

Fourth International

Asia in Revolt

Civil War in Korea

Korea: New Stage in "Cold War"

The Third Chinese Revolution

Indo-China: Struggle for Freedom

•

Latin-America: One Country

Manager's Column

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FOURTH INTERNATIONAL

Volume II Sept.-Oct. 1950 No. 5 (Whole No. 106)

Published Bimonthly by the
Fourth International Publishing Association

116 University Pl., New York 3, N.Y. Telephone: ALgonquin 4-9330.
Subscription rates: U.S.A. and Latin America \$1.25 for 6 issues; bundles, 20c for 5 copies and up. Foreign and Canada: \$1.50 for 6 issues; bundles 21c for 5 copies and up.

Reentered as second class matter April 4, 1950, at the Post Office at New York, N. Y., under the Act of March 3, 1879.

Managing Editor: GEORGE CLARKE
Business Manager: JOSEPH HANSEN

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clude pertinent economic studies of Eastern Europe by Ernest Germain.

* * *

The issue devoted to problems of the American Empire is, of course, particularly worthy of note. This was in August 1949. There was the issue devoted to **Political Trends in the United States** having articles on the new union bureaucracy, the Roman Catholics in the trade union movement, and

the new stage of the American socialist movement. This was in March 1949. Any of these issues can naturally be ordered individually.

* * *

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Question in the May and September 1948 issues. In addition J. Meyer has written extensively on this question contributing **The Revolutionary Answer to the Negro Problem in the United States** (December 1948), **Stalinism and Negro History** (November and December 1949), and many other articles in this bound volume.

* * *

The volume contains important material on the colonial struggles, including articles on the recent downfall of the Kuomintang regime in China and the rise of the new Mao Tse-tung government. These articles on China will be found in the February, June and December 1949 issues. Much of the information included in these articles is very difficult to obtain elsewhere in the English press. **The Draft Theses on the Jewish Question Today** is presented for discussion by our readers in the January 1949 issue. An editorial from **Kol Ham'amad**, Hebrew organ of the Palestinian Trotskyists, is translated in the May 1948 issue. In addition the October 1949 copy contains two articles on Palestine bringing the analysis of events past the formation of the Jewish State. One of these articles deals entirely with **The Israeli Economy**. The other is on **Zionism and The Middle East**.

* * *

We can mention here by title only a few of the many illuminating articles in this volume. There are many others covering all aspects of the modern political scene in America and abroad. So send your orders for the 1948-1949 bound volumes to **Fourth International**, 116 University Place, New York 3, N. Y. If you have been keeping a file of the magazine as it appeared write in for a copy of the index. For 60c your file can be made into a handy reference tool.

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FOURTH INTERNATIONAL

VOLUME 11

SEPTEMBER-OCTOBER 1950

NUMBER 5

New Stage in the Asian Revolution

Civil War in Korea

By J. B. STUART

Regardless of its further course, the war in Korea has brought a rude awakening to the American ruling class. "It is a war unlike any we have faced before," one war correspondent writes, "it is a political war as well as a military war." But they are still rubbing their eyes. While they lecture the soldiers on the battlefields not to refer to the embattled Koreans, who had been pushing them farther and farther to the sea, as "gooks," Warren Austin, their chief diplomat in the United Nations continues to speak of the North Korean leaders as "zombies," "Soviet zombies." Thereby the rulers of the US show they are still far from understanding what they are up against.

But they are not alone in this misunderstanding. There are so-called "radicals" and "socialists," some with Marxist pretensions, who fail to recognize the essential character of the war despite the daily flashes of lightning that illuminate it from all parts of Asia, from the China of the "Communist" Mao Tse-tung to the India of the bourgeois democrat Pandit Nehru. If this is a political war it would seem necessary to determine what its politics are. Instead American public opinion is being mesmerized by the concept that what is happening in Korea is purely and simply an element in the warming up of the "cold war" between the US and the USSR. They fail to grasp that it is much more an element of the onrushing anti-imperialist revolution in Asia, whose momentum cannot be arrested by any of the rulers or governments in power today.

I. US and USSR in Korea

It is, of course, indisputable that the Soviet bureaucracy has from the first regarded Korea, as well as every other territory to which its influence was extended by World War II, exclusively from the point of view of its own narrow national interests. Stalin's agreement with Roosevelt at Yalta underwrote the latter's Cairo pact with Churchill and Chiang Kai-shek to give Korea independence "in due course." This was supplemented by the arrangement between them, upon the USSR's entry into the war against Japan, to divide Korea at the 38th parallel "for the purpose of accepting Japanese surrender." The strategic and economic exploitation of the area north of the 38th parallel—

along with the wall of secrecy typical of Kremlin policy in its buffer zones—followed as a matter of course.

But the very nature of the Soviet bureaucracy and its historical roots imposed a different line of conduct upon the occupying power in North Korea from that pursued by the US occupation authorities in the South. For, what both powers encountered in Korea, as in all of Asia, was the stirring colonial, agrarian revolution.

The Occupants Introduce Themselves

The difference in approach between the Soviet bureaucracy and the US imperialists was indicated in the tone of their first pronouncements to the Korean people. The Command of the Soviet Army declared at the outset:

"Citizens of Korea! Your country is now free. But this is only the first page in the history of Korea. . . The Soviet Army has created all conditions to enable the Korean people to embark upon free, creative work. You, yourselves must become the creators of your own happiness, etc."

While Stalin's generals did not fail to take the usual credit for "liberation," they were obviously constrained to recognize and adapt themselves to the temper of the population. MacArthur, on the other hand, issued the following order:

"The entire administrative power of the territory of Korea south of parallel 38 is under my jurisdiction. The population should unreservedly obey the orders issued over my signature. Those acting against the occupation or violating order and tranquility will be mercilessly and severely punished. For the period of military occupation, English is introduced as the official language."

To a people rising from forty years of Japanese domination, under which large-scale revolts flared up regularly every other year, the calling cards of the two new occupants were bound to be impressive. If the Stalinists thereafter made full use of this contrast, that was only to be expected.

First Revolutionary Upsurge

Even before the entry of American or Russian troops, however, local revolutionary committees divested the Japanese authorities of power throughout the country. The

network of "people's committees" had been quickly consolidated into a "People's Republic" set up at Seoul, the capital, located in the South.

"The Japanese authorities," writes Professor McCune, the outstanding American authority on Korea, "fearful of the powder keg on which they were sitting, did not impede the formation of the Republic, but on the contrary granted its leaders special facilities in exchange for assistance in maintaining order." (*Korea Today* by George M. McCune, Harvard University Press, 1950. Our presentation of Korean events leans heavily on this scholarly work for its factual material.)

In the North the Republic's activities were thereafter carried on "with the sanction of the Russian occupying forces" who promptly recognized the new "people's committees." When US troops arrived on September 8, 1945, the Republic offered its services to the American command, but "was given a cold shoulder." Instead, General Hodge, the commanding general, "announced that the existing Japanese administration would continue in office." (The story of the warm cooperation between the defeated Japanese and the victorious US authorities throughout the Korean surrender, contrary to the relations of both to the Russians, is a highly interesting social study in itself, but would take us too far afield here.) While popular resentment proved too great to make this plan feasible, Hodge nevertheless ordered the Republic dissolved on November 20, declaring that "Military Government is the only government in South Korea."

A few months later, in February 1946, he appointed a "Representative Democratic Council" under the chairmanship of Dr. Syngman Rhee, the reactionary former head of the "Korean Provisional Government" who had recently returned from the US and who had no appreciable following in the new Korea. The "Democratic Council" was likened by Koreans to the "Advisory Council" they had already known under Japan.

In short, the Americans entered Korea as conquerors. They simply ignored the colonial revolution and sought measures to suppress it, from outright collusion with the former Japanese authorities to the utilization of native reactionaries out of touch with the insurgent people. By contrast, the Soviet bureaucracy, whatever its motives, recognized the colonial revolution for what it was and adapted itself accordingly. The picture of Stalin was displayed everywhere in the North, the benevolent "liberating" role of the Red Army was trumpeted every day, but no military government was ever established and the influence of the occupying authorities was exercised through the medium of the revolutionary committees in which Korean Stalinists played leading roles. These committees were eventually centralized into a "People's Committee for North Korea" headed by Kim Ir Sen, a well-known Stalinist who had previously taken a prominent part in the military struggle in Manchuria.

Seizure of Japanese Property

The same two methods of approach were manifested on the economic plane. The defeat of Japan was accompanied not only by the rise of people's committees as governmental

authorities, but also by seizures of property, hitherto largely in the hands of Japanese or of Korean collaborators. Even branches of banks were seized. Studying a table of assets prepared by the Chosun Bank, McCune remarks: "An apparently very common reason for suspension of operations was seizure by local People's Committees acting largely on their own initiative." The dates given, along with the notation of the reason for suspension, vary from September 1 to early October 1945 (Japan surrendered on September 2.)

A "Decision No. 91" issued by the North Korean authorities October 4, 1946, requires that "Claims of recovery of already confiscated property (i.e., of Korean-citizen-owned factories, industries, mines, etc.) . . . should be investigated by Provincial People's Committees and errors rectified," indicating that "in many instances abrogation of private property rights may have been a usurpation of authority by local People's Committees."

Land Reform and Counter-Revolution

But greatest of all was the land hunger that had grown to vast proportions under the Japanese and which here, as everywhere in Asia, was the paramount explosive force. The Soviet-backed North Korean authorities faced that problem at once and a central decree legalized all previous action taken spontaneously, with sweeping provisions "bestowing the right to exploit the land to those who cultivate it." All Japanese and collaborator-owned lands were confiscated and distributed in their entirety to the peasants free of charge. Also subject to the same provision were: 1) Land owned by Korean landlords in excess of 5 *cho* (12¼ acres) per family; 2) Land owned by those who did not cultivate but rented land solely for tenancy; 3) All land, regardless of acreage, which is continuously in tenancy; 4) Land owned by shrines, temples, and other religious sects in excess of 5 *cho*." By the end of 1946 this land program had been carried out.

In the South, on the other hand, all revolutionary overturns in property were ruthlessly suppressed. No land reform at all was instituted until 1949. Under the land bill finally passed by the American-sponsored National Assembly, peasants were required to pay for land grants, parceled out from estates formerly owned by the Japanese, with 20% of their crop for 15 years (to compensate former landlords). And even this measure was largely sabotaged by the landed gentry in control of the Syngman Rhee regime by all kinds of subterfuges. These included forced "purchases" before the validation date, in which the peasant had to use his chattel and farm implements for payment, throwing him at the mercy of the usurer, often his former landlord. At the same time, land hunger in the South was even greater than in the North, where there had always been a large proportion of peasant-owners.

"In all probability," says McCune, "it (the land reform) was the best propaganda agent for the Russians in the South."

Nearly every other measure of importance in the economic or political sphere undertaken by the American occupation and the Rhee regime that finally replaced it toward the end of 1948 had the same effect. The sale or

lease to private entrepreneurs of industrial plants taken over from the Japanese resulted by 1949-50 in a standard of living below the average of that under the Japanese occupation; in 800,000 unemployed; in black market profiteering which undermined the whole economy. The anti-labor laws deprived the workers of any means of economic betterment by collective bargaining. The electoral laws virtually placed a political monopoly in the hands of the landlords and capitalists. The suppression of civil rights led to continued revolts which encompassed virtually all political tendencies outside the narrow Syngman Rhee clique.

Struggle for Unification

Compounded with all these sources of resentment was that of the division of the country itself, felt equally strongly by the mass of the people in the South as well as in the North. The natural economies of the two regions dovetailed with each other, in agriculture as well as industry. The South was a great rice bowl, the North a source of wheat, fish and fertilizer; the South, a consumer goods producer and the North a center of heavy industry. The artificial division of the country at the 38th parallel was choking the life-blood out of the nation. Unification of Korea became a crying necessity, giving a still greater impulse to the social ferment and placing the national revolution on the agenda.

The Stalinist bureaucracy, while sharing equal responsibility with American imperialism for the division of the country, nevertheless adapted itself in this respect also to the revolutionary developments, again for its own purposes to be sure. We have already noted how at the very first, the Soviet Army Command sanctioned the activities of the People's Republic set up at Seoul and later dissolved by the US authorities. In the subsequent course of events, while Washington sought to manipulate the United Nations machinery for its maneuvers with the unification problem, Moscow relied on a continued campaign of negotiations for unity conducted by the North Korean regime. In this campaign practically all political groupings in the South exclusive of Rhee and his henchmen came to participate.

Distrust of the US and the UN Commission grew constantly in the South, as the results became evident to the broad masses: stolen elections, a balloting system discriminating openly in favor of the propertied classes, police suppression of civil rights and organizations, the outright jailing as well as assassination of anti-Rhee leaders of all opinions. Every attempt of native political groups to work out unity with the North "drew the fire of the American command" and the narrow ruling group cooperating with it. Involved in one such attempt, at a nation-wide conference in 1947—which called for withdrawal of both US and Soviet forces among other conditions for establishing a unified government—besides the Northerners, were Kim Ki-ju, chairman of the Interim Legislative Assembly set up by the US authorities; Choi Tong-gu, its rightist vice-chairman; Kim Koo, who had replaced Syngman Rhee as president of the "Korean Provisional Government" during World War II; Hong Myung-ki, head of the liberal Demo-

cratic Independence Party; and Lyuh Woonhyung, chief of the Social Democratic Party.

South Answers with Terror

Even after the election of the carefully gerrymandered National Assembly of the "Republic of Korea" in 1948, 18 members introduced a motion for a "North and South Special Unification Committee" to explore the possibilities with the Soviet-sponsored regime. It was defeated.

By contrast, the North Koreans continued to press the subject even as late as the Spring of 1950, offering to unite their legislature elected in 1948 with the National Assembly elected in the South that same year. As became well known at the time—although the fact has since been carefully suppressed in the American press—a delegation from the North, which came to meet the UN commission on this very subject at the frontier last May, a month before the opening of hostilities, was arrested under gunfire from Rhee's troops and abducted into his jails.

Mass terror was the response of the US occupation and the Rhee regime to the agitation for national unity. Three "major round-ups" took place, McCune recounts. A wave of demonstrations and strikes in October 1946 supported the unification program of a "Coalition Committee" headed by Kim Ki-ju, the former associate of Rhee, and Lyuh Woonhyung, president of the short-lived People's Republic. In the city of Taegu alone, police trained under the Japanese slaughtered 50 civilians, themselves suffering an equal number of casualties. 1,500 persons were arrested and tried, 500 convicted. All "left wing" publications were suppressed. In March 1947, 2,718 persons were arrested in a second round-up. In August 1947, right wing, "Youth Corps," in collusion with the police, ran a reign of terror of their own. Among the many victims of assassinations was Lyuh Woonhyung, who had been considered a compromise candidate for president against Rhee.

Roger Baldwin, director of the American Civil Liberties Union, upon returning from a Korean visit in the summer of 1947, summed up his observations: "By nurturing the police state, we drive moderates into the Communist camp."

After the withdrawal of the troops by the USSR in 1948 and by the US in 1949, the tendencies displayed in both parts of Korea under the occupation became more pronounced. The pressures for a showdown on the national as well as on the economic, on the colonial as well as the social planes were greatly increased. Whatever the resultant strategic plans of the big power sponsors of the two regimes, it is obvious that a brewing revolution was dividing native society, developing a drive of its own. The social classes and their leaders were undoubtedly relying upon support of one or the other big power. But they were girding for a battle all their own, on vital issues growing out of their own past, which could not have been cooked up in the diplomatic corps or the general staffs in either Moscow or Washington.

"An internal South Korean rebellion against the Rhee government would have occurred if the forces of North Korea had not invaded," runs the testimony of an Economic Cooperation Administration official of the US government and former CIO official, Stanley Earl, who returned from Korea at the end of last July.

II. "People's War" in Korea

Not to understand the background of revolutionary ferment that preceded the outbreak of the Korean war inevitably entails a misunderstanding of the character of the war itself. For in this background alone lies the key to the military operations of an erstwhile oppressed colonial people which have given serious battle to the armed might of the great US. Some publicists have begun to recognize it vaguely as a "people's war," that is, a political war which, to be more precise, has to be characterized as a revolutionary war.

To speak of the regime conducting this "people's war" as no more than a puppet regime of the USSR and of its leaders as "Soviet zombies"—like the picture of the war itself as a simple episode of the world-wide struggle of the Big Two—is the height of superficiality.

An interesting sidelight serves to illuminate this question. At the beginning of the war, the entire body of official public opinion in this country ascribed the rapid military successes of the North Koreans to the fact that they were assuredly Russian-led "from the top command all the way down to regimental units," as one report put it. After more than two months of incessant and widespread warfare, with casualties on both sides as well as prisoners numbering in the thousands, Washington and Tokyo haven't been able to offer a single example of any Russian soldier in the Korean fighting.

But it has become known that the top commanders themselves are actually Koreans. "Half a dozen such, in positions from division to corps commanders, have now been identified," says a dispatch to the *N.Y. Times* from MacArthur's H.Q. in Tokyo, indicating "that at least thus far the leaders of international communism have left the Korean war in the hands of homegrown though foreign-educated Red Koreans." The "foreign education" they have received, it appears, is in the Chinese civil war. Three of those named, Kim Ir Sen himself, Kim Mu Chong and Choi Young Kun were leaders of major battles in that war, with Kim Mu Chong identified as one-time commander of the famous 8th Route Army. All three, it also appears, are graduates of the equally famous Whampoo Military Academy, which was established in China in the early 1920s with Soviet aid and whose founder was none other than Chiang Kai-shek.

III. Anti-Imperialist Revolution

Like the Chinese civil war which finally overthrew Chiang Kai-shek, the Korean war is anchored in a revolution which, challenging foreign imperialism, tends to overturn all of society in the process. The events in China proved that the revolutionary ferment produced by World War II had risen to such proportions that the ruling class, no matter how superior its material resources and how great the aid obtained from abroad, could not withstand the assault of the dispossessed. (Chiang is estimated to have received no less than \$3 billion from the USA in the post-war period, while the 8th Route Army is said to have operated on its territory on an overall state budget of \$15 million annually.) The events in Korea offer the even more startling spectacle of a relatively new revolutionary army

in the Orient not only resisting successfully but of scoring victories over the better equipped forces of the most modern imperialist army.

Both phenomena have been recognized as examples of the "people's war." This is a new type of war that our soldiers do not understand, the correspondents warn from the front. The "enemy" is all around them. He "swarms fanatically" over them without regard for life and safety. He infiltrates around their flanks dressed as refugees. He rises in their rear as guerilla detachments. Where does this fanaticism come from? What accounts for all this?

