

# INTERNAL BULLETIN

VOL. XII, No. 4

November, 1950

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MEMORANDUM ON THE UNFOLDING WAR AND THE  
TASKS OF THE PROLETARIAT  
IN THE NEW PHASE OF THE WORLD (PERMANENT) REVOLUTION  
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Issued by:

SOCIALIST WORKERS PARTY  
116 University Place  
New York 3, N.Y.

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MEMORANDUM ON THE UNFOLDING WAR AND THE  
TASKS OF THE PROLETARIAT  
IN THE NEW PHASE OF THE WORLD (PERMANENT) REVOLUTION

By Sam Marcy, Buffalo, N. Y.

1. The immediate significance of the Korean war lies not merely in the fact that it unleashed a momentous upheaval of the colonial masses on a new front of the ever-widening and deepening Asiatic Revolution, but marked a qualitative change in the character of the whole international situation. It has definitely and irretrievably ushered in the first though brief phase of the Third World War. Even if the Korean War should be followed by a more or less protracted interlude of "truce," it would only prove that a further preparatory period was necessary for the next and absolutely inevitable phase of the developing general conflict. But the die has already been cast. It was prepared, not merely by the Korean war, but by the entire preceding course of historical development, and flows logically and inexorably from the unbearable antagonisms between the growth of the productive forces and their rebellion against the forms of capitalist property as well as the fetters of the outmoded national state.

2. To the degree that the new war is waged as a struggle between the USSR and imperialism it differs from its predecessors in that it is essentially a conflict between two mutually antagonistic and irreconcilable social systems based on diametrically opposed class structures. Herein lies its broader historical and sociological significance.

3. But the struggle between the Soviet Union and imperialism is not a simple conflict between two self-contained and independent entities, suspended in mid-air and gravitating under their own impulses. While it is unquestionably true that the conflict between the Soviet Union and imperialism is truly titanic and world-wide in scope, it is anything but simple or merely two-sided. Rather it is manifold and extremely complex. The combatants on the arena are not arbitrary entities but living social forces. Nor are they self-contained or independent. On the contrary, they are organically inter-connected, indissolubly anchored to and absolutely dependent upon the two great class pillars of contemporary society -- the world proletariat and the world bourgeoisie.

It is from the historic antagonism of these two classes, whose interrelation constitutes the whole fabric of the bourgeois social order, that the conflict between the Soviet Union and imperialism originated and developed. And it is from the unendurable tenseness of their social contradictions that their life and death struggle must sooner or later be joined. This is the root content of the whole problem. This is the quintessence which has been hidden beneath the motley web of alternating international events, conjunctures, and catastrophes. Its presentation to the world under the mask of the "cold war" is one of the most insidious elements in the mechanics of class deception -- equally necessary for the self-preservation of the reigning oligarchy in the Kremlin as for the perpetuation of the rule of finance capitalism with its citadel in Wall Street.

It is the class character of imperialism with its nerve center in the USA, which draws together all bourgeois states and all kindred social layers and mobilizes them for the war against the USSR.

It is the class character of the modern working class as the grave-digger and revolutionary successor to the bourgeoisie which is the umbilical cord that ties in the fate of the USSR with the fate of the world proletariat. If we conceive the mutual relations of the USSR and the world proletariat as flowing from their social connections, what emerges between them is not an arbitrary contraposition but an inseparable interdependence. This flows from their common class denominator, from the sameness of their basic social substance, and from their relation to each other -- not as mere fragmentary and disparate parts of the same social reality, but as separate stages of an uneven process of development. Not all the disavowals of Stalin, not all his base denunciations and cruel betrayals can break the social nexus between the Soviet Union and the international working class. Nor can he dissolve their historic fate in the maelstrom of his bureaucratic politics. The course of the unfolding war cannot but make the historical destiny of the USSR and the international working class more plainly congruent, the identity of their social and historical interests more visible, and the path of their development and direction more clearly outlined.

4. Hence the deepest and most profound significance of the coming war is that it will mark the opening phase of the all-out, supreme, and final conflict between the world bourgeoisie, which long ago exhausted its progressive historical role, and the world proletariat, which must seize control of the productive forces of society and organize them on a rational basis.

5. By the very nature of its objective dynamics and the irresistible sweep of its momentum, this war must necessarily develop into a global class conflict: greater, sharper, and more decisive than all the social and political conflicts of the past. Historically and sociologically, it will be a resume of the more than one hundred years of revolutionary warfare waged by the proletariat and its allies against the bourgeoisie.

