making tools for the fields and for the huge public projects. Again, to combine modern and indigenous tools means to vastly multiply the indigenous tools — carrying poles, baskets, pails, wheelbarrows, carts, shovels, hoes and the like. If in the process, the wheelbarrow and block-and-tackle should come to supersede the carrying pole, this would be progress — albeit modest — indeed.

It would appear that the output of the local backyard steel furnaces in the countryside went largely into these traditional tools. Thus the *Peking Review* (Dec. 9) speaks of using the steel so made for "crude machines."

Pots and pans collected from households seem to be a principal source of "raw material" for commune furnaces. Presumably the families won't need them any more since they are to eat in mess halls. Crossman reports that at two communes, "I was at once surrounded by scores of men, women and children, clapping their hands and laughing, as they described how they had just contributed all their home cooking utensils to be melted down in the furnaces for the Surpass Britain campaign." At the third commune, he noted, "Beyond were furnaces and the usual pile of surrendered cooking utensils." Charcoal, as in primitive times, was the principal fuel.

However, this phase has now come to an end, and steel-making in "native-type" furnaces is apparently being shelved. An editorial in the *Peking Daily* (Jan. 20) suggests that localities where "it is too costly to carry out steel and iron production should quickly discontinue operations and divert their manpower to other fields of work." It also suggests that "native-type" furnaces should be converted (i.e., give way) to "foreign-type" furnaces. (Quoted in the Feb. 10 *Christian Science Monitor*.)

Revival of traditional agriculture, traditional domestic industries and traditional public works — these are the fields in which the mobilization of labor through the communes can substantially increase the total fund of Chinese goods — above all, of food. This is not yet a "great leap forward" to modernization of the economy and to socialist abundance. When properly understood, however, which means when stripped of the inexcusable sloganeering and false

promises of what can be achieved in the immediate future, the program emerges as essential *preparation* for a great leap forward.

It should be recognized, of course, that part of the preparation includes genuine modernization in the countryside such as installation of small power plants, requiring only low dams for hydraulic generation. *Hsinhua News Agency* reports 4,500 such stations in Szechwan with a total capacity of 100,000 kilowatts. These can replace traditional vegetable-oil lighting with electric lights, thus making the oil available as industrial raw material. In addition, construction of huge, modern power plants are included in the great river-harnessing projects. These mark the real leap forward from traditional to modern public works.

RESPONSE of the peasants to the communes is reported in the capitalist press as varying from "going along" to enthusiastic. However, from Macao, Portuguese enclave near Hong Kong, some reports have filtered through of peasant "risings" against the communes. The two sets of reports are not necessarily contradictory. Both can be true. The reaction of the peasants may vary in different sections of the country. The degree of preparation for the move will also affect the amount of support. Furthermore, how brutally or how intelligently the move is carried through would have its effect on peasant acceptance or rejection. Thus, plowing under the old homes for fertilizer before new ones are built and forcing peasants to sleep in the open (this too has been reported), would not predispose the peasantry to accept the program. Neither would a monotonous diet of cold rice or sweet potatoes with no other vegetables and no meat. There have been reports that before joining the communes some peasants killed their chickens and pigs. This seems to be confirmed by a recent editorial in the *People's Daily* admitting a decrease in China's livestock.

It is impossible to tell from here how the program has been put into practice throughout most of China. Foreign observers have seen only selected communes. No one has traveled systematically from commune to commune to report on overall results. That there have been many abuses is attested to by the decisions of the December plenary session of the Central Committee calling for measures slowing the pace of work and easing other rigors of communal life.

The question of peasant acceptance or rejection of the communes goes deeper than this, however. Does setting up the communes violate the peasants' petty-bourgeois aspirations to be individual farmers? That is the most important question. Millions of Russian peasants fought Stalin's forced collectivization in 1929-1932 because it outraged their individual-proprietary outlook. No matter how rational the three-year hard battle against nature might otherwise be, if it collides with the peasants' aspirations to the point that they sabotage the program, the country will be brought to ruin. It is true that the peasants are going into the communes not from individual ownership but from cooperative farms, similar to the Soviet Union's collective farms. But were they reconciled to the cooperatives? The communes, furthermore, take away even the small individual plots that the farmers were allowed to own under the cooperatives.

In the absence of sufficient trustworthy information, I can only state an opinion based on a number of historical factors. It is entirely possible, I believe, that the great majority of peasants are willing to defer the realization of individual-farming aspirations for a limited time. It is entirely possible that they have decided to accept a temporary "militarization" of life for the sake of an economic forced march.

The peasantry, furthermore, learned to sacrifice in the long war of liberation against the Japanese and in the civil war. Again, participating in the construction of huge public works under state administration is an ancient tradition in China as throughout Asia. For millennia, prosperity — whether for the laboring peasant or an exploiting caste or



class — has hinged on building and keeping up tremendous public works. The old cycle saw the periodic breakdown of the system as dynasties decayed. The revolutions that then occurred brought to power fresh forces who organized repair of the damage and construction of new works. The Mao regime, blocked from large-scale international aid has not been able to escape this historical pattern. They would do better to acknowledge it publicly.

Individual ownership after land distribution following the victory of the revolution in 1949 brought no viable solution for the peasant. The allotment often came to less than a half an acre. For the poor peasants, it sometimes came to as low as one *mu* (one-sixth of an acre). By American standards, where forty acres rates as a subsistence farm, such an allotment would signify outright starvation. The

comparison, however, is somewhat deceptive. In 1909, King cited 2.5 acres as the holding of a well-to-do Chinese peasant, and he visited a capitalist farmer who operated on 25 acres. Just the same, a few *mus* mean slow starvation even on the basis of Chinese skills and agricultural methods. And if we suppose deterioration of soil fertility and impairment of irrigation for decades, then the allotment was clearly too small a plot for subsistence. The distribution could not be permanent. A great many people needed to get off the land. But Chinese industry could absorb only a small proportion. The land remained overpopulated.

Under these conditions, the feeling of proprietorship could not assert itself very vigorously. Later, under the cooperatives, there were too many rivalries, too little coordination for major area-wide projects that were needed,

too much imbalance between work in the fields and development of processing — flour milling, etc. And there probably was still too much crowding on the land.

The communes offer the peasants the prospect that necessary public works at least will be undertaken, that the land will be restored to its wonted fertility, that necessary processing units will be established, etc. Furthermore, this year's bigger harvests mean food for all and the prospect, if successes through commune efforts continue, of wage payments — if not this year then in the subsequent years. (The Chinese government claims that the 1958 harvest was nearly double last year's. Conservative estimates, such as Tillman Durdin's in the Jan. 13 *New York Times*, place it at 25% — still a remarkable increase.) From all this we can suppose acceptance of the economic forced march, if too many abuses do not attend the introduction of the communes. But it would be rash to conclude that the Chinese peasants are now "growing over" to socialism — let alone communism — through the communes.

We can expect that the very economic successes of the communes in the "three-year hard battle" will foster social differentiation. Some people will be absorbed in the Communist party hierarchy, contributing to a bureaucratic layer separating out from the rest of the peasantry. Others will obtain a permanent place as wage workers in the processing industries or migrate to the cities as industry expands there. Still others will be involved for long periods in the huge nationally sponsored public works. And then we can also expect that tens of millions of peasants will want at last to engage in individual farming plus some form of voluntary cooperation.

To this day, a big section of the Russian peasants — whose income is higher than that of the Chinese — continue to display petty-bourgeois aspirations. Isaac Deutscher is correct when he writes that "The Russian collective farm has remained a halfway house between the private farm and the commune." (*The Reporter*, Nov. 13, 1958.) In Eastern Europe we have seen the peasant seizing every opportunity at his disposal to break out of the collectives and return to private farming. He succeeded in Yugoslavia, Hungary and Poland. Until the development of technology in agriculture really merges town and country — that is, really wipes out the difference between industry and agriculture — the basis for socialist relations on the land will remain precarious.

For, once semifeudal bonds are broken, the soil is cleared for bourgeois and petty-bourgeois relations. They can be surmounted only gradually (or totally only for limited periods of time under exceptional circumstances). Lenin was referring to this law when he declared after the revolution that the Russian countryside generated capitalism spontaneously and by the hour.

To defend the concept that communes are the road to communism in China, a spokesman for the Communist party offered the following rationalization: "Limited by economic and technical conditions, the small-peasant economy can only engage in extensive farming and receive a small amount of grain from vast areas at the mercy of nature. It is only in the socialist and communist eras that the way opens to the people to use the land correctly with their full initiative." (Tsao Kuo-hsing in the *Peking Review*, Dec. 16, 1958.) Thus, it is claimed, communal property and intensive agriculture go hand in hand. We have already seen that China's 4,000-year history gives the lie to this contention. Again, in England intensive agriculture was introduced in the sixteenth century side-by-side with the enclosure of the common lands. As long as extensive farming prevailed, in which "a small amount of grain," was reaped from "vast areas at the mercy of nature," the common lands had to be maintained. But intensive agriculture and private property went hand in hand. Individual farming can finally be surmounted only on the highest technological levels, which China simply does not yet possess.

Pressures for dissolving the communes as combined economic and political units in China can therefore be expected

to mount precisely to the degree that traditional agriculture and public works are restored and their scope is extended — that is, to the degree that the "three-year hard battle" is fought to a successful conclusion. Just as the bureaucratic abuses that accompany the sloganeering of today can undermine peasant acceptance of the communes, so sloganeering of the same type can bring catastrophe in the future, if the CP leadership seeks to defy pressures for dissolving the communes. Forced collectivization in Russia is a reminder of how bureaucrats, depending on dictatorial command instead of democratic planning, can inflict blows on agriculture from which the country takes decades to recover. (Soviet agriculture has not yet fully recovered from Stalin's crimes in this field.)

Communist production cannot be arbitrarily introduced, particularly in a single relatively primitive area. Nor can communist family relations and the communist status of women. In the Chinese commune, the woman gains in status by becoming a wage earner (assuming that the communes will have sufficient surplus to pay an amount respectable enough to be called wages). She will thus acquire a status as high as the one enjoyed by women in capitalist countries. But she will not have won socialist liberation. Moreover, separation of the sexes in barracks, child rearing by inexperienced nurses, canteen food that is inferior to home-cooked meals, laundries that damage the clothes more than they clean them, and the like, are not inducements for women to remain in the communes. A return to hearth and home — if freed from the slavery of the patriarchal family — may seem preferable. Will the Chinese CP seek to hold the women in the commune by force? Already there are concessions. Families may eat at home if they prefer.

HAVE said that in my opinion to restore China's traditional intensive agriculture is not yet a "great leap forward" but prepares such a leap. What then would the real leap be? The problem can be defined in the following way: By restoring traditional farming methods, China can obtain a yield *per acre* on par with that of any other country in the world (if not higher). But the yield *per man-hour* will still be far smaller than that obtained in modern industry whether in China or in any of the economically advanced countries. And it will still be far smaller than that obtained in agriculture in the West. In the last analysis, economic progress is measured by economy of labor time. China will not have succeeded in making the really great leap until it has succeeded in winning parity in labor-time with the United States.

Of course, comparisons between man-hours absorbed in China's traditional intensive farming and in American extensive farming are not entirely fair to the Chinese. U.S. agriculture is extremely wasteful of soil fertility. Soil conservation and soil improvement is practiced relatively little in this country. Where fertilizer is used, it is primarily inorganic and not applied in such a way as to improve the heritage of land for future generations. Bad farming practices, which continue to this day, led King to predict in 1909 that sooner or later American agriculture would have to learn from the Chinese. We will have to turn to greater use of irrigation, grading of soils for best crop usage, long-range planning that returns all forms of organic waste to the soil. We shall have to learn the value of rice cultivation. King added, however, that "this country need not and could not adopt their *laborious methods* of rice culture, and while, let us hope, those who come after us may never be compelled to do so, it is nevertheless worth while to study them, for the sake of the principle involved." (My emphasis.)

King foresaw a fruitful interchange leading to common agricultural practices in which the West — particularly the U.S. — would learn intensive cultivation from the Chinese in return for providing mechanization of farms and of food-processing industries.

Successful working-class revolutions in Western Europe

and the United States, leading to the elaboration of a world socialist economic plan, would enable China to take the great leap forward in the shortest possible time. For one thing, China would immediately be freed from the burden of having to feed its population almost exclusively from the produce of its own soil. Accumulated surpluses in other areas could equalize the load. Chinese agriculture would become a constituent part of world agriculture, which in turn would form a single branch of world economy, abundantly equipped to feed the world's population. The process of mechanizing Chinese agriculture would begin on a huge scale and would be completed at a rapid pace. As more and more people in China were released from the soil by farm mechanization, they would be available for industrial work in China supplied by a world pool of machines and plants; or they might migrate to other lands — say to the United States — to help in transforming agriculture here on an intensive basis. Or they could carry out the program of the Chinese Communist party to turn the grassy plateaus of China, now virtually unused, into cattle-raising areas.

A socialist overturn in Japan alone would transform China's prospects overnight. The economies of the two countries would gear together naturally. Japan would be able to mass-produce power-driven pumps, plows, carts, trucks, lift forks, and dredges for China's farms (and for its own, for Japanese farming resembles Chinese farming), while making equipment available for industrial development.

Are these prospects utopian? No. They are the real prospects that the Chinese working people can use as guides. The Chinese revolution was but one link in the chain of socialist revolutions of our epoch. Its victory has accelerated the process of socialist revolutions throughout the world. What the Chinese CP leaders lack most, unfortunately, is an international revolutionary orientation. In fact, their program of building "socialism" in one country rejects the program of world revolution. And that deprives their foreign policy, too, of the most effective approach to the working people in the West. Even now the working people in Europe, the U.S. and Japan should be demanding recognition of the People's Republic of China (where this is not yet accorded) and applying pressure on their governments to extend long-term credits to the hard-pressed Chinese people.

Without immediate international aid, China will not be able to "leap" ahead in agriculture or industry. But it will be able to take a series of painful steps forward, enabling it better to hold out against imperialism and facilitating a later leap. By correct economic policies China can begin "catching up" with techniques in capitalist countries and go a distance on the road to higher labor productivity. The process however, will be arduous and perilous and would still await international socialist aid to be completed.

In such a transition period, the caliber of leadership is decisive. To work out a balanced plan of national development geared to actual needs, social realities and realizable goals; not to strain human labor to the point of exhaustion (which would only lower labor productivity); to offer modest but important improvements in living standards commensurable with gains in productivity — these are some of the tests of leadership that face the CP heads. They will face even more difficult tests in the period ahead. Should the majority of the peasants, after trying out the communes, assert their aspirations to toil the land on an individual basis, it will be necessary to retreat from the premature communization of the land. Instead of trying to arrive at "communism" by brute force, it will be necessary to build a number of model communes with the latest equipment and cultural facilities that can attract the rest of the peasantry to finally abandon private farming of their own volition.

THERE is continued evidence that the Chinese Communist party is deeply divided over policies that touch on these very questions. Such is the meaning of the state-

ment, in the recent "Resolution on Some Questions Concerning the People's Communes," that "The urgent tasks at present are to quickly achieve a unity of views on the communes among all members of the Party and among the people . . ." (*Peking Review*, Dec. 23, 1958.)

In an article in *Pacific Affairs* (Dec. 1958.), Roderick MacFarquhar points to speeches by various party leaders in the last two years as evidence of two tendencies which he calls respectively the "pragmatists" and the "sloganeers." The "pragmatists," he says, would seem to be led by Premier Chou En-lai while the "sloganeers" appear to be headed by Liu Shao-ch'i, First Deputy Chairman of the party. (Mao Tse-tung is supposed to be currently backing the "sloganeers.")

The "pragmatists" favor maintaining, in the words of Chou En-lai, a "reasonable rate of growth for the national economy and [placing] the plan on a forward-looking and completely sound basis, to ensure a comparatively balanced development of the national economy." This should be based on first taking account of the needs and possibilities.