In Korea, as in China, the war proceeds with a constant division of the landed estates. The army recruits as it marches forward, the peasants are only too anxious to defend their newly acquired land, the population its newly acquired rights. That's what makes for the undiminishing mass of soldiers and their "fanaticism." What makes the "people's war" so superior tactically, as Jack Belden has pointed out in *China Shakes the World*, is that its soldiers know exactly what they are fighting for, they have it tangibly before their eyes. On the other hand, the soldiers opposing them have only the vaguest notions as to the whys and wherefores of the struggle. At best, as one of them explained to a front reporter in Korea, "I am fighting to remain alive."

The example of China, and now of Korea, cannot help but have its effect on the rest of Asia. "The promptness with which the North Koreans instituted drastic land reforms in the conquered areas of South Korea is an impressive fact for many Asians," writes Harold R. Isaacs in *The Nation*. And this, the writer explains, undermines the ability of politicians like Nehru, much as they desire, to carry their countries into an alliance with the US. "If the American fight against Communist aggression can be successfully twisted into a fight against needed revolutionary change, the outcome is a foregone conclusion regardless of episodic military decisions."

To combat the "people's war," the US must yield to the "needed revolutionary change" which is its driving force, this ex-Marxist proposes along with all the other liberals. The tiger must change his stripes. . .

IV. Stalinism and Asia

The Korean war is, as we have seen, the result of the unfolding Asian revolution. No amount of UN mummery about North Korean aggression—and it is hardly clear just what the real occasion for the opening of hostilities was—can obscure that fact. At the same time the strategic benefits of a North Korean victory for the USSR are undeniable, just as the converse holds true for the US. But which is decisive: the strategic advantage gained by the Soviet bureaucracy or the revolutionary advantage achieved by the Korean people in arms?

This same question has a direct bearing on the relation of the Kremlin to the broader problem of the Asian revolution. In undermining US imperialism, the Asian revolution at present works in favor of the Moscow bureaucracy in the conflict between the two big powers. Jacob Malik, the Soviet delegate to the Security Council, speaks not to the Council but to the people of Asia, the newspapers complain.

And he wins this "propaganda" battle hands down. Of course. But all this indicates that the Soviet bureaucracy, contrary to the "Big Brain" in Washington, is aware that a revolution is taking place and is trying to exploit it for its own advantage. Does that mean that the Kremlin is promoting the revolution, as capitalist propaganda claims? Does that mean that the bureaucracy has complete control of it as certain "radicals" and "socialists" think?

The Kremlin's Record

The whole record of Stalinism in Asia since 1925 presents a veritable avalanche of proof that far from instigating or promoting the revolution—in China especially—the Kremlin has done everything possible to throttle it. Up until most recently, including the postwar period, Stalin has not only not sought control over the ferment in Asia, but has done what he could to lodge power in all kinds of coalitions, in which the colonial ruling class would predominate. China, Indo-China, and Korea itself are outstanding examples of this.

In *China*, Stalinist policy began in 1925-27 with the subordination of the Chinese Communist Party to Chiang Kai-shek within the Kuomintang. After Chiang's march to the North and the massacre of the Shanghai workers, whose strikes started the wave of revolution at that time, Stalinism pursued a similar policy with Wang Chin-wei and the Left Kuomintang. When this bloc yielded similar disastrous results, a brief ultra-left period marked by the putsch of the Canton "Commune" intervened, but for the whole following period the two-class party ("workers and peasants' party") and the "bloc of the four classes" (bourgeois, petty-bourgeois, peasants and workers) became the essence of the Stalinist line all over Asia. The whole course of the Chinese CP and the army and territories under its control was based originally on this policy.

Coalition Policy Fails in China

The war with Japan and the requirements of guerilla warfare that ensued from it, pushed the Chinese CP ever forward as the rallying center for the agrarian revolution and widened the cleft between it and the ruling class all across the vast nation. The Chinese CP was riding the twin horses of the *agrarian revolution*, that threatened to leave it behind, and of the *policy of coalition* with the ever more discredited Kuomintang. Moscow itself pursued a line of loyal collaboration with Chiang as a war partner, and even as late as 1949 concluded an agreement with him relating to Manchuria and Sinkiang province. This was universally regarded as a slap in the face of the Mao Tse-tung leadership of the CP for Mao was then getting ready for the showdown with Chiang, who had rejected all compromise proposals. Clearly, "the Kremlin seems to have been very skeptical of the post-war possibilities of Mao," as Belden says.

While Mao had been forced by the Kremlin to seek a practical solution in negotiations with Chiang at Chungking, the famous "Border Region" of the Hopei-Shantung-Shansi-Honan provinces was so completely engaged in the revolutionary process that its leaders and troops "would

not have surrendered the sovereignty . . . to the Kuomintang even at the direction of Mao," Belden reports. It was the irresistible spread of this agrarian revolution that made any kind of compromise with Chiang impossible. The revolution undermined Chiang's regime within the very social strata that supported it. By the same token, the revolution pushed Mao and the CP to the fore as the rallying center of the new nation being created. For the Kremlin it was a matter of expediency to shift to support of the revolution, not at all a matter of policy or aims.

In Indo-China

In *Indo-China*, the collapse of Japan in 1945 swept the CP-organized Viet Minh movement under Ho Chi Minh into control of virtually the entire country. No other authority capable of governing existed. Even the former Emperor Bao Dai pledged loyalty to Ho's regime. The French imperialists were forced to deal with it. But the pressure of the Kremlin and of its agents in the French CP forced Ho Chi Minh and his government to agree to the incorporation of the country, renamed Viet Nam, within the "French Union," as the French Empire was then rebaptized.

The French imperialists thereafter only had to wait long enough to land their own troops in force at the port of Haiphong in order to abrogate all agreements with Ho; set up a succession of puppet regimes (the latest one headed by Bao Dai), and to open up full-scale war against the Viet Minh. Without a murmur of audible dissent from Moscow, the French Stalinists continued to vote credits to finance this war organized by the various coalition governments in which they participated until they were thrown out of office in May 1947.

Only when, despite this stab in the back, the Viet Minh army continued effectively to challenge the French for control of Viet Nam, did the line of Stalinism change. Stalin recognized the Ho government not in 1945, when it had unchallenged control, but in 1950 when Ho Chi Minh was fighting desperately to regain it. And even then, recognition by Mao had to be granted first. Moscow was merely bowing to necessity.

In Korea

In *Korea* also, the Kremlin was prepared, despite its early adaptation to revolutionary events, to provide a means for curbing them. At the Foreign Minister's Conference in Moscow, in December 1945, it proposed setting up a coalition government under a four-power trusteeship, US-USSR-Britain-China (Chiang). A Joint Commission of American and Russian occupation forces was formed to work out details. Pressure on the North Koreans swung them into line behind the Moscow proposal, which was of course accepted by the other powers.

The Korean rightist under Syngman Rhee took the initiative to disrupt the trusteeship plan by a campaign of agitation, including both mass demonstrations as well as assassinations of supporters of the plan. Like the Kuomintang in China, the Korean party of the landlords and capitalists could not countenance the possibility of any government that was not strictly under their control in the

existing revolutionary situation. McCune explains that the Americans were "caught in a dilemma: If the rightists were repudiated . . . the American delegation (in the Joint Commission) would have eliminated the largest group of anti-Communists in South Korea. On the other hand, if the Americans supported the Korean reactionaries, it was almost inevitable that the Joint Commission would collapse." The dilemma was naturally resolved in the latter way.

As in the other instances, the initiative in breaking up all possibilities of a bourgeois coalition with Stalinist participation and imperialist control came—not from the Kremlin, but from the old ruling classes. Revolutionary struggle was the only recourse left to the native Stalinists. The Moscow bureaucracy had to adjust itself to the events.

In all three cases cited, Stalin was interested in crushing a revolution, not in fostering it; in obtaining a lever within an imperialist-backed bourgeois government for the strategic protection of his nationalistic foreign policy—not in establishing control through a revolutionary government, as part of an internationalist policy. Events got out of hand. To maintain its objectives, the Kremlin had to adjust its policies to an unwanted revolutionary upsurge.

The Bureaucracy and the Revolution

The line of the Kremlin in Asia, as in Europe, can only be understood by grasping its essentially conservative character. Revolution in general, and proletarian revolution in particular, is anathema to the Soviet bureaucracy. In Europe, where proletarian revolution threatened, it took a directly counter-revolutionary position at the outset of the postwar period. For a proletarian revolution, with its inevitable surge of politically experienced worker masses, could not long be restrained from taking the road toward workers' democracy, an immediate and deadly menace to Stalin's regime. In Asia, the revolutionary awakening of the backward peasantry was bound to be a slower process, within which the bureaucracy saw an opportunity for maneuver.

But in both cases, the Kremlin preferred a deal with imperialism which would leave the status quo more or less unaltered, and with it all the advantages in the Yalta and Teheran agreements. Hence, its original friendly policy to General de Gaulle as well as to Generalissimo Chiang. It was only when Wall Street felt that capitalism had successfully survived the Second World War and had ruled out any further deals with Moscow, that the Stalinist bureaucracy reversed engines in both Europe and Asia—its whole strategy in the so-called buffer zone in Eastern Europe having been determined by its conservatism and by defensive considerations. The mounting revolution in Asia merely presented itself as another shield for the Kremlin in the tug-of-war with Washington.

But the aims of the bureaucracy and the power of the colonial revolution can be confounded only at the risk of losing one's bearings. This confusion is one of the causes of the growing crisis of the American ruling class. The more experienced, but much weaker British bourgeoisie understands the distinction better. British Tories speak of the need "of establishing the West rather than Moscow as the friend

of the great Asian revolution of our time;" they support British recognition of the Mao regime wholeheartedly and look with dread upon American policy toward Formosa, for instance, which "if persisted in means tragedy for her no less than for us." (From an editorial in the *London Observer*.)

Peculiarities of Asian Developments

For Marxists, such confusion can be fatal. The Asian revolutionary wave, more specifically the stormy Chinese revolution which is at present its powerhouse, has taken shape differently than we had foreseen, to be sure. The national revolution has overturned the old colonial society without direct proletarian hegemony; the peasants have risen, the workers in the cities are still quiescent. The peculiarities of the law of uneven development, into which the treacherous role of Stalinism has entered as an objective factor, brought about a new departure from the anticipated course of development.

Before the working class could recover sufficiently from the defeats of 1925-27 to take the same powerful lead in the third Chinese revolution, the ruling class and its imperialist backers were so debilitated by World War II and its convulsions that the old order simply crumbled. The agrarian masses in upsurge moved into the vacuum thus created under the leadership of a Communist party long cut off from the proletarian masses of the cities. But this CP led by Mao Tse-tung, while not a revolutionary proletarian party, was not a peasant party in the traditional sense either. Although it believed that the agrarian revolution should confine itself to democratic tasks and to the capitalist construction of Chinese industry, it did not have the links to the capitalist class that traditional peasant parties have. Its revolutionary antecedents of the 1920s and its international roots placed it in a position, under the circumstances described, of heading an agrarian revolution in isolation from the two main contending classes in present day society.

But the momentum of the agrarian revolution makes such isolation untenable for any length of time. The revolution must become permanent or retreat. Solid capitalist support—and that can come only from the imperialist USA today — could throw back the agrarian revolution and subordinate the peasant masses to a revived capitalist class. The only other alternative is its forward development into a socialist revolution. For that, the worker masses of the cities have to move into political action. In other words, the third Chinese revolution has to be transformed into a proletarian revolution. Trotsky, polemizing against the Stalinists as far back as 1928, formulated the problem in terms that remain valid today:

"Then China has matured for the dictatorship of the proletariat? Only the experience of the struggle can provide a categorical answer to this question. By the same token, only the struggle can settle the question as to when and under what conditions the real unification, emancipation and regeneration of China will take place. Anyone who says China has not matured for the dictatorship of the proletariat declares thereby that the third Chinese revolution is postponed for many years to come." (*Third International After Lenin*.)

The very rise of the third Chinese revolution poses the question of its proletarian character and in this broader, more fundamental sense, confirms again Trotsky's analysis.

As the revolutionary struggle sharpens in Asia, the old opportunist formulas of Stalinism—the “bloc of the four classes,” the “two class party”—are being swept away by titanic social forces. Mao launches a campaign of recruitment of industrial workers to “enhance the proletarian character” of the Chinese CP. Kim Ir Sen says: “The people's committees represent organs composed of representatives of various sections of the Korean people and are founded on a solid alliance of the workers and peasants *under the leadership of the working class.*”

We do not need to take these words at their face value to deduce from them an actual trend: The force of the Asian revolution itself compels the native leaders to cast

off their Stalinist miseducation and in contrast to Stalin's policy for decades, to seek out, however hesitantly and confusedly, the great strategic concepts of the October Revolution.

The task of Marxists under these circumstances is clear. To place themselves firmly on the side of the permanent revolution; to distinguish between its dynamic forces and those of the Kremlin trying to exploit it; to support the struggles of the colonial peoples against imperialism in their present complicated form. The successful prosecution of these revolutionary struggles, we are profoundly convinced, will bring the insurgent Asian peoples into conflict with the conservative and counter-revolutionary Soviet bureaucracy and, as Yugoslavia has shown, will open up the path for the regeneration of the revolutionary Marxist movement throughout the world.

Korea and the “Cold War”

By MICHEL PABLO

The Korean events raise two principal questions which now demand an answer: what is the correct attitude, the class attitude to be adopted toward them; what are the perspectives of development of the international situation in the near future.

Who Is the “Aggressor”

It appears that an “aggression” occurred in Korea on June 25 and the only difference on this point between the apologists for the pro-American camp and those of the Soviet camp is the identification of “the aggressor”: North Korea instigated by Moscow or South Korea instigated by Washington.

The whole gamut of centrists and ultra-leftists in the international workers' movement is clinging to this formal aspect of the events, seeking “the aggressor” and denouncing him. We specifically refer to the articles published to date on this question in Shachtman's *Labor Action* in the United States, in the POUM'S *La Batalla*, in Monatte-Louzon's *La Revolution Proletarienne*, the *Franc-Tireur* clique in France, the position taken by Fenner Brockway in England, etc.

The attitude of the Yugoslavs is more subtle but no less equivocal, but we will discuss it separately from the position of the above-mentioned groups.

Reading the angry prose inspired by the Korean war amongst most of these people, one is first of all struck by how far their Stalinophobia and eclecticism have removed them from the class standpoint and have led them to “forget” a fundamental fact in the Korean affair: namely, that this country was artificially divided along the line of the 38th parallel by the mutual agreement of Moscow and Washington and that there can be no question of two “nations,” in which one can be accused of acts of “aggression” or of “invasion” against the other. And consequently, the very allusion to the precedent of the attack upon Finland by the Soviet Union in 1940 is valueless.

How can any part of the Korean population whatsoever be reproached for opposing the arbitrary division of their country and for desiring to restore its unity? The independence and reconstruction of the country was at stake. A struggle for the unity of the country undertaken by any part of the population whatsoever, even from the purely formal standpoint of international law, could not be considered as an “aggression” or as an “invasion,” but simply—so far as it involves armed struggle, as is the case—as a *civil war*.

A civil war involves hostile classes and hostile interests. To take a position in regard to a given civil war, it is necessary to analyze the character of the social forces involved and their aims:

Who fights whom, and why.

Social Geography of Korea

A knowledge of social geography is necessary for every political writer or spokesman. Korea is a distant country which up to now has attracted very little international attention, but its present social structure at least ought to be very clear to all those who have denounced the “aggression” and “invasion” by North Korea. In the “People's Democracy” of North Korea, the feudal-capitalist elements were eliminated, an agrarian reform was promulgated and the government, taken over by the Communist Party, still enjoys if not support at least expectant toleration of the masses, the poor peasants and workers.

In South Korea the feudal-capitalist class had the upper hand and the police were the principal prop of Syngman Rhee's regime. The advanced state of corruption and disintegration of this regime is beyond doubt: This has even been recognized by a number of American and pro-American spokesmen and confirmed by such facts as the elections which took place only this year.

The scope of the partisan movement which developed in the South even before hostilities, as well as the military

debacle which overtook this regime at the very beginning of the war, has confirmed its advanced state of decay which was comparable to that experienced by Chiang Kai-shek's regime in the latter stages of its existence.

Thus, on the plane of the alignment of social forces at the beginning of hostilities in Korea, we are confronted by the following: considerable masses of poor peasants and workers on the one side, attracted by the Korean Communist Party under the banner of unity and independence for Korea; feudal-capitalist elements surrounded by American military-police forces and some insignificant sections of backward peasants on the other. Syngman Rhee's army which, according to its American instructors, was "the best army in Asia," began to crumble and crack up because the South Korean soldiers had no desire to fight for the feudal-capitalists of Seoul and their imperialist masters, who entered directly upon the scene by dispatching American forces stationed in Japan.

At this juncture the Korean civil war became combined with a direct aspect of *colonial and anti-imperialist war*.

The *revolutionary* aspect of this war is not less important. It began as a *national* civil war, for the unity and *independence* of the country, and then developed into a *revolutionary anti-imperialist* war, which had to fight the inevitable coalition of native feudal-capitalists and foreign imperialists, as happened in China, Indo-China, and the Philippines.

More quickly and audaciously than in China or Indo-China, the North Korean leaders linked the purely military struggle to a bold social program, calling upon the South Korean masses to revolt, to organize themselves "everywhere" into People's Committees* and to proceed to agrarian reform. This was to be carried through in the liberated territories of the South, according to the decision on July 4 of the Permanent Commission of the Supreme People's Assembly, by the "confiscation of land without compensation and through free distribution of the confiscated land." (New China News Agency Bulletin, July 11.) The same decision abolished a series of taxes imposed by Syngman Rhee's regime and considerably lightened others.

The results of this program and these revolutionary decisions have been incontestably manifested in the scope of the mass support everywhere encountered by the North Korean army as it descended upon the South. It is this support which lies at the base of its resistance, its victories and explains the surprises that were in store for American strategy when confronted by a *revolutionary war* of this type.

Blinded by the Glare from Moscow

To declare that this aspect of *anti-imperialist* and *revolutionary* war is only of "secondary order," as the POUM'S *La Batalla* (July 19) writes, or is of a purely "formal" character and "completely" devoid of all content, as the pretentious prose of certain ultra-leftists asserts, means turning one's back upon the mass movement of millions of people which is shaking all of Asia and all the colonial

* June 26 message of Kim Ir Sen to the Korean people (New China News Agency Bulletin, June 28, 1950).

countries and which constitutes the most important revolutionary factor at the present time.