6. The fact that the opening phase of the war may manifest itself (or rather conceal itself), even if only initially and temporarily, as a war between nations, should not in the slightest degree obscure its clearcut class character. It is not a war between the nations but a war between the classes! The transfer of the main burden of the struggle from the shoulders of the immediate protagonists (the USSR and the USA) to its most direct ultimate protagonists -- the world bourgeoisie and the world proletariat -- is as inevitable as the rising sun. The bourgeoisie has everywhere recognized this war as the great and decisive one of its long and bloody career, and has therefore invested it with an immeasurably greater acuteness than all its past struggles combined. Its fury and rapacity will know no restraints. The proletarians and oppressed of all lands will soon know this, but all too well! While petty-bourgeois philistines and centrists of all shades and hues will undoubtedly point to the symmetrical character of the armies in combat as proof of the reactionary character of the war on both sides, we must on the other hand ceaselessly proclaim that: whereas one army is driven by the engines of class despotism and social strangulation, the other is a locomotive of historical progress. Never, however, even for an instant, can the revolutionary vanguard neglect to courageously and energetically expose the congenital propensity of the temporary and cowardly custodians

of the locomotive to obstruct and shipwreck, all in the name of their own narrow, selfish, and caste-like interests. Their replacement before the end of the journey is absolutely necessary and inevitable. The revolutionary vanguard must make it clear to the whole world that in this war the geographical boundaries are social boundaries, the battle formations are class formations, and the world line of demarcation is the line rigidly drawn by the socialist interests of the world proletariat. Every worker must know his place as well as his duty.

7. That the first phase of the unfolding war exploded on the Korean peninsula is neither accidental nor arbitrary, nor primarily propelled by subjective or diplomatic considerations. Not even Stalin or Truman or the Pope make history wholly out of their own cloth. And since the Korean war is not a transcendental ripple on a vast sea, but a momentous event in the evolution of the world-wide class struggle, and a turning-point in international relations, it can only be understood in the light of sharply defined and objectively determined causes. That does not mean that the perfidious role of Stalin's politics is not reflected here as well as everywhere else where he maintains a treacherous stranglehold on the masses -- only here it is reproduced on a more monstrous and catastrophic scale.

But just as little can we say that the Korean war was wholly and exclusively generated by the elemental revolutionary outbursts of the Korean masses. This would be just as false as to conceive Korea as a mere pawn in the struggle between two arbitrary powers. While it is incontestably valid to affirm that the revolutionary ferment of the Korean workers and peasants was the most indispensable social ingredient in the composite interplay of class forces in that corner of the Asiatic crucible, it would be entirely wrong to regard it as a unique phenomenon divorced from the historic process of our time. To probe its significance to the very depth, we must first of all view it as an inseparable element in a constantly evolving world process whose social mainspring and driving force is and can only be the present struggle of the basic classes for hegemony over society.

8. This struggle finds its partial though acutest expression in the developing class war between the USSR and imperialism. The great tragedy of the world proletariat and the Russian proletariat in particular is that this struggle is distorted, mangled, and mutilated by the parasitic interests of the Thermidorian bureaucracy. But to deny that this struggle exists or to deny its class character would only facilitate the deceptive politics of Stalin rather than prepare for his downfall. Korea was not a struggle between Stalin and Truman or MacArthur, nor was it a struggle between the "barbaric East" and the "democratic West," but between the upper and lower strata of a convulsed social organism which could no longer endure the restraints of class stratification.

It is in this social setting, where global class currents and antithetical cross-currents, always in constant evolution and uninterrupted strife, meet and collide, that we see Korea in all its enormity and stark tragedy. Korea was a temporary but untenable nodal point in this struggle of the giants, the mirror where the contending antagonists momentarily measured their strength, but where one of them ignominiously retreated. It ended temporarily in a major catastrophe, above all for the Korean people, a setback for the Soviet Union, for

all the oppressed of the Orient, and for the working class in general. But it is only the beginning!

It did prove however, if further proof were still necessary, that Stalinism can attempt to nibble away at imperialism, can even willy-nilly consent to a daring offensive, but cannot hold its ground in the face of the united, concerted, world-wide imperialist counter-offensive. Why? Because this in its turn threatens to inevitably convert itself into a global class war, a new phase of the world (permanent) revolution, which would surely sweep away not only imperialism but the debris of Stalinism as well.