The "pragmatists" are also said to have favored better treatment for intellectuals and the freer atmosphere set forth in the "Hundred Flowers Policy" in 1956 and early 1957. "By encouraging freer thinking," says MacFarquhar, ". . . it was hoped that greater efficiency could be achieved." But the "bloom and contend" policy gave rise in the spring of 1957 to student demonstrations. The workers indicated dissatisfaction with economic conditions and resentment against the growth of a privilege-seeking bureaucracy.

The "sloganeers" then took over. "Instead of looking to [the intellectuals] to provide the technical know-how for economic advance, they look now to the peasants to achieve that advance by sheer hard work alone . . ." is how MacFarquhar sums up their program. How many bottlenecks and dislocations this "hard work alone" might produce is immaterial to them.

(That the introduction of the communes went hand in hand with contempt for technical knowledge is attested by reports that, for instance, *surgeons* must perform manual labor daily for a few hours in addition to their practice. And this in the face of China's acute shortage of trained medical personnel!)

It would appear that at last December's plenary session of the Central Committee, a compromise was reached between the contending groups on a more moderate approach to the communes. Commune leaders were warned to see that workers are permitted eight hours of sleep a day and four hours for meals and study, leaving the work-day at twelve hours. Women who are menstruating should be given light tasks or allowed to rest. "Scientific methods" of production should be observed. Finally, the Central Committee's resolution declares that communism cannot be established overnight but requires a long process of evolution based on mechanization.

The trouble continues to be, however, that the party leadership is not based on the working class and does not seek to chart its way by Leninist revolutionary theory. The party is bureaucratized. The cadres form an economically privileged and privilege-seeking layer. They are trained in Stalinism and Maoism; that is, a brand of empiricism given to use of Marxist phrases. The party leadership does not foresee trends and does not shape its policies accordingly. It tends instead to swing drastically from one course to another in reaction to events without thinking out the ultimate consequences.

The achievements of the Chinese revolution — as of the Russian revolution — are prodigious, even under bureaucratic leadership. But the ability of bureaucratic misleadership to retard the struggle and bring victory into question must not be lost sight of either.

It is for these reasons that Marxists in this country, without wavering in their campaign to win diplomatic recognition and long-term credits for China, must go slow in their evaluation of such phenomena as the Chinese communes and remain critical in their assessment.

THE SINO-SOVIET DISPUTE

Resolution Adopted by 1963 SWP Convention

The Sino-Soviet dispute is -- next to the Polish and Hungarian revolutions of 1956 -- the most striking manifestation of the death agony of Stalinism. It shows that the de-Stalinization processes affecting the relations between the Soviet bureaucracy and people are also transforming the relations between the Kremlin and the other workers states and between the Russian CP and the Communist parties of other countries. These developments have already shattered the monolithic controls which were exercised over international Communism under Stalin's autocracy.

The mortal crisis of Stalinism has been brought about by the revolutionary changes in the world situation and in the Soviet Union since the end of World War II. Most important are the startling industrial, scientific and social progress of the USSR which has made the masses ever more demanding toward the totalitarian power; the extension of Soviet dominance over Eastern Europe followed by the destruction of capitalism there; the victory of the Yugoslav, Chinese and North Vietnam revolutions; the irresistible spread of the colonial revolution culminating in the establishment of a workers state in Cuba; and the favorable shift in the balance of world forces between the camp of the revolution and counterrevolution. All these developments have introduced new contradictions into the Soviet sphere which threaten the Kremlin's supremacy. The acute differences dividing Peking from Moscow are the most important expression of the eruption of these contradictions in the relations between the workers states.

* * *

The present conflict between the Russian and Chinese CP leaderships originated with the 20th Congress of the Soviet CP in 1956 when Khrushchev denounced the cult of Stalin and clearly enunciated the reformist views flowing from his aim of accommodation with imperialism. It first came into the open during 1959-60 at the time of the Camp David discussions with Eisenhower. Today the differences have sharpened to the breaking point.

The dispute has raised for consideration many of the most fundamental questions confronting the world struggle for socialism. Nationalism vs. internationalism; a policy of accommodation to imperialism or class struggle against it; the attitude toward the colonial revolution and the colonial bourgeoisie; the problem of war and peace; the road to power; workers democracy.

What are the positions of the two chief protagonists on these questions and how should they be judged?

(1) The nature of imperialism. Khrushchev contends that, since Lenin's day, the world relationship of military, political and economic forces between the capitalist and socialist camps has altered to such a degree that imperialism can be neutralized and world peace assured even though imperialism continues to survive in its major strongholds. Therefore the most urgent and central task of Soviet diplomacy and working class politics is no longer the struggle to abolish capitalism. It is the need to induce "progressive" and "peace-loving" statesmen among the capitalist powers to recognize the wisdom of peaceful coexistence with the workers states.

The Chinese answer that imperialism has not changed its fundamentally aggressive and warlike character, as the record of the Cold War and U.S. interventions in South Vietnam and Cuba freshly demonstrate. Therefore, in the struggle against the imperialist war preparations, it would be a fatal illusion to base socialist policy upon the peaceful inclinations of any capitalist group.

These differences are focused around the nature of U.S. imperialism today. The Chinese consider the American imperialists as the greatest threat to world peace and to the colonial revolution and Kennedy as their executive head in the White House.

The Soviet leadership (and its echoers in the American CP) take a quite different attitude towards the Democratic president. It has never characterized the U.S. commander-in-chief as a warmonger but has placed prime responsibility for the aggressions of U.S. foreign policy upon rightwing militarists and the Pentagon. Khrushchev wants to keep the road clear for summit conferences with Kennedy which will successfully crown his course towards peaceful coexistence.

(2) The struggle for peace. The Khrushchev tendency argues that the risk of nuclear war can be averted while imperialism and capitalism are left intact. The warmaking potential of the profiteers can be nullified without destroying the capitalist system and transferring supremacy to the working people.

The Chinese answer that there cannot be any guarantee of world peace, no end to war, until and unless imperialism is overthrown, above all in the underdeveloped countries where the colonial revo-

lution is in progress. The only reliable antiwar force is the people engaged in struggle for their own ends against the representatives of the rich.

(3) Attitude towards the colonial revolution. In its search for diplomatic allies, the Kremlin, fearful of upsetting the status quo, has not hesitated to set aside the claims of the colonial revolution and subordinate these to the alleged needs of "peaceful coexistence." To curry favor with deGaulle and lure France out of the Atlantic Alliance, the Soviet government and the French CP refused until the last hour to aid the Algerian fight for independence.

The Chinese, who supported the Algerian rebels from the first, say that the aims of the colonial revolution should be given priority over diplomatic considerations. The two sides clash most sharply on this question in Southeast Asia (Laos) and in Latin America where the Communist parties under Moscow tutelage are opposed to the development of the revolutionary movements along Cuban lines which the Chinese spokesmen encourage.

(4) Attitude towards the colonial bourgeoisie. Where the national bourgeoisie of the colonial and semicolonial countries is neutralist or friendly towards it, the Kremlin counsels the resident Communist parties to go along with them. The Moscow declaration of 1960 and the new program of the Soviet CP even set up a special category of "democratic national states" of indeterminate socioeconomic nature which all progressive forces were duty-bound to support. The support accorded Nehru by the Soviet government and most of the Indian CP leaders in the border conflict with China is the ripe fruit of this policy.

The Chinese advocate distrust of the national bourgeoisie and reliance upon the independent struggle of the masses to secure national and social emancipation. They point out that a colonial revolt which begins with a struggle for national independence, unity, or agrarian reform cannot be halted at the elementary democratic stage but tends to pass over into the socialist stage where capitalist property and power are eradicated and economic planning through control of all national resources can be instituted.

This pattern of the colonial revolution unfolding in an "uninterrupted way," empirically deduced from the experience of their own revolution and now extended to cover the struggles in other colonial lands, comes close to Trotsky's theory of the permanent revolution. However, the Maoists obstinately refuse to acknowledge this similarity and continue to denounce

Trotsky as a "traitor" who prefigured the path of Tito.

(5) The road to power. At the 20th Congress of the Soviet CP Khrushchev proclaimed the doctrine that a "peaceful road to socialism" is now possible in the imperialist countries through purely parliamentary means. He has since stated that this revision in Communist theory was introduced by Stalin in the advice he gave for drafting the current program of the British CP.

The Chinese, although they still praise Stalin as the foremost disciple of Lenin, have correctly stated that this is a relapse into the Social Democratic reformism flayed by the Bolsheviks. The Chinese, like Castro, do not exclude the theoretical possibility of a peaceful transfer of power to the workers. But they say that history has not yet provided any such example and it would be folly to base the strategy of the struggle upon such a prospect. They insist that socialism cannot achieve victory without breaking up the bourgeois state apparatus and creating a new type of regime based upon the workers and peasants.

(6) Bureaucratic nationalism vs. internationalism. Now that its commands no longer exact immediate and total obedience from the other workers states and Communist parties, the Kremlin has been trying to work out new types of control over the international Communist movement. But even these modified forms of manipulation on behalf of the Soviet bureaucracy collide with the independent national interests of the other workers states and their ruling groups, the leftward -- and even at times (Italy!) the more rightward -- inclinations of powerful Communist parties outside the Soviet domain as well as the needs of the anti-capitalist and anticolonial struggle.

Resistance to the "great power chauvinism" of the Kremlin has been most vigorously expressed by the Chinese. They accuse the Soviet leadership of abandoning proletarian internationalism and violating "the normal relationships of independence and equality that should exist among fraternal parties." As evidence of these "abnormal, feudal patriarchal relationships," they refer to the Soviet mistreatment of Albania (but not Stalin's mistreatment of Yugoslavia), the withdrawal of economic aid to China, the supplying of war materials to India, the unilateral rejection of the 1957 Moscow declaration, and the master-servant relations between the Kremlin and such satellites as the Communist Party of France under Thorez.

However, they talk as though all this degeneration began with Khrushchev's rise to the top in 1956-1959. Actually,

the men in the Kremlin are continuing the Stalinist practice of subordinating the other sectors of the struggle for socialism to the narrow interests of the upper crust of Soviet society.

The sum of these positions put forward in their polemics shows that the Chinese CP advocates a far more aggressive class struggle policy than the utterly opportunistic and reformist course pursued by the Soviet leadership and its followers from Calcutta to New York. On most of the key issues of the international class struggle in dispute Peking is to the left of the Kremlin and takes more militant stands. The Chinese Communists have thereby moved closer to correct Leninist positions on these points, although they have by no means arrived at a consistent Marxist world outlook.

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Having recognized this, it must be noted that on a number of crucial questions the Chinese CP has far from cast off its bureaucratic character and Stalinist heritage either in its principles or practices.

(1) Khrushchev, the American CP, Kennedy and the capitalist press all accuse the Chinese of wanting to foment world war in order to achieve socialism. This is a falsehood and slander. In recent statements the Chinese have carefully explained that they favor the peaceful co-existence of countries with different social systems and do not view world war as a necessary or desirable means of bringing about the downfall of capitalism.

Nevertheless, the Chinese statements consistently underrate the frightful costs of nuclear war and do not adequately take into account the changes introduced by the unprecedented destructive power of the new weapons. They sometimes speak as though capitalism alone would crumble in the atomic blasts and that socialism might be erected on radioactive ruins. The grim fact is that nuclear war would be the greatest of all defeats suffered by the working people, even if humanity should somehow survive its terrible effects. This underestimation of the perils of nuclear war has helped the Kremlin and others to confuse the issues by playing up "the nuclear teeth" of "the imperialist paper tiger" as a cover for its opportunism.

How is imperialism to be disarmed? The Chinese have a deficient perspective on this crucial question. They effectively develop the argument that only the revolutionary struggle of the masses can defend world peace and that these progressive movements should not be suspended or subordinated for fear of "nuclear blackmail." At the same time they imply that

achievement of military preponderance by the "socialist camp," plus the "peoples' revolutionary struggle," can pull the nuclear teeth of imperialism.

There are two wrong assumptions implicit in this position. First, that a drastic shift in the "balance of power" between the opposing power blocs can by itself compel imperialism to surrender its warmaking capacities. Second, that the successes of the colonial revolution plus the economic and military advances of the "socialist camp" can change the international balance of forces enough to paralyze imperialism and prevent the button from being pressed.

This line of reasoning leaves out of account the paramount factor in the world situation: the class relations in the imperialist strongholds. The development of the workers movement there will be decisive in determining the destiny of mankind in the nuclear age. No matter how many economic, military and political successes are registered by the workers states and in the colonial lands, the key to permanent peace and a world socialist society of abundance lies within the centers of capitalism, above all the United States. The warmaking powers can be taken from the atomaniacs only through the struggle for the conquest of power by the socialist workers movement there.

The Chinese do not see or clearly state this fundamental fact. Moreover, in such an advanced capitalism as Japan, the Chinese take no exception to the position of the Japanese CP that the main task there is, not the fight for workers power and socialism, but to win national independence from U.S. imperialism.

(2) Most reprehensible is the refusal of the Chinese to favor the de-Stalinization moves taken in the Soviet bloc since 1956. The continued confirmation of the Stalin cult places them at odds with the most progressive forces and antibureaucratic tendencies within the Soviet bloc and the Communist parties. This antagonism toward the relaxation of authoritarian rule serves to counteract the support which revolutionary militants in the Soviet sphere might otherwise be disposed to give to their criticisms of Moscow's line.

This reactionary attitude is symbolized on the state level in Peking's unprincipled bloc with Hoxha's Albania, one of the most despicable Stalinized regimes in Europe. In the factional fight against Khrushchev the Chinese are also giving aid and comfort to the discredited Stalinist die-hards in the Soviet Union headed by the deposed Molotov "anti-party" group.

Mao stands at the opposite pole in

this respect to Castro who has not only supported the de-Stalinization processes in the Soviet bloc but has taken prompt and energetic steps to check any spread of that bureaucratic infection in Cuba.

(3) While Peking praises Albania as a model Marxist-Leninist state, it unwarrantedly dismisses Yugoslavia as a capitalist state which should be excluded from the "socialist camp." Yet the internal regime of Communist Yugoslavia is much freer than the unmitigated despotism of its Albanian neighbor.

(4) Although the Chinese Communists attack political submission to the colonial bourgeoisie, they are not consistent in this regard. For example, they have expressed no objection to the craven support given by the Indonesian CP to the government of Sukarno who is Nehru's counterpart in that country. It appears that, even in the colonial sphere, Peking's principles are tailored to fit the momentary needs of its foreign policy.

(5) Most important of all is the status of the internal regime of the Chinese workers state ruling party. The obdurate resistance of the Chinese CP leadership to de-Stalinization and its proponents is connected with strict maintenance of its own bureaucratic hold. Since the Hungarian revolution of 1956 and the quick withering of the "Hundred Flowers Bloom" experiment in 1957, the Mao regime has been very apprehensive of opposition and maintained rigid control over all domains of social and political activity.

This refusal to abandon Stalinist practices at home not only offends powerful progressive currents in the Soviet bloc but runs counter to its own conduct in the dispute with Moscow. Its demands for the open confrontation of views in the sphere of international party relations conflicts with its refusal to permit expression of dissent from the official line within their own party and country.

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Crucial events test the policies and define the positions and directions of all governments, parties and tendencies claiming to be guided by Marxist-Leninist principles. Two major developments in the past year have provided such a testing ground in the Sino-Soviet dispute.

In the India-China border conflict Moscow took an equivocal diplomatic posture which was tantamount to supporting capitalist India against Communist China. It even supplied war planes to India. The majority of the Indian CP backed Nehru. The followers of the Khrushchev line else-

where joined Nehru in the anti-China chorus. Peking correctly characterized this conduct as a betrayal of proletarian internationalism. It was the first time that the Soviet rulers allied themselves with a bourgeois regime against a workers state.