But, these haughty observers of history reply to us, what do you make of the role of the Kremlin and of Stalinism in all this? The Korean war, they say, is above all an episode in the "cold war" between Washington and Moscow, the former manipulating Syngman Rhee and the latter Kim Ir Sen. To consider the North Korean war just and progressive, to support it, is to play Moscow and Stalinism's game and to facilitate it, write our prophets of the new "bureaucratic" era which is supposedly being erected over mankind "to extend the orbit of Russian domination and the regime of bureaucratic capitalism." (*Socialisme ou Barbarie*, Aug.-Sept. 1950.)

That is the essence of the argumentation of all those who, even in the best case when they do not go so far as to applaud "the energetic action" of American imperialism and its UN cover in Korea (*Revolution Proletarienne*), content themselves with adopting a "neutral" attitude toward the "two" Koreas.

Logic has value only to the degree that it is capable of generalizing without thinning into empty abstractions the *essential* points, the *fundamental* factor of a phenomenon. It is easy to see nothing in the world today except the direct or indirect action of two gigantic organized forces: the Soviet bureaucracy and American imperialism. But, to go further and believe that these forces alone are creating and orienting contemporary history and that history unfolds according to their plans, is a big jump for anyone who is uninclined toward a metaphysical conception of history and has no taste for a divine Providence resembling the conceptions of a Bishop Bossuet.

The experience of the Korean war, which has radically upset the political and military strategy of the United States, has already served to demonstrate that this colossal power is seized by the contradictions of the planet that it aspires to govern—contradictions which are far beyond the understanding of the ruling class and even the means at its disposal. We will return later to this aspect of the question.

The Soviet bureaucracy, because of its different social nature, and despite its material and technical inferiority in relation to American imperialism, has a better grasp of social forces and can exploit them better to its advantage.

But neither the United States nor the Soviet Union creates these social forces and determines their fundamental historical course. The crisis of the capitalist system in the metropolitan countries and the colonies is not the product of the Kremlin's machinations nor are its dynamics determined by the Kremlin. Both are above all determined by the nature and the evolution of the capitalist system. The crisis of Stalinism, on the other hand, is not determined by Washington but by the nature and evolution of Stalinism.

Progressive Character of Colonial Struggle

To return to the colonial aspect of the crisis of capitalism, it is absurd to attribute everything that has happened in this domain since the last war to the Kremlin and not to understand above all, the profound, *necessary* and *progressive* character of the mass movements in the colonial coun-

tries which, in one unprecedented blow, are simultaneously smashing the chains of feudalism, parasitic native capitalism and imperialism.

This movement is *necessary*, that is to say, it has been prepared by the entire previous evolution of the colonial countries and no one is able to stop it. The only possible revolutionary attitude is to participate in this movement of the colonial masses and to struggle within it against its exploitation by the Soviet bureaucracy. But the primary condition for realizing this possibility is the *unconditional defense of this movement against the native feudal-capitalists and above all against imperialism*. It is impossible to imagine a better scheme for political suicide than that which consists in telling the colonial masses who are rising up against imperialist domination by the millions especially throughout Asia, that they will be supported only on condition, as the POUM's *La Batalla* says (forgetting its own struggle in Republican Spain) that they are not headed by Stalinist or Stalinized leaderships but by "revolutionary governments independent of Moscow"!

To condemn these movements, to ignore them, to minimize them, to maintain "neutrality" toward them because they are directed by Stalinist leaders means in reality to condemn, to ignore, to minimize, to maintain "neutrality" toward *the whole of the class struggle and the colonial and anti-imperialist struggle in our epoch*.

Further the movement of the colonial masses is not merely *necessary* in the sense we have already explained. It is at the same time basically an extremely *revolutionary* and *progressive* movement from two points of view: (1) it destroys forever the equilibrium of the capitalist system and plunges the latter into a permanent and ever worsening crisis; and (2) to the degree that the anti-imperialist revolution spreads throughout the world and the crisis of capitalism deepens, the world revolution is strengthened and the regime of the Soviet bureaucracy, despite contrary appearances at the first stage, is undermined at its very foundation.

Events confirm this conception of the entire situation and of the historical process. The mass movement in the colonial and semi-colonial countries broke out everywhere after the war with a power so one had anticipated, not even the Stalinist leadership itself. The impetus of this movement dragged the Communist Party much further than the Kremlin envisaged, influencing the independent development of these parties. This becomes clear upon a more attentive study of the developments of the Chinese revolution since 1936 and especially during the war.

Pressure on Stalinist Leadership

In Korea the mass movement was no less deep-going. No one can affirm with certitude that it was the Kremlin which initiated the unleashing of the operations against South Korea and not the leadership of the Korean CP impelled by the pressure of the masses and its own "leftism." And no one yet knows the precise role played in these movements by Mao's China which is not exactly that of a Moscow satellite on the order of the "Popular Democracies" of Europe.

A study of what happened in Korea before the "aggression" establishes that military operation came as the climax to an extended period of propaganda for unity by North Korea. On several occasions proposals were made by them for the "peaceful" unification of the country. These proposals were invariably rejected by Syngman Rhee and strongly contributed to the isolation of his regime from the masses who aspired toward the unity of the country. In such a situation as existed in Korea, with a regime disintegrating in the South, and the fever of unifying the country mounting more and more among the masses, who can affirm that the Korean CP leadership itself was able to resist this mass pressure without incurring the risk of being swept aside and that it was not on the contrary carried along by this pressure?

In China the compromise imposed by Moscow upon Yen-an with the Chunking regime in 1946, to which the agrarian reform was sacrificed, was broken by the pressure of the masses themselves who began to seize the land. If the Chinese CP had not changed its policy at this time, it would have found itself cast aside by the masses and isolated from them.

In Greece, after the Varkiza agreement, the new partisan war was spontaneously begun by elements who did not want to accept this treasonable deal and the Greek CP leadership subsequently went along with this movement in order not to lose its base completely.

Naturally, the Kremlin seeks to participate in every movement of the masses and to exploit it for its own exclusive benefit. But that is not sufficient reason for condemning the movement itself, that is to say, *condemning the class struggle and the struggle of the colonial peoples in our epoch*.

Nature of Russian Aid

Beyond the shadow of a doubt, the Kremlin is playing its own game in the Korean war against its principal adversary, the United States. But there is more than one major difference between Russian and American intervention. There are no Soviet troops in Korea, there are not even Soviet "cadres" directing operations. No proof has yet been furnished on this subject by the Americans or the United Nations despite their obvious interest in this point. Koreans are fighting against American imperialist and other troops. This fact is of major importance.

La Batalla, however, does not wish to be deceived: it knows that the "North Korean divisions are armed—and almost certainly likewise directed—by the Russians." Other knowing observers of the specific expression of "the bureaucratic phenomenon in Korea" can only explain the resistance of the Koreans and the reverses that the "immense USA" has experienced up to now by the fact that behind North Korea there is "the power and strict control of Russia."

The fact is, however, that Russia, up to now, as in the Spanish war, as in Greece, as in Indo-China, doles out its military aid in doses deliberately calculated to insure that victory will not ever be acquired at this price alone. What the Kremlin is aiming at in Korea will be pointed out later. Let us note for the time being that the tanks and other Russian armaments that the North Koreans possess

have been paid for by the labor of the Korean masses and that they still for example completely lack airplanes even up to the present time. Their superiority over the Americans and their partners thus far consists above all in their superior morale and in the broad and deepgoing support that this war has aroused among the population, in the revolutionary character of the struggle which has given the greatest surprises to the imperialists, producing the greatest discouragement and the greatest scepticism regarding the effectiveness of an action which was conceived purely along the lines of the classic military procedures against a people in revolt.

The Korean struggle must be placed in the framework of the immense mass movement of the colonial and semi-colonial countries which aims to throw off the yoke of imperialism and also of the native feudal-capitalists. At the present time this movement is the main revolutionary factor which is causing the ruin of the capitalist system and is powerfully strengthening the historical perspectives of the world proletarian revolution. It thus acts in the long run also against Stalinism, against the rule of the Soviet bureaucracy which is incompatible with the expansion of the revolution in the world and with the new possibilities for the organization and development of the world productive forces.

Moscow's Strategy in Korea

We can only offer hypotheses on the role played by the Kremlin in the Korean war as well as on how it plans to utilize this war. Even if the Kremlin was actually the chief instigator of the "aggression" against Syngman Rhee's regime, it is very probable that it did not foresee either the speed, the scope or the consequences of the American reaction. It probably counted upon a quick war which would easily overturn the Seoul decrepit regime.

But the moment the leaders in Washington decided to demonstrate in action the seriousness they attach to their policy of "upholding de facto situations" and not abandoning any position or any sphere of influence already held, it is possible that the Kremlin found an interest in exploiting the Korean affair in the same way as that of Indo-China or of Greece. It may have sought to create a new "focal point" which would involve the United States and its other imperialist allies in an exhausting war effort, disorienting their entire strategy, and which in any event would be disproportionate to whatever gains victory would give them.

Some European and American journalists, more adept at interpreting the game of the Kremlin, are evidently not wrong when they define Moscow's strategy as dictated by a design to involve the United States in secondary but very costly military and political conflicts, while keeping the strength of the Soviet Union intact. This conception not only seems logical but conforms to the interests of the Soviet bureaucracy. Every minor conflict it can drag imperialism into, like that of Greece or Indo-China, each center of unrest like Malaya, Burma, and the Philippines, provokes a constant hemorrhage in the body of imperialism, both financial and material, which exhausts and disperses its forces over secondary points on the world front.

Viewed from the angle of the antagonisms between the Soviet Union and the United States, there are really two important fronts: Europe and Asia. The European sector is by far the more important of the two for in Europe there still remains concentrated the great material and human forces whose effective control can decide the outcome of a general war. For this reason Moscow has an evident interest in involving its imperialist adversaries in conflicts which oblige them to strip Europe and to render the consolidation and reinforcement of their European positions impossible. Moscow actually gains from these local conflicts in which the imperialists are involved, not only because of the *immediate* financial and material hemorrhage that results for the imperialists but also because of their long-range political consequences.

Undermining Capitalist Stabilization

The margins of capitalist stabilization are everywhere so narrow that a wave of prolonged strikes, for example, suffices, in any one of the countries in Western Europe which has attained a precarious equilibrium thanks above all to Marshall Plan aid, to restore the cycle of inflation, of rising living costs and all the consequences flowing from this. Conflicts on the scale of those of the partisans for Greece, of Indo-China for France, of Malaya and Burma for England (to a lesser degree) are factors which undermine the bases of a genuine equilibrium for these countries and perpetuate the social crisis. To the degree that the United States is obliged to take direct charge of part of the war efforts of all these capitalist countries, the margin of equilibrium of American capitalism itself begins to be perilously restricted, as has already become evident by the growing budgetary deficits in the United States and the constant inflationary pressure.

Within certain limits, Moscow evidently profits from all this disorganization of the capitalist system, aggravated by the constant struggle that this system is obliged to conduct in order to survive in the metropolitan countries and the colonies. We say "within certain limits" for if this disorganization of capitalism, this crisis, this decomposition acquires the scope of a stampede under the blows of the world socialist revolution, that would set into motion forces among the masses the Kremlin fears instinctively and which would be directed in the long run against the bureaucracy itself.

On this account the Kremlin maintains areas of unrest but never helps them to the point of victory. It is possible that the Korean affair is now being exploited with this perspective in mind. It is further possible that the Kremlin would be agreeable to seeing a conflict arise between China and the United States which would simultaneously check the forward march of the Chinese revolution, increase its dependence upon the Kremlin, and on the other hand intensify the exhaustion of the American forces and contract the extent of the equilibrium of Yankee imperialism.

Naturally this complicated game of the Kremlin which reflects the complex nature of the Soviet bureaucracy and which consists in exploiting the crisis of capitalism for its exclusive benefit without solving it through the world socialist revolution, gives it an enormous superiority over

the United States. This superiority can be regarded as a supplementary weapon which it would be naive to underestimate and which tends to modify the relationship of forces between the Soviet Union and the United States in favor of the Soviet Union.

Changing Relationship of Forces

We do not say that this relationship of forces has *already* been altered in favor of the Soviet Union. We merely mean that it would be wrong to appraise the relationship of forces between the Soviet Union and the United States simply by comparing either their existing or potential material and human forces or their degree of technical development. It is also necessary to take into account the strength that the Kremlin derives from the exploitation of the crisis of capitalism, an exploitation which among other things includes the specific form of a war in Indo-China, or a war in Korea, draining the substance of imperialism without directly affecting the resources of the USSR.

The Korean war is extremely instructive from this viewpoint. Regardless of its outcome, it has already demonstrated the enormous price imperialism must pay for every attempt to re-impose its grip upon the colonial peoples and that the era of simple police operations or of a few garrisons maintaining "order" in the colonies has gone forever. On the other hand, it has demonstrated that a mere material superiority does not suffice against a revolutionary war, against the masses of an entire people in revolt. The United States can probably conquer Korea—if it persists in its war efforts in the absence of any other solution and if new complications are not introduced in the international situation—at the expense of an effort whose price would be far out of keeping with "the efficiency" of American industrial production. But such a price paid in Korea would really mean a Pyrrhic victory, which is not much to look forward to in a general war.

The Korean war has demonstrated that American imperialism cannot indulge in everything and that its power, which is much more potential than actual at the moment, has limits and is not easily brought into play. Moreover, its utilization is complicated by the reactions of the masses, of the classes, and of antagonistic factions within the ruling class of the United States itself. From this viewpoint, the Korean war ought to be regarded by the working class as a stimulus for bold revolutionary action, unencumbered by fear of Moscow as well as fear of Washington.

Naturally, reality is dialectical and it is not enough to point out only the weak points in the armor of American imperialism. The Korean war has called forth a violent reaction in the ruling class of America by suddenly enlightening it about a reality it had not fully been aware of up to now. This reality consists in "the terrible facts" that Winston Churchill recently spoke about in his recitation of the enormous superiority in men and classical arms possessed by the USSR, confronted by an almost disarmed "Atlantic Community" leaning upon the sole supremacy of atom bombs, which is itself now disputable and in any event not decisive.

The latest consequences of this reaction, which continues and which has not yet found crystallization either in

spokesmen or in doctrine, are the setting into motion of the American war machine, the expansion of an armaments economy, and the accelerated militarization in the country. Two or three years from now, these trends will lift the military potential of the country to a very high level and on this account a dangerous one.

As for the rest of the "Atlantic Community," it is difficult to see what important modifications British and French rearmament will introduce in the relationship of forces between the Soviet Union and the United States, while on the contrary it is easy to see how the precarious equilibrium attained by these countries can again crumble under the weight of new budgetary expenses. It is doubtful whether the capitalist countries, including Germany and Japan—which will inevitably become gears in the armament machine—can counterbalance by the effectiveness of their military contributions the financial and social disequilibrium which would result from such a drive toward war. If it is true that the Korean war accelerates capitalism's preparations for war, it is equally true that the social crisis in all countries is aggravated by this preparation and the crisis will give birth to new great struggles which can upset Washington's as well as Moscow's plans.

Imminence of Third World War

Despite the prophets of the imminence of the Third World War (an "imminence" which has now endured since 1946), the Korean war remains confined within the general atmosphere of the "cold war." That is the result of the existing relationship of forces between the Soviet Union and the United States which permits neither one nor the other to count upon an assured victory.

That is now evident for the United States so far as the Korean war is concerned. Its lack of preparation for a general war is a striking fact. To declare war now despite everything would mean the United States would have to conduct war without any effective allies, not only against the Soviet Union and its satellites but against all Europe and Asia which is not at all inclined to resist the combined action of the Red Army and the internal revolts led by the Communist parties. When it still had the atom bomb monopoly the United States could still hope for a swift strategic victory. But now not even this hope exists.

Until the Korean war there was a widespread notion—which had even penetrated our own ranks—that the United States enjoyed a natural superiority over the Soviet Union, which would become manifest in any test of their material and military strength. Facts have demonstrated that this superiority, this wholly American effectiveness, which is incontestable from the purely material and technical standpoint, does not have an immediate equivalent when applied in revolutionary wars of the Korean type. By spreading this power and effectiveness everywhere in the world, it becomes weak and dispersed and requires too great a price even for the wealth of American imperialism.

Actually it is rather the Soviet Union than the United States which now commands all the possibilities for conducting a world war. This situation modifies to a certain degree our own appraisal of the relationship of forces at the present stage between the two antagonistic camps in

the sense that the existing effective superiority has shifted toward the Soviet camp. But this does not alter our basic perspective of the *continuation of the "cold war"* interrupted by attempts at compromise without an immediate general war.

The reason why the Soviet Union, despite the advantages of its present position, is probably not greatly inclined to take the initiative in a general war is to be found above all in the risks the Soviet bureaucracy would incur in the event of a world conflagration which would let loose immense revolutionary forces over the world without a sufficient guarantee that these forces could be controlled by Moscow.

It is superficial reasoning to forget this basic characteristic of the Soviet bureaucracy and to invest it with Napoleonic ambitions of world conquest. The conservatism of the bureaucracy is a fact and it moves cautiously in the world arena, in accord with a rhythm which will permit it to maintain its absolute control in respect to the bourgeoisie as well as in respect to the masses.

Some people object to this argumentation which rejects the possibility of a general war in the near future (and even for some years) on the ground that war is not necessarily the result of mature thought and that it is possible to engage in an adventure without consciously calculating the chances of its success. In a situation, say these objectors, where the fever constantly rises in the two camps, where nervousness and uneasiness grip the leading circles, it is possible that a small military clique, for example, can ignite the powder magazine and launch a general conflict. Such a possibility is especially applicable to the United States where the factional struggle within the ruling class is very great and their understanding of the real situation in the world is fairly limited and scanty.

Naturally such a danger exists and it would even be heightened in the event of any new action by the USSR in another nerve center of the world front—the Middle East, Yugoslavia, Berlin—an action which would infuriate some of the top American and European circles.

But it is also necessary to take into account the fact that in reality, so far as war against the USSR is concerned, the decision will be made by the most responsible circles of the American and even the world bourgeoisie and that it is very difficult to imagine that such a decision is at the mercy of a MacArthur or a McCarthy. On a question like that of war against the Soviet Union, which will involve the fate of the entire capitalist system, factional struggles within the bourgeoisie are settled as a rule by a carefully considered position, conforming to the class interests of the bourgeoisie, to its possibilities, to its chances of success and not of suicide.