It is entirely probable that the planners in the Kremlin conceived Korea as a stealthy venture which would strengthen their influence in the Orient and test as well as cement the alliance with China. But Korea evoked the most violent paroxysm of imperialism and set the stage for the fullest political, social and military mobilization of all bourgeoisdom. Its class character is most vividly shown in the fact that not a single bourgeois layer anywhere on the globe even as much as professed to see the "other side," the side of the North Koreans.

The Kremlin swiftly took all this into its calculations and beat a retreat -- a retreat that was still possible, without material injury to its interests, but a retreat that has paved the way and made absolutely inevitable the new offensive by imperialism under conditions which cannot but be much more unfavorable to the Soviet Union and the working class in general. Again and once more, the next phase of the struggle will show that it is the whip of the counter-revolution which will urge the revolution onward.

9. The events in Korea could only have begun on the basis of the new correlation of class forces in the Orient and the consequent alteration of the international position of the great powers. The mutation of state forms on the mainland of China is indubitably the most decisive cause of the consequent changes. Itself issuing from a mighty revolutionary wave, originally impelled by the great October Revolution, the coming to power of the Mao Tse-tung regime is the greatest rupture in the imperialist chain since the victory of the Bolshevik revolution of 1917. Whoever does not see that the bourgeois-landlord-merchant-compradore class alliance, the main and fundamental prop of imperialism in China, has been broken and shattered, and a new class power erected, cannot hope to understand the evolution of present-day society. A new class power, basing itself fundamentally on the workers and peasants, has seized the reins of power, and is now attempting to shape the destiny of China in a new direction. That bourgeois relations still predominate in industry and agriculture is incontrovertible. But what is of the greatest moment is that the political power of the former ruling class has been shattered, their "body of armed men" disarmed or destroyed, and their main source of strength and recuperative power, their nexus to and dependence upon imperialism, shattered. China is a workers' state because the main and fundamental obstacle to the rule of the workers and peasants, the bourgeois-landlord-imperialist alliance has been swept away and a new alliance -- based on workers and peasants -- erected in its place. It is not a chemically pure dictatorship of the proletariat, as no social formation ever is, but its fundamental class content is beyond doubt.

10. But shall we characterize the new Chinese revolution "by the class which achieves it or by the social content lodged in it"? To this question posed by Trotsky in one of his letters to Preobrazhensky (see April 1936 NI) Trotsky gives the following answer: "There is a theoretical trap lodged in counterposing the former to the latter in such a general form." Why? Because, says Trotsky, "The 'social content' under the dictatorship of the proletariat (based on an alliance with the peasantry) can remain during a certain period of time not socialist as yet, but the road to bourgeois development from the dictatorship of the proletariat can lead only through counter-revolution. For this reason, so far as the social content is concerned, it is necessary to say: 'We shall wait and see.'"

This hypothetical stage of the Chinese revolution projected by Trotsky more than two decades ago corresponds precisely to the reality of the China of today. The revolution's "social content" -- the full nationalization of the means of production as well as collectivization of agriculture -- has, of course, "not yet" been achieved, although small but significant beginnings have been made, especially in Manchuria. But the road back "to bourgeois development from the dictatorship of the proletariat can lead only through counter-revolution," i.e., the re-emergence of the Chiang Kai-shek regime or one of similar social stripe.

Of course Trotsky had in mind a genuine Communist Party grounded in revolutionary Marxism and geared to the perspective of the world revolution, rather than the party of Mao Tse-tung and Choy En-lai, which in every way represent a negation of these very ideas. But then the latter have not been the architects and guides of the revolution, as was the case with the party of Lenin and Trotsky. On the contrary, the present Chinese leaders have been catapulted into power by the torrential revolutionary pressure of the Chinese peasants and workers. But theirs is nonetheless a dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry no matter how distorted and mutilated by Stalinist practices, dogmas and perspectives -- unless we are willing to assume that the Communist Party of China is a non-working class organization and does not base itself on the workers and peasants. In such a case we shall, of course, have to revise our whole theoretical approach to this question.

But what about the contradiction between the present political structure in China and its economic base? Here again the words of Trotsky offer a faultless guide: "The gist of the matter lies precisely in the fact that although the political mechanics of the revolution depends in the last analysis upon an economic base (not only national but international) it cannot, however, be deduced with abstract logic from this economic base. In the first place, the base itself is very contradictory and its 'maturity' does not allow of bald statistical determination; secondly, the economic base as well as the political situation must be approached not in the national but in the international framework, taking into account the dialectic action and reaction between the national and the international; thirdly, the class struggle and its political expression, unfolding on the economic foundations, also have their own imperious logic of development, which cannot be leaped over."