In the Caribbean crisis the Kremlin placed its missiles in Cuba less for the sake of defending the Cuban Revolution than for using them as pressure upon Washington for concessions in a prospective settlement of the Berlin affair. When this move backfired, Khrushchev not only agreed to withdraw the missiles but also to U.N. inspection of military establishments on the island without consulting the Cubans.

The Chinese have stated that the Kremlin was "adventuristic" in putting the missiles in Cuba in the first place and "capitulationist" for removing them under Kennedy's ultimatum. Unlike Khrushchev, they supported from the first the "five conditions" proposed by the Cuban government to safeguard its interests against U.S. aggression.

The disregard for Cuba's sovereignty displayed in the Caribbean crisis has hardened the suspicion of the Chinese, Cubans and others that the Kremlin will not hesitate to sacrifice the most vital interests of other workers states to its line of "peaceful coexistence" with Washington. That is why Peking speaks so bitterly of "appeasement." In truth, both the Indian and Cuban affairs furnish fresh evidence that Stalin's successors place their own national-bureaucratic interests above the rights of other workers states and the achievement of the anti-imperialist struggle.

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The root causes of the Sino-Soviet dispute are to be found in the very different national and international situations of the two workers states which give rise to conflicting interests, aims and policies of their ruling strata.

As the heads of an independent and powerful state of 700 millions who have conquered power through victorious revolution, Mao and his colleagues not only feel on a par with the Soviet leaders but superior to them in capacity to give direction to "the socialist camp." They bitterly resent the many manifestations of arrogant behavior on the part of Soviet "elder brother" which they have experienced beginning with the unannounced repudiation of Stalin in 1956.

There are profound economic, political, domestic and military reasons for the growing breach between the Soviet Union and China. The disparity in the

economic levels of the two countries is a continuous source of friction. Communist China had to start modernizing and industrializing its economy after 1949 on a more primitive foundation than the Soviet Union in the 1920's. Its more rapid rate of development in the early 1950's has been interrupted and set back by the failures of the "Great Leap Forward" and the widespread distress caused by the natural disasters since 1959.

At the 22nd Congress in 1961, while China was suffering from hunger and its economy was in a critical slowdown, Khrushchev announced that in 20 years the Soviet Union, having already achieved socialism, would approach communism. The Soviet people were promised the highest living standards in the world. Imagine the reaction of the Chinese as the Soviet leaders go ahead with this perspective, callously disregarding the massive material needs of China and its somber difficulties. Hit by poor harvests and plagued by millions of mouths to feed, Peking has had to spend scarce foreign exchange to import grain from Canada, Australia, and elsewhere. The Soviet Union has none to spare for them. Moreover, it has given more aid in the past decade to such neutralist nations as India, Egypt, and Indonesia. Now Peking has revealed that, after the Bucharest Conference of 1960, Moscow broke hundreds of economic contracts with China and cut its aid and trade to a minimum.

It is a mockery of socialism and fraternity to say that one people, a third of mankind, must live on 15 cents a day while the other is being lifted to Western standards. If the economic levels and resources of the two nations cannot be immediately equalized, as they cannot, then the Chinese would at least like to see Soviet foreign aid reallocated with a greater percentage going to them and the revolutionary forces in the colonial areas than to the neutralist bourgeois regimes.

The Khrushchev faction cannot meet the requests of the Chinese Communists for many reasons. It is bound by the utopian policy of building "communism in a single country" at the fastest pace. More substantially, the Soviet Union does not possess the capacities to increase its production, raise the living conditions of its people, sustain the expense of the nuclear arms race, go to the moon, implement its diplomatic objectives in the "third world" -- and take care in addition of the immense and pressing requirements of 700 million Chinese. The Chinese have come last in the priorities of the Kremlin's planners.

China's poverty and underdevelopment, as well as Russia's inadequacies, have been inherited from their presocial-

ist pasts.

The truth is that the unevennesses between the two countries and the frictions these engender cannot be fundamentally eliminated except through the extension of the socialist revolution to the advanced capitalist countries. Mutual aid and planned cooperation could place the necessary productive forces of the wealthier lands at the disposal of the poorer ones and narrow the gap between the haves and have-nots in the shortest possible time.

Ironing out the vast disproportions between the two sectors of humanity is the paramount task of the entire transitional period from capitalism to socialism. A genuine Marxist leadership would at least acknowledge the existence of this problem and honestly explain its gravity to the working class public, as Lenin's Bolsheviks did. But the false ideology and nationalist outlook of the Soviet and Chinese bureaucracies have kept them from even mentioning this fundamental fact. It smacks too much of the heresy of "Trotskyism."

In exposing their economic mistreatment at the hands of the Kremlin, the Chinese expose some of the consequences of Khrushchev's neo-Stalinist program of building "communism in a single country." But they have not delved into its root causes.

Dissimilarities in the international positions of the two nations are as estranging as the disparity in their economic situations. The Soviet rulers are far more privileged, conservative and contented with the status quo than the Chinese.

Communist China is the outcast of world politics among the workers states. It is diplomatically and economically isolated and militarily encircled. The U.S. stations its forces in South Korea, sustains Chiang in Formosa, and has its Seventh Fleet in adjacent waters. The Pentagon supervises antiguerrilla operations in South Vietnam, intervenes against China and its allies in Laos and neighboring countries, sends arms to India. Now China is not only excluded from the councils of the major powers and cut out from American trade but also from Soviet aid.

In response to these conditions, the Soviet and Chinese leaderships have developed divergent foreign policies and asserted different attitudes towards U.S. imperialism and Western capitalism. Despite the rebuffs encountered along the way, the Kremlin has persistently sought to reach a modus vivendi with Washington since the 1955 Geneva Summit Conference. Meanwhile, it wants to confine any

changes in international relations within the compass of its special aims and interests.

Peking, on the other hand, has to break through the blockade imposed by a hostile United States. Neither the neo-colonial bourgeois governments nor the Soviet Union, it has found, will help it enough to serve that purpose. To disrupt the Pentagon's strategy and beat back its enemies, China has no recourse but to turn towards the colonial revolutions, above all in Southeast Asia. The expansion of the anti-imperialist struggles in the colonial lands is today a life and death matter for Communist China.

The Chinese Revolution bears the same relation to Asia as the Cuban Revolution to Latin America. Both must spread in order to survive and counter the aggressions of U.S. imperialism which wants to stop and suppress any imitation of their example.

The attitude adopted towards the colonial bourgeoisie is decisive in colonial politics. Here the Chinese have sharp differences with the Russians. They have extorted admission from Moscow that it supports "just wars of colonial liberation." But they are aware that the Soviet leaders are more intent upon lining up uncommitted governments behind their diplomatic objectives than encouraging forces and movements which aspire to go beyond neocolonial status and take the socialist road to liberation.

Since the erosion of the agreements reached at the Bandung Conference in 1955, Peking has looked upon the neocolonialist bourgeois regimes as actual or prospective tools of Western imperialism. Nehru's conduct in the border dispute has fortified this view. The spread and strengthening of the worker-peasant movements in Asia offer Peking the most effective means of "neutralizing" governments inclined to play imperialism's anti-China game.

Their possession of H-bombs and the means of delivering them gives the U.S. and the USSR an equal stake in maintaining the present "balance of terror" as part of their condominium over the rest of the world. So long as universal disarmament is not enforced, the Chinese believe they have as much right and need as any other power to atomic bombs. However, the Soviet chiefs are not disposed to help China acquire nuclear weapons.

The Soviet removal of its missiles from Cuba under Kennedy's threat has intensified Chinese resentment against the Russian resistance to its independent nuclear development. They feel that Khrushchev cowers before the imperialist "paper tiger" and in the showdown, yields too readily and too much to its blackmail.

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Ironically, Moscow today has friendlier relations with Washington, and even the Vatican, than with Peking. Both sides have agreed upon a high-level meeting to compose their differences. But they have different aims and approaches in the negotiations. The Chinese view the meeting as a preliminary to another international conference of all Communist parties. At this point Khrushchev prefers a two-power parley because he fears the Chinese will use an international conference to promote and reinforce support for their position.

As things are moving, another conference of all the Communist parties would more likely deepen and hasten a split than ease the differences. The Communist parties have already held three such conferences, one at Moscow in 1957, another at Bucharest in 1959, and a third at Moscow in 1960. Although the statements issuing from the two Moscow meetings were unanimously adopted, they did not dispose of the differences. On the contrary, these flared up more fiercely afterwards.

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Moscow's hegemony over international Communism is now challenged by rival centers of authority in Peking, Havana and Belgrade. The divergences between the leaderships of the workers states not only threaten to disrupt their diplomatic relations; the divisions between the pro-Moscow and pro-Peking forces generate differentiations and splits within, as well as between, the Communist parties.

The Great Debate which has been provoked by the disagreements between Moscow and Peking is irrepressible and cannot be arbitrarily suspended or suppressed. It would be most beneficial if the worldwide discussion could be conducted freely, openly and democratically without disrupting the unity of the workers states against the imperialist coalition and without reprisals on either a state or party level against any of the participants. But the Chinese attitude towards Yugoslavia, and the Soviet economic reprisals against China and its diplomatic breach with Albania, indicate that this is unlikely to be the case. The depth of the differences, as well as the bureaucratic methods pursued by the officialdoms involved, prevent an unimpeded clarification of the controversial issues.

Nevertheless, the Great Debate has many progressive consequences. It is striking hammer blows at the Stalinist monolithism which has strangled the Communist movement for 25 years. It is stimulating critical thought and free discussion. It has posed for reconsideration

many of the key issues of socialist policy in connection with the most burning problems of our era.

The controversy has involuntarily promoted processes of public debate in the Communist world. The Chinese Communists are publishing in their press the documents directed against their views and dared the Kremlin and other parties to do the same. They have declared that they are now a minority in the world Communist movement and have the right to be so. They assert that a majority and a minority can coexist in a Communist movement and that sometimes a minority can be correct against the majority. In turn Khrushchev has said that Communists of different countries may hold different opinions on specific questions, including some very important ones.

These welcome departures from the totalitarian uniformity of the Stalin era can help break the ground for a return to Leninist practices which permitted the free expression of minority views and the formation of tendencies and factions around them.

As the Italian CP youth organization demonstrates, the demolition of monolithism not only opens doors for the expression of unofficial views but also for the introduction of authentic Marxist-Leninist ideas along Trotskyist lines into the Great Debate. From the standpoint of revolutionary Marxist politics, this is the most positive feature of the controversy.

The Sino-Soviet conflict confirms the thesis upheld by our movement that the subordination of the communist movement to the Soviet bureaucracy was a transitory phenomenon which could not withstand the extension of the socialist revolution to other countries. This was first illustrated by Yugoslavia in 1948. Although Yugoslavia is now ranged alongside the Kremlin, the collision between the Russian and Chinese leaderships is similar in origin and significance to the Tito-Stalin break.

At bottom both stem from the clash between an independent regime issuing from a powerfully progressive worker-peasant revolution and the conservatized Soviet bureaucracy which wishes to distort and restrain its development for its own narrow ends. The requirements of these national revolutions and the interests of its ruling groups have proved incompatible with the designs and demands of the Kremlin.

The Sino-Soviet dispute has incomparably greater magnitude and importance than its predecessor because of the greater size and power of China and the different position it occupies in the unfold-

ing world revolution. Unlike the Yugoslavia of 1948, China is not situated between a Stalinized East Europe and Western capitalism with a conservatized workers movement but in the storm center of the colonial revolution and the anti-imperialist struggles of Asia.

The more militant and progressive views of Peking are finding a responsive audience in Asia, Africa and Latin America where the colonial revolution is in full flood. Most of the Communist parties in Asia except for the Indian, Ceylonese and Outer Mongolian, sympathize with the Chinese. The arguments and actions of the Chinese can have the most powerful and radicalizing effects upon the communist movements in the colonial lands.

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The Sino-Soviet dispute is not a mere personal quarrel between two ambitious heads of state. It is more than a conflict between the two Communist governments and parties of China and the USSR. It goes beyond the division between East and West, prosperous and poor peoples, colonial rebels and metropolitan conservatives. It concerns nothing less than the fundamental problems of our epoch.

This dispute extends and deepens the historic controversies which have shaken and reshaped the world socialist movement at previous turning points in its development. Most notable have been those between revolutionary Marxism and revisionism-reformism at the beginning of this century, between Bolshevism and Social Democratic chauvinism and centrism during the first world war and the Russian Revolution, and the Communist Left Opposition and Stalinism after Lenin's death. The current debate has grander dimensions since it directly affects forty percent of the world's inhabitants. And it will have even more portentous consequences for the fate of mankind.

As the heads of giant states representing hundreds of millions of people, the Russian and Chinese CP leaders are the principal protagonists in the Great Debate. They have regulated its unfolding to date and their decisions will shape the main lines of its next stage. But the discussion is not, and will not be, restricted to the positions and decisions of the officialdoms headquartered in the Communist capitals. The breakup of Stalinist monolithism is encouraging anti-bureaucratic sentiments down below and stimulating broader currents of dissent which tend to go beyond the limits set by Moscow and Peking.

A worldwide realignment of revolutionary forces is being set into motion

by the same vast changes of recent years which have brought about the Great Debate. In Latin America such groupings have already begun to draw together under the impetus of the Cuban example.

This process is only in its beginnings. It will have to pass through a series of turns and stages before it arrives at fruition. Its outcome will depend, among other things, on the correctness and effectiveness of the intervention of the Trotskyist cadres in its unfolding.

How should Marxists orient themselves in the crossfires and complexities of the Great Debate at its present stage?

In determining which of the contending parties takes the more progressive stands, the Fidelista Cubans can usefully serve as a standard of measurement. They not only have a record of persistent advance toward revolutionary Marxist positions but have the most correct attitudes on the two most important aspects of the dispute: workers democracy and international class struggle policy. Peking and Albania most gravely default on the first; Moscow and Belgrade on the second.

The Chinese Communists have views close to the Cubans on a series of key issues connected with the major problems of anti-imperialist action, especially in Asia, Africa and Latin America. But, apart from their inconsistencies in these areas, their resistance to the processes and proponents of de-Stalinization array them against the forces striving for democratization in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe and harms the Chinese Peoples Republic itself.

The Khrushchev tendency is the official banner-bearer of liberalized reform in the Soviet bloc. But its opportunistic and even treacherous course in foreign affairs has a pernicious influence on the progress of the mass revolutionary movements against U.S. imperialism and Western capitalism.

The Tito leadership, allied with the Kremlin, has introduced significant innovations in workers control of industries and other fields. But it stands at the far right wing of the Communist states in its positions on the nature of imperialism and its policies toward the revolutionary movements against capitalism.

For a correct orientation it is necessary to avoid making sweeping and one-sided judgments which disregard the wrong positions and the inconsistencies of the contending parties. The Moscow-Peking dispute is not that of a clear-cut opposition between a reformist-bureaucratic and a Marxist revolutionary party, as some contend.

This is a confrontation between two bureaucratic formations, both of Stalinist schooling. One heads a politically degenerated workers state in process of internal reform; the other a deformed workers state where the revolution is still vital and vigorous. The two contending regimes are being subjected to very different pressures from imperialism, the worker-peasant masses at home, and the international revolution. This accounts for the zigzags in their policies and the contradictions in their positions.

Moreover, they are not the only participants in the dispute. Five distinct political and ideological tendencies have already been drawn into the discussion. In addition to the positions advocated by Khrushchev's and Mao's regimes, there are those put forward by the Yugoslav Communists, the Fidelista Cubans and the Trotskyists.

What are the tasks of the Trotskyist cadres in this new phase of the death agony of Stalinism?

We enter the Great Debate equipped with our own traditions, program, proposals and goals. We are not Khrushchevists, Maoists, Titoists or even Fidelistas. The Trotskyists represent a distinct ideological and independent political tendency. We make clear our support to any correct conception or progressive position taken by any of the other tendencies. But our long-range purpose is to bring people, individually and collectively, organized and unaffiliated, to our program and perspectives and fuse with them on that basis.