Capitalism is accelerating its march toward war, but the road is still blocked by numerous and powerful obstacles. The Korean war provides supplementary proof of these difficulties and of the need imperialism has of gaining time.

On the other hand, we have emphasized the reasons which likewise restrain the Soviet bureaucracy from launching into a general war. Under these conditions it conforms far more to the reality of the international situation, to orient the policy of the revolutionary proletariat not on

the immediate inevitability of war but on the revolutionary struggle against capitalism and against the policy of the Soviet bureaucracy, a struggle facilitated by the parallel development of the crisis of capitalism and of Socialism. This is the sole effective obstacle to the outbreak of war itself.

The Yugoslavs and the Korean War

We will close with some necessary remarks regarding the attitude adopted by the Yugoslav government and the Yugoslav Communist Party toward the Korean events.

Naturally this attitude is part of a series of conceptions held by the Yugoslavs regarding the United Nations, the Soviet Union and the international workers' movement, which we will examine elsewhere. Here it suffices to say simply that insofar as the Yugoslavs persist in these conceptions, one can be justly fearful that their tendency which has begun to differentiate itself from Stalinism, will stop half-way and, while not yielding to the contrary pressure of imperialism, will nevertheless maintain a markedly centrist character.

The Yugoslavs, tormented by the possibility of an attack by the Soviet Union against their own country and under pressure from American imperialism, have adopted an ambiguous attitude toward the Korean events. At no time, either in the United Nations or in their press, have they denounced the imperialist character of the American and United Nations intervention or taken a clear position toward the war led by North Korea, as they had previously done in the case of China and Indo-China. They have taken refuge in a somewhat enigmatic "neutrality," avoiding all comment and all clarification of their position, as if they felt troubled and perhaps even a little ashamed of this silence.

That the pressure of American imperialism has forced them to adopt an attitude of abstention and neutrality in regard to the two participants in the war in Korea within the United Nations, is understandable. But that their press in Yugoslavia, and the press of the Yugoslav party in particular—*which ought never to be confused with that of the Yugoslav government as such*—likewise avoid taking a clear position on this conflict, on its meaning and on its class character is a centrist attitude which does not at all serve the cause of the genuine defense of Yugoslavia by the revolutionary proletariat and the colonial peoples.

The Yugoslav leaders "doubt" that the struggle of the Koreans will lead to "genuine independence" and by that they mean that Korea, even when liberated from imperialist troops will fall entirely under Soviet control (see the interview by Marshal Tito given to the Indian journalist, Kamalesh Banerji, in August 1950). This danger exists; and the Korean and international revolutionary vanguard ought to denounce it and struggle against it. But is not the same thing true for Indo-China and China? By adopting such a position, the Yugoslavs risk joining the ranks of the "neutralists" in regard to the class struggle and the struggle of the colonial peoples in our epoch under the pretext that its leadership belongs in most cases and at the first stage to groups influenced by the Soviet bureaucracy.

War and Diplomacy in Viet Nam

The Five-Year Struggle for Indochinese Independence

By JEAN FAVRE

In the fifth year of the war in Viet Nam (Indo-China), the positions of the French colonial army can be outlined as follows; two-thirds of the territory is completely out of its control and is administered by the Ho Chi Minh government; the area occupied by this army in the North consists of the Tonkin delta and includes the cities of Hanoi and Haiphong; in the central part of several coastal cities of which Hue is the most important; in the South of a fairly large portion of Cochin-China including the city of Saigon.

It is in the zone occupied by the colonial army that incessant engagements and attacks against the Viet Nameese guerrillas take place for control of the lines of communication. (In a conference convened on Feb. 26, 1950 by the Minister of Colonies, an officer of the expeditionary corps defined as "free" those roads to which access can be had two days of the week under the protection of stockades spaced a kilometer apart. These are the roads leading from Saigon in Cochin-China where the position of the expeditionary corps is infinitely better than in Tonkin.)

This is a very precarious situation for the imperialists despite a considerable war effort which, according to some serious estimates, equals the total of Marshall Plan aid to France. In September 1945, the Socialist-Communist-MRP government, presided over by de Gaulle, spent 100 billion francs merely to launch the expeditionary corps. Since then, these expenditures have been greatly exceeded each year.

The imperialists have been trying to augment their fighting forces by the recruitment of native Bao Dai auxiliary troops. To date these recruits do not exceed 3,000. The recent revolt of an auxiliary detachment occupying an outpost moreover is significant of the dangers in such recruitment. The French bourgeoisie is meeting with the greatest difficulties in cloaking its own intervention with a civil war. These difficulties flow directly from the consequences of 80 years of colonial domination.

In Search of "Collaborators"

Content in its comforts, the French bourgeoisie preferred "safe" investments and usurious operations to the investment of capital in the colonies. It saw in the non-industrialization of the colonies a measure of security for its empire, fearing above all the rise of a numerous colonial proletariat and the raising of the cultural level of the masses.

This explains the extremely backward state of the economy of Viet Nam which has known imperialism only in its piratical and plundering form. On the eve of the Second World War, the picture was as follows:

On the one hand the development of the volume of industrial production was negligible. *Raw materials represented 96.5% of the bulk of exports. Latex was not converted industrially, but exported at a low price in the interest of the Michelin rubber trust in France. Although the country has mineral products in abundance (coal, iron, nonferrous metals) there is not a single blast furnace in all Indo-China, and two-thirds of the coal mined is for export. Add to this the fact that rice represents by far the most important export item at the expense of mass consumption.*

The French bourgeoisie carried prudence to the point of dispersing concentrated industry, needed even for the preparation of latex or the husking of rice, by its diffusion into small artisan establishments. Banking capital, represented by the all-powerful Bank of Indo-China, has been degraded to the medieval role of pawnbroker and usurer, keeping the landlords in subjection, through whom it siphons the surplus value extorted from the coolies, day laborers and tenant farmers.

The social structure of the countryside is likewise very backward. On the side of large landed property: 700 European planters own one-fifth of the cultivable land, of which only one-half is cultivated; a slightly larger number of large Annamite landlords crush their tenants under the burden of debt. (At the beginning of the season, the tenant is obliged to borrow from the landlord. Six months later, at harvest time, he must repay him in rice at a 300% rate of interest. The landlord takes in all 70% of his crop.)

On the other side, the immense mass of poor peasants own less than two hectares of land on the average; in Tonkin, 62% of heads of families own an average of less than one hectare and only 8% owned more than 1.8 hectares. Even in large holdings, cultivation is split up on a family basis, lacking the most rudimentary implements and fertilizer (Tonkin phosphates are exported to obtain a larger profit). Irrigation is at a minimum. All this explains the low productivity of the Indo-Chinese rice fields whose output is 12 to 14 quintals to the hectare as compared with 32 in Japan.

* * *

By curbing the capitalist transformation of Indo-China, imperialism has hampered the development of a strong national bourgeoisie. Trade and manufacturing play only an accessory role for the Annamite capitalist who is almost always also a landlord because farming and its complement, usury, are a source of the greatest individual profits, and are therefore the preferred form of investment for the accumulated capital of the merchant or factory owner.

As a result of its extreme weakness, the native bourgeoisie is incapable of playing either a revolutionary or an effective counter-revolutionary role. Organically tied to the class of landowning usurers it cannot embark on the first and principal step of the bourgeois democratic revolution: the solution of the agrarian problem. On the contrary it is in direct class opposition to the poor and landless peasants who constitute 92% of the population of Viet Nam. Weak numerically, a real historic abortion, the Viet Nameese bourgeoisie cannot provide the counter-revolutionary fulcrum needed by French imperialism to crush the struggle of the Viet Nameese people from within and to achieve a compromise of the Indian or Indonesian type.*

The dialectic of history has transformed the strength of French imperialism into its weakness. Without a strong bourgeois party, without a Nehru or a Sukarno, it has no one with whom it can deal. It is in the dilemma of *all or nothing*: either reconquer Indo-China and re-establish its rule along the old lines, or lose everything. Imperialism will not find any "collaborators" whom it can trust to safeguard the essence of its positions in its old colony.

Juridical Stratagems

Since its own forces, after five years of war, are no longer sufficient for reconquest, the French bourgeoisie is employing one of those juridical stratagems of which it is so fond: it has baptized its own agents as the Viet Nam "Government."

As far back as 1946 the French tripartite cabinet, in which the Stalinists participated, created a puppet government under Dr. Thin: seven out of eleven of its ministers were French colonials. The life of this "government" came to a tragic end with the suicide of Dr. Thin.

Then in October 1947 came the constitution of the "government" of General Xuan, general . . . of the French army. Xuan did not commit suicide but his government had no more success than its predecessor's.

Finally in April 1949, the Minister of Colonies dispatched His Majesty Bao Dai to Indo-China and placed at his disposal the expeditionary corps which installed him at Dalat. Endowed with such mighty protection and with a letter from President Auriol confirming the famous agreement of March 8, 1949, His Majesty Bao Dai became the dreamed of partner needed to sign a good agreement. His only defect is that he does not represent the struggling Viet Nameese masses. He has even been incapable of consolidating around himself a native bourgeois and feudal force large enough to serve as a screen between himself and the masses.

Since the time of the conquest of Indo-China, the French bourgeoisie has made and unmade imperial dynasties, putting the most docile marionettes on the throne. Bao Dai was one of such selections. He was prepared to collaborate

* Dutch imperialism also curbed the industrialization of Indonesia. But the Indonesian national bourgeoisie today is incomparably stronger than the Viet Nameese bourgeoisie. For example, 50% of the rubber plantations belong to the Indonesian bourgeoisie while 70% of such plantations in Indo-China are owned by French companies. Moreover Indonesia benefited from a certain industrialization during the Japanese occupation in the last war.

with Japanese imperialism when it occupied Indo-China in March 1945. Ten days after the Japanese capitulation, he abdicated: there was no hand to pull the marionette's strings. It was then that Ho Chi Minh designated him as "councillor of the Republic" of Viet Nam, making him the symbol of Ho's intention to remain "within the framework of the French Union."

Bao Dai does not and will not enjoy the support of the popular masses. Today as before he remains an instrument of imperialism. And there is no doubt, as a deputy said in the French parliament, that "the Viet Nameese people will know how to inflict the punishment which those who betray their country deserve."

Viet Minh and the Ho Chi Minh Government

The Ho Chi Minh government beyond any possible doubt is the representative of the broad Viet Nameese masses in struggle against imperialism. It is the duty of the international proletariat to fight for the recognition of this government so as to deprive the imperialists of the shadow of justification which is represented by the support of this shadow Bao Dai government. That in no way implies approval of Ho Chi Minh's policies.

Up to 1949, Viet Minh with its Stalinist leadership was the champion of "independence within the framework of the French Union." *Internally*, this is the explanation for the liquidation of the self-governing organs of the masses, the assassination of revolutionary militants, outstanding among them Ta Thu Tau, the great Indo-Chinese Trotskyist leader, several weeks before the March 6, 1946 compromise, the dissolution of the Communist Party into the Viet Minh, the designation of the traitor Bao Dai as councillor of the government. *Externally* there were constant efforts at compromise with France which had the same results as those of Sukarno's Indonesian government with Holland: to permit the invading army to strengthen its positions.

What were the consequences of the March 6, 1946 agreement? The expeditionary corps under General Leclerc was in a blind alley. After having seized Saigon on Sept. 23, 1945 with the help of British troops, he did not have the strength either to cut down the partisans in Cochinchina or to set foot in the North where the Chinese troops of Chiang Kai-shek were stationed. The offensive then gave way to diplomacy: in exchange for vague promises, vaguer even than those included in the present agreement with Bao Dai, the Ho Chi Minh government opened the big cities and the decisive lines of communication to the expeditionary corps and called upon the population to give the French troops a friendly reception. Then Ho departed for France to the Fontainebleau conference which was dragged out by the French government to Sept. 14 when a "modus vivendi" was signed which confirmed the capitulatory concessions made by Ho Chi Minh.

This seven months' period was put to good use by the French government, in which the Stalinists participated, to reinforce its expeditionary corps in men and materiel and to set up the puppet government of Dr. Thin in Dalat. On November 20, the reinforced invading army was ready to renew hostilities. On November 24, the French fleet took

Haiphong after a bombardment which took 6,000 lives. The war has continued to this day despite constant offers by Ho Chi Minh.

The Indo-Chinese Policy of the US

American imperialism, conscious of the impasse of French colonialism, was not displeased by the indefinite prolongation of this war. It was to renounce its 1945 projects of trusteeship and to content itself for five years with raising a few virtuous protests against the military solution chosen by French imperialism. Recently, its strategic realism led it to the hope that a compromise could be effected before the expected victory of Mao Tse-tung. It was not satisfied with the Bao Dai maneuver.

In the last months of 1949, it demanded on the occasion of the delivery of arms provided for by the Atlantic Pact that these arms not be used in Indo-China. In a word American imperialism was biding its time and looking toward the future. The victory of Mao Tse-tung and the recognition by the USSR of the Ho Chi Minh government changed this policy. Truman's ambassador, Jessup, went to Dalat to confer his blessings on the puppet Bao Dai. Endowed with two masters, the valet-sovereign has been recognized in law as the government of Viet Nam.

If American imperialism has dropped its distrustful reserve, it was in order to reply to the recognition of Ho Chi Minh by the USSR and to fulfill its role of sick nurse of decaying imperialism on this new front of the cold war. But there is no enthusiasm in the Yankee press in its comments on the recognition of Bao Dai.

"The French," writes the *Baltimore Sun*, "are not situated for the kind of policy which had its expression in India when England granted freedom to that country while keeping it in the Commonwealth. . . No one can say yet whether the Bao Dai experience can be expected to succeed. The perspectives are not very good. . ."

The *N. Y. Herald Tribune* makes the melancholy observation:

The western powers are in a difficult situation. The Bao Dai regime cannot be considered really independent while French troops remain in Viet Nam. . . On the other hand, if the French troops leave Indo-China, the Ho Chi Minh forces will conquer all of Indo-China.

The British press itself, despite the kinship which binds the two imperialisms possessing colonies, wrote on the eve of England's recognition of Bao Dai:

We will prepare a grave defeat in prestige if we recognize Bao Dai before taking measures which will preserve him from disaster. A premature recognition will be a dubious benefit for Bao Dai.

Thus the imperialist allies have had their hand forced. They have been obliged to open a new front in the cold war, submerging their own rivalries and suspicions in the common support of Bao Dai. Having entered this road, the US, supplanting French imperialism, will be compelled to directly supply the Dalat government with dollars and war materiel.

The Recognition of Ho Chi Minh

The recognition of Ho Chi Minh by Mao Tse-tung's China on Jan. 20, 1950 did not impel the imperialists to decide on this adventurous step. They resigned themselves

to it only after the USSR in turn recognized the Ho Chi Minh government (Jan. 31, 1950), to be followed by the "people's democracies."

This belated recognition by Stalin did not make any decisive difference for the Viet Nam republic. In fact, its strength rests in the reality which convulses the structure of the world, in the mass upsurge of the peoples of Asia to free themselves from the chains of imperialism. Stalin now desires to utilize this irresistible force, to channelize the struggle for independence to provide water for his mill in the cold war.

Soviet recognition in 1945-1947 would have rendered a real service to the Viet Nam Republic; by allowing for the sending of material support, it would have quickly led to expulsion of the invading army. At that time Viet Nam's position was stronger than it is now and it was not even disputed by French imperialism which had to deal with Ho Chi Minh.

But at that time, Stalin was scrupulously observing the Yalta agreements, that counter-revolutionary Holy Alliance which provided that Viet Nam was to remain a colony in the French Union. Maurice Thorez, Secretary of the French CP, was a government Vice-President and during the prolonged Fontainebleau conference (May-Sept. 1946), the party brought daily pressure on Ho Chi Minh to capitulate to the representatives of French imperialism.

The New Stalinist Policy

During the debate in the French parliament on Jan. 27, 1950 over the March 8 (1949) agreement, the French CP opened a violent attack against the policy carried on by French imperialism. One of its deputies especially, Jeannette Vermeersch called upon the international proletariat to take action against imperialism to force the withdrawal of the expeditionary corps. She went so far as to denounce the massacre of 40,000 Algerians in Constantinois on May 8, 1946 without, however, recalling that a Stalinist vice-president, Maurice Thorez was in the government responsible for this crime and that the planes which bombed the villages of Constantinois were dispatched by a Stalinist Minister of Aviation, Charles Tillon.

Similarly throughout her long speech, the speaker tried to imply that the war had lasted for *three years* and all the Stalinist speakers followed the same line. Undoubtedly their aim was to circulate the idea among the worker masses that the imperialist attack began only in 1947, that is after the Stalinist ministers left the government.

The CPF pretends that its deputies never voted credits for the Viet Nam war. But the facts are beyond question:

In Sept. 1945, the coalition government, including Stalinists, requested 193 billion francs for military appropriations of which 100 billions was especially allocated for the launching of the expeditionary corps. The CPF deputies voted for it.

In Jan. 1946, during consideration of the annual budget, the Socialist deputies demanded a 20% reduction in military credits. Tillon, Stalinist minister of armaments, protested and obtained the rejection of the Socialist demand. The CPF deputies voted in favor of the budget requested.

On July 26, 1946, the deputies of the CPF voted for a budget of 189 billion francs. On the same day the Assembly

with Stalinist agreement incorporated the definition of the French union in the constitution.

On Oct. 3, 1946 the CPF deputies voted in favor of the total 1946 budget comprising war appropriations.

On Dec. 23, 1946 the CPF deputies voted for the provisional 1947 budget including 70 billion francs of military credits necessitated by the growth of the expeditionary corps and the resumption of hostilities in Indo-China.

On March 21, 1947, several days after the massacre of 80,000 Madagascans by the imperialists, the five Stalinist ministers voted 55 billion in military credits for the second quarter and voted confidence in the government which had perpetrated the massacres in Madagascar and Viet Nam.

Finally, on December 20, 1946, a month after the bombardment of Haiphong, the 182 Stalinist deputies voted together with the entire Chamber to send greetings to General Leclerc and his expeditionary corps.

Nevertheless this memorable speech by Deputy Vermeersch, synchronized with the diplomatic recognition of Ho Chi Minh by the Soviet government, marked an important turn of Stalinist policy toward Viet Nam and the abandonment of all past efforts to keep it within the French Union. It was accompanied by a campaign of agitation involving strike movements or sabotage by fighting groups in several unions and localities.

The turn, made in the typical bureaucratic manner, threw the Communist workers into extremely violent and convulsive actions without an absolutely indispensable campaign of preparation and systematic mobilization of the masses. The result has been the isolation of the Communist workers who, in certain cases, were left with a handful of strikers exposed to employer and government repression while a large majority of the workers remained disoriented and passive.