In the light of the above passage it is clear that the objective dynamics of the Chinese revolution can find its fullest expression

only on the international arena. The fate of China even more than that of the Soviet Union can be determined, not within the narrow confines of its national boundaries, but on the broad highway of the international proletarian revolution.

11. No approach towards a real understanding of the intricate relations between China, the Soviet Union and imperialism, is possible unless one previously takes into account the class character of their regimes.

"The USSR, as a workers' state, has no imperialist interests or aims in China. On the contrary, it is in the interests of the USSR to help smash imperialism in all its colonial and semi-colonial strongholds by rendering the fullest possible aid to the oppressed peoples in their struggle against imperialism."

This statement of Trotsky's, written in 1938, retains its fullest validity today. In the diplomatic relations of Moscow and Peiping are not only interlaced the sordid interests of the two bureaucracies, but also the inner needs for development of their respective states. We must draw a sharp line between the conflicting needs of Stalin and Mao for the perpetuation of their privileges, and the imperious demands for mutual development of China and the Soviet Union as geographically contiguous and socially harmonious state formations. The frictions and conflicts are all between Mao and Stalin, not between China and Russia.

The alliance between the Soviet Union and the Chinese Republic is an alliance between social classes having identical social aims. Inherent in this is their irreconcilable hostility to imperialism. The world bourgeoisie is supremely conscious of this. In its effort to break the alliance it is not promoting a "new democratic order in Asia," but is seeking to promote a new form of apostacy among the "leaders" of the Asiatic revolution, while at the same time preparing to mount a new military offensive.

The rapprochement between Peiping and Moscow, a truly remarkable achievement in itself, demonstrates that the laws of history are stronger than the bureaucratic apparatus. The class bonds between China and the USSR have at least for the moment triumphed over the narrow clique politics of their ruling hierarchies. The alliance between the USSR and China has partially decided the fate of the USSR, and definitely ended more than a quarter of a century of isolation. While it has solved one problem for the USSR as well as China, it has put into sharper focus another, and made its solution more imperative than ever. The elimination of more than half a billion people from the strangle-hold of world capitalism in the period of its death agony, cannot but aggravate all of the contradictions of capitalism anew, and impel the bourgeoisie towards a forcible solution of its problems at the expense of the millions of the Asiatic continent, the last safety-valve for world imperialism. The co-existence of the Soviet-Chinese alliance side by side with imperialism cannot but be conceived as a preparatory period for the next phase in the global class struggle.

12. The law of uneven development and its supplementary expression, the law of combined development, have brought it about that

Europe, the cradle of that socio-economic formation known as capitalism, proved too narrow and cramped either to serve as the basin for capitalism's fullest expansion in its youth or even as a cemetery where the proletariat can at long last perform the final rites for its stubborn and tenacious old foe. In this respect, capitalism shows a striking similarity to at least one other preceding universal social formation. We refer of course to the classical civilizations of antiquity. They too attained their fullest flowering, not in their cradles, the fertile valleys of the Tigris and Euphrates or the Nile, but on the broader expanse of the Mediterranean.

13. As long ago as the turn of our century, the economic center of gravity, which was slowly shifting from Britain to Germany, also showed signs of moving further westward towards America. This was graphically illustrated, not merely by the uninterrupted stream of migration, as well as the export of capital to America, but by a multitude of other factors, not the least of which was of course the unparalleled expansion of American industry itself, which developed in practically ideal social and natural surroundings, untrammelled by Europe's feudal obstructions. Nor were there formidable capitalist rivals directly blocking its path of development.

The fires of the 1848 revolution on the European continent could not be revived in the wake of the discovery of gold in California, a fact which Marx and Engels refer to as of "even greater importance than the February revolution." With prophetic vision the youthful authors saw more than a century before our time that unless Europe took the road of social revolution "it would fall into the same industrial, commercial, and political dependence as Italy, Spain and Portugal." Only if Europe "transformed its mode of production" would it "maintain the superiority of European industry and counteract the disadvantages of the geographical situation," in relation to America.

14. At about the same time that signs were discernible of the shift of the economic center of gravity further West, signs were multiplying that the center of revolutionary gravity was shifting East and away from Western Europe. Kautsky, the chief theoretician of the Second International, did not entirely overlook this interesting social phenomenon. And Lenin, almost two decades later, in a none-too-polite manner, recalled it to his attention after Kautsky had turned renegade and denied the validity of the October revolution.