Our intervention has two different aspects. Predominant at this stage is our ideological participation in the discussion.

The Yugoslavs, the Chinese and the Russians have all accused each other of behaving like "Trotskyists" on one or another aspect of this dispute. It is no accident that Trotskyism, even though in falsified shapes, has appeared from the first on the arena of the debate. Khrushchev's revelations about Stalin at the 20th and 22nd Congresses of the Russian CP and the de-Stalinization processes have already opened the eyes of many Communists to the correctness of the Trotskyist analysis of Stalinism and broken down the ban upon the ideas of the Fourth International. This interest in Trotskyist views will receive another strong impetus from the progress of the Sino-Soviet dispute and the vital issues it has posed to the world Communist movement.

The Trotskyists must bring forward their own views at every opportunity, not only to set the historical record straight but because we have an irreplaceable con-

tribution to make toward clarifying the controversial questions.

The strategic goal of the world Trotskyist tendency is to see that the prolonged process of reorientation and regroupment is consummated by a return to genuine Leninism through the strengthening of the Trotskyist cadres and the extension of their influence. Tactically the problem is how to get closer to the CP dissidents favoring the Chinese views who are breaking with Stalinism to facilitate the broad realignment of revolutionary forces promoted by the dispute.

The task of the SWP is somewhat simpler on the tactical side than that of Trotskyists in other places. Although the American radical movement is small and weak, we hold a strategic position within it. The developments of the dispute, especially the Chinese CP attack upon the attitude of the American CP toward the Kennedy administration, should further demoralize and discredit the CP. The pro-Mao grouplets are scattered and incohesive. Moreover, in the Western hemisphere the example of Cuba and the issue of the Cuban Revolution is more important in separating the revolutionary from the reformist elements than the more remote Sino-Soviet dispute. This is especially true of the United States, where the Cuban question is in the center of American foreign policy.

We are not fellow travellers, camp-followers, uncritical supporters, and still less capitulators to any opportunist, bureaucratic or centrist currents, whatever tactical readjustments and organizational expedients are required to effect closer relationships and unre-

stricted communication with other tendencies. We must tell the whole truth about all the issues at stake and present a rounded picture of all the contending participants in order to carry out our political function and win over solid supporters to our cause.

Elementary as this may be, it is necessary to make the point sharply and explicitly when our movement is being drawn into a tremendous turn in world socialist development. The tactical readjustments required to take advantage of new openings must not involve sliding over into adaptation to Maoism or Khrushchevism.

In this connection, our newer members should study and absorb the lessons of our movement in dealing with centrist currents moving to the left. There is danger of losing old members instead of gaining new militants if our program and aims are lost sight of and sacrificed to tactical expedients.

Such adaptation or capitulation is all the more unwarranted and reprehensible since the outbreak of the Sino-Soviet dispute is in its own way a vindication of Trotskyist foresight. The two main issues at the bottom of the Sino-Soviet dispute are the same as those which pitted Trotsky against Stalin in the 1920's. These are the questions of socialist internationalism and workers democracy. It would be impermissible for Trotskyists to hide or abandon their views on these and related questions at a moment when they are being reconsidered not only by small groups of propagandists but by millions upon millions of fighters for socialism throughout the world.

THE SWP POSITION ON CHINA

Resolution Adopted by 1963 SWP Convention

The Third Chinese Revolution is now thirteen years old. During that time, and especially since our conclusions were codified in the resolution adopted by the SWP national convention in September 1955 and ratified by the 1957 SWP national convention, all our official activities and writings related to that colossal event have been directed in accord with the following guidelines.

1. The Significance and Achievements of the Revolution

The Chinese Revolution converted China from a capitalist-colonialist country to a workers state by overthrowing Kuomintang rule, ending imperialist domination, unifying the nation under a central government, wiping out provincialism and warlordism, nationalizing the land, banks and major means of industrial production, monopolizing foreign trade, planning the economy, and reorganizing agrarian relations through a series of steps culminating in the "People's Communes."

This radical transformation of China's social and political organization has brought about remarkable progress in many fields in the face of immense obstacles. The new regime has taken measures to improve food, clothing and shelter, stabilized the currency, cleaned up prostitution and beggary, promoted literacy, education and science, expanded public health and medical services, introduced social benefits for the aged and disabled, broken down the patriarchal family, giving greater freedom and equality to the women and youth, built up and beautified many cities. These changes and many others associated with them testify to the gains made through the revolution which has released enormous popular enthusiasm and energies.

The Chinese Revolution is not only the major turning point in modern Chinese history; it is the greatest blow against capitalism since the Russian Revolution of 1917. It is a continuation and extension of that first socialist victory. The progressive consequences of the overturn have not been confined within China's boundaries. The successes of the Chinese Revolution have affected the whole of world politics, especially in the colonial areas, and will have even more profound impact in the next decades. The isolation of the Soviet Union has been broken. The balance of forces between the capitalist and the anticapitalist camp has been altered to the advantage of the latter.

New China has become the central powerhouse of the colonial revolution, especially throughout Asia. It is popularizing socialist ideas and methods among the underdeveloped nations and providing them with an example to follow in overcoming their backwardness and modernizing themselves. In the Korean War China proved a major deterrent to the further penetration of U.S. imperialism into the Far East. The People's Republic of China is emerging as a military and diplomatic power of the first rank, while it is only at the threshold of its assertion in international affairs.

2. The Class Nature of Communist China -- and its Political Structure

These mighty accomplishments, their international radiations, and the prospects of progress opened up for the 700 millions of China and the rest of humanity have determined our fundamental attitude toward the Third Chinese Revolution and our definition of the social structure and state which have issued from it. We are firm partisans of that workers and peasants revolution, defenders of its social forms and conquests against all internal and external enemies and supporters of its advances. Our party has demonstrated its solidarity with revolutionary China in the struggles against Chiang Kai-shek, then in the Korean War, and most recently in the India-China border clash.

We have sociologically characterized China as a workers state resulting from and based upon the fundamental social achievements of the revolution -- expropriation of the landlords and capitalists, nationalization of the means of production, state control of foreign trade and planning of the economy.

At the same time we have noted that the political system of the People's Republic is not in harmony with its socioeconomic foundations. It has been subjected to grave bureaucratic deformations. These were brought into the revolution by the Stalinist background, training and methods of the Chinese Communist Party, which organized and directed the civil war, set up the new regime, and has monopolized all political activity from its birth.

The CCP did not follow up the victory of the workers and peasants and its own assumption of power by establishing, developing and strengthening organs of popular control. The bureaucratic tendencies present from the first have been sub-

sequently reinforced by China's poverty and cultural backwardness. The predominance of the peasantry over the workers, the insistent demands of extensive and accelerated capital investment in economic development, the sustained scarcities of consumer goods, including food and other elementary necessities, coupled with the authoritarian, ultra-centralized character of the regime has fostered the growth of inequalities. There are no democratic curbs upon the arbitrariness and appetites of the ruling stratum in the government, party, army and economic enterprises. Although their privileges may appear slight compared with the exorbitant parasitism in the wealthier workers states, they can loom large amidst the extremely low level of subsistence.

The absence of workers and peasants councils, freedom of organization and political expression, the suppression of revolutionary Marxist opinion and groups, the total fusion of the party with the state apparatus, the exclusive possession of all the instrumentalities of power by the CP have given a special stamp to the new Chinese regime. It is a workers and peasants state by virtue of its property relations and major social tendencies. But it is a deformed workers state because of the lack of any means of popular control over its policies and administration. In political terms, it is not, as its leaders claim, a "people's democracy," but a bureaucratic autocracy elevated above the worker-peasant masses in whose name it rules.

3. The Nature of the Chinese CP

The Chinese CP leadership was formed in the Stalinist school, imitated its methods, and followed the twists and turns of the Kremlin's foreign policy until 1947. However, even before the revolution, the Mao leadership showed certain signs of mistrust and independence of Moscow because of its experiences with Stalin, its illegality, its hard struggle to survive, its isolated stay in Yanan, and the closeness of its cadres to their peasant base.

Riding the irrepressible peasant uprisings from 1947 to 1949, the CP broke with Stalin's Menshevik line of collaboration with the national bourgeoisie and conducted the civil war to its logical conclusion by organizing, mobilizing and leading the armed masses to the conquest of power.

Installed at the head of the new revolutionary regime, the Chinese CP entered a new stage of its development. As a sovereign power with enormous prestige and popularity and an independent base of operations in the most populous country, it was no longer subordinate to the Soviet bureaucracy but on a par with it.

Despite its present hostility to the Yugoslav CP, the Chinese CP has many features in common with it. Since it won supremacy through leading an authentic popular revolution which overthrew the old order and opened the road to socialism, it is much closer to the masses, is more responsive to their demands, and more susceptible to their pressures than the CP leaderships placed in power by the Kremlin in Eastern Europe. The growing strength of the Soviet bloc, the spread of the colonial revolution, and the direct menace of U.S. imperialism have partially radicalized the foreign policies of the Chinese CP, although it still collaborates politically with colonial bourgeoisies, as in the case of Indonesia. Inside China the impetus of the unfinished revolutionary process has impelled it forward.

Nevertheless, the Chinese CP has not cast off its Stalinist heritage. It is bureaucratic in its inner life as in its methods of governing the country and administering its economy and culture. All major policy decisions are settled by a few top leaders and handed down to the cadres who have no right of initiation or dissent.

The period since 1956 has been a crucial test of the revolutionary socialist quality of all the regimes and parties in the Soviet orbit. How has the Chinese CP met this test?

In 1956-57 the Chinese leaders backed the Kremlin in its suppression of the Hungarian revolution and cast its weight against the workers' efforts to throw off bureaucratic rule in Eastern Europe. In 1957, after a brief attempt at relaxation in the "Hundred Flowers Bloom" experiment, in which Mao went so far as to justify the workers' right to strike, his regime abruptly halted the "Bloom and Contend" policy and cracked down on the students and intellectuals for fear of further and more deep-going expressions of mass discontent.

Since then Peking has resisted and opposed the extension and deepening of the de-Stalinization processes in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. It regards Khrushchev's reforms not as inadequate concessions to the demands of the people, but as adaptations to alien class forces leading toward the restoration of capitalism. It is in a de facto bloc with the Stalinist diehards who want to contain and reverse the trends toward liberalization.

Within China, despite spasmodic promises of toleration of dissent, the CP continues to silence all criticism, even when presented from a socialist standpoint. Although the regime campaigns furiously against "rightists," it has

collaborated with rightwing groups while hounding and imprisoning Trotskyists.

The CP's "commandism" and its harmful consequences were exhibited in the "Great Leap Forward" and the conduct of the People's Communes during 1958-59. The reckless haste and disregard for the welfare of the peasant population set back economic development for a period. The almost military mobilization of the labor force, the excessive prolongation of the working day and elimination of needed days of rest led to passive resistance and a drop in production. Although the CP has not resorted to the violence of Stalin's forced collectivization and retreated in time, it has maintained an attitude of bureaucratic paternalism toward the workers and peasants. The worst excesses of the Great Leap Forward have since been corrected -- but as bureaucratically as the original policies were instituted and applied.

The Chinese CP justifies its dictatorship under the pretense of building socialism in one country, preparing more bitter disappointments for the masses inculcated with this illusory perspective. It miseducates the revolutionary masses by confusing Marxism with Stalinism and upholding Stalin as a continuator of Lenin. Since it does not have a Marxist program and does not follow a consistent revolutionary course either in its domestic or foreign policies, it cannot be regarded as the true representative of the workers vanguard in China.

4. The Permanent Revolution in China

In contrast with the negative results of the Chinese revolution of 1925-27, the progress of the Third Chinese Revolution has supplied massive positive confirmation of the laws of the permanent revolution.

(a) It passed over from the bourgeois-democratic stage in tackling the problems of national development (national unity, independence from imperialism, the uprooting of feudal survivals, land reform) to the proletarian-socialist stage (nationalization of industry and the banks, state monopoly of foreign trade, planning, and collectivization of peasant holdings) in an uninterrupted sequence of action.

(b) Victory for the people was achieved and the foundations of a new order established not by political subordination to the "progressive" bourgeoisie but by armed struggle against the national bourgeoisie based on a revolutionary alliance of the workers and peasants.

(c) The revolutionary regime has proceeded to reconstruct the old order at an accelerated tempo in one field after

another.

(d) The triumphant revolution has tended to extend itself into the neighboring lands of Tibet, North Vietnam and North Korea, to spur revolutionary movements in Asia, and colonial revolutionary forces from Algeria to Cuba.

However, the process of permanent revolution is far from ended within China itself. The world revolution leading to socialism requires not only the destruction of capitalist relations on a national and international scale but the creation of democratic relations within each workers state and fraternal relations among them. The struggle for workers democracy against bureaucratic overlords is an indispensable aspect of the total process of permanent revolution.

The transition from capitalism to socialism and on to communism necessitates the transformation of politics and culture as well as economics. This must be based upon the fusion of politics with production and consumption in a regime under the democratic direction of the producers. Workers control over the productive processes and plans, and over all facets of political activity and civil life, is not a luxury to be deferred to some remote future but a necessity of economic progress and the fulfillment of the aims of socialism. It is central to the cultural elevation of the masses demanded by socialism.

The existing political structure of China is in conflict with the further requirements of the socialist revolution. The most crucial of all the internal contradictions in the country is that between the inherently democratic tendencies of the popular upsurge and the autocratic character of the regime. The Marxist vanguard has to indicate the progressive solution of this conflict.

5. Main Tasks of the Trotskyists

A realistic revolutionary leadership has to take into account the objective necessities of the given situation and elaborate a practical set of proposals to meet the problems posed at the specific stage of revolutionary development. The Marxist vanguard in China is obligated to support every forward impulse of the revolution from the masses and every progressive measure of the regime. However, it does not confine its action within the limits prescribed by the ruling party which insists that the masses await its directives or secure permission before voicing criticism or taking steps to correct evils and abuses.

While recognizing the positive contributions Peking is making in the struggle against Moscow's opportunism on the

international arena, revolutionary Marxism must criticize the shortcomings of Peking's foreign policy and present a program for democratizing economic and political life. The Chinese people can move forward to a genuine socialist democracy through the creation of workers and peasants councils exercising full powers, through democratic administration of the communes, through workers administration of industrial enterprises. The trade unions should be independent of the state and have the right to strike. There should be freedom for all scientific and artistic schools, the right of other socialist tendencies to exist along with the right of criticism within the CP.

Such a program of struggle for workers democracy would run up against the resistance of the regime. It would be preferable if the resulting confrontation between the bureaucrats and the people could be resolved by mutual agreement of the contending forces. But, so long as Stalinist methods and concepts dominate the CP, this is the least likely of variants. Mao's regime tenaciously adheres to the Stalinist dogmas of the inseparability of party and state, the infallibility of the top leadership, the monolithic party prohibiting tendencies, and the impermissibility of rival workers parties. It applies the most stringent forms of thought control, making it risky and even criminal to harbor "dangerous thoughts."

There are no legal means, no institutional channels through which the direction and policies of the one-party state can be changed or corrected in a peaceful way. Today any left socialist tendency which urged the adoption of policies contravening the official line of the movement would be persecuted, outlawed, imprisoned. Any serious sustained effort to modify the political system involving mass action would be met with stern reprisals from the ruling bureaucracy which would smear it as "rightist" and "counterrevolutionary." Thus any consistent attempt at democratization would be transformed by the regime into a revolutionary political encounter, regardless of anyone's intentions or aims. This was demonstrated by the leadership's reaction to the criticisms expressed in 1957.