To this disastrous tactic were added the demoralizing effects of slander. Here is one example: some 2,000 workers in Nice demonstrated against the shipment of a V2 landing platform to Viet Nam. They pushed the huge crates containing the engine off the dock. The next day they were to read in *l'Humanite* that this shipment was destined for. . . Tito.

Far from pursuing a united front policy which would permit the maturing of the consciousness of the masses and would aid their mobilization, the CPF intensified its ultimatic and sectarian policy whose aim is the destruction of the Socialist Party. By these methods, it pits the Socialist and Communist worker against each other. Once more Stalinism has shown itself incapable of a genuine class united front policy. It can only switch from class collaboration to sectarian isolation in order to then return to class collaboration.

Socialists and Generals

The reformist leaders thus find it much easier to carry on their policy of camp followers and shameful accomplices of imperialism. With no concrete proposal for action to reject, with no explanations to give, they have ready answers to the wild insults and attacks of their Stalinist partners.

For years the social democracy has timidly implored for negotiations with Ho Chi Minh. But in the last several months it has become the accomplice of the Bao Dai

operation, contenting itself with presenting an amendment to the agreement of March 8 to the effect that this agreement would be considered only *as a point of departure and as definitive*. Their amendments defeated, the Socialist deputies nevertheless voted for the agreement while begging for a cessation of hostilities.

But while the SFIO (Socialist Party) congress periodically votes for peace in Indo-China, the parliamentary apparatus of the party is engaged in intrigues for compromise among the job-seeking, military and administrative circles. This is accompanied by the usual deals in the corrupt ruling spheres of French imperialism, by lucrative traffic in posts, by bribery, by shady go-betweens.

Mired in these operations, which are a good reflection of the degree of degeneration of a party which has renounced the class struggle for several decades, the Socialist leaders became the target for the right wing of the MRP (the French Catholic Party), which is the mouthpiece for the Bank of Indo-China.* This was known as "the scandal of the generals" which went beyond the confines in which the MRP had hoped to keep it and revealed the corruption of all the ruling bourgeois circles and their Bao Dai agents.

Perspectives of the War in Indo-China

The perspectives of French imperialism in Indo-China are extremely bleak. It is impossible for it to provoke a civil war in Viet Nam. It is impossible for it to reach a compromise safeguarding its economic domination in the absence of sufficiently strong capitalist or feudal formations to constitute a government party which could put down the war of liberation. It is impossible for it to reconquer the old colony militarily.

All that remains for the already defeated French bourgeoisie is to aid in the transformation of the war of reconquest into an arena of the cold war and to take a back seat behind American imperialism. That however does not permit it to relax its military effort which is its only means of holding on to a portion of its former privileges. In other words, there is no hope of healing the festering sore which for five years has weakened the emaciated body of French imperialism except by amputation, whose effects will be even more serious.

The struggle of the Viet Nam people since 1945 has been a very weighty element in the relationship of forces between the classes in France itself. The bourgeoisie has been able only to partially exploit its victories of 1947 and 1948 over the French proletariat because of the setbacks it suffered at the hands of Viet Namese proletarians and peasants. The rise of De Gaulle has been bridled by the same reality since he has had to limit his criticism to this or that weakness, this or that hesitation of the government without being able to counterpose a more effective policy. He has had nothing better, nothing not just as bad to propose to the

* The financial interests of the Catholic clergy occupy a predominant place in the Bank of Indo-China. A. Hamon wrote in "The Masters of France in 1938"; ". . . the majority of the members of the administrative counsel of the colonial enterprises belong to the category of catholic capitalists or their representatives. . . The Catholic Church and its congregations invest capital in colonial enterprises."

ruling circles of the French bourgeoisie as a way out of the Indo-Chinese impasse.

Hostility among the French working masses to the war in Indo-China is mounting. Government employees know that an increase in their salaries clashes against the all-devouring war budget. Peasants and middle classes see in the war one of the reasons for the heavy taxes that have been levied on them. The workers understand that the war is one of the causes of the debasement of their standard of living. Youth drafted into military service live in fear of being sent to Indo-China to strengthen the present army of *volunteers*. The war in Indo-China clearly appears as an unjust war, a criminal war, a war without end, as "the dirty war" as a bourgeois weekly called it.

What curbs the movement of the French masses today is their distrust of Stalinism which has only been able to organize defeats. Many workers refuse to be tools of Stalin in the cold war. This distrust can only be overcome by the creation of a genuine proletarian united front, based on

democratic rank and file committees. Such a united front would evoke a great response and would overwhelm the repressive apparatus of the French bourgeoisie, which cannot triumph over its own proletariat as long as it is unable to triumph in Indo-China. The proletarian united front would quickly paralyze the imperialist war effort, forcing the withdrawal of the expeditionary corps. By the same token, Bao Dai would collapse, and with him the hopes of American imperialism.

The PCI, French section of the Fourth International, is fighting for the realization of the proletarian united front. The unwavering struggle it has carried on since 1945 against the war in Viet Nam, for the withdrawal of the expeditionary corps, the confidence it has won among the Viet Namese workers in France and among the national parties of the oppressed peoples spur it on to intensify its anti-imperialist work in the new situation.

(Translated from the March-April Quatrieme Internationale)

The Third Chinese Revolution

I. Origin and Significance of the Victory of Mao Tse-tung

By ERNEST GERMAIN

A half-billion inhabitants in a sub-continent as vast as Europe (1)*, nomad peoples living beside modern proletarians, the kerosene lamp and Rockefeller's fuel oils penetrating to the smallest villages of the South while money remains unknown in entire regions—such is the China of today, classic example of the historically combined development of all Asia. The penetration of international capital industrialized an insignificant coastal strip and a few northern provinces; in the rest of the country its action was limited to the destruction of the centuries-old handicrafts and the crushing of the peasant under the burden of usury. Between international capital and the mass of the Chinese arose a class of intermediaries, the compradors, who, living on the commercial profit granted them by the foreign entrepreneurs and its conversion into usurer's capital, bled the peasantry white.

Incapable on account of their social peculiarities of unifying the country, of assuring its independence, of resolving the agrarian question, this bourgeoisie of compradors, unable to play any progressive role in history, kept the country in chaos and prostration. The ancient Chinese culture disintegrated; in the countryside, ignorance and illiteracy reached their culmination. At the same time, in the big cities as a common means of communication with the foreign lords the infernal and highly symbolic jargon of "pidgin English" was coined in which "I am" is translated by "I belong." Such is the country which is the theater of the most important revolution precipitated by the Second World War.

* All footnotes are listed in sequence at end of article.

Chinese society, bastard child of the old China and world imperialism, did not cease suffering bloody convulsions. Principal theater of imperialist rivalries in the Far East, it was chopped up by warlords waging private wars subsidized by the big powers interested in Chinese commerce before duly falling victim to a war of conquest by Japanese imperialism. The defeat of the Chinese revolution of 1925-27 permitted no progressive solution of the contradictions in which this bastard society writhed. That is why there was a consequent slow decomposition of the fundamental productive relations on which Chinese society was based.

Japanese imperialism invested considerable capital in Manchuria, colonized in 1931. The equivalent in yen of close to 5.5 billion dollars flowed in (2). Vast industrialization doubled coal production there and tripled metallurgical production. But this industrial development did not profit the country as a whole. The great agricultural belts of the North and the South, which the Japanese never succeeded in occupying, were cut off from the developed industrial centers. In the North, above all in territories occupied by Communist guerillas or by local peasant militias, handicrafts underwent a new growth (3). Trade died down and the tendencies toward provincial and even district autarchy gained strength continually. The country turned in upon itself.

This had considerable consequences for agrarian economy. The links with the world market which made it possible to smooth the ups and downs in the supply of rice and wheat, were cut. The result was famine at each bad harvest. Entire provinces with tens of millions of inhabitants

were hard hit, especially during the big famine in the northern plain in 1941-43. A shift occurred away from crops such as cotton, grown for sale in the cities, to food crops (4).

At the same time, the officers of Chiang Kai-shek's army, small local officials and other supports of the Kuomintang, suffering from the mounting inflation, appropriated for themselves immense stretches of communal and tenant peasant lands. In the province of Szechuan it was estimated that 20 to 30 percent of the landlords seized their lands during the war and their holdings represented 90 percent of the land owned by the old landlords (5). This evolution was again accentuated after the end of the war when the government through nationalized companies seized lands belonging to the Japanese. The North China Exploitation Company alone seized several hundred thousand mow of land in Hopei (6). (One mow equals approximately one-sixth of an acre.)

The tax in kind since 1941, the innumerable forced loans and requisitions of the army, dealt the final blow to a peasant economy that had been tottering for a long time. Numerous villages were depopulated—the number of farmers who died of starvation during and after the war is estimated at ten to fifteen million (7)! Vast reaches remained uncultivated. The soil, exhausted by centuries of too numerous harvests and lack of care, rebelled in its turn against the archaic mode of production in northern China. The yield per mow dropped without cease (8). Belden estimates that at the end of the war 50 million mow of land were lying desolate in the three fertile provinces of Honan, Hupeh and Hunan. Hundreds of thousands of small and middle peasants were dispossessed (9). A considerable devaluation in the price of land occurred as numerous peasants found themselves forced to sell their tiny patches (10).

Thus the war and its immediate aftermath created on one side a new layer of speculators and parasitic owners, and on the other an enormous mass of expropriated peasants. This polarization of society signified an extreme exacerbation of the social contradictions and was the midwife of the third Chinese revolution.

"Bureaucratic Capital"

China's sudden reconquest of the big industrial centers upon the Japanese capitulation betokened brutal confirmation of a typical aspect of contemporary China—the submergence of the extremely weak industrial bourgeoisie by "bureaucratic capital." From 1936 on, nationalizations acquired importance. Official statistics indicate that in 1942 the government possessed 20 power stations, eight iron and steel factories, many machine and electrical manufacturing plants and ten distilleries (11). At the end of the war, the government seized all Japanese-owned enterprises, thus appropriating the lion's share of the textile and coal industries (12). Four families, Chiang Kai-shek, the Soongs, the Kungs and the Chen brothers skimmed the cream from these nationalized enterprises as their private domain, utilizing their political positions at the same time to amass fabulous fortunes in the management of these enterprises

and to acquire in numerous sectors virtual monopolies for their private enterprises.

The reactionary American writer George Moorad, who remains nevertheless an apologist for the Kuomintang, decried the situation thus created in these terms:

By using government loans and UNRRA materials, and by confiscating enemy-alien properties, the state-family monopolies soon came to dominate mining, heavy industry, silk, cotton, spinning, sugar, transportation, and, of course, banking and overseas trade. . . In addition to their controlling interest in the National government, Soong-Kung combine and its satellites also owned the China Highway Transport Company, Fu Chung Corporation, Yangtze Development Corporation, Central Trust of China, China Textile Development Corporation, and Universal Trading Corporation. Thus the great Japanese-owned cotton spinning mills in China, which, in 1937, had rivaled Bombay and Manchester productions, were taken over by the China Textile Development Corporation, which, receiving government loans and government cotton, was able to put private Chinese and British mills out of business. The monopolies also got preferences in allocations of fuel, transport and raw materials. (*Lost Peace in China*. E. P. Dutton & Co., New York, 1949. pp. 197-98.)

This is a form of the concentration of monopoly capital which the advanced countries have never known.

When a member of one of these families, the financier T. V. Soong, ex-president of the Bank of China, ex-minister of foreign affairs, and ex-prime minister, was named governor of the rich province of Kwangtung in September 1947, four months after his resignation as head of the government under the pressure of public opinion, the press explained this nomination as the result of a gift which Soong himself had made to the charity fund of the Kuomintang of at least 500 billion Chinese dollars, or 10 million American dollars, in stocks and bonds of important commercial and industrial enterprises (13). "Bureaucratic capital," hence, was the conquest of dominating positions in the economy by exploiting public office, combined with the purchase of controlling posts in the government by means of enormous profits wrung from the economy.

These extremes of corruption and despotism injured not only the foreign capitalists who saw themselves excluded from part of their traditional profits, but also the majority of the Chinese compradors themselves who found the most profitable fields monopolized by the "four families." These native bourgeois layers, cut off from profitable commercial or industrial activity, concentrated all the more on speculation and usury, thus accelerating the disintegration of the economy and feeding the hate of all the productive classes toward the Kuomintang and its rotten regime.

Galloping Inflation

But the factor which contributed most to the disintegration of the traditional social relations was the galloping inflation that developed during the course of the war and its immediate aftermath. In addition to the universal parasitism of the regime, the cause of this inflation resided above all in the enormous mass of unproductive governmental expenditures for the maintenance of a hypertrophied bureaucracy and army—approximately 70 percent of the budget was devoted to the army (14). This led to an

enormous budgetary deficit surpassing two-thirds of the expenditures, and this deficit could not be covered except by unbridled printing of bank notes. By 1940 prices had already reached an average of 3,500 (taking the 1937 level as 100) and in some provinces even more than 5,500 (15). The end of the war was marked by pronounced acceleration of the inflationary movement. During 1946 prices soared 700 percent in Shanghai. From January to July they mounted again by 500 percent. The circulation of money rose from 1.15 trillion Chinese dollars in January 1946 to 11.46 trillion in July 1947. From that time, the rhythm of inflation accelerated, as is indicated by the course of the American dollar on the Shanghai black market:

One American dollar was worth (in Chinese dollars)— in June 1947, 36,000; August 1947, 44,000; October 1947, 100,000; November 1947, 165,000; March 1948, 500,000; May 1948, 1,000,000; beginning of August 1948, 10,000,000 (16). The magnitude of the inflation ended in the elimination of money as means of monthly payment of salaries and wages, payments being made with sacks of wheat. Inflation led to hoarding of gold and foreign money, to massive stockpiling of goods and from that to increasing scarcities. At the end of August 1948, the government made a last attempt at stabilization of the monetary situation. A new issue, *the gold yuan*, was put in circulation. Prices were stabilized and rigorous penalties instituted to curb speculation. But the public remained sceptical, since at the same time budget figures showed annual government revenue covered scarcely *two months' expenditures* (17). And so, like agrarian reform, inflation on the morrow started up again worse than ever. Six weeks later the hike in prices reached 45 percent. Four weeks more, and the official index hit 81 percent (18). Between November 1948 and January 1949, prices mounted 500 percent. A new cycle of galloping inflation was opened.

The inflation led to complete prostration of business. "Production is paralyzed," wrote the correspondent of the *Neue Zuercher Zeitung*, October 17, 1948, "because of the lack of raw materials. The peasant producers refuse to sell their products so long as they cannot buy foods at official prices." Fear of the inflation led to heavy disinvestment of capital. Such capital, transformed into gold bars or dollars, flowed to Hong Kong, the United States, Latin America. Plant equipment deteriorated. Machines were no longer repaired. Capital ceased to be renewed. Inflation devoured what reserves had remained intact in the country. Coal production fell to half the pre-war level; textile production to a similar level. Throughout Manchuria, industrial production in 1948 stood at 10 percent of its normal level.

A typical case, cited in the report of General Wedemeyer, is that of the Hwainan Coal Mine in central China owned by the China Finance Development Corporation which is controlled by two of the four families, the Soongs and Kungs. This corporation possessed extensive foreign exchange assets, but refused to use them to rehabilitate the mine. The government itself had to start production moving by advancing more than one million American dollars. After exhausting this loan, things stopped at that (19). Finally, this situation led to a rupture in trade between city and country. Great stocks of foods and cotton accumulated

in the villages of Manchuria and northern China while famine reigned in the cities. At the same time, huge stockpiles of coal accumulated in mining centers while the peasant population suffered terribly from the bitter cold of winter. All economic life in the country seemed to halt (20). The culpability of the regime was apparent to everyone.

American Intervention in China

Imperialist intervention had prevented transformation of China into a modern nation. At the same time it lent unexpected support to the particular social relations characterizing the China of the first half of the twentieth century. With the end of the war this situation was radically upset. Of the old powers protecting the Chinese social order, only Great Britain and the United States remained independent forces, and Great Britain was too weak to intervene effectively in China. On American imperialism fell the whole burden of defending that Christian civilization which had pressed on China the seal of opium, coolies and the licensed brothels of Shanghai.

The outbreak of war between Japan and the United States considerably accentuated American interest in China. While bankers and technicians prepared plans for credits and capital investments, General Stilwell sought to utilize the immense Chinese human potential for the creation of new armies endowed with modern equipment. It was in the course of these attempts that the Yankee military heads had their first prolonged contacts with the leaders of the Kuomintang and understood that the Chiang Kai-shek regime was hopelessly corrupt and condemned to perish. The documents published by the American State Department contain secret reports of agents, written in 1943-44, which were all unanimous in predicting the defeat of Chiang Kai-shek in the event of civil war on the grand scale in China. The report of John Stewart Service characterizes the situation in the provinces controlled by the Kuomintang in the following way:

1. Morale is low and discouragement widespread. There is a general feeling of hopelessness.
2. The authority of the Central Government is weakening in the areas away from the larger cities. Government mandates and measures of control cannot be enforced and remain ineffective. It is becoming difficult for the Government to collect enough food for its huge army and bureaucracy.
3. The governmental and military structure is being permeated and demoralized from top to bottom by corruption, unprecedented in scale and openness.
4. The intellectual and salaried classes, who have suffered the most heavily from inflation, are in danger of liquidation. The academic groups suffer not only the attrition and demoralization of economic stress; the weight of years of political control and repression is robbing them of the intellectual vigor and leadership they once had (21).

This appreciation of the Chinese situation placed American imperialism before an insoluble dilemma the moment the war in Asia came to an end. On the one hand, it was necessary to give maximum aid to Chiang Kai-shek to prevent the swift collapse of Kuomintang China. On the other hand, it was necessary to replace the Chiang Kai-shek government by a government capable of avoiding the outbreak of civil war on the grand scale, since the Kuomintang

could not help losing such a war. But the sole means American imperialism had to put pressure on the Kuomintang was precisely the aid which it advanced. Unable to make up its mind to cut this aid in order to wring real concessions from the Kuomintang, it saw all its attempts to reach conciliation between the Chinese Communist Party and Chiang Kai-shek doomed to failure in advance.