15. The first imperialist holocaust delivered a shattering blow to European capitalism and marked the definite passage of the economic center of gravity to America. Ludwell Denny's notable book, "America conquers Britain," which appeared a decade later, was merely a statistical tabulation of Trotsky's brilliant prognosis that America "would put Europe on rations."

Meanwhile, the revolutionary center of gravity which was steadily moving Eastward gave objective and monumental verification of its existence with the outbreak of the October Revolution, breaking the imperialist chain at its weakest link, Russia.

The establishment of the first Workers' Republic and the founding of the Communist International electrified the whole world proletariat. It did not however break the back of European capitalism, but



did make a significant dent further East, in China. The Chinese revolution of 1925-27 was drowned in blood with the indispensable aid of Stalin, but left smoldering embers in the form of intractable armies.

16. The close of the Second World War established American finance capital as the nerve center of world imperialism and marked its fusion with the most diverse forms of European and Asiatic reaction. It also signified the end of European capitalism's political sovereignty, in domestic and particularly in foreign affairs. The center of revolutionary gravity moved further East, finding explosive confirmation in the culmination of the Third Chinese Revolution, and setting in motion the millions of oppressed and exploited in all of south-east Asia, and even as far as the Philippines.

17. To arrive at an approximation of the direction of social development since the October Revolution, let us identify anew the driving forces of that development, namely; the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. Proceeding thus, we isolate them in "pure" form; that is, we separate them from such secondary phenomena as national boundaries, political parties, bureaucracy, democracy, fascism, reformism, and Stalinism. These are superstructural elements, which in a given situation may operate to bolster or hamper the structure as the case may be, but are strictly derivative in character. Sometimes they serve as palliatives for reviving a decomposing social structure, and again, as encrustations which paralyze a live and growing structure. In a broad and general way, history indicates that, ultimately, every new social structure which arises out of the needs of development of the productive forces will in time bring into correspondence its superstructure, or, failing that, will overthrow it.

If we abstract all superstructural phenomena from the structure, that is, from the sum total of the inter-relation of the classes, we find that the residue is still the same -- the bourgeoisie and the proletariat.

What then is new? If we still view the structure -- the sum total of the inter-relations of the classes -- in "pure," naked form and divorced, particularly, from the blinding effects of the multitudinous national boundaries, we see then that there has taken place on a global scale a most remarkable social regroupment of the basic classes, a redistribution into newer and larger geographical basins of the material and social power of the bourgeoisie and proletariat. "East" and "West" have become the geographical receptacles, the depositories into which old Europe, poured out its rich social protoplasm in opposite directions -- resulting in a shift of the revolutionary center of gravity to the East and the economic center of gravity to the far West.

The proletariat established its first workers' republic in the East, where imperialism was weakest and where capital found the greatest social resistance to its reproduction and further development. The bourgeoisie on the other hand reproduced itself on a materially sounder foundation in America, where it not only encountered the least social resistance but also found the most favorable natural surroundings.

18. "America is the foundry where the fate of Man will be forged." In this profound thought of Trotsky's is lodged not only a

great historic conception but also a revolutionary prognosis and guide to action. Ingrained in it, too, is the final hope for all humanity.

The law of value, that ultimate arbiter of all things both splendid and shabby, has evinced in America an all too one-sided interest, and even partiality towards the owners that be, and rather scant attention to the powers who will be. Our point is not to quarrel with the law, but to show her other, kindlier side.

The law of labor value showed that a couple of American destroyers could terrorize all Formosa, and completely subdue it, were that also necessary. That occurred fully three quarters of a century ago, in 1876. Today, when America is equipped with the atomic bomb, the "absolute" weapon, Formosa presents a formidable and even terrifying project for the banker-general fraternity in the Pentagon. That too is a demonstration of the law of labor value -- that it may yield different results under changed circumstances.

"Five miserable divisions," as Trotsky called them, seemed entirely sufficient for the Japanese war clique to hold all of China's millions in subjection. But the bookkeepers of the banking houses of Mitsui and Mitsubishi took too narrow a view of the role of technology in its relation to the prosecution of a predatory war on a seemingly helpless people. That the miscalculators broke their necks in the relentless pursuit of their mad adventure was also an expression of the law of labor value -- only they had not reckoned with this side of the law: its conditional, dependent and relative character.