For these reasons the political line of the revolutionary Marxists remains one of political revolution aiming at thoroughgoing democratization. This requires intransigent opposition to the holders of power, not reconciliation with them or adaptation to their regime. A new party will have to be formed to conduct

that struggle. Its elements will be found in the ranks and lower leadership of the CP, in the factories, communes, universities and technical schools, especially among the youth raised under the revolution.

6. The Challenge to Our Position

Numerous tendencies controvert these longstanding positions. They are challenged inside our party in the resolution submitted by comrades Swabek and Liang which proposes to replace them on the following key points.

(a) The political regime. They contend that the People's Republic of China is not bureaucratically deformed but is basically democratic in structure, operation and tendency, despite certain minor bureaucratic manifestations. The government is as responsive to the needs and responsible to the interests of the worker-peasant masses as was the Soviet Republic under Lenin and as is the Cuba of Castro.

(b) The character of the CP. The Chinese CP is not a Stalinist or opportunist party in any way but, according to Swabek, has been a revolutionary Marxist party since Mao became its head. It is an adequate and appropriate political agency for the promotion and realization of socialism. It resembles the Bolshevik party of Lenin far more than the Communist Party of Stalin.

(c) The Trotskyist line. Swabek and Liang urge the Trotskyists to abandon political opposition to Mao's regime and extend political support to the CP leadership. They propose to endorse with minor reservations the overall political direction of the ruling party and its dealings with the Chinese people. They counterpose a line of reliance upon a reformed bureaucracy to the line of struggle against it for a fundamental change in the structure, leadership and policies of the regime in accord with the Trotskyist program of workers democracy and revolutionary internationalism.

7. Reaffirmation of Our Position

We reject these assessments and the proposed revisions of our positions derived from them. They are not warranted by the real situation in China today, insofar as we know it. We reaffirm the main conclusions of the 1957 convention resolution as these have been restated and brought up to date in this document.

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New Judgment on the Sino-Soviet Rift

Monthly Review and the Great Debate

By George Novack

THE Sino-Soviet dispute is upsetting relations between the workers' states and shaking up the Communist parties. It is also forcing other currents of opinion in the socialist movement to clarify their positions on the controversial issues and declare their attitude toward the principal protagonists.

The perplexities provoked among radicals by the unexpected widening of the schism between the two major members of the Soviet bloc and by their devious handling of the Great Debate are mirrored in *Monthly Review*, the most widely circulated organ of academic Marxism in the United States. Its editors used to believe in the predestined harmony of all countries in the "socialist camp" as well as the absence of conflict between Stalin and the Soviet people. The developments of the past decade have shattered these illusions.

To be sure, the 1948 split between Moscow and Belgrade had occurred before then. But this could be dismissed as an exceptional event, an aberration due to Stalin's intransigence. After Khrushchev embarked on deStalinization and effected a reconciliation with Tito, this impediment was removed. However, Moscow's resumption of friendly relations with Belgrade coincided with a rupture with Albania and deepening differences with Communist China. How was this to be explained and which party to the dispute was right?

THE first reaction of the *Monthly Review* editors was to side with Moscow. After describing the views of the disputants, they offered the following evaluation in their December 1961 issue.

"... We have no doubt whatever that the Russians are right and the Chinese wrong. The Chinese position seems to us to be a typical example of a kind of dogmatic leftism that has appeared again and again in the history of the international socialist movement. Two of the distinguishing hallmarks by which it can be recognized are underestimation of nationalism and the lumping together of all opposition in an undifferentiated reactionary mass. It always exudes super-militancy and preaches no compromise."

As the dispute has unfolded, doubts about the correctness of their original conclusions mounted. Today

the editors have reversed their stand. In a special issue on "The Split in the Socialist World" (May, 1963) they announce that their former analysis was wrong and they now support the Chinese against the Russians. They write:

"On the main issue in the controversy — whether the struggle for peace or the struggle against imperialism should take priority — we are convinced that the Chinese do indeed have the truth on their side. Real peace will never be achieved much less guaranteed, as long as imperialism exists. And we are also convinced that the Chinese are right that imperialism can and will suffer decisive defeats at the hands of revolutionary peoples of the underdeveloped countries."

The *Monthly Review* editors now assert that the Chinese have the correct revolutionary positions on the key questions: the character of the historical period through which the world is passing, the nature of imperialism and how to fight it, the possibilities of peaceful transition from capitalism to socialism, and the program of "structural reform" versus proletarian revolution for the advanced capitalist countries.

They protest against the misrepresentation of the Chinese views by Khrushchev and his associates. "The Chinese are accused of wanting to advance the cause of socialism through world war, of advocating and practicing adventurist foreign policies, of stirring up premature revolts, of ignorance of conditions outside their own country, and so on and so forth. All of these charges are false, as anyone who knows the history of the recent past and takes the trouble to read the relevant Chinese literature can easily verify." They applaud the Chinese for publishing both sides of the debate while the Soviet leadership suppresses the Chinese replies to the accusations against them.

THIS shift from Khrushchev to Mao on the issues of the international class struggle raised by the Great Debate is a step forward by the *Monthly Review* editors. Their rectification of a hasty judgment and their openness to argument shines by comparison with the lackey reflexes of the American CP leaders who

have dutifully snapped to attention under Khrushchev's baton, incurring the scorn of Peking for "prettifying" Kennedy as a prospective preserver of world peace.

Defects of the Argument

Do the revised opinions of *Monthly Review* provide an adequate analysis of the Sino-Soviet dispute? The editors at least now do justice to the Chinese where their policies are right against the Russian. But their current viewpoint still has serious defects.

One of the principal points discussed in their article concerns the revision of Marxism. Who represents authentic scientific socialism and who has abandoned its methods in the Sino-Soviet conflict? In 1961 Huberman and Sweezy maintained that, despite their differences, both the "Soviet and Chinese positions are built on common Marxist foundations." This is as though Lenin, in his fight against revisionism and opportunism, had emphasized that Bolsheviks and Social-Democrats both appealed to the traditions of Marx in their polemics.

Now the editors say that only the Chinese are orthodox Marxist-Leninists. "The Russians and their followers, by comparison, are undoubtedly the modern revisionists the Chinese describe them as." They no longer depict Khrushchev as the realistic statesman restraining the super-militant Chinese Communists from reckless acts. He, together with Togliatti and (we presume) Gus Hall, is a revisionist who has "thrown dialectical and historical materialism to the winds and . . . put in its place the most commonplace kind of pragmatism."

AS FOR themselves, Huberman and Sweezy claim to be true-red Marxists but somewhat unorthodox Leninists, particularly on the question of revisionism. They state that, while most of Lenin's ideas were valid, his theory of Social-Democratic revisionism has not stood up and should be discarded. And since the Chinese attempt to extend Lenin's conceptions about revisionism from the Social Democracy to the "modern revisionism" of Khrushchev, Togliatti and Tito, they too fall down.

The gist of their reasoning is as follows: The Chinese repeat after Lenin that revisionism is "bourgeois ideology which infiltrated into the ranks of the workers." The vehicle of this infiltration is the labor aristocracy which turns against the interests of the masses and transmits the pressures of the bourgeoisie. This theory of revisionism, they hold, is wrong on two counts.

In the first place, the Bolsheviks were proved wrong and the Social Democracy was right "for the simple reason that the Social Democrats and not the Communists expressed what the workers felt to be their real interests. The workers, in other words, were not revolutionaries at heart, and no amount of exhortation by the Communists could turn them into revolutionaries."

Huberman and Sweezy write as though the original conflict between the revolutionary Marxist and reformist-revisionist trends in the European labor movement began over questions of strategy in the years following the First World War and the Russian Revolution. It actually broke out in full force in 1914 over the issue of supporting the imperialist war and then during 1917-1918 over the policies to be pursued in promoting the Russian and European revolution to victory. Lenin's ideas on revisionism were most positively tested during the Russian Revolution in the

Bolshevik contest for leadership of the insurrectionary masses against the Mensheviks and other reformist tendencies. His theory of the causes of revisionism was not simply an academic exercise; it served above all as an instrument of orientation and a guide to action in the struggle for workers' power.

The Working Class is Blamed

The counter theory offered at this late date by *Monthly Review* shifts the responsibility for the subsequent defeats of the revolutionary movement from the Social-Democratic leaders to the working class. Yet it was these leaders, and not the workers, who were not "revolutionaries at heart." This does not mean that the working class was ready for revolution or that the struggle for power was on the agenda at all times. But during the periods of recession in the struggle the Social-Democratic reformists and centrists failed to prepare for the next upsurge and, when that broke out despite them, they refused to mobilize the workers for the showdown with the capitalist rulers, and even sold out their movement.

ACCORDING to Huberman and Sweezy, however, the Social-Democratic leaders — and the Stalinists who later imitated their example — were adjusting to "what the workers felt to be their real interests." They do not necessarily think that the reformists were right in doing so but the latter were at least acting as realists in opposition to the romanticism and "dogmatic leftism" of Lenin's followers.

Leaving aside all the other revolutionary opportunities that were mishandled and missed from the defeated Germany of 1918 to the crisis-torn France of 1934-36, how does such an interpretation, based on the non-revolutionary disposition of the workers and the common sense of their official leaders, fare in respect to the Spanish Civil War of 1936-38? Were the Spanish workers so averse to revolutionary action that "no amount of exhortation by the Communists could turn them into revolutionaries"? In truth, the Communist and Socialist parties imposed upon the insurgent masses reformist, i.e., counter-revolutionary, policies that lost both the civil war and the revolution. The revisionists of the 1930's did not express or represent either the real feelings or the basic interests of the working masses, any more than did the German Social-Democratic leaders of the 1920's or the Communist leaders who helped Generals de Gaulle and Badoglio restore capitalism in Western Europe at the close of the Second World War.

The "Non-revolutionary" Workers

However, the main function of the editors' rejection of the Leninist theory of the causes of revisionism is not to exculpate the misdeeds of the Social Democracy from 1915 to today but to provide an "objective" rationale for the Kremlin's current line. According to them, the source and support of Khrushchev's revisionism is not to be found in the special interests of any labor aristocracy but in the non-revolutionary attitude and outlook of the Soviet people which he faithfully reflects.

"... The Soviet people are no more revolutionary than the workers of the advanced capitalist countries, though for different reasons. It is not that they have

shared as junior partners in the exploitation of a dependent empire, but rather that they have already made their revolution, have successfully defended it in violent struggles, and have laid the foundations of a rapid advance to higher standards of living. What they want now is a long period of peace and quiet in which to get on with the business in hand Marxism-Leninism is in its essence, as the Chinese correctly insist, a revolutionary doctrine addressed to the oppressed and exploited of the world. How can it be expected to appeal to people who are not oppressed or exploited and who have no need of a revolution?"

The Communist parties in the advanced capitalist countries likewise go along with the anti-revolutionary temper of their own working classes. The Chinese, on the other hand, are so fervently militant because they live in the colonial area, the hotbed of world revolution.

THUS the Communist parties are not vanguard organizations of struggle which strive to radicalize the labor movement but, purely passive registers and accurate reflectors of the given state of consciousness of the masses in their own countries. Although the *Monthly Review* editors express disapproval of all this, they sympathetically understand its inevitability.

This simple image of the role of the Communist parties will not stand much inspection. It assumes that the policies of the Communist parties in the capitalist countries are arrived at independently of Moscow and under national influences alone. And it ignores the fact that they can at times undertake adventurist actions which suit the diplomatic needs of the Kremlin, even though these may run counter to the sentiments and welfare of the workers. Nor does the notion of direct correspondence between the CP line and the mood of the masses hold good for many colonial countries. In Iraq, as Tabitha Petran points out in the same issue, the Communist leaders from 1959 on followed a purely opportunistic course of support to the Kassim dictatorship under highly advantageous revolutionary conditions.

Questions to Chinese Communists

Despite the flaws in their own theory, the *Monthly Review* editors do pose questions to the Chinese Communists which lead to the core of the problem of "modern revisionism." The Chinese, they say, correctly characterize Khrushchev and his fellow CP leaders as revisionists. But, according to the Leninism they swear by, revisionism has its social roots in the creation of a labor bureaucracy and a labor aristocracy. Where, they ask, is such a social basis to be found in the Soviet Union to account for the prevalence of revisionism among its leaders? "Does it make sense to speak of bourgeois influence penetrating the ranks of the Soviet workers through a labor aristocracy?"

The question is well put. *Monthly Review* answers it by denying the existence of any privileged social strata in the Soviet Union. The Leninist method therefore is for them wholly irrelevant. The editors are able to do this so easily, not only by ignoring the gross inequalities within the Soviet social structure, but by avoiding all reference to the well-known Trotskyist theory of the bureaucratization of the Soviet regime under Stalinism. They locate the causes of "modern revisionism," not in

the material conditions and social differentiations of the workers' states, but in the conservatism of the masses.¹

They point out that Khrushchev is "the fountainhead" of this revisionism in world communism. But the present Premier is only rendering more explicit and carrying forward in practice the disfigurements of Marxist-Leninist doctrine initiated under Stalin. Khrushchev denies this. (He wishes to cover his own tracks and obliterate the memory of his teacher and sponsor.) The Chinese deny this. (They uphold Stalin as the continuator of Leninism and decry Khrushchev as an anti-Leninist.) The *Monthly Review* editors do not care to mention this. (Is that because they might have to review their entire attitude toward Stalinism and Trotskyism?) Yet it is the case.

There is no need to disqualify Lenin's conception of the nature of labor opportunism to explain Stalin's or Khrushchev's course. It is only necessary to know how to apply Lenin's method and ideas to the development, or more precisely, the political degeneration of the Soviet regime and the Communist parties from his death in 1924, as Trotsky did.

STALINISM, he explained, was a reactionary and revisionist tendency which arose within the Bolshevik party because of the isolation, economic and cultural backwardness of the young Soviet Republic fighting for survival. Its immediate social nucleus was the newborn Soviet bureaucracy which had its main social supports in the peasantry and labor aristocracy. This privileged bureaucratic caste, in the government, army, party and economy, straddled the two major social forces within the Soviet Union, now leaning on one, now turning to the other, as the necessities of self-preservation dictated.

Bureaucracy's Dual Role

The Soviet bureaucracy had an equally ambivalent position on the world arena which was responsible for the violent zigzags in its foreign policies. While it sought to accommodate itself and conclude deals with the imperialists at the expense of the international working class, when it was threatened with attack by this or that sector of the imperialist powers, it had to summon the workers to its aid.

This dual nature and role of the Stalinist bureaucracy is not unique. It can be seen in the conduct of other union and socialist bureaucracies. For instance, such an incorrigible conservative as David McDonald, head of the United Steelworkers, was compelled to lead a 116-day strike against the steel companies after collaborating with them for years against the workers and visiting the U.S. Steel plants on a goodwill mission arm in arm with the corporation president.

KHRUSHCHEV does not represent the real interests nor fulfill the demands of the Soviet workers; he is the executive agent of the upper crust of Soviet society. But he is subjected to the ever more insistent and unsatisfied demands of the masses as well as the claims of the more enlightened sections of the intelligentsia. He has had to make significant concessions to these in order to preserve and protect the dominance of his ruling group.

The Communist parties who are under Moscow's tutelage are primarily subject to the crass opportunism expressed in Khrushchev's line of "peaceful coexistence" and secondarily to the bourgeois and petty-

bourgeois influences emanating from their national environments. This is as true of the weak and discredited American CP as of the big and strong French CP.

A Dangerous Subject For Chinese

If the *Monthly Review* editors see no merit in Lenin's teachings on revisionism (which, parenthetically, extended and enriched Marx and Engels' theory of the opportunism of the British labor leaders of their own day), the Chinese Communists dare not press their application too far. In dealing with Khrushchev's revisionism, they have not passed beyond the spheres of ideology and policy to probe into the sociological foundations of the phenomenon, as materialists should. If they did so, they would have to conclude that a privileged caste of bureaucrats had grown up and usurped power in the Soviet Union, embarking on an opportunistic course which involved the renunciation of the struggle to overthrow imperialism and the trampling on the rights of other workers' states in a spirit of "great-power chauvinism." The only effort along sociological lines so far issuing from Peking has been a maladroit attempt to insinuate that Khrushchev is leading the Soviet Union back toward capitalism where Tito has presumably already taken Yugoslavia.