Attempts at Compromise

The political and military basis for such a compromise was real nonetheless the first two years after the war. Chiang's armies, equipped thanks to the Americans with ultra-modern materiel, were transported by American planes and ships to the big centers of Manchuria and the North, in order to speedily occupy the cities evacuated by the Japanese, then by the Russians. The groups of Communist partisans, officially united to the regular army under the name of the Eighth Route Army, had occupied some agricultural districts and a few cities, then had halted their operations. On October 11, 1945, an agreement was reached between the Kuomintang and the Chinese Communist Party providing for the convocation of a People's Political Consultative Conference to iron out all the differences.

This conference was held in Chungking in January 1946 and after 21 days of discussion adopted a series of resolutions on the organization of a coalition government, the reconstruction of the country, military problems, convocation of a National Assembly, etc. It was not a question of a radical reform (22). Finally on February 25, 1946, under the aegis of General Marshall, in China on special mission as conciliator, the Kuomintang and Chinese Communist Party concluded an agreement for the unification of the armed forces. The road to "social peace" seemed open (23).

Nevertheless, at the very moment these agreements were reached, hostilities were again on the point of breaking out. Responsibility for this fell squarely on the Kuomintang, and several months later General Marshall did not hesitate to publish a declaration in which he listed "seven errors" of Chiang Kai-shek, seven flagrant cases of military aggression on the part of the Kuomintang's forces in violation of the agreements previously reached with the Chinese Communist Party. In the summer of 1946, general hostilities resumed and at the end of that year the Kuomintang army opened a general offensive aimed at occupying the territories held by the Communist armies. A widespread civil war had blazed up (24).

Failure of Marshall's Mission

Formally, General Marshall's mission of conciliation was wrecked on the question of the occupation of territories which had changed hands after January 13, 1946, the opening date of the Political Consultative Conference. The Chinese Communist Party demanded the *status quo ante* and continuation of social reforms previously carried out in these areas. Marshall proposed evacuation of the territories and their conversion into a kind of no-man's land. Chiang Kai-shek demanded their occupation by "government" forces (25).

In reality, the landlords were convinced of the inevitability of peasant uprisings on a grand scale. They had no confidence that the Chinese Communist Party, following eventual entrance in a coalition government, would prove capable of halting these uprisings. They feared consequently that any prolongation of the period of relative freedom enjoyed by the peasants in the Communist-occupied regions would lead fatally to the seizure of land, and that the example set by these regions would spread throughout the Chinese peasantry. The sole means of avoiding this catastrophe was the rapid reconquest of these regions, as long as the relation of military forces was basically favorable to the Kuomintang. The Chinese ruling classes understood that time worked against them. The military adventure in which they plunged with a blindness rarely equalled (26) was neither desired nor provoked by the Chinese Communist Party which seems to have genuinely sought the road to compromise (27).

The failure of General Marshall's mission of conciliation and the following fact-finding mission of General Wedemeyer did not by any means signify abandonment by American imperialism of its policy of intervention and "pacification" of China. For two years, American policy continued to be buffeted between two contradictory aims—to avoid any breaching of Kuomintang power from one side; from the other to try to "liberalize" the regime and lead it to putting an end to the civil war. If American conciliatory intentions in China seem to have been genuine, *in practice* American intervention brought about prolongation of Chiang Kai-shek's dictatorship. The "pressure" exerted on the generalissimo to introduce some "progressive" reforms achieved only ridiculous results (28).

The total amount of American aid given the Kuomintang was considerable. It is a flagrant lie when reactionary circles in the United States and the world try to explain the victory of Mao Tse-tung by the "insufficient" support Washington gave Chinese reaction. So far as *military aid* strictly speaking is concerned, besides numerous American advisors in China and the transport of soldiers and materiel for the Kuomintang in American ships and planes, 700 million dollars' worth of lend-lease deliveries were made *after the end of the war* in Asia, plus arms and munitions worth more than one billion dollars (29). As for economic aid, the official American figure is another billion dollars plus sale of surplus goods worth an additional billion dollars (30). Say a total of *three billion dollars* which could not save Chiang Kai-shek. In truth, nothing could have held back the mounting flood of the third Chinese revolution.

The Disintegration of Power

The defeat of Chiang Kai-shek in the Chinese civil war cannot be understood if you consider it as the defeat of a "democratic" government in the face of the "totalitarian" power of the Chinese Communists. From the social point of view, the Kuomintang regime, based on an alliance of landlords and bourgeois compradors, was crushed by the uprisings of exploited peasants. Even from the formal

point of view, it was the spontaneous initiative and a considerable degree of local self-government which permitted the Mao Tse-tung armies to overwhelm the rotten and universally detested despotism of the Kuomintang.

Nothing in fact could be further from reality than to call Chiang Kai-shek's dictatorship bourgeois democracy. The dictatorship was openly affirmed as such, since the Kuomintang openly declared that it was exercising tutelage over the Chinese people, not yet ripe for political sovereignty, up to 1947 (31). And the formal abandonment of this "tutelage" came at the time when the dictatorship, basing itself on a secret service of 200,000 members, opened an unparalleled wave of repressions (32).

A very convincing example of the "democratic" nature of Chiang Kai-shek's government is its reign of terror on the island of Formosa in 1947. On February 25, 1947, incidents broke out which led to a number of killings by Chinese soldiers. The population of Formosa rose up and organized political councils which demanded a democratic constitution for the island. The governor entered into negotiations with the populace to gain time pending arrival of reinforcements from the mainland. When the Chinese troops landed, a bloody repression began. The Americans fix the number of victims at 5,000 slain; the inhabitants of Formosa speak of 20,000 people murdered (33). History took its revenge on Chiang Kai-shek by abandoning him today to the stubborn, underground hatred of the unhappy people of this island.

As Trotsky long ago observed, the Kuomintang dictatorship was not fascist in character (34); contrary to the fascist regimes it had no base of support in the petty-bourgeois masses, which were violently hostile to it. It was a military dictatorship based on an alliance between landlords, certain layers of compradors and the immense caste of military men and upper bureaucrats who profited from the regime. According to the Swiss journal *Der Bund*, China had 6,773 generals in active service. (June 15, 1948.) The war, however, altered the base of this regime. Cut off from the big industrial centers and the decisive levels of the compradors, Chiang Kai-shek was forced to support himself more fully on the most conservative and backward landlords. From this fact, the political weight of the representatives of this class (notably the clique of the Central Committee of the Kuomintang) became decisive (35). This explains the failure of the 1946 compromise which had been favored by the industrial bourgeoisie of northern China, who, on March 13, 1946, sent a delegation to Kuomintang headquarters to obtain immediate cessation of hostilities (36).

Career of a Generalissimo

The personality of Chiang Kai-shek is a faithful reflection of the regime which he incarnated. Harold Isaacs has drawn a portrait of the Chinese dictator as ferocious as it is faithful. Son of a landlord-trader of the province of Chekiang, Chiang Kai-shek came to Shanghai about 1911 where he tried to make a career as a stock broker. He got in touch with the secret societies and hobnobbed, says Isaacs, with "gangsters and bankers, smugglers and brothel-keepers, the money-changers and the scum of the treaty

ports." Headed for prison, he was saved by his comprador protectors, then went south to link his fortune with Sun Yat-sen. A young career officer, he was chosen by the father of the Chinese Republic to spend six months in Moscow in 1923. On his return, he became commander of the Whampoo Military Academy, constructed and maintained with Russian funds; and it was from this position that he left in 1925 for the military expedition which permitted him later to crush the revolution in 1927 and to unify China under his dictatorship. The massacres which he perpetrated left wounds that are felt to this-day.

From April to December 1927, 37,985 persons were executed for "political crimes." From January to August 1928, the number condemned to death was 27,699. At the end of 1930, it was estimated that 140,000 political opponents had been put to death by the regime. In 1931, incomplete statistics referring to the cities of only six provinces mentioned 38,778 persons executed by the political police in the course of the year.

Changes Wrought by the War

Chiang Kai-shek maintained his dominant position, says Isaacs, by offering immediate benefits to all the ruling classes and by effective maneuvering among the mutually hostile military cliques (37). But the change in the relationship of forces between landlords and compradors during the war profoundly altered the Kuomintang's seat of power. Even more fatal was the development in northern China and Manchuria during the same period of organs of self-defense and self-government among the peasants. In the lost villages where the Japanese troops had not been able to send more than advance scouts but which the Kuomintang troops precipitately abandoned, solid nuclei were organized of anti-imperialist resistance and local democracy. The village militia of secretly elected town administrations appeared even behind the Japanese lines.

The Communist Eighth Route Army soon began to coordinate this resistance movement under its leadership. Having insufficient cadres, it was compelled to leave the villages a high degree of autonomy and democracy. Administrative units put together in rather slack fashion were taken in hand by a central body created from above, the "government of the Shansi-Hopei-Shantung-Honan Border Region" which left considerable representation to local and non-Communist elements (38). Toward the end of the war, this "government" and the authoritative formations which the Communist partisans had constructed in other parts of the country already controlled close to 90 million people (39).

The mass of peasants, while observing with distrust the measures of the new authorities tending to prevent the agrarian reform up until 1946, nevertheless considered the new government as the first which had not acted forcibly and always against the people. They were ready to grant it their support from the moment their fundamental demand for land was carried out (40).

The Chiang Kai-shek regime thus found itself facing an adversary whose forces did not cease to grow. Its own resources did not cease to diminish, corroded by an unbridled corruption. Belden cites the case of a colonel due

for promotion to command of a battalion who was rejected because of inability to pay the customary "gift" to his superiors. He was then made head of the transport unit of his regiment. In this capacity he had to give one-seventh of all the gasoline to the officer in charge of the supply depot. His superiors took another one-seventh of the gasoline for their personal graft. To supply the regiment, the colonel had to sell grease and lubricants on the black market himself in order to make up for the gasoline lifted by the corrupt officers (41). The Chinese writer Pei Wan-chung reports that the mayors of villages responsible for sending young recruits to the army had organized, in the province of Hopei, a system according to which every family paying exorbitant sums could keep their sons home (42). At the same time the missing forces were inscribed on the regimental books so that the officers could put their pay in their own pockets. The result was that numerous armed formations did not have more than 60 percent of their presumed forces (43). The situation becomes clearer still when one adds that very often officers of the Kuomintang sold their arms to the Communists.

The monetary reform of August 1948 installing the *gold yuan* had been prepared so secretly that not even the American advisors of the Chinese government had been informed. Yet it soon appeared that the General Secretary of the Ministry of Finance had organized his own little speculation in the Shanghai stock exchange through the fact that he knew the date and details of this reform! (44) General Wedemeyer's report affirms that tax officials took more from the peasants than they could pay, while rich businessmen and merchants evaded tax obligations by presenting fake accounts (45). The same report declares that "In pre-war years, the reputation of the Chinese Maritime Customs for efficiency and honesty of administration was unexcelled throughout the world. At the present time . . . corruption . . . is widespread, more so . . . than at any time in the last 94 years." Merchants bribed customs officials to pass their goods illegally, evading license fees and customs duties to get around price controls or simply to expedite action. The administrative costs of collecting duties, however, averaged only 10 percent; while in the Direct Tax Bureau of the Ministry of Finance the "administrative" expense of tax collection ran as high as 60 percent (46).

Middle Class Rebellion

In contrast to the high dignitaries of the regime who organized fraud and corruption as a private racket, the bulk of the small functionaries were pushed on the road of corruption because of the flagrant insufficiency of their salaries. Inflation hit the functionaries and salaried middle classes harder than it did the industrial workers. In March 1948, a university professor earned 10 million Chinese dollars (equivalent to 20 American dollars) (47). He had no way of obtaining supplementary income to this starvation wage. Hardly surprising then, in these conditions, that "the cultured, intellectual classes should be almost completely alienated from the regime" (48). And in token of this hostility, imposing protest movements centered around the universities.

In 1946 especially there were demonstrations greeting establishment of the truce; but the demonstrators who acclaimed the leaders of the Kuomintang as well as those hailing the leaders of the Chinese Communist Party were attacked by the police and army. At Suchow, 12 students were killed and 27 wounded. The dean of the school was likewise killed. At Kunming, two professors were murdered after having spoken at a meeting in favor of the truce (49). In 1947, the movement was much larger. Students of the universities of Shanghai, Peking and Nanking proclaimed a general strike. Some 3,000 students of the Transport High School occupied the North Station in Shanghai and seized a train, demanding that it take them to Nanking to talk with the government (50). The students tried to organize the nationwide general strike for June 2. Repression was rapid and violent. Thousands of soldiers and police closed in on the universities of Shanghai and Nanking, arresting and beating hundreds of students. At Hankow and Chungking likewise, the number of victims was high. Nine hundred and twenty-three arrests, dozens of deaths, a thousand wounded—such was the balance sheet of the student movement of 1947 (51).

In 1948, the movement started again in the spring. At Peking a mass demonstration clashed with a barrier of police. There were a number of dead and wounded on both sides. At Kunming, July 15, 1948, police staged a raid on the University, killing five students, wounding a hundred and arresting 1,200, of whom 300 were sent to concentration camps. The prisoners were submitted to infamous tortures; 30 were buried alive. In August 1948, a special court was set up to handle "student insubordinations." Thousands of students and hundreds of professors were dismissed from the middle and higher schools (52).

The workers' movement during the first postwar years also experienced a period of mounting intensity in the big industrial centers. During 1946, 1,600 strikes took place in Shanghai (53).

The sliding scale of wages was won and the workers obtained numerous supplementary bonuses to offset the effects of the worst inflation. In 1947, there was a new wave of strikes which in Shanghai in May almost reached a general strike protesting the temporary banning of the sliding wage scale system (54). The system was restored. In 1948, however, the acceleration of the inflationary movement and the aggravation of the military situation brought on a period of retreat in the labor movement. The struggle for elementary personal and family needs became paramount. Apathy spread among the people who began to look toward the armies to resolve their difficulties. There were only the disturbances of the famine, the rice riots.

Government authority disappeared completely. The desire for peace was universal. All classes of the nation felt profound loathing for the regime. Still, a class was needed to deal it the final blow. It was the peasant insurrections that overthrew Chiang Kai-shek.

The Agrarian Question

The unequal historic development of China finds its most faithful reflection in the unequal development of agriculture in the different Chinese regions. Hence it is

impossible to give a simple sketch of class relations in the Chinese village since these relations vary enormously from region to region. A certain number of generalizations nevertheless remain possible. Agriculture in the provinces south of the Yangtze is in general more advanced than that of the northern provinces; in the same way, in the North in places remote from the coast and principal railway lines one finds stronger vestiges of feudalism in agriculture (55). In southern China, farms are smaller than in the North. But this difference simply reflects the poverty of agriculture in the North where the peasants are unable to eke out a living on smaller plots. Thus in the South of China only half the farms have an area greater than 1.64 acres and 20 percent an area greater than 3.29 acres. In northern China, 73 percent of the farms have more than 1.64 acres, not more than 50 percent are larger than 3.29 acres and 35 percent exceed 4.94 acres. These figures also indicate the extremely small dimensions of Chinese farms (56).

In the North of China, the small landlord system predominates; in the South, tenants and sharecroppers constitute the majority of the peasants. However, throughout China the number of independent peasants has diminished considerably since the turn of the century, as is recognized by official Kuomintang sources. In some provinces of southern China, the percentage of peasants owning their land fell extremely low—in the province of Chekiang (south of Shanghai along the sea) to 18 percent; in the rich province of Kwantung, where Canton is located, 21 percent; in Fukiang, between Chekiang and Kwantung, 25 percent, etc. More agriculture is capitalist and more small farmers have given way to the tenant and sharecropper (57).

In 1936, professor Chen Han-seng estimated that 65 percent of the Chinese peasantry either possessed no land or possessed too little to make the barest living (58).

Chinese agriculture is likewise marked by a strong differentiation in the form of payment of agrarian rent. This rent is paid sometimes in kind at a fixed rate, sometimes as a portion of the annual harvest. In general, industrial crops (cotton, tea) pay rent in money, food crops predominantly in kind. This rent is extremely high. Official Kuomintang sources fix "the average" at 40 to 60 percent of the harvest, but in numerous cases the landlords receive more than 60 percent of the harvest, as the following figures demonstrate:

Province	Percentage of farms paying on the harvest:		
	From 50% to 60% (of the crop)	From 60% to 70% (of the crop)	More than 70% (of the crop)
Hopei	6.9	16.0	9.2
Szechuan	28.9	21.7	2.4
Shantung	3.4	9.4	11.7
Suiyuan	6.3	12.5	6.3
Honan	11.0	13.6	2.2
Shansi	24.8	14.3	0.8
Fukien	19.3	9.7	2.2
Tsinghai	9.1	4.5	4.5
Hunan	16.5	5.5	3.3
Kansu	4.9	4.9	2.4

(59)

To complete this picture, it must be added that in practice the landlord fixed the rate of rent as he pleased and this rate often varied from harvest to harvest in the absence of any written contract. Even with a written contract, it remained with the landlord to interpret it as he pleased since the peasant was most often illiterate. Finally, it is necessary to say that the rates cited above refer solely to rent of the land. If the landlord likewise furnished some farm tool or fertilizer, he demanded additional payment (60).

Backwardness of Land Relations

The landlords were themselves quite different. In the North, they lived in general amid their lands; capital went from the city to the countryside; the merchant tended to become a landlord. Contrariwise, in the South, the owner generally lived in the city. He invested the rents he received in business or industry. Capital went from the countryside to the city (61). In both cases, however, the capitalization of the land rent was never made through the industrialization or mechanization of agriculture, the improvement of the land or increase in the productivity of labor. It was done either by taking the land from ruined peasants and parceling it out to other peasants toiling with the same archaic methods, or by usury, trade, or by a combination of these different operations. This explains the considerable backwardness in the development of agriculture in relation to the growth of the population (62).

Bourgeois economists try to explain this backwardness by the lack of arable land or the excessive birth rate. In reality, it is a question of a phenomenon already well known in Russia and again today in India. Because of the lack of land, the landlord is interested in maintaining production within the limits of intensive small production similar to truck gardening, without introducing the methods of production and instruments of modern technique. Each year, all the surplus product and a part of the means of subsistence are taken from agriculture to feed and enrich the landlords, the bureaucrats and innumerable officers. This permanent crisis in agriculture cannot be resolved unless the owners are expropriated, a new concentration of land rendered impossible by the nationalization of the soil, the buying and selling of land forbidden and the countryside thus made capable of providing a market for the industries of the city, which in turn will furnish the countryside with the instruments needed to considerably raise agricultural production.