The law of value regulates the organism of capitalism, and illuminates the relations between labor and technology. It shows that the productivity of labor is determined, among other factors, by the state of technology. But from this does not follow the utterly false and spurious military doctrine, now especially current after Korea in the ruling summits of Wall Street, that the technological status of any particular country at any given moment is an absolute criterion of its strength and viability in modern combat -- that is, total war.

19. American finance capital is the center of the imperialist system. It is moving at a faster tempo all the time, but its heart beats ever slower. True, the war doubled the national income -- raised the productivity of labor, and expanded the productive forces to unprecedented heights. But American capital is living on borrowed time. It is nurturing volcanic eruptions everywhere. The terrestrial globe appears to it as one gigantic piece of real estate, in a terribly bearish market, where the overlords of finance can garner the most fabulous fortunes merely by extending funds to the most desperate customers. But alas! The time-honored empirical solutions are running their full course. That their "elder statesmen" recognize this is all too clear from their daily foreboding pronouncements.

American finance capital never fully recovered from the paralytic stroke it received in the economic avalanche which began in October, 1929. The years of cataclysmic decline that followed in its wake was proof irrefutable that private ownership of the means of production was strangling the social organism. That whole complicated network of capitalist property relations which is forever mask-

ing itself under the pseudonym of "free enterprise" and the "democratic way of life," was suddenly stripped of its sodden garments and began to appear with each passing day of chronic crisis, as just a brutal mass of reactionary and hypocritical obstructions standing in the way of the American people. Signs, too, were to be observed everywhere that this revolutionary idea might even take hold of the broad masses. The bourgeoisie reacted with frenzied, hysterical opposition, even to the most insignificant social demands. It was not that the bourgeoisie could not "afford" them, but it was indicative of the fact that the idea of revolution, which was slowly making its way into the nerves of the masses, had simultaneously raised itself as a spectre in the minds of the bourgeoisie.

But the continent of Europe was again pregnant with another imperialist holocaust, and America was destined to become the arsenal from which Europe would draw an apparently unlimited stream of weapons for its own self-destruction. This is what was at the bottom of the recovery that followed. This is what interrupted the further development of America's first series of truly great class struggles and cooled the molten lava of the embryo revolution that was the CIO in its Heroic Age, the phase of its "sit-downs."

20. "Violent outbursts take place sooner in the extremities of the bourgeois organism than in the heart, because here regulation is more possible." Thus did Marx many decades ago, without even alluding to America, depict its role while at the same time foreshadowing the first series of successful revolutionary conflagrations at the extremities of the imperialist system, and not at its heart. But the heart is so fashioned that it can properly nourish only the natural parts of its own body. While it is incontestably true that America is today the center of the world-wide imperialist system it must not be forgotten that it was constructed to fit the narrower framework of the American continent. The laws of physiology have yet to exhibit how the heart of an organism, itself in old age, can be made to function while assuming the added responsibility of pumping its blood into an ever-increasing number of dead and decaying parts artificially engrafted to it. This is an abomination in nature as well as in society! The heavy preponderance of the dead weights of European and Asiatic reaction will inevitably ruin its aging heart.

The burden of the preceding paragraphs is calculated to show that the tendency in world politics and economics whereby the revolutionary center of gravity moved steadily in one direction and the economic center of gravity in another direction, will sooner than most Philistines realize, convert itself into its opposite and result in a union of the two.

This is the real meaning of America as the "foundry where the fate of man will be forged." The coalescing of the revolutionary center of gravity with that of the economic center will be the great turning point in man's history.

The first truly revolutionary outburst on the social soil of the American continent will light the flames of a new revolutionary conflagration which is sure to envelop the entire globe. It will graphically demonstrate how "East meets West," not by the construction of new and more tortuous artificial boundaries, but by the revo-

lutionary destruction of all of them. It will be the supreme and ultimate alliance of the great truly progressive classes of the East and West in a final effort to accomplish their own dissolution. This in turn will terminate the first great cycle of man's development from sub-man -- to man -- to Communist Man, and set him on the path to new and higher syntheses.

21. It is only in the light of the general perspective outlined above that we can arrive at a fuller and more many sided estimate of the period which began with the first worldwide imperialist explosion of August 1914.

At the end of two world wars and the beginning of the third one, the relative position of the two basic classes in the struggle for world hegemony is as follows: The world bourgeoisie lost its material bases in Russia, China and Eastern Europe. It all but lost the shattered remnants of its base in Western Europe. But it strengthened itself materially and socially in America. The world proletariat in a social and historical sense, holds power in Russia, China and Eastern Europe, but at the cost of its complete political expropriation. It lost its revolutionary vanguard and succumbed to ideological strangulation. This resulted in the complete atrophy of the revolutionary Marxist spirit, its traditions, its heritage, not to speak of its revolutionary methods of struggle and its liberating principles. From this followed a long period of demoralization of the world proletariat and its consequent inability to reorganize itself under a new revolutionary vanguard.