The Peking ideologists shrink from adopting a Marxist explanation of the root causes of "modern revisionism" much as Khrushchev refrains from digging into the real reasons for "the cult of the individual." It would inexorably force them — or others who are more consistent — to go back and reexamine the historic origins of this revisionism in the reaction to the Russian Revolution which concentrated power in the Stalin faction and embalmed Lenin's program along with his body. It would also oblige them to reopen the whole question of Trotskyism and its role as the Marxist antithesis of Stalinism.

Still further, it would show that Khrushchev's projected aim of building "Communism" in one country, which is one of the major sources of friction between Russia and China, originated with Stalin. This is the current version of the bureaucratic break with Lenin's socialist internationalism first formulated in Stalin's nationalist concept of building "socialism" in the USSR. The perspective of building an isolated and independent socialist paradise within the confines of the Soviet state was the official charter of the Soviet bureaucracy, just as the theory of the gradual, peaceful transformation of capitalism into socialism was the characteristic ideology of European Social Democracy. Khrushchev has now taken over both.

MAO and his associates have also absorbed this fundamentally anti-Marxist concept from Stalinism and are endeavoring to realize it in their own domain. At the height of the euphoria during the "Great Leap Forward" in 1958, some overzealous Chinese theoreticians even spoke of skipping the "socialist" stage and going directly to communism through the peoples' Communes.

Soviet Key to Revolution

At the Twenty-Second Congress of the Russian CP, Khrushchev elevated this policy to new heights by proclaiming that the Soviet Union, having completed the creation of socialism, would be "the first country to advance to communism." This became the corner-

stone of the new 1961 program which said that "the successes of Communist construction spell abundance and a happy life for all, and enhance the might, prestige and glory of the Soviet Union." The program also promises that the vision of these blessings would "win the hearts and minds of the masses" in the rest of the world and become the most potent factor in the elimination of capitalism.

This idea that the main motive power of the anti-capitalist revolution is henceforth to be, not the class struggle, but the economic successes of the Soviet Union is, as *Monthly Review* points out, a relapse into pure idealism. It incarnates for our generation the Utopian socialism based on the belief that the force of good example would attract enough popular support to make the exploiters abandon their fleshpots and sources of power. In fact the economic advances cannot in themselves even induce the Soviet bureaucrats to renounce their privileges, although they can prepare the preconditions for their overthrow by the people.

The Kremlin policy proceeding from this premise not only cuts out the central role of international class struggle; it strikes at the prospects of economic development of the less favored workers' states. The Soviet program itself asserts that, because of their dissimilar economic and cultural levels, different countries will complete social construction and enter "the full-scale construction of communism" at different times. According to Moscow's timetable, the Soviet Union goes first and China last.

Viewed in purely demographic terms, this order gives the material interests of 200 million people prolonged priority over those of 700 million. This minority is to enjoy the plenty of communism while the majority lags far behind.

THROUGH Comecon (Council for Mutual Economic Aid) the Soviet Union is engaged in the beginnings of trans-national economic planning with the East European countries exclusive of Yugoslavia and Albania. China, however, has no place in the Soviet plans of economic integration and development. Meanwhile, Moscow has been giving more economic aid to capitalist countries like India, Indonesia and Egypt, than to Communist China. To rub salt into a deep wound, it has withdrawn its technicians and torn up hundreds of economic agreements, reducing exchanges to a minimum.

The enormous difficulties arising at this stage from the uneven economic development of the workers' states and their inadequate productive capacities cannot be easily or quickly overcome. It is one of the most critical problems of the transitional period from capitalism to socialism.

The immediate requirements of the two countries is one aspect of the problem; its long-term solution is quite another. Specific decisions regarding trade agreements, mutual aid, the rate and modes of economic integration, etc., would have to be worked out by representatives of the workers' states judiciously and fairly in the light of the onerous existing conditions. Khrushchev has remained silent on this aspect of their differences. Peking has not fully discussed the problem in its polemics, although it has begun to divulge such consequences of the Kremlin's policies as the use and abuse of economic aid as an instrument of diplomatic and political pressure.

Roots of the Bitterness

The bitterness of the clash between Moscow and Peking flows from the operation of the policy and perspective of building "communism" in one country, regardless of its harmful effects upon the progress of the other workers' states and the international struggle for socialism. The political backsliding of the Soviet regime under Stalin, and the great power chauvinism and bureaucratic opportunism under Khrushchev, which the Chinese inveigh against, have the same fundamental base. Both issue from the practical denial of the primordial role of the international proletarian struggle for power and the substitution of purely nationalist objectives in the movement for socialism.

Peking recognizes some of the consequences of this course but fails to uncover its ideological or sociological roots. So long as the Chinese Communists refuse to regard Khrushchev's "revisionism" as the prolongation of Stalin's anti-Leninist bureaucratic nationalism under changed circumstances and in new forms, they will be unable to give an adequate Marxist explanation for the division or develop a correct policy for coping with it.

Two Kindred World Views

The *Monthly Review* editors have not swung over to the Chinese side entirely because of the power of their arguments and the correctness of their positions. They have kindred views on the world situation and the strategy of the anti-imperialist struggle. For some time *Monthly Review* has staked everything on the progress of the colonial revolution alone. They agree with the Chinese that the underdeveloped countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America are "the weakest links in the imperialist chain" and therefore "the key to a successful fight against imperialism is to be found in the revolutionary struggles of the people in those areas."

Since the masses of Asia, Africa and Latin America are impelled toward revolution by intolerable conditions while the workers in the advanced capitalisms are conservative and so is the Soviet people, the sole chance of revolutionary advances and victories now lies in the colonial world. That is why the revolutionary movements in the underdeveloped countries "constitute the crucial factor in the all-important struggle against imperialism."

The premise underlying this outlook is most clearly formulated in a companion article by the pro-Peking Uruguayan writer, Eduardo Galeano, in the same MR issue. He says that the Chinese recognize that "the fundamental contradiction of our time resides in the struggle between the rich countries and the poor countries. The anger of the Chinese shows that this contradiction cuts across social regimes and appears as much in the communist as in the capitalist world."

THIS notion of an irreconcilable opposition between the prosperous bourgeoisified and the poor proletarianized peoples, regardless of their socio-economic structures and internal class divisions, is prevalent throughout the colonial lands. It reflects both the realities of uneven economic development and the uneven progress of the world revolution. But it is a break with Marxism, which sees the fundamental contradiction and motive force of social development in our epoch in the conflict of classes and categorically separates countries where capitalist relations have been abolished from countries dominated by imperialism.

The existence of oppressed peoples and their just struggles for national and social liberation and the efforts of poor and backward nations to raise their productive powers and increase their wealth does not nullify the basic division of contemporary society into exploiters and exploited wherever capitalism holds sway and imperialism operates.

The theory of basic conflict between the hungry and the satisfied bloc, whether capitalist or Soviet, is supplemented by the concept of the all-saving mission of the colonial revolution. This also reflects realities of the present period. There is a disastrous cleavage between the colonial revolution and the mass moods and movements in the advanced capitalisms. This has been sharply evidenced in the inertia of the French workers' movement under Communist and Socialist direction toward the Algerian fight for independence and the even greater indifference and lack of understanding displayed by the American workers toward the Cuban revolution at their doorstep.

BUT IT would be wrong to use this lag in the development of the different areas of the class struggle as the groundwork for a global theory of revolutionary strategy which counterposes the colonial world to the West or to the Soviet sphere as a whole. The imperialist states, the Soviet bloc and the colonial and semi-colonial countries constitute three major sectors in the world struggle for socialism today. The problem is to link all three together in an over-all strategic conception of the world revolution which assigns to each the real part it plays in the entire process and keeps their interrelations and interactions clearly in mind.

The Chinese Communists are correct in saying that Africa, Asia and Latin America are presently "the focus of all the contradictions of the capitalist world, the weakest link in the imperialist chain and the storm center of world revolution." But that does not exhaust the question. In so far as the colonial countries break out of the world capitalist system and take the road to socialism, as China, North Vietnam and Cuba have done, they weaken the power and positions of the imperialist centers. But by themselves the forces of the colonial revolution cannot bring about the downfall of imperialism.

U.S. Still the Key

It will require the supremacy of the workers over the capitalists in the most highly developed imperialist countries before mankind can be definitively freed from the threat of nuclear annihilation and the way to socialism be cleared. The Chinese do not see, or at least they do not clearly state, that the key to world peace and a socialist society of abundance lies, not in the colonial areas, but in the centers of capitalism, above all in the United States. So long as the militarists and monopolists in Washington have their fingers on the nuclear button, they can wipe out in a few hours all the achievements of civilization.

The crucial and decisive role of the workers' struggle for power in the advanced capitalist countries is the revolutionary Marxist answer to Khrushchev's illusions about "peaceful coexistence" as a panacea and the false expectations that either the economic successes of the Soviet bloc or the cumulative victories of the colonial revolution can suffice, *by themselves and without the victory of the Western workers*, to overcome imperialism and its evils.

Struggle Against Bureaucracy Omitted

In addition to the struggle against imperialism and neo-colonialism in Asia, Africa, the Middle East and Latin America, and the struggle of the workers against the capitalist rulers in the imperialist strongholds, there is the struggle of the masses against the bureaucrats that has been pervading the Soviet bloc since Stalin's death. The *Monthly Review* editors do not mention or include this in their reappraisal, as though it was not an issue in the Sino-Soviet dispute.

YET IT is no accident that the present conflict emerged after the Twentieth Congress where the cult of Stalin was denounced. Since then, the struggle for democratization of the workers' states and their relations with one another revolving around deStalinization has been one of the capital issues in the Communist world. Unfortunately, the Chinese take the wrong side in this burning question. They regard the demolition of the Stalin cult and other liberalization measures wrested from his successors, not as gains won by the masses, but as unwarranted concessions to non-proletarian forces and bourgeois influences. They back up the Albanian regime whose Premier distinguished himself at the Fourth Party Congress in February 1961 with the following prescription: "For those who stand in the way of party unity: a spit in the face, a sock in the jaw, and, if necessary, a bullet in the head." They are in a *de facto* bloc with the discredited Stalinist diehards of the Molotov type who would like to stage a comeback and halt further steps toward liberalization. They continue the cult of Stalin and supplement it with the cult of Mao-Tse-tung. They maintain a monolithic domestic regime with no room for the expression of dissent against the official line either within the ranks of the ruling party or in the country.

Peking's Unreconstructed Stalinism

The issue of workers democracy versus bureaucratic domination is not a minor or incidental matter. It now agitates the entire Communist movement to one degree or another. The further development of the anti-bureaucratic struggles in the Soviet bloc will have momentous effects for good or ill upon the future of the entire socialist cause. The unreconstructed Stalinism exhibited by Peking, Albania and their co-thinkers on this point is far less praiseworthy or palatable than the inadequate reforms granted by the Khrushchev tendency.

The failure of *Monthly Review* to deal with this aspect of the dispute is not only a serious gap in their presentation. It indicates that, although their new position is an improvement upon the old, it is no less one-sided and uncritical. This is all the more regrettable because, in the preceding issue of the magazine (April 1963), Professor Paul Baran and Paul Sweezy put forward excellent views on the relations between proletarian revolution and democracy in a rejoinder to the arguments of Anatoly Butenko, a Lecturer in Philosophy at Moscow University, who objected to their criticisms of Stalin and of current Soviet policies. They wrote:

"We believe that revolutions, especially when combined with forced economic marches, create conditions conducive to excessive political repression, to abuses of power, to unnecessary curtailment of in-

dividual freedoms. The remedy, however, is not to be found in selection of good leaders, important though that certainly is, but in the preservation of popular control over leaders, in maintaining and extending the democratic institutions and civil liberties of the working people, in confining repression to active counter-revolutionaries. This was the policy advocated by Marx and Engels; it was the policy practiced under the most trying and difficult circumstances by the Russian Bolsheviks during Lenin's lifetime; it is the policy being practiced in Cuba today. It seems to us that it has never been more necessary than it is now for socialists to insist on this policy of revolutionary democracy, and to combine this insistence with a careful analysis of all the obstacles that stand in the path of its realization."

WORKERS' democracy and control is no less an economic than a moral and political issue. Under nationalization accurate and harmonious planning becomes the key to optimum economic growth. The workers, who constitute the vital productive force, must be able to assert not only their preferences as consumers, but their proposals as producers. If the planners are guided by the collective experience of the producers, workers' democracy stimulates the fastest rate of growth. The Chinese people could be among the beneficiaries of a more rapid and well-proportioned economic growth of a democratically administered Soviet Union. Furthermore, the establishment of institutions of workers and peasants control in China would not only inspire the entire colonial revolution but could have saved the Chinese people from the disastrous recklessness which attended the "Great Leap Forward" since 1958 and the organization of the Communes. The Peking leaders themselves now admit that the growth rate suffered and grave mistakes were made because of lack of communication between the people and the planners.

The question of revolutionary democracy in the workers' states posed by the de-Stalinization process is no less important in the Great Debate than the problems of strategy in the anti-imperialist struggle. It would be unwarranted to ignore either one or the other. The outstanding merit of the Fidelistas, as Baran and Sweezy stress, is that they combine correct attitudes on both of the cardinal issues in the dispute: international class struggle policy and workers' democracy. If Moscow and Belgrade most gravely default on the first, Peking and Tirana go wrong on the second.

MR's Political Orientation

The *Monthly Review* advertises itself as "an independent socialist magazine." It certainly has no connections with any organized radical groups or party. It appeals primarily to disaffiliated and detached individuals interested in Marxist ideas which do not lead to any mass action or socialist organization.

Yet the publication is not so *ideologically* independent of the main tendencies of socialist or communist thought as its editors claim or hope to be. For a long time *Monthly Review* travelled in the orbit of international Stalinism, keeping a proper distance from the American CP which servilely followed the Kremlin line. Since the Khrushchev revelations and the Polish-Hungarian events of 1956, they have shaken loose from their old path and are seeking another anchorage.

Like C. Wright Mills and many others, they have been inspired and uplifted by the colonial revolution.

In the face of the weakness and cowardice of the Social-Democrat and Communist parties in the metropolitan centers, they have deposited all their hopes for the regeneration of socialism and the reconstruction of society in the colonial revolution, just as the fellow-travelling radicals of the 1930's focussed upon the Soviet Union. They have been firm supporters and influential expositors of the ideas and aims of the Cuban and Latin American revolutions.

From a Marxist standpoint, there are two fundamental defects in their orientation and outlook. One is their prejudice against any efforts for the formation of a revolutionary workers' party in the United States and even against participation in socialist electoral action. They manage to convert Marxism into a means for learned commentary on world events rather than a guide to political action and organization, as Lenin taught it should be.

The other weakness comes out in their reactions to the Sino-Soviet dispute. In switching from Khrushchev to Mao, they have not succeeded in acquiring genuine ideological independence of the principal contending power centers in the Soviet world. They are as uncritical and categoric in their attitude toward Peking as they were previously to Moscow.

NEITHER the Russian nor the Chinese Communists hold completely correct Marxist-Leninist positions in the Great Debate. This is not a clear-cut conflict

between a reformist and a revolutionary leadership on the model of the Bolshevik struggle against the Social Democracy. It is a far more complex and contradictory situation in which two bureaucratic formations, both of Stalinist origin and schooling are reacting to very different pressures from imperialism, the worker-peasant masses, the colonial and world revolution.