The Burden of Taxes and Usury

In addition to this basic cause of the poverty of the Chinese peasant, other evils overwhelmed him too, principal among them being the feudal vestiges, usury and the exorbitant taxes. Feudal vestiges were heavy in northern China and even in certain inland provinces of southern China. Not very far from Shanghai one could see the adobe castles of the landlords surrounded by the miserable huts of the peasants. The head of each *sai* (social unit composed of a number of villages) was at once judge, merchant, tax collector, usurer and executioner. He had his own army recruited on a "voluntary" basis among his servants and

the poor peasants of the area. Forced labor, the lord's feudal right over wives of the peasants, concubinage, existed on a wide scale (63).

Usury was the direct consequence of the exorbitant rate of rent which prevented the peasants from accumulating the least reserve fund. It expanded considerably with the *commercialization* of agriculture which tied the value of the harvests to the fluctuations of the world market. If for natural causes or in consequence of the movement of prices a poor harvest made it impossible for the tenant to pay his taxes to the government and his rent to the landlord, he was obliged to borrow money from the usurer, the landlord himself or a member of his family. He was often obliged to borrow seed for the coming season or even food in order to give his family its meager pittance of millet or rice. Interest was extremely high and did not cease to mount in later years. On the eve of the war, it reached 40 to 60 percent a year. During the war it exceeded 100 percent for *three months*.

Who could be astonished in these conditions that "the most massive and best-built houses in the villages and small towns were always the pawnshops"? Or that the poor peasants of the province of Shansi had a bitter verse: "In good years, the landlord grows crops in the fields. In bad years, the landlord grows money in his house." (64)

During the war the four families sought to move in on the considerable profits of usury. Their Farmer's Bank and above all the "government" farm cooperatives, which before the war had never advanced more than 15 percent of the sums borrowed by the peasants, now furnished them 80 percent. These cooperatives loaned money to the village heads and small landlords who in turn loaned it to the peasant. As in the celebrated cartoon at the time of the peasant war, the tenant alone bore the cost of all these beautiful institutions which crushed him and pushed him into revolt.

The exorbitant character of the taxes has been emphasized again and again. In the history of China, the examples of insupportable tax systems which have pushed the peasants into revolt are innumerable (65). But never were any pushed to such extremes as in the final years of Kuomintang rule. Besides the land tax, there were a dozen different additional taxes which from 1941 on began to be collected in kind. In 1942, government monopolies were established for the sale of salt, sugar, tobacco and matches (66). At the same time, they established and extended the system of military requisitioning of manual labor and agricultural products which bled entire areas white.

In the article already cited, the writer Pei Wan-chung reports that in the province of Hopei in 1946 no one would accept a *mow* of land as a gift, the special tax exceeding in effect the annual revenue which one could squeeze from this morsel of land. Belden tells of a case where the special land tax passed annual production by more than 100 percent in the plain of Chengtu. And in the province of Honan, the same author discovered a case where the military requisitions of the Kuomintang army were *one thousand times greater* than the land tax. This had a precise significance—the peasants lost not only their land, their food and their clothing, they still had to sell their women and

children as concubines or servants to the tax collectors or officers in charge of the requisition (67).

If the predominant mode of agriculture was that of small plots, the continuous expropriation of the small peasants through very high rates of rent, usury and taxes ended in the concentration of *property* in the hands of the village lords, usurers and merchant-usurer-compradors. It was not rare to find landlords possessing 20,000 *mow* (3,333 acres) or more. Ten percent of the agricultural population of China—lords and rich peasants—possessed 55 to 65 percent of the land. In the province of Shansi, 0.3 percent of the families possessed 24 percent of the land. In Chekiang, 3.3 percent of the families possessed half the land, while 77 percent of the poor peasants possessed no more than 20 percent of the land. And in Kwantung where 2 percent of the families possessed 53 percent of the land, 74 percent possessed only 19 percent of the land (68).

This explains why the insatiable land hunger of the peasant soon became transformed into a class hate with an exact object—hate for the landlord and all those allied with him. This hate precipitated the downfall of Chiang Kai-shek.

The Collapse of Chiang Kai-shek

When the economic and political situation becomes insupportable to all the productive classes of a society; when all the conflicts tend to become marked by force; when the classes supporting the decrepit power have lost all confidence in themselves; when indignation and revolt constantly mount; when the past and the future confront each other in every social conflict; at such a crucial time, the rulers of the country, seeing their power falling away definitively, end up despite themselves risking all in a fatally imprudent action because they are powerless to reverse the course of events. What the Varennes flight of Louis XVI was for the French aristocracy and the Kornilov coup d'etat for the Russian bourgeoisie, such was the Manchurian adventure of Chiang Kai-shek for the Chinese ruling classes.

We have seen that at the time the truce was agreed upon under the aegis of Marshall at the beginning of 1946, the Kuomintang still possessed considerable military superiority over the Communist armies. At that time nothing was yet clear-cut. The peasants had not yet definitively chosen. The uprisings were still sporadic. It was then that Chiang Kai-shek, against the advice of the Americans but with their aid, took his best armies to the north of China and Manchuria and began an offensive to drive the Communists out of the few cities which they still occupied after the departure of the Russians.

This maneuver proved fatal on all counts. Militarily, it lengthened the communication lines of the government armies to the extreme and ended in their isolation and complete encirclement far from the supply centers and vital centers of central China. Politically, it forced the Chinese Communist Party to proclaim agrarian reform to obtain the active support of the peasantry. And socially, it provoked the indignant hostility of this same peasantry because of the vexations and reprisals inflicted on them, and thus unleashed the uprisings on such a scale that the downfall of the Kuomintang became inevitable.

In vain the American advisors, including General Wedemeyer himself, counselled Chiang Kai-shek against the Manchurian campaign and proposed that he first consolidate his positions on the North plain (69). The generalissimo was obliged to take his chances as he had been obliged to sabotage the agreement with Mao Tse-tung. Chiang had used this tactic with success in crushing the revolution of 1927. But the revolutionary fires were then less numerous and more isolated. Now it was a question of the entire country. That is why in 1927 the lightning-blow of a concentrated force could overwhelm the main revolutionary centers one by one, while twenty years later a similar concentrated force found itself outflanked on all sides by the extent of the uprisings.

At first the generalissimo's action seemed crowned with success. On May 23, 1946 government forces seized the important city of Changchun in Manchuria; the Communists were obliged to lift the siege of Tatung, important communication center in the province of Shansi. On October 10, the government troops seized Chihfeng, last important Communist center in the province of Jehol, and the big city of Kalgan. In November, they occupied the city of Tunghua in Manchuria, and finally, in March 1947, they occupied Yen-an, which had been the Communist capital during the war with Japan.

Communists Gain Initiative

These quick successes would not have been possible had not the Communist command avoided being drawn into big engagements. The Communist troops retired systematically from the cities toward the countryside, contenting themselves with cutting communication lines between the urban centers occupied by the government troops, and harassing them constantly. Although the Kuomintang troops at the beginning of 1947 still had a numerical superiority of two to one and still greater superiority in arms, the immobilization of important contingents of the Kuomintang used to garrison the cities soon gave the advantage of the initiative to the Communist troops.

This initiative was utilized by the Communists in an audacious maneuver that was crowned with complete success. The armies of the Communist general Liu Po-cheng marched from their base positions in Shantung, close to the sea, toward the province of Honan in central China, separating the government forces which had conquered Yen-an to the west from the main forces of the Kuomintang in the Suchow-Nanking area. The forces of General Liu gained the Yangtze and began to cross it in the month of June 1947. Other Communist forces followed and a new front was opened by the Communist troops on the two banks of the Yangtze in central China. At the same time, Liu continued his march, ending by establishing his general headquarters in the autumn of 1947 in the mountains between Nanking and Hankow, the very heart of the Kuomintang empire, from where in 1948 the decisive attacks were directed against the government forces (70). Thus began to develop the grandiose encircling maneuver which in 1948 overwhelmed the troops of the Kuomintang in the battle of Suchow and destroyed them there.

It would however be unjust to ascribe the success of the

Communist maneuvers and the failure of the government maneuvers solely to the difference in strategic ability of the generals of the Kuomintang and those of the Chinese Communist Party. It is true that this difference existed, and that, adhering to the fundamental rules of the military art, the Communist chiefs sought above all to destroy the enemy (71), while the Kuomintang generals sought to occupy the big cities.

But in these different strategies was reflected the different structure of the two armies and the difference of their social function. Army of social conservatism, dragging with it an interminable train of parasites, living off the country and universally detested by the population, constantly losing forces when in march because of desertions and carelessness; cut from its supply bases in the South, and for that reason obliged to group itself around aviation fields where its food came by air—the army of Chiang Kai-shek was heavy, immobile, harassed continually from the rear by partisans, exposed more and more to demoralization. Army of social revolution, consciously seeking to gain the sympathy of the peasants by distribution of the land and food stocks (72), capable of dividing itself into innumerable columns which in course of the way became armies that grew larger with peasants in revolt; without baggage or a train of camp-followers, limiting itself to the most frugal nourishment on the level of the population of the area it traversed—Mao Tse-tung's army enjoyed extreme mobility, unseizable by the forces of the adversary, utilizing with constantly repeated success the tactics of infiltration, seeing its morale growing at each new success and at each extension of the peasant uprisings. No matter what Chiang's strategy, he would have lost this civil war in advance.

Peasant Revolt

As military operations extended to an ever greater number of provinces and districts, the peasant uprisings similarly widened and deepened. The peasants had hesitated up to the summer of 1946. At that time, after months of hesitation and evasion, the leadership of the Chinese Communist Party decided to permit distribution of the land. This was the sole means available to halt the offensive of the government armies at the edges of the big cities and to recruit new forces. Peasant uprisings began to be felt behind Communist lines in territories under jurisdiction of the "Border Region Government." Organizing at first with hesitation, then with growing courage as they became conscious of their forces in the frequently held public meetings (73), the poor peasants expropriated 21,000 landlords in the Shansi-Hopei-Shantung-Honan Border Region during the summer of 1947 (74). This example exercised an irresistible attraction on the peasants in neighboring areas, then on the peasants of all China.

In vain the landlords supported themselves on the forces of the Kuomintang or on their own armed bands, seeking to dam the insurrections. The "fire brigades" which they organized against the "bandits" conducted a reign of terror in the villages, but this terror continually brought new recruits to the armies and partisan groups of Mao (75). Numerous students and functionaries escaped from

the big cities to join the Communist forces (76). In the second half of 1947, the peasant insurrections in Hopei, Honan and Shantung brought together a new armed force. Farther to the south, an insurrection in Kiangsi forced the Kuomintang to open a new front. Along with the students and small functionaries, women joined their forces in the revolt, rising against the thousand-year-old slavery, covering the villages with their "Women's Associations" which had written the emancipation of women on their banners.

The downfall could not be delayed longer. But the Communists understood that the easiest and most crushing victory is not that carried off on the fields of battle, but the one conquered in the minds and hearts of the opposing army. Beginning in 1948, they concentrated all their forces on the disintegration of the government armies. The democratic structure of their army, the lack of privileges among their officers, the attention paid the ranks, the consideration with which prisoners were treated, paved the way for a radical reversal of the situation.

Chiang's officers, already profoundly demoralized, treated their own soldiers as brutally at the first military reverses as the Chiang Kai-shek regime had treated its own peasants. Thousands of wounded were abandoned without any aid; hundreds of thousands of soldiers, destitute of food and clothing, did not even receive their pay (77). It was on these detachments that the Communists concentrated their efforts, efforts at fraternization. Beginning in May 1947, the press announced that special "supervisory" detachments would prevent the mass desertions of government troops in Manchuria (78). In January 1947, the whole American-equipped 26th Division went over to the Communist camp (79).

A year later this movement became irresistible. In September 1948, Tsinan, capital of Shantung, was captured thanks to the desertion of the troops of the general defending the city. In the same month, the important city of Kaifeng likewise surrendered at the same time as other centers. Chiang Kai-shek lost within a few weeks three armies and 300,000 men. The situation of his best armies in Manchuria became untenable. Besieged in Changchun, the 60th and the 7th government armies lost 13,000 soldiers and officers within a few weeks to the Communist camp; then it surrendered almost without a fight. At Chinchow, another Manchurian city, 120,000 men surrendered. The Communist troops took Mukden, capital of Manchuria, rejoining under forced march in December 1948, the Communist forces of the Great Plain, occupying rapidly Tientsin and Peking and destroying the bulk of the troops of the Kuomintang in the battle of Suchow.

The military collapse of the Kuomintang completely shook the foundations of the regime. Important military chiefs like General Fu Tso-yi, commander of Peking, went over to Mao's camp. A spirit of everyone-for-himself marked the definitive disintegration of the party in power. Seeking to save itself by desperate measures, it opened a reign of terror in Shanghai, directed not only against the Communists but even against the bourgeoisie (80). The latter threw its weight in the scales and demanded the end of the civil war at any price. Chiang Kai-shek resigned as head of the government and retired to his home province. Peace

parleys which could not lead to anything were undertaken. Meanwhile, the Communist armies regrouped along the whole Yangtze, central artery of China.

At midnight, April 20, 1949, when the Communist ultimatum for the acceptance of terms expired, Communist troops crossed the river at numerous strategic points in face of insignificant resistance. The triumphal march on Shanghai, Nanking, Hankow, Canton and Chungking began. In a few months, Mao Tse-tung became master of all continental China. The dictatorship of the Kuomintang had lasted 22 years, exactly the same as that of Mussolini.

May 1, 1950

(The second part of this article gives a description of the current situation in China, a study of the evolution of the policy of the Chinese Communist Party in the civil war, a criticism of the intervention of the USSR in China, an analysis of the class nature of the Chinese revolution and a sketch of the future perspectives of this revolution.)

(1) Including Sinkiang and Manchuria, excluding Tibet and Outer Mongolia, China has an area of some 3.75 million square miles, that is, somewhat less than that of Europe. With Tibet and Outer Mongolia, China becomes 15 percent bigger than Europe. (2) Report of Pauley, President Truman's special envoy to Manchuria, in the spring of 1946. *Neue Zuercher Zeitung*, May 4, 1947. (3) Jack Belden, *China Shakes the World*. Harper & Brothers, New York, 1949. pp. 127-28. (4) *United States Relations with China*. Based on the files of the State Department. U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C., August 1949. pp. 127-28. (5) *Ibid.* p. 60. Belden, *op. cit.*, pp. 145 and 151. (6) Belden, *op. cit.*, p. 151. (7) Belden, *op. cit.*, p. 151. (8) Article by a Chinese professor in *Journal of Farm Economics*. Cited by John Bowman in "The Chinese Peasant." (*Workers International News*, January-February 1949.) (9) Belden, *op. cit.*, pp. 151, 157. (10) Article from the Peking magazine *Ta Kung Pao*, reprinted in *N. Y. Herald Tribune*, July 8, 1947. (11) *China Handbook*, 1937-1943. Compiled by the Chinese Ministry of Information. The Macmillan Company, New York, 1943. pp. 432-36. (12) Report by General Wedemeyer, *United States Relations with China*. pp. 780-93. (13) *Neue Zuercher Zeitung*, October 2, 1947. (14) *United States Relations with China*. p. 770. (15) *China Handbook*. pp. 612-13. (16) *United States Relations with China*. pp. 782-83. *Neue Zuercher Zeitung*, August 21, November 29, 1947, June 5, 1948. *N. Y. Herald Tribune*, May 21 and August 7, 1948. (17) *Neue Zuercher Zeitung*, September 9, 1948. (18) *Neue Zuercher Zeitung*, October 10 and November 28, 1948. *N. Y. Herald Tribune*, October 10, 1948. (19) *United States Relations with China*. pp. 781-82, 86, 89, 93. (20) *Neue Zuercher Zeitung*, May 4 and June 3, 1947. *United States Relations with China*. p. 221. (21) *United States Relations with China*. p. 567. (22) *United States Relations with China*. pp. 135-40. (23) *United States Relations with China*. pp. 140-43. (24) *United States Relations with China*. pp. 151-56. (25) *United States Relations with China*. pp. 232, 158, 166. (26) In an interview with Marshall, December 1, 1946, Chiang Kai-shek felt confident "the Communist forces could be exterminated in eight or ten months." Previously, his military advisors had even declared that the Communist armies could be brought to terms within three months! (*Ibid.* pp. 212, 216.) (27) See the declaration of Chu Teh, commander in chief of the Communist armies: "If the Kuomintang had carried out the People's Consultative Council's agreements in February, there would never have been a civil war." (Robert Payne, *China Awake*. Dodd, Mead and Co., New York, 1947. p. 304.) Payne likewise reports that the Communist Party proposed as arbiter of a common administration of the town of Changchun, a big Manchurian capitalist, Mo Ti-huei. (28) Thus, to combat inflation, the government decided in September 1947 to bar importation of cosmetics and to limit the duration of banquets to two hours, limiting the number of dishes to the number of guests only, with a ceiling of 8 dishes! (*Neue Zuercher Zeitung*, Sept. 14, 1947). (29) *United States Relations with China*. pp. 940-42, 1945-46, 952-55, 969. (30) *United States Relations with China*. pp. 1043-44. (31) See Program of Political Tutelage, fundamental charter of the Kuomintang between

1928 and 1937, in *China Handbook*. pp. 84-85. (32) Robert Payne, *Journey to Red China*. p. 110, Heinemann, London 1947. (33) *United States Relations with China*. pp. 925-33. Belden, op. cit., pp. 394-97. (34) L. Trotsky. Letter to the comrades of Peking, "A Strategy of Action and Not of Speculations." (*La Lutte de Classe*, Nos. 46-47, January-February 1933.) (35) Belden, op. cit., p. 422. (36) Payne, op. cit., p. 109. (37) Harold Isaacs, *No Peace for Asia*. Macmillan, New York, 1947. pp. 54-55, 60-61. (38) Belden. Op. cit., pp. 28, 52-53, 55, 71, 84. (39) Report of John P. Davies, Jr., *United States Relations with China*. p. 567. (40) Belden. Op. cit., pp. 83, 84, 161-62. (41) Belden. Op. cit., p. 376. (42) *N. Y. Herald Tribune*, July 8, 1947. General Wedemeyer extends this conclusion to all of China. *United States Relations with China*. p. 759. (43) Belden. Op. cit., p. 376. (44) *Neue Zuercher Zeitung*, September 9, 1948. (45) *United States Relations with China*. p. 758. (46) *United States Relations with China*. p. 799. (47) *Neue Zuercher Zeitung*. June 15, 1948. (48) *The Times*, May 19, 1948. (49) Belden. Op. cit., p. 399. (50) *United States Relations with China*. pp. 238-39. *Neue Zuercher Zeitung*, May 21, 1947. *Le Soir*, May 22, 1947. (51) Belden. Op. cit., p. 400-02. (52) Belden. Op. cit., p. 404. *United States Relations with China*. pp. 277, 869, 872. *Neue Zuercher Zeitung*, July 17, 1948. (53) *Neue Zuercher Zeitung*, August 12, 1947. (54) *Nieuwe Rotterdamsche Courant*, May 12, 1947. (55) Harold Isaacs. *The Tragedy of the Chinese Revolution*. Secker & Warburg, Ltd., London. 1938. p. 28. Belden, Op. cit., p. 155. (56) *China Handbook*. pp. 609-10. (57) *China Handbook*. p. 605. One reads: "Land ownership became more and more concentrated in the hands of a small section of the people." (58) *Agrarian Problems in Southernmost China*. Cited by Isaacs. *The Tragedy of the Chinese Revolution*. pp. 27-28. (59) *China Handbook*. p. 608. (60) Bowman, *The Chinese Peasant*. Op. cit. (61)