That is the balance sheet of the world-wide class struggle -- with the losses as well as gains on both sides of the class barricades. And viewed in retrospect, could it really have been otherwise? Such a long and protracted struggle, extending for decades and spanning the continents as well as the oceans, could not but result in catastrophic losses as well as prodigious gains.

In a continuous, raging, ever-deepening and widening war between the classes, no greater error can be made than to confuse a momentous gain with a loss, or for that matter vice versa. Our primary purpose in making an appraisal of the class character of any given social formation is to formulate guides for action. The proletarian army cannot for long be under a cloud as to whether certain of its contingents belong to the enemy or are part of its own class camp. A gain must be defended and a loss must be erased! Such are the ruthless and imperious demands of a war that must be fought to the death.

But can Eastern Europe and China be regarded as a gain for the proletariat? As a success? Perhaps the best way to answer this question is expressed in the words of Walt Whitman: "It is provided in the essence of things that from any fruition of success, no matter what, shall come forth something to make a greater struggle necessary."

Thus the real merit, the lasting significance of the overturns in Eastern Europe and China are that they shall bring forth, as expressed in the words of Whitman, "SOMETHING TO MAKE A GREATER STRUGGLE NECESSARY." China and Eastern Europe are stepping stones which bring "the greater struggle" -- the inevitable social Armageddon between capital and labor -- ever closer.

The emergence of China and Eastern Europe as workers' states has not closed the epoch of their revolutions but merely opened them -- and projected them on the broad highway of the world struggle of the classes where their fate and the fate of the world proletariat will be decided. The crushing of the old state apparatus and the erection of a new one based on workers and peasants merely lays the foundation for the development of the revolution from lower to higher stages -- a development that can find its fruition only on the international arena. If we adopt the global class war as the scale of our measurements then we can see that the overturn in Eastern Europe and in China have materially changed the relationship of forces between the world bourgeoisie and the world proletariat, and have been a heavy blow to imperialism by circumscribing the orbit of its deadly operations, i.e., the extraction of surplus value, the super-exploitation of the people abroad in order to better enslave the people at home. This in itself is a progressive development.

Neither Russia nor China nor Eastern Europe nor Yugoslavia can build "socialism in one country" or even together "in one zone." If in the period which opened in 1924, when a relatively more stable equilibrium prevailed, the building of socialism in one country was a reactionary, nationalistic Utopia, then today it is completely fantastic, and a cruel deception of the masses. While significant gains can be made here and there by the nationalization of the means of production and the collectivization of agriculture, the distortion of the economy of these countries as a result of the imperative needs of the military situation makes peaceful planning, even on a modest scale, far more difficult. The world is living in a perpetual state of war, literally on the edge of a precipice. The dark shadow of American imperialist might, and the terror of its military prowess is a preponderant element in the calculations of the large as well as the small states. As long as the incubus of American finance capital clings to the body of world economy no real long term socialist planning can be done anywhere on the globe. A world that is living in the shadow of the atomic bomb cannot but economically gear itself more and more towards war; that is, the forcible solution of irreconcilable contradictions which cannot be resolved in any other manner. That is the indelible outline of the stark reality. Whoever preaches "the neutralization of the two camps" for a long period, is handing the masses a soporific pill while the bourgeoisie is sharpening its dagger.

22. The metamorphosis of the USSR -- the most striking social phenomenon in man's entire evolution -- presents a living social panorama that is truly staggering. This is scarcely to be wondered at. It contains within its broad bosom such an abundance of contradictions, contrasts, and nuances -- is so rich and variegated in content -- combining horse-drawn vehicles with jet propelled planes -- harnessing the energy of the peasant who still draws his water direct from the well, while exploring the possibilities of the mountain-moving atom -- a whole country moving at break-neck speed, and yet at a snail's pace -- holding out the greatest hopes for the masses, and yet dashing them to the ground every day, every hour -- connected and interconnected with a thousand threads to the most distant and most barbarous past, and yet serving as a beacon light for man's future -- a vast labyrinthine social complex whose every sinew and muscle is twined and inter-twined with the most suffocating and stifling over-

growth of parasitic fat. Such are some of the more obvious aspects of a once isolated and struggling infant state that has now arisen to the stature of a veritable giant.