The Chinese CP undoubtedly advocates far more militant policies in the international arena than the utterly opportunistic Soviet leadership and its followers from New Delhi to New York. Although the Chinese have moved close to Leninist positions on a number of key issues of the international class struggle, they have by no means arrived at a comprehensive Marxist world outlook: their positions are marked by grave inconsistencies. A genuinely independent Marxist judgment of the issues in the Sino-Soviet dispute would first separate what is true and progressive from what is false and reactionary in the positions of both protagonists and then make an overall evaluation of the main direction of their development, without fear of criticism.²

1. For an analysis of the social base upon which the Soviet bureaucracy rests, see the chapter in Trotsky's "Revolution Betrayed," on the Social Physiognomy of the Ruling Stratum. Also the chapter: Inequalities and Social Antagonism in the Soviet Union, in Bulletin of Marxist Studies, No. 2, January 1958, entitled: The Soviet Union: What it is — Where it is going, by Theodore Edwards. Both available from Pioneer Publishers, 116 University Place, N.Y. 3.

2. For an appraisal of the contending positions, including the inconsistencies of Peking's foreign policy line, see: "Peking vs Moscow: The Meaning of the Great Debate" by William F. Warde, recently published by Pioneer Publishers, 116 University Place, N.Y. 3., N.Y. 50 cents.

Maoism And The Neo-Stalin Cult

By Tom Kerry

WITH THE publication of the recent Chinese indictment entitled: "The Leaders of the CPSU are the Greatest Splitters of Our Times," the split between Peking and Moscow becomes definitive. The full text of the statement is published in the Feb. 7 issue of *Peking Review*. The text goes beyond the title by characterizing the Khrushchev leadership as the greatest splitters of all time, by asserting that "the leaders of the CPSU are the greatest of all revisionists as well as the greatest of all sectarians and splitters known to history."

The statement purports to be a historical review of splits and splitters from the time of Marx and Engels up to the present day. Its central thesis had been previously projected in a speech by Chou Yang, vice-director of the Propaganda Department of the CPC Central Committee, delivered on Oct. 26, 1963 to a scientific gathering at the Chinese Academy of Sciences. To wit: That "revisionism" arose to plague Marx and Engels at the very dawn of the socialist movement. So it was at the beginning and so it will continue to the very end.

Chou Yang argues that inasmuch as every thesis must have its antithesis, the promulgation of the Marxist revolutionary doctrine [thesis] inevitably gave rise to its opposite [antithesis] revisionism. Not only were the founders of scientific socialism fated to combat revisionism but Lenin too, in his day, was compelled to enter the lists against the revisionists. And, according to the dialectic of Chou, such was the fate not only of Marx, Engels and Lenin, but "of Stalin too."

"This phenomenon may seem strange," Chou Yang opines. "How can certain people who had previously been supporters of revolutionary scientific socialism degenerate into counter-revolutionary anti-scientific revisionists? Yet it is not at all strange. Everything tends to divide itself in two. Theories are no exception, and they also tend to divide. Wherever there is a revolutionary scientific doctrine, its antithesis, a counter-revolutionary, anti-scientific doctrine, is bound to arise in the course of the development of that doctrine. As modern society is divided into classes and as the difference between progressive and backward groups will continue far into the future, the emergence of antitheses is inevitable."

With all due apologies to Chou, a nagging question still persists in thrusting its way to the fore: What is the criteria for determining who is and who is not a "Marxist-Leninist?" Chou has a ready answer. The Khrushchev leadership has repudiated Stalin. "To repudiate Stalin completely," Chou affirms, "is in fact to negate Marxism-Leninism, which Stalin defended and developed."

According to the Maoist schema of historical development the split was inevitable from the beginning. However, it is still necessary to fix the exact moment in time and the precise issue which signalled the dialectical transformation of Khrushchevite Marxism-Leninism into its opposite, revisionism. The time and issue are pinpointed in comment number two on the "Open Letter of the Central Committee of the CPSU," entitled "*On the Question of Stalin*" (Sept. 13, 1963). It reads as follows:

"Stalin died in 1953; three years later the leaders of the CPSU violently attacked him at the 20th Congress, and eight years after his death they again did so at the 22nd Congress, removing and burning his remains. In repeating their violent attacks on Stalin, the leaders of the CPSU aimed at erasing the indelible influence of this great proletarian revolutionary among the people of the Soviet Union and throughout the world, and at

paving the way for negating Marxism-Leninism, which Stalin had defended and developed, and for the all-out application of a revisionist line. *Their revisionist line began exactly with the 20th Congress and became fully systematized at the 22nd Congress. The facts have shown ever more clearly that their revision of the Marxist-Leninist theories on imperialism, war and peace, proletarian revolution and the dictatorship of the proletariat, revolution in the colonies and semicolonies, the proletarian party, etc., is inseparably connected with their complete negation of Stalin.*" (My emphasis).

The aspect of the Sino-Soviet dispute about which this article is especially concerned is the attempt to revive, regenerate and reconstitute the "Stalin cult" on a world scale. The working class of all countries — I repeat, *all countries* — have paid a heavy price for the virus of Stalinism that has for so long poisoned the wellspring of Marxist thought and revolutionary socialist action. Millions of worker-militants who flocked to the liberating banner of Leninism in the aftermath of the Bolshevik-led Russian October revolution were corrupted, debauched and cruelly betrayed when the Stalin faction seized the power, strangled the workers' and peasants' soviets, emasculated Lenin's party and extended its malignant sway over the international communist movement.

To begin with, it is a gross exaggeration to assert that the heirs of Stalin now occupying the Kremlin have "completely negated Stalin." For their own reasons and their own interests they have been constrained to lift but one tiny corner of the veil that has for too long shrouded the countless crimes committed by the genial butcher who defiled the name of Lenin and besmirched the proud banner of Bolshevism. Stalin was no Marxist-Leninist. He was a murderer of Marxist-Leninists — including some thousands of devoted Stalinists. The Chinese do a great disservice to their own cause in the struggle against the Khrushchev brand of "revisionism" and to the regeneration of Bolshevik-Leninism by attempting to lead a movement *back to Stalin*. For nothing in the revisionist views today advocated by Khrushchev were not at one time or another in the past promoted and advocated by Stalin.

* * *

THERE IS today a growing mood of discontent and opposition to the flagrantly opportunist policies and practices of the Khrushchev leadership being manifested in Communist party formations throughout the world. A number of splits have already taken place and more are looming on the horizon. The questions raised by the Sino-Soviet dispute have been an important ingredient in this ferment. In their Feb. 7 document, Peking openly calls for an extension of these splits and encourages, promotes and supports the "schismatics."

The back-to-Stalin gambit is designed to channelize the opposition to Kremlin "revisionism" within strictly defined limits governed by the needs and interests of the Maoist bureaucracy; to circumvent untrammelled discussion of the many basic issues raised in the dispute by insisting on establishing and maintaining the hierarchical order of progression — Marx-Engels-Lenin-Stalin-Mao. If successful it can only serve to substitute a Mao cult of infallibility for the now defunct Stalin cult in which all disputed questions of Marxist-Leninist theory and practice will be subject to the *ipse dixit* of the cult leader.

This tendency is already to be observed in the groups that have split off from the various Communist parties and embraced Maoism. In this country, for example, a small

group which split from the American Communist party several years ago, after coyly flirting with Maoism for a period, has finally plumped for Peking as against Moscow. It modestly calls itself the Progressive Labor Movement. In the recently published winter issue of its magazine, *Marxist-Leninist Quarterly*, there appears a programmatic statement by the National Coordinating Committee of PLM which purports to meet the need of the American working class for a "revolutionary theory."

We are informed in an editorial note that: "During the past year the Progressive Labor Movement has been discussing the [Sino-Soviet] debate concerning correct Marxist-Leninist theory for our movement and for the international movement."

We are availing ourselves of this opportunity to comment on those aspects of the "debate" that concern us here: Stalin and Stalinism. In making their Great Leap from Moscow to Peking the leaders of PLM faithfully parrot the Maoist line on the merits and demerits of Stalin. Along with Peking they flay Khrushchev for downgrading Stalin in his 20th Congress speech because: "It did not place both his enormous contributions and his serious errors in their actual historical context, but offered instead a subjective, crude, total negation of a great Marxist-Leninist and proletarian revolutionist."

In an almost verbatim paraphrase of the Chinese statement "*On the Question of Stalin*," the PLM article draws a balance sheet of Stalin's assets and liabilities and concludes that on balance, Stalin's contributions are "primary" and his errors, "secondary." What precisely were these errors?

"In the matter of Party and government organization, Stalin did not *fully apply* proletarian democratic centralism. He was in *some instances* guilty of abrogating it. There was a great development of centralism without the absolutely essential corresponding growth of proletarian democracy. This *appears to have fostered* an inordinate growth of bureaucracy which *often resulted* in reliance on administrative 'diktat' rather than the *full participation* of the party membership and people in making and carrying out policy." (Emphasis added to underscore the method of introducing qualifying phrases intended to minimize Stalin's "errors.") But let's continue — the worst is yet to come!

The PLM statement then plunges into a learned dissertation on "contradictions," lifted bodily from Mao, to explain why Stalin fell into the "error" of presiding over the monstrous frame-up trials and purges which converted the Soviet Union into a veritable chamber of horrors.

"Stalin," we are informed, "erred in confusing two types of contradictions which are different in nature. Thus, he did not differentiate between contradictions involving the Party and the people on the one hand and the enemy on the other, and contradictions within the Party and among the people. Consequently, he did not employ different methods in handling these different types of contradictions. Stalin was right to suppress the counter-revolutionaries. If he had not he would have been derelict in his defense of the Soviet State. Thus, many counter-revolutionaries deserving punishment were duly punished. But, because contradictions within the Party and among the people were not recognized as something totally different, something natural and even essential to the Party's theoretical growth and development, no Communist method of principled inner-Party struggle, proceeding from unity through struggle to a higher unity, was developed. *Many innocent people, or people with differences which could have been worked out in the course of principled ideological struggle, were wrongly killed.*" (My emphasis)

Unfortunately, people who were "wrongly killed" are just as dead as those killed "rightly." When Stalin was alive *all* were indiscriminately dubbed "counter-revolutionary" and summarily executed. Those who now deplore such "secondary errors" were among the first to applaud Stalin's fright-

ful atrocities as evidence of his not being "derelict in defense of the Soviet State."

Who now is to decide which were the innocent and which the guilty? Who is to judge? As an aftermath of Khrushchev's 20th Congress speech on the Stalin cult a few of the "wrongly killed" were "rehabilitated" and a few of Stalin's crimes were disclosed. A few more rehabilitations and disclosures at the 22nd Congress. Instead of pressing for a full disclosure of all the facts of Stalin's crimes and the rehabilitation of *all* of Stalin's victims, the Maoists demand that Khrushchev call a halt to the "attack on Stalin."

* * *

UNDER compulsion to settle accounts with their own Stalinist past, the authors of the PLM statement, present us with a bowdlerized condensation of the history of the American Communist party. We are informed that the CPUSA was cursed with "revisionism" from its very inception. We are further enlightened by the assertion that the one golden era of the American CP was the period following the expulsion of the Lovestoneite leadership in 1929 encompassing the early years of the Great Depression. In the entire history of the CP one doughty warrior against "revisionism" is singled out for special commendation: William Z. Foster.

To buttress this contention a companion piece to the PLM statement appears in the winter issue of *Marxist-Leninist Quarterly*, a eulogy of Foster on the occasion of the 80th anniversary of his birth, written by one Fred Carlisle. The PLM message to the American working class urging the need for a "revolutionary theory" is thus simplified: On the international arena: Back to Stalin. On the American scene: Back to Foster!

Before proceeding further we must comment on the outrageous jargon that is the hallmark of Stalinism and which has now been spiced by the turbid Maoism of the Chinese. Words which had previously been endowed with a precise definition in the Marxist vocabulary have been transformed into verbal abstractions capable, as the occasion demands, of being invested with the most diverse meanings. The term "revisionism" is a case in point. To Marxists, revisionism has been associated with the name of its most prominent advocate, Eduard Bernstein, author of a book entitled *Evolutionary Socialism*. Bernstein's attempt to divest Marxism of its revolutionary content was designed to provide theoretical justification for the adaptation to capitalist parliamentarism of the right-wing bureaucracy, especially the trade-union bureaucrats, who became a power in the Second (Socialist) International during the prolonged period of imperialist expansion and "prosperity" in the latter part of the 19th century up to the outbreak of World War I.

The classic manifestation of revisionism was known as Millerandism, after Alexandre Millerand, a French lawyer and socialist deputy in parliament who in 1898 accepted an appointment as Minister of Commerce in the cabinet of the capitalist government. Millerandism became synonymous with parliamentary coalitionism. Millerand was the first Socialist to accept a ministerial portfolio in a capitalist government. His action engendered heated debate in the socialist movement of that time, which was divided into right, left and center. The left wing rejected coalitionism as a betrayal of socialism. The right wing chided Millerand only because he had not consulted the party. The center (Kautsky) introduced a motion at the International Congress held in Paris, in 1900, typical of centrist straddling, "allowing that socialists might, as an exceptional measure of a temporary kind, enter a bourgeois government, but implicitly condemning Millerand by saying that such action must be approved by the party."

This compromise paved the way for the later coalition policy of the Social Democracy during and after the outbreak of the First World War. The lessons of the struggle in the Second International against coalitionism constituted an important ingredient influencing Lenin's views on the nature of the revolutionary socialist party. Later, with

the formation of the Third (Communist) International, a conscious and deliberate barrier was erected against the infiltration of reformist socialist and centrist muddleheads by the imposition at the Second Congress in 1920 of the 21 conditions for affiliation.

The People's Front Variety

In the hey-day of Stalinism, coalitionism was dignified by the name "people's front" and was consecrated as the official policy of all sections of the Communist International at the Seventh World Congress in 1935.

Lenin considered coalitionism a betrayal of socialism and fought against it the whole of his political life. To him it was the epitome of revisionism and he wrote his polemical work, *State and Revolution*, as a refutation of the parliamentary cretinism of the coalitionists, and in the process elaborated and refined the revolutionary essence of Marxism. Upon his return to Russia in April 1917, Lenin threatened to split with those Bolsheviks, including Stalin, who favored participation with the Mensheviks in the coalition government established after the February revolution.

One question: Do the Marxist-Leninists of PLM consider people's frontism, the most odious form of coalitionism, as revisionist? They don't say! However, they do extol William Z. Foster as the "best" of the fighters against the "revisionism" of the American CP; Foster, who preached and practiced people's front coalition politics to the day of his death. And what of Mao? Can they find anywhere in his voluminous writings a forthright condemnation of people's frontism? I don't think so!

In China, coalitionism was first imposed by Stalin in the revolution of 1926-27. It there took the form of the Stalin-Bukharin formula of "the bloc of four classes," under which the Chinese Communist party was subordinated to the rule of Chiang Kai-shek's Kuomintang. Under this formula, the Chinese workers and peasants were first disarmed and then butchered by the troops of Stalin's erstwhile ally, Chiang Kai-shek. As a result of this experience, Chen Tu-hsiu, then leader of the CPC, broke with Stalinism along with a number of other prominent leaders. All of whom were expelled from the Stalintern as "counter-revolutionists."

It was only after the Seventh World Congress of the CI enthroned the People's Front as the prevailing "universal truth" of Marxism-Leninism that Mao Tse-tung was elevated to the position of party leader.

The Dialectic of Revisionism

According to the Maoist dialectic in which everything, including theory, divides in two — not three or four but exactly in two — the tendencies in the world socialist movement are neatly separated into two compartments: revisionism and Marxist-Leninism. Revisionism is elevated to the status of an abstract category in which the term assumes a generic character in which is subsumed all that is not accorded the sovereign title of Marxism-Leninism. Reformism, sectarianism, dogmatism, opportunism, ultra-leftism, each or all are included or may be inferred in the general term. What is revisionism today can become Marxist-Leninism tomorrow and vice versa. It has become, par excellence, a cult term. Only the initiates who are privy to the thought of the cult leader can be sure of what it means at any given moment. Instead of a precise word defining a specific tendency it has been transformed into an epithet to smite those bold or foolhardy enough to question or disagree with the latest revelation of the "leader."

