

1. Stalinist Russia is a reactionary state based upon a new system of economic exploitation, bureaucratic collectivism.

The ruling class is the bureaucracy which through its control of the state collectively owns, controls and manages the basic means of production and exchange. The laboring classes, the workers and peasants, are the chattels of the bureaucracy, tied to the factories and land as part of the means of production. The basic motive force of the economy is the extraction of more and more surplus labor from the toilers so as to increase the revenue, power and position of the bureaucratic ruling class.

2. Thus, while bureaucratic collectivism, in common with all previous class societies, rests on the exploitation of the many by the few, its productive relations are distinguished from those of its predecessors by the specific manner in which the means of production and labor are united in the economy. This determines the distinctive social relations and specific laws of development of Stalinist Russia.

The bureaucratic-collectivist productive relations demand that the ruling class have an absolute monopoly over the vast national market (protected by the monopoly of foreign trade), and operate the economy by means of totalitarian state planning. The relations within the ruling class -- the share which individual bureaucrate receive of the wealth produced, their relative power and position, the manner in which individuals enter or are forced out of the ruling class -- are determined by non-economic, primarily political forces. The bureaucracy, however, is more than a political bureaucracy. It has fused all economic and political power into its own hands and it is the ruling class economically, politically and socially. It exploits the laboring masses collectively through its state and thereby merges the economic and political elements of class rule. It directs the economy through political terrorism, and uses the state power (as well as economic necessity) to compel the toilers to labor in the factories and fields. Political terrorism and forced labor are therefore inherent characteristics of the Stalinist productive relations.

As a result of these social relations, the bureaucratic ruling class is directly concerned with the economic and political strengthening of the country in order to maintain its own rule. These relations form the basis for the Stalinist-imperialist exploitation and oppression of the minority peoples within the Soviet Union, the Stalinist "Empire". And because of the existence of such a vast, multi-national sphere of domination (rich in raw materials, land, and man-power) and because of the backwardness of Russian economy, the imperialist character of the Soviet Union with reference to Poland, the Baltics and Balkans, etc., is closer to the military-bureaucratic imperialism of Czarism than to modern capitalist imperialism.

In relation to the capitalist imperialist states Russia occupies the position of a huge national trust which, by monopolizing the home market, intensifies the contradiction existing in these countries between the tendency for the unlimited development of the productive forces and the growing limitations of the markets for capital investments and for the sale of commodities. From the standpoint of Russian industrial and cultural development, the overthrow of world capitalism is an indispensable condition for the liberation of its own nationally confined productive forces, so that it could benefit fully from the advanced Western technique and take its place as an integral part of a progressive world economy. Here also, bureaucratic collectivism (Stalinism) reveals its socially reactionary character in its role as an assistant of out-lived capitalist imperialism in the task of destroying the independent working-class movement for socialism.

3. In contrast to Russian bureaucratic collectivism, capitalism in any of its forms is based upon the private (or corporate) ownership of the basic means of production and exchange by individual capitalists, and the exploitation of the masses with the aim of extracting more and more profits for these individual capitalist property owners.

Under Fascism, and to a growing degree in all modern capitalist imperialist countries (particularly when they assume the form of war economy), the totalitarian state control over economy does not abolish but only supplements the basic productive relations of capitalism. The Fascist state regulation of capital investments, limitations on profits, forced labor and fixed prices and wages, monopoly of foreign trade, etc., have produced new, subsidiary, productive relations which have been super-imposed on the basic capitalist productive relations, and are indispensable in order to maintain the latter in the concrete historical conditions of social crisis and war. In this regime of state-controlled capitalism, then, the bureaucracy is the political agency of the propertied class, defending bourgeois society, capitalist ownership, exploitation and profits, and conducting a war for the extension of the fields of investment for German big business.

4. Unlike early bourgeois society which was progressive, bureaucratic collectivism is reactionary from the day of its birth. While it has succeeded over a period in raising the industrial level of the country, its productive relations are in actuality tremendous obstacles to the real growth of the social productivity of labor (the economic basis of social progress), the raising of the living standards of the masses, and the development of society toward socialist security and freedom.

The Russian bureaucracy has succeeded in increasing the industrial and agricultural output of the country only by the most ruthless exploitation of the workers and peasants; through totalitarian control of the vast internal market and the abundant material and human resources at its disposal (raw materials, gold, man-power, etc.); and the importation of advanced capitalist technique from abroad. Yet despite these, and despite its superior forms of organizing economy (state ownership and planning), Stalinist Russia has experienced rapid, cyclical fluctuations in the development of economy. In recent years there has been a marked decline in the annual rate of increase of industrial output. Even the brief periods of increasing

production do not lead to greater social stability. On the contrary, they accentuate the contradictions of the economy and the insecurity of the regime.. Thus bureaucratic collectivism cannot develop the productive forces progressively in any socially significant sense, that is over a long historical period, such as is the case with progressive societies.

It is the bureaucratic productive relations themselves which hamper the development of the forces of production. The terroristic regime, which is an integral part of these relations, leads to constant disruptions in production, such as those arising from the inevitable purges. The productive relations as a whole bring about continual disproportions in the output of the various sectors of the economy dependent upon one another, and thereby tremendous economic waste; the low efficiency of production arising from the forced character of labor and the poverty of the masses; the poor quality of industrial output, and the appropriation by the ruling class of an increasing share of the national wealth.