A real analysis of the Soviet state can only be made with the aid of what Lenin called "the last word in scientific evolutionary methods" -- dialectics. "The essence of it," he took great pains to show, "is the division of the one and the cognition of its contradictory parts."

Where is the summer soldier in labor's minor wars who has not championed the Soviet Union when that social phenomenon appeared in its "one-ness," i.e., its unity, and as it is seen in relatively stable equilibrium -- "at peace with the world," and in harmonious collaboration with labor's deadly enemies?

And who has not seen the erstwhile sycophant and purveyor of the most infamous Stalinist dogmas who has suddenly awakened in the midst of the cold war and now sees only "its contradictory parts" -- the conglomerate mass of Stalinist distortions of the Soviet state? It remained for Trotsky to show that the real essence of the objective dialectics of the Soviet state lies not in its "one-ness" (the unity of opposites in the body social, which is conditional, temporary and relative) nor in its multitudinous contradictory parts (which are merely objective manifestations of the hidden process), but in the "division of the one," (the struggle of opposites, which is absolute) and must inevitably result in the separation of the revolutionary social structure from the reactionary super-structure. Therein lies the essence not only of the Soviet Union but of dialectics itself! This is the imperishable rock of Trotskyism, the only valid and consistently revolutionary Marxism of today.

23. In between capitalism and socialism lies ahead a rather lengthy period of transition. Since the advent of the October Revolution, it has generally been recognized to be more protracted in character than was originally conceived in the pre-monopoly days of capitalism. It must now also be fully recognized that to the transition between capitalism and socialism there also corresponds another lengthy, parallel transition, a transition in the development of the proletariat from the stage of non-consciousness to consciousness.

Like all other elements in the material evolution of man, consciousness is subject to the same laws of movement -- of slow quantitative growth, of leaps forward and breaks, of the transformation of quantity into quality, etc. -- as all other phenomena. The successive breakdowns of the First, Second and Third Internationals can be conceived as breaks in the evolution of the consciousness of the proletariat. These breaks correspond to, or rather follow on the heels of, giant rifts in the material struggle of the classes, arising from their incompatible roles in the process of production. The reflection of this in the consciousness of the working class, particularly in its vanguard, are true-to-law developments, conforming inexorably to objective law. Rather than evincing the reign of the arbitrary, they demonstrate that consciousness, like all other elements in social development, is the product of a deep inner lawfulness.

The victory of the Thermidorean over the revolutionary tendency in the struggle of social forces following the October Revolution was

the greatest break in the development of the consciousness of the working class. The revolutionary tendency fell in combat as a result of the concentration of all the material and social forces of the bourgeoisie against an isolated and besieged fortress of the world revolution. The centralism of the imperialist bourgeoisie triumphed over the revolutionary centralism of the proletariat, and produced a monstrous reaction in the bureaucratic absolutism of Stalinism.

24. Our movement will triumph over all its ideological enemies, and lead the world proletariat to ultimate victory by remorselessly and relentlessly exposing before all the world the inherent contradiction and ultimate separation of the virus that is Stalinism from the bacillus that is the revolution, inherent in the structure of a whole group of workers' states comprising almost half the population of the world. The latter demands of us that we passionately, loyally and devotedly defend them against all their enemies from within and from without. Failure to do it boldly and courageously will result in a breach of revolutionary duty not only to the workers and peasants in those states, but to the world proletariat as well. Equally imperative is the consistent, energetic and absolutely uncompromising exposure of the perfidious role of Stalinism all over the world. In the daily prosecution of these tasks as part and parcel of the general world-wide prosecution of the class struggle we will grow strong and soon count our followers by the millions.

25. This is not the summer of Stalinism, but its Indian Summer. This is not the Winter of labor's historical role, but that of capital's, and its golden bloody dusk now settling all over the globe heralds not the long night of reaction but the relative (even though it may be total) darkness of the equinox before the storming of the heavens by the proletariat.

October 29, 1950

comment - stylistically extremely "rhetorical"

The ideas could well have been presented simply & with less revolutionary flourish, pomp and circumstance. I wonder if money was ever influenced by Wagnerian Opera say

Notterdamming?

main point - The class struggle has taken on a global geographical character with the USSR playing the role of proletariat and U.S.A. world capitalist. The final showdown between Capitalists and workers will take the form of a world War between Russia and America.

The initial stages (Korea) have already begun. This will lead to a revolution in the U.S.A.