From time to time differences of interpretation may arise between even the most devoted disciples that might lead to serious doctrinal disputations. The system cries out for a final arbiter around whom must be draped the aura of infallibility. Just as the Catholic church requires its pope to interpret holy scripture, so does every bureaucratic formation in the labor movement require its "pope" to resolve disputes that arise as a result of the inevitable conflict of interest between individuals and groups within

the bureaucracy. To submit such disputes to the democratic process of discussion and action by the masses would endanger the existence of the bureaucracy as a whole. The bureaucrats fear this course as the devil fears holy water. With the hothouse growth of the Soviet bureaucracy after Lenin's death, Stalin was elevated to the position of supreme arbiter of the parvenu bureaucratic caste and invested with the divine afflatus of infallibility.

In this sense the Chinese are correct in twitting Khrushchev about his indiscretion in seeking to place sole blame on Stalin for the crimes committed during his reign. There is, however, method to Khrushchev's madness. His condemnation of the "cult of the personality" is calculated to absolve the bureaucracy of all responsibility for Stalin's crimes. His task is greatly facilitated by the fact that once the supreme arbiter is firmly esconced upon this lofty perch the illusion is created that the "personality" has achieved complete independence from the bureaucratic machine that created him and that it is the man who manipulates and rules over the machine instead of the other way around. Khrushchev attacks the "cult of the personality" in order to conceal the ugly visage of the "cult" of the bureaucracy which continues to rule as before.

* * *

LET us scrutinize, in the light of this brief historical review, the tendentious analysis of the Marxist-Leninists of PLM of what went wrong with the American CP, when it happened and what to do about it.

"From the earliest days of the communist movement in the United States to the present," we are informed, "revisionism and its political manifestation, class collaboration, has been the chronic weakness."

Not so. While the PLM theoreticians are prone to use the term "revisionism" in the generic sense indicated above, in this instance they define its concrete political manifestation as "class collaboration." In the "earliest days" of the American CP class collaboration was decidedly not its "chronic weakness." In the period following the Russian revolution of 1917 the dividing line between the various tendencies in the socialist movement on an international scale was their attitude toward the October revolution.

The revisionists who preached and practiced the doctrine of class collaboration were solidly lined up in hostile antagonism to the Bolshevik revolution. The earliest CP's, both in this country and abroad, were formed almost without exception out of splits over this question in the various parties of the Social Democracy. In this country the several Communist parties were established as a result of a split in the American Socialist party led by the left wing. The left wing splitoff from the SP, together with the foreign language federations, comprised the cadres of communism which then split into contending parties each seeking recognition from the Communist International.

Disease of Ultra-Leftism

The basic weakness was not class collaboration but ultra-leftism. The tendency toward ultra-leftism was not at all peculiar to this country but was a malady that afflicted a number of the early communist groups in Europe. In fact, it was precisely against this disease that Lenin polemicized in his now famous pamphlet: *Ultra-Leftism: An Infantile Disorder*. Class collaborationists were not welcome in the Communist International of Lenin's and Trotsky's day.

But let's proceed with our perusal of the PLM statement for a clue to this bowdlerized version of history. "After the expulsion [in 1929] of Lovestone," we are told, "the party developed a militant pragmatic approach which appealed to workers during the depression and produced a mass base for the CP." In the article by Carlisle, eulogizing Foster, we are instructed that: "During the 1929-33 years of deepest crisis," the American CP "came closer to being a correct Marxist-Leninist program for the U.S. than anything that had been developed during the past 70 years."

This is incredible! The years singled out for special approbation by PLM encompass what has gone down in history as the "Third Period." The Sixth World Congress of the CI was held in 1928 under the aegis of the Stalin-Bukharin bloc. Bukharin headed the right-wing tendency in the CPSU which included such prominent leaders as Tomsky and Rykov. For the whole period prior to 1928 the Stalin bureaucracy proceeded on the Bukharin formula of a casual romp to socialism in which "socialism" would be established "at a snails pace." The slogan at the time was: Kulak enrich thyself! The Left Opposition, under the leadership of Leon Trotsky, had repeatedly warned that the differentiation among the peasantry in the villages under the Stalin-Bukharin policy was strengthening the grip of the Kulak (rich peasants) on the peasant economy and solidifying their political control over the middle and poor peasantry.

The program of the Left Opposition presented an extensive criticism of the Stalin-Bukharin line and elaborated an alternative program of planned industrialization in the economic sphere and a restoration of workers' democracy in the Soviets and the party. Needless to say, the program of the Left Opposition was suppressed and the adherents of the opposition were slandered, expelled, jailed, and, in Trotsky's case, exiled from the Soviet Union. This did not forestall the development of the crisis predicted by the Left Opposition. It erupted soon after the Sixth Congress when the Kulaks engineered a strike against the Soviet government which threatened to starve the cities into submission and brought the Soviet regime to the very brink of disaster.

Recoiling in panic from the spectre of capitalist restoration spearheaded by the Kulaks, Stalin responded with a sharp turn to the left. In startling contrast to the previous line, Stalin decreed the immediate liquidation of the Kulaks, the "forced march" to collectivization and the first of his series of five-year plans of rapid industrialization. These edicts were carried out in an atmosphere of virtual civil war. The Stalin-Bukharin program adopted at the Sixth Congress was quickly jettisoned.

Stalin broke with Bukharin, who was retired in disgrace, and proceeded to purge the Bukharinists from their positions of leadership in the various sections of the Comintern. In this country Jay Lovestone was tagged as the scapegoat because he was identified with the Bukharin line. Although commanding a majority at the March 1929 convention of the American CP, Lovestone was summoned to Moscow where he was detained while the Stalin machine engineered a switch in leadership. Characteristic of Stalin's machinations, Foster, who was then the most prominent leader of the CP, was sidetracked, and a political nonentity by the name of Earl Browder was tagged as leader of the CP. Being absolutely dependent on Moscow for his authority, Browder was considered a more pliable instrument of Stalinist manipulation and Foster was shunted aside. Foster never forgave Browder for this humiliation.

To buttress his "left turn" in the Soviet Union, Stalin proclaimed the advent of the "Third Period" which was to herald the end of capitalism on a world scale. In the world outside the Soviet Union the tactics of the Third Period rested on the twin pillars of the theory of "social fascism" and the "united front from below."

The theory and practice of "social fascism" was a patent absurdity. Lenin had previously characterized the reformist Social Democrats as social chauvinists, or social patriots, etc. His intention thereby was to pillory the reformists as socialist in words, but national chauvinists in deed; or socialist in word, but bourgeois patriots in deed. But what could the epithet "social fascism" mean? That the Social Democrats were socialist in word and fascist in deed? But the Hitlerite fascists aimed at destroying the Social Democrats by smashing the independent unions upon which they were based, and made no bones about it. Germany was the major arena in which the battle was to be fought

out. According to the theory of "social fascism," the Social Democracy, which commanded the support of the majority of the German working class, was the "main enemy."

The Third Period tactic of the "united front from below" was another of Stalin's unique contributions which wreaked havoc in the world labor movement. The tactic of the united front was worked out and codified at the Third World Congress of the CI which convened in Moscow from June 22 to July 12, 1921. Contrary to the hopes and expectations of the Bolsheviks, the post-war wave of revolutionary actions subsided after a number of serious defeats. The slogan advanced after the October revolution of the "conquest of power," was amended because of the change in the objective situation. The Comintern modification was summed up in the slogan "the conquest of the masses." That is, to win for the Communist parties the allegiance of a decisive section of the working class in preparation for the next revolutionary wave.

The Social Democrats still commanded the support of a considerable section of the European working class. The tactic of the united front was designed to unite the workers in action against capitalist reaction and for the defense of their interests. The tactic was devised to compel the leaders of the Social Democracy to enter united front actions on concrete issues in defense of the interests of the working class as a whole. In the process of such actions it was considered that the non-communist workers would be won over to the Communist parties as they became convinced of the treacherous nature of their reformist leaders. To forestall the expected attempt of the Social Democrats to limit and derail the united front actions, it was insisted that each organization maintain its independence. As Lenin phrased it: We march separately but strike together.

Stalin took this concept and gave it his own twist — which converted it into its opposite. If the Social Democracy and fascism were "twins," as he insisted, a united front agreement with the leaders became impossible. To get around this dilemma Stalin concocted the "united front from below." That is, the workers adhering to the parties of the Social Democracy were called upon to break with their leaders and join in actions organized and led by the Communist parties. But if they were prepared to go that far, why bother about applying the circuitous tactic of the united front? It didn't make sense. The result was that there was no united front at all. On the contrary, in the name of the "united front from below" the Stalinists proceeded to split the labor movement down the middle.

American Version of Third Period

In this country, and others, the Third Period lunacy became a hideous caricature. Worker militants, members of the Communist party together with their supporters, were yanked out of the existing trade unions and herded into pure "revolutionary" paper organizations under the leadership of the CP acting through the front of the Trade Union Unity League. The trade-union bureaucrats were tickled pink. At one fell swoop they had gotten rid of their most militant opposition elements. Needless to say, the paper unions of the TUUL were 100 per cent "revolutionary" — and 100 per cent impotent.

In this country the Third Period idiocy made little difference one way or another. It was in Germany, the key to the whole international situation, that it exacted a heavy toll. By splitting the organized German working class, the "theory" of social fascism and the tactic of the "united front from below," paved the way for Hitler's march to power. So complete was the demoralization of the German workers that Hitler's hordes seized the power *without a struggle*.

The victory of Hitler in Germany marked the end of the so-called Third Period. It led to a sharp rightward swing in which the "united front from below" was transmuted into the "people's front" at the Seventh World Con-

gress of the CI in 1935. If anything, the "people's front" line was an even crasser mutilation of Lenin's united front tactic.

Third Period Stalinism can be aptly characterized as "infantile leftism" gone berserk. And it is this aberration that PLM now advocates as a model for building a "new" Marxist-Leninist revolutionary communist movement in this country. This, they contend, was the "heroic" period of the American CP. This view goes far to explain the pronounced tendency toward irresponsible adventurism which characterizes their activity. You can never give birth to a movement — progressive or otherwise — by propounding and following a course of infantile leftism, but you can spawn a numerous crop of victims, which is just about what the Stalinist Third Period line accomplished.

The PLM statement, cited above, attributes the development by the American CP of its Third Period line to "militant" pragmatism. I must confess that the distinction between "militant" pragmatism and the non-militant variety, as philosophical categories, eludes me. The implication is that under the leadership of Foster, the American CP arrived at their line independent of the Kremlin. Unfortunately for the authors of the statement, Foster says otherwise. In his *History of the Communist Party*, published in 1952, Foster relates that during a discussion in the CI on the "American question," following the March 1929 convention, Stalin criticized both the majority [Lovestone] and the minority [Foster] for their "fundamental error in exaggerating the specific features of American imperialism."

"It would be wrong," the Kremlin sage observed, "to ignore the specific peculiarities of American capitalism. The Communist Party in its work must take them into account. But," he quickly added, "it would be still more wrong to base the activities of the Communist Party on these specific features, since the foundation of the activities of every Communist Party, including the American Communist Party, on which it must base itself, must be the general features of capitalism, which are the same for all countries, and not its specific features in any given country."

Under this formula, Stalin cemented his monolithic control over all sections of the CI. Policy originated in Moscow. And woe betide those who pleaded "specific peculiarities" to warrant an exception being made for their own section. From then on every twist and turn in Kremlin policy was religiously echoed in every section throughout the world, special national "peculiarities" to the contrary notwithstanding. Foster got the message. When it came to twisting in conformity with the latest edict from Stalin he was without a peer. This earned for him in the radical movement the appellation, William "Zig-zag" Foster. This is the peerless fighter against "revisionism" whom the PLM statement commends to: "Young radicals [who] can learn from and emulate the devotion to the working class and socialism of such outstanding communists as William Z. Foster."

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In his panegyric on Foster the self-avowed Marxist-Leninist, Fred Carlisle, explains that the main authority upon whom he relies for an evaluation of Foster is Foster himself. He neglects to add that whole sections of his eulogy were lifted bodily from Foster's *History of the Communist Party*, for which the original author is not credited. "Foster's historical analyses of these struggles," Carlisle affirms, "are quite helpful, being more accurate and objective than other available sources." Irony itself stands disarmed before such monumental naivete. At any rate, among the many examples of Carlisle's historical scholarship, we select one which raises an important question — Lenin's concept of democratic centralism as contrasted with that of Stalin-Foster.

"In 1928," we are enlightened, "James P. Cannon was expelled from the C.P. for supporting Trotsky's left-

deviationist doctrine. Upon his return from the sixth world congress of the Comintern, which had turned down an appeal from Trotsky in exile, Cannon began clandestinely distributing Trotskyite materials. Though Cannon had been a member of their group, Foster and Bittelman preferred the charges against him of disseminating Trotskyite propaganda, advocating withdrawal from existing trade unions, abandoning the united front and fomenting disruption. Eventually about 100 of Cannon's followers were also expelled and, under Cannon's leadership, formed an opposition league which later became the Socialist Workers Party, affiliated to the Fourth International."

The charge of "clandestinely" circulating "Trotskyite materials," is supposed to convey the impression that Cannon was engaged in some sneaky, underhanded, criminal activity, warranting the most drastic penalty. Precisely what was the nature of this contraband which the sly Cannon was "clandestinely" distributing to leaders and members of the American CP? The slander that it consisted of "propaganda advocating withdrawal from the existing trade unions," and "abandoning the united front," etc., characteristic of the Stalin-Foster Third Period insanity, is downright ludicrous. The "materials" actually consisted of Trotsky's article, *Criticism of the Draft Program*, which had been presented for the consideration of the delegates to the Sixth World Congress and which they were bureaucratically deprived of reading because it was suppressed by the Stalin-Bukharin machine. The article, which came into Cannon's possession through accident, was later published serially in the first issues of *The Militant*, then the American organ of the Left Opposition.

Does our learned historian even bother to ask himself the question *why* Cannon found it necessary to distribute such materials "clandestinely." Cannon was a member of the top political committee of the CP; he had gone to Moscow as a delegate of the American CP to the sixth congress. Wasn't he entitled to submit whatever materials he possessed pertinent to the decisions of that congress in a discussion presumably called for that express purpose? But, no! By that time the Stalin pogrom against Trotskyism raged throughout the communist movement. Trotsky's views were distorted, mutilated, or suppressed by the Stalin bureaucracy. The most effective theoretical weapon in the arsenal of the bureaucracy was the mailed fist — and they wielded it with abandon. And all of this, of course, in the name of "democratic centralism."

A Deadly Affliction

As he did with so many of Lenin's contributions, Stalin twisted the Leninist concept of democratic centralism into its opposite, bureaucratic centralism. Under Lenin's concept of democratic centralism, as practiced in his lifetime, all a minority was obliged to do was to *accept* the decisions of the majority after democratic discussion and debate, leaving to the unfolding events to determine who was right and who wrong. Stalin gave this concept just one little twist and converted it into bureaucratic law that a minority must *agree* with the majority.

It is a psychological impossibility to expunge from one's head views, opinions, and thoughts which might be at variance with the views, opinions, and thoughts of others. The practice of bureaucratic centralism inevitably led to the obscene spectacle of individuals driven to public confession of their "errors" in order to avoid summary expulsion or worse. All of this was embellished and dignified under the heading of "self-criticism" which, as practiced by Stalinism, could be more accurately defined as self-flagellation.

Trotsky once aptly characterized Stalinism as "the syphilis of the labor movement." To urge upon the American workers a return to Stalin-Foster is to counsel a course which could only induce an aggravated case of *locomotor ataxia*. And that is one affliction we would not wish on our worst enemies.