Under these conditions, not only the masses, but also the ruling class, the bureaucracy, live in permanent political insecurity, uncertainty and terror. Stalinism has failed to establish either a progressive or a stable economic and social order.

5. The unique character of bureaucratic collectivism arises from its concrete historical origins. It is the product of the bureaucratic counter-revolutionary overthrow of the Russian Workers' State.

The Bolsheviks, the revolutionary party of the proletariat, took power in a culturally backward country. The economic and political insecurity of the regime accentuated by the civil war and imperialist intervention, led to increasing limitations of democracy in the society: the trade unions, the factory committees, the cooperatives, and to the monopoly of political power of the Bolsheviks. With the expropriation of the landlords and the capitalists, and the nationalization of the basic means of production and exchange, the state and the economy were administered by a bureaucracy controlled by the Bolsheviks.

The counter revolution carried through by the Stalinist faction of the Party was strengthened by the defeats of the socialist revolutions in western Europe. The old bureaucracy was gradually transformed by Stalin; the new bureaucracy, with the Stalin faction as its representative, utilized the administrative control of the state and economy and the slogans of the Russian revolution to destroy its opponents within Russia and in the Communist International. It developed the theory and practice of "socialism in one country". On the one hand it wiped out virtually all remnants of the old capitalist elements in industry, trade and agriculture and strengthened nationalized property. On the other hand, it destroyed the limited workers democracy that had existed (in the soviets, factory committees and trade unions) and liquidated the revolutionary Bolshevik party, murdering its best representatives.

In the bureaucratically-deformed workers' state of Lenin and Trotsky, the political power of the proletariat was expressed through the political power of the revolutionary party, the Bolsheviks. In crushing every manifestation and vestige of the political power of the working class, the Stalinists thereby overthrew the workers' state.

and converted the state property into the indispensable economic basis of its own bureaucratic totalitarian rule. When the Stalinists announced "the complete and irrevocable victory of socialism", they were in fact celebrating the triumph of bureaucratic collectivism.

6. Thus, the new Stalinist society was born as a reactionary obstacle to the development of Russia and world society toward socialist freedom and security. From a historical viewpoint, Russia has taken a bastard path backward from the regime established by the Bolshevik revolution. It is from the start torn by contradictions and antagonisms which exclude the possibility of its taking the progressive road as did early bourgeois society. It arrives on the scene of history as an expression of world social reaction, at a time when on a world-wide scale the economic conditions already exist for a great leap forward from class exploitation to socialist freedom and plenty, and when the working class is the only social power which can bring about the progressive transformation of society.

7. The class-conscious workers have no interests in common with this new system of exploitation and oppression, bureaucratic collectivism. In wartime as during peace the revolutionary socialist must not give any support to the Stalinist state. Our task is that of awakening the working class to the socialist struggle against bureaucratic collectivism as against democratic imperialism and Fascism -- for the working class power and socialism.

Revolutionary socialists, therefore, are not defensists with respect to the Stalinist state either in peacetime or in war, any more than they are in the capitalist states. They advocate and support only those measures which lead towards the independent organization and action of the working class against the bureaucracy, for socialist revolution and workers' power. They will seek allies among the peasantry and the oppressed national minorities within the Stalinist state. In the course of the struggle against Stalinism, there will inevitably arise both progressive and reactionary movements, both under the banner of democracy. Revolutionary socialists, while advocating socialist democracy, will support all progressive democratic movements against Stalinism and seek to gain leadership in such movements. They will oppose all reactionary movements, in particular those connected with the bourgeois imperialist power. Such movements have as their aim the restoration of capitalism. Revolutionary socialists are as opposed to capitalist restoration in Russia as they are against the maintenance of Bureaucratic collectivism.

In no case do we accept the alternatives. Stalinist reaction or capitalist-imperialist reaction, as the determinant of the struggle of the working class, any more than we do in the case of the alternatives Fascism or imperialist democracy. Revolutionary workers must take the third road; the struggle against both types of reaction and against the exploitative and oppressive societies from which they spring, the struggle for the political power of the proletariat and for socialism. No other victory can lead to the emancipation of the working class and the progress of humanity.

8. Hitler's invasion of Russia is an integral part of the Second World War. The immediate aim of the German attack is the conquest of Russian territory primarily for economic and military advantages in the struggle to defeat British and American imperialism; and the seizure of the rich Russian resources as a step toward complete world

domination. The Anglo-American alliance with, and aid to, Russia are aimed at the defeat of German imperialism. Stalin's defense of Russia is a defense of the bureaucracy's dictatorial rule over the Russian people and the oppressed nationalities (Ukraine, etc.), and a defense of his imperialist conquests since 1939 in the Baltics, Balkans, etc. As against both imperialist camps - Berlin-Rome-Tokyo and Washington-London-Moscow -- the Workers Party remains the Party of the Third Camp of Labor and the Oppressed Peoples. In all the belligerent countries the interests of the working class -- the cause of genuine national freedom and socialism -- call for unrelenting opposition to the home government with the aim of workers' governments and a World Socialist Federation, the only road to durable peace and freedom.

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(Signed) Joseph Carter
Manny Garrett
Paul Temple
Frank Demby
Rob't. Nevins [Paul Bern]

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