Agnes Smedley. "Feudal Vestiges in the Chinese Countryside." In Sneevliet's magazine, *De Nieuwe Weg*, 1933. No. 2. (62) Belden cites on this subject (op. cit., p. 147) the following facts: From about 1650 to the present, the population of China grew from 70 million to 450 million, while the area under cultivation increased from 130 million acres to only 260 million. (63) Agnes Smedley. Op. cit. Belden. Op. cit. pp. 155, 158. (64) Belden. Op. cit., pp. 152-53. Isaacs. Op. cit., p. 29. (65) Owen Lattimore. *The Making of Modern China*. pp. 78-84. George Allen & Unwin Ltd. London. 1945. Isaacs. Op. cit. p. 3. (66) *China Handbook*. pp. 200-04. (67) Belden. Op. cit., pp. 157-58. (68) Belden. Op. cit. pp. 149-50. (69) *United States Relations with China*. pp. 131-32. (70) Belden. Op. cit., pp. 360-61. The report of military operations is based essentially on the dispatches of A. Steele of the *N. Y. Herald Tribune*. (71) Military tactics outlined by Mao Tse-tung in his Christmas Day speech in 1947. Belden. Op. cit., p. 322. (72) Belden. Op. cit., pp. 361, 381. (73) Meetings to "settle accounts" or "list grievances" against the landlords. Belden. Op. cit., pp. 30-31, and in passing. (74) Belden. Op. cit., p. 200. (75) *N. Y. Herald Tribune*, July 8, 1947. (76) Belden. Op. cit., p. 406. In October 1948, 4,500 students crossed over in ten days. (77) *The Times*, November 20, 1948. (78) *Neue Zuercher Zeitung*, June 27, 1947. (79) Belden. Op. cit., p. 351. (80) Notably by the execution of speculators, the arrest of owners of the biggest textile mills and Tu Yueh-sen, opium king of Shanghai and head of the yellow "trade unions" of the Kuomintang. (Belden. Op. cit., p. 409.) Belden, as well as others, indicates that the bourgeoisie was forced to resume commercial relations with the areas occupied by the Communists. The *Neue Zuercher Zeitung* of November 19, 1948, estimates that 25 to 40 percent of the goods imported in the Kuomintang ports went past the Communist lines.

Latin-American Unification

By J. GOMEZ

A special dispatch to the *New York Times* dated February 14 states that the Argentine government has confiscated and outlawed the book written by Jorge Abelardo Ramos entitled *Latin America: One Country* (Its History, Its Economy, Its Revolution), published by *Ediciones Octubre*.

The author deals with one of the paramount problems facing the peoples of that continent: their disunity and how it can be overcome. I shall limit my comments to some of the problems connected with the main political conclusions of the book whose descriptive material is devoted not so much to the whole of Latin America, but rather to the conflicting social groupings in Argentina and to a lesser extent, to its most immediate neighbors, Uruguay, Paraguay, Bolivia.

Although some statements and formulations are open to question, the author's three main conclusions are basically correct, regardless of their precise application in daily struggles:

1. In the solution of the economic and political problems of Latin America, there can be no room for its present geographical divisions.

2. Neither the feudal elements, which still prevail in a number of Latin-American countries nor the bourgeoisie, including even its most aggressive and advanced Argentine branch, are capable of carrying through the historical task of unifying Latin America.

3. Only the ascending proletarian class has the political power and the need to realize continental unity; it can

accomplish this not under capitalist society, but only through the Socialist United States of Latin America.

The peoples of Latin America have the burning problem of creating a solid economic basis for existence and survival; but this task cannot be realized within the frame of its prevailing geographical divisions and subdivisions. This has impressed itself upon most of Latin-American society except among the feudal and semi-feudal bourgeois, for whom nothing has changed since the colonial days of decadent Spain and who reduce all modern problems and human struggles to the management and administration of the old feudal "hacienda" (plantation). The economic consequences of disunity have preoccupied not only the fighters for socialism but even the most advanced elements of the newly rising bourgeois forces. A typical statement is the one made at the Ninth Pan-American Conference held in Bogota, Colombia in 1948 by Jaime Torres Bodet, Chief of the Mexican Delegation: "Unity continues to be urgent for our economic liberation, because a truly solid inter-american structure cannot be built upon rickety and precarious national economies."

What accounts for this "rickety and precarious" condition of the national economies of the Latin-American countries?

1. Vast though the continent is and rich in natural resources, it is cut up into numerous separate units, each calling itself a "nation." Most of these states are small and lack the necessary material elements for the semblance of a national economy. Moreover, as a result of three cen-

turies of parasitic rule by feudal Spain to be followed, after their political liberation from the Spanish yoke, by the immediate penetration of imperialist interests in complicity with powerful feudal groupings, these countries have never emerged from the paralysis and deformation of their economic origin.

2. The system of private property along with the deliberate efforts of Wall Street to preserve its exclusive interests makes it impossible to bring about a more harmonious balance in either the industrial or the agrarian sectors.

One-Sided, Backward Economy

A few illustrations. What can the representatives of private property do to correct the one-sided national economy of Cuba which is basically nothing but a sugar factory? What can the feudal and semi-feudal lords in the five small Central American Republics (Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua) do to remedy their condition as single crop plantations? What can the rulers of isolated Bolivia do about their confinement to a tin factory economy? The same applies to one degree or another to Chile (copper, nitrate and a few other minor industrial enterprises), Venezuela (petroleum), Colombia (coffee, bananas, etc.). Furthermore, all these industrial and crop enterprises are either owned by imperialist interests or are subject to their domination or control.

Most of the countries in continental Latin America are so restricted in their economy that a single imperialist enterprise becomes the nerve center of its so-called "national" life, economically as well as politically. Will Lissner in his recent articles in the *New York Times* about Central America does not exaggerate when he says that "no regime could survive the major economic catastrophe that would result" if the United Fruit Company "pulled out" of Guatemala because of its friction with the bourgeois nationalist regime of Arevalo. Furthermore, while the smaller countries are at the mercy of a single company, even the stronger and more developed, like Argentina, must submit more and more to the economic and political pressures of US imperialism.

Even more debased, emaciated and deformed is the condition of agrarian economy in the Latin-American countries. With few exceptions, primitiveness, servitude, peonage, misery and starvation mark the countryside everywhere. Although the great majority of the population is engaged in farming, most of these agrarian economies do not provide the necessary diversified food and are obliged to import farm products. The feudal oligarchy makes no effort to remedy this situation while the bourgeoisie, as the experience of Mexico indicates, has proved impotent to cope with this gigantic problem. Some of the Mexican political regimes since the 1910 revolution against the feudal regime of Porfirio Diaz made serious efforts to solve the agrarian problem. They did register a few improvements and advances. But after forty years of effort, poverty, misery and starvation still dominate the Mexican countryside.

As the consequence of this mangled industrial life and backward agrarian economy, the conditions of the great

majority of the population could hardly be worse. Professor Joshua de Castro of the University of Brazil declares that two-thirds of the South American countries (Venezuela, Colombia, Peru, Bolivia, Chile, the northern and the most southern part of Argentina, the western part of Paraguay, and half of modern Brazil) constitute "one of the major zones in the world of undernourishment and death by starvation."

The normal living conditions of the bulk of Latin-American peoples are so horrifying that when Washington's delegation at the Ninth Pan-American Conference stated that the US was in no position to offer effective help to Latin America because it has to concentrate efforts upon Europe, the same Jaime Torres Bodet exclaimed: "We have seen in the papers the pictures of those Europeans weakened by their long stay in concentration camps; the sight of them produces all the more bitterness in us because those punished and bloodless bodies inevitably bring to mind the image of our own Indians." (Indians and mestizos constitute the majority of the population.)

The Ruling Elements

But the elements which rule over the system of private property are, by their very position and role in social life, totally unwilling and incapable of solving any major problem. Its most benevolent representatives, however much they may be preoccupied with national and social questions, are no less helpless. They can only beg and lament like Bodet does in another part of the above-mentioned speech:

When one flies, as many of us have just done, from one to another of our capitals, at first one isn't sure what to admire most: the immensity of the perspectives opened to men by Mother Nature or the enormity of the injustices imposed upon the residents of the New World, which have plunged the big majority of its countries into an economic swamp. . . Fertile coast. Welcoming valleys. Mountains swollen with extractable minerals. And yet, with a few outstanding exceptions, the law of the wilderness governs all this latent wealth. . . In very few places are men in a worse position to take advantage of the inheritance which belongs to them by right.

The picture painted by Bodet is true and moving. But ironically, his very social position prevents him from depicting the other half of the picture with the same frankness and realism: the half that concerns those forces responsible for the "economic swamp," the "injustices" and law of the wilderness in the midst of so much "latent wealth." The reason for his reticence is obvious. Not only was he sitting next to delegated representatives of the feudal-oligarchical and imperialist interests, but he himself represented those bourgeois nationalistic elements who, willingly or unwillingly, by the very nature of their class interests are nothing but their partners-in-crime.

The feudal-oligarchy bears the direct historic responsibility for the division and backwardness of the continent. They seem satisfied with the thirty pieces of silver they receive from their imperialist masters and in return gladly perform the most servile acts. On the other hand, the nationalist bourgeoisie came upon the scene too late to effect any important changes. It arose in Latin America after the imperialist domination of the continent and its

development coincides with the mortal decay of the capitalist system as a whole. Thus even its most audacious and radical wing lacks clear perspectives and the courage to act.

The nationalist bourgeoisie undoubtedly dislikes its subordination to American imperialism and would prefer to become sole owners and exploiters of their own resources, or at least bigger partners in the system of capitalism. Furthermore, its petty-bourgeois humanist wing, horrified by a state of affairs comparable to Hitler's concentration camps, would like to see a juster world. They also realize that only a coordinated and unified Latin America can bring about such a gigantic human advance.

United to Oppression

But these middle-class reformers and radicals are pledged to preserve the private property system responsible for all those desperate "bloodless" bodies and are thus impelled to ally themselves with the very US imperialism that stands in the way of their own national aspirations. Here is how one of their representatives, Santa Cruz, Chilean representative to the United Nations, speaking about the factors of conflict between them and American imperialism, summarized their basic position: "I believe that the things that unite us are much more profound than the ones that separate us."

In this one sentence the nature of these representatives of the ruling classes is exposed. The most casual view of the economic history of Latin America and the unbearable conditions of its inhabitants point to one imperative conclusion: no matter to which one of the twenty separate units the people of Latin America belong, nothing unites them with the interests and aspirations of US imperialism, either on a continental or world scale. In fact, the interests and aspirations of them all stand in open antagonism with the aims of American imperialism to keep Latin America in its present state of economic backwardness and deformation. Disunity is a means of preserving Latin America as a source of raw materials, as a market for industrial products and for super-exploitation of its human material, for in division there is weakness.

What are the more "profound" things that unite not only the feudal-oligarchy but also the more sensitive and ambitious bourgeois elements with American imperialism rather than with aspirations of the peoples of their own country for unity and coordination? They all look upon their own peoples as actual or potential enemies. Hence the renunciation and subordination of their own aspirations to the more "profound" task that history has imposed upon these ruling groups in this hour when three-fourths of the "bloodless" bodies are growing impatient with the system that, in the midst of so much "latent wealth," offers so miserable an existence.

Impotence of Bourgeoisie

The author of *Latin America: One Country* is absolutely right in his insistence that, in this epoch of the death agony of capitalism, the Latin-American bourgeoisie is totally incapable of solving any of the democratic tasks. Ramos merits special commendation for recognizing the

real nature of the bourgeoisie because, in the honeymoon days of Peronism in Argentina the political grouping to which he belonged hoped that the Latin-American bourgeois forces, due to their "own peculiarities," could, given a favorable conjuncture of circumstances, achieve at least a partial unity and thus break away from their semi-colonial status. To prove their point they cited the case of the Peron "Five-Year Plan" of industrialization and Argentina's trade agreements with Chile and Bolivia. But, under pressure from American imperialist interests and the inherent contradictions of capitalist economy, both trade agreements failed.

This failure was not an isolated episode. Notwithstanding the cry of the Latin-American bourgeoisie that only through continental trade expansion can Latin America correct its present economic deformation, trade between them fell from an estimated \$600 million in 1948 to \$450 million in 1949, as was revealed at the recent Conference of the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America held in Montevideo. This is a forceful illustration of the decadent nature of the capitalist forces as well as of their inability to unify the continent and break its semi-colonial chains.

With variations in degree and form, the same thing holds true for the petty-bourgeois political groupings and forces. Ramos correctly points this out but the chapter in his book on this subject is rather weak because it is limited to dealing with the abortive effects of concrete political actions of the petty bourgeoisie instead of analyzing the basic social causes. This a serious shortcoming because these political groupings and movements in Latin America attract not only the best elements among the radical petty bourgeoisie but also broad layers of the working masses. Only a program based upon a fundamental analysis can attract a considerable sector of their ranks to the revolutionary socialist movement.

The Middle-Class Movements

The masses have observed — but not yet understood — how the Aprista (Popular Revolutionary Alliance of America), one of the most radical nationalistic and continental-minded political movements with an exceptionally strong and capable leadership, switched from its original anti-imperialist and anti-feudal attitude in *Peru* and not only modified but even renounced its opposition to United States imperialism and the feudal oligarchy.

The same is true of the Romulo Betancourt movement in *Venezuela*. Although this ex-Marxist formed a huge popular movement, when Betancourt rose to state power, like Haya de la Torre in *Peru*, he left untouched the basic feudal oligarchy and imperialist interests and even capitulated to them.

A similar course was taken by the Grau San Martin movement in *Cuba*; by the Gaitan forces in *Colombia* which ended up as part of the Liberal Party; by the once powerful coalition of petty-bourgeois radical forces under Marmaduque Grove in *Chile* which even paraded under the banner of socialism. The same observations hold good for the MNR (National Revolutionary Movement) and the

PIR (Revolutionary Left Party) in *Bolivia*; and for the present Arevalo regime in *Guatemala*.

The task of unifying Latin America is certainly complex because of the diverse and contradictory factors involved. But unity can be realized because, together with the growing understanding that the economic and political problems of each of the component separate parts of continental Latin America can be solved only through their consolidation, the necessary material and social prerequisites are actually in existence.

To be sure, intense nationalist feelings have been fostered by the elements responsible for Latin America's "Balkanization"—as the author of the book designates its present division—or for the formation of "*patrias chicas*" (tiny motherlands)—as Luis Alberto Sanchez, one of the outstanding intellectuals of Peru and of the continent with strong radical and humanitarian inclinations, terms them in his book: *Does Latin America Exist?* Driven by personal ambitions and exclusive economic interests, the nationalists have made special efforts to cultivate feelings of "Argentinism," "Peruvianism," "Chileanist," "Bolivianism," "Salvadorism," "Mexicanism," etc. Nevertheless, there exists a deep-rooted feeling of Latin Americanism throughout the continent.

I am not referring to the "Latin Americanism" of the ruling classes. They talk much about Latin-American unity. This is empty rhetoric which Luis Alberto Sanchez properly characterized as "Latin Americanism" of the "traditionalist" variety resting upon the "part (of the ruling class) that is associated with small inherited dynastic interests" and cultivated by those who are above all concerned not to lose "their privileges."

For instance, the ruling group of Bolivia, faced with deep social unrest, is forced to "discover" or "uncover" every month or so—and lately even more frequently—"revolutionary" plots to overthrow it. Every demand, manifestation, popular movement or strike is immediately stamped as a "revolutionary" plot and suppressed with all the brutality at its disposal. Similarly, every strike or movement for better conditions is branded a "communist" plot by the ruling class of Chile and consequently outlawed and suppressed. The feudal oligarchy of Venezuela linked with imperialist interests could not even tolerate the existence of so mild a reformist popular movement as Betancourt's "Party of Democratic Action" and had to drive it out of the government and declare it illegal. The outlawing of the Apra in Peru duplicates the Venezuelan situation.

The feudal elements of Latin America will stop at nothing to perpetuate their "dynastic interests" and ambitions. In the recent presidential elections in Peru, the Odria regime eliminated a rival candidate of the same social class from the race because Odria could not have won even in a restricted election. Odria's government is so fearful and unpopular it had to prohibit the importation of mimeographs into the country without permission from the regime because some oppositional material appeared in the streets in mimeographed form.

The military junta of Venezuela does not dare to hold "elections." Nicaragua is merely Somoza's "hacienda." He wouldn't permit even the most conservative forces to par-

ticipate on a free and equal basis in the so-called election there. Santo Domingo is a strictly personal enterprise of Dictator Trujillo. How can leaders of this kind fight for national independence on a local or continental scale?

But the Latin-Americanism of the Indians, mestizos, Negroes, and whites who form the heart and body of real Latin America is of a completely different nature. It is not based upon the defense or preservation of any "inherited dynastic interests" or "privileges." It expresses a deep inner feeling of belonging to one and the same body of toiling and suffering humanity. It is a manifestation of concern for their mutual welfare since they are all faced with the same problems and needs. It arises from the growing realization of the Chilean, Colombian, Bolivian, Peruvian, Costa Rican, Nicaraguan, Venezuelan, etc., that their aspirations for a better world cannot be achieved within the present geographical divisions but only through unity since all are in the same situation. Their Latin Americanism in the ethnological field lacks the malignant group exclusiveness predominant in the ruling class. It arises from a melting pot of humanity with a common historical development, a common geography and common objectives in life.

In contrast to the timidity and nervousness of the ruling elements, reflecting the instability of the foundations they rest upon, the fighters among the Latin-American people are bold and courageous. The coasts, valleys and mountains of Mexico, Bolivia, Chile, Peru, Venezuela, Colombia, Nicaragua, etc. are covered with the blood of their battles. In these life and death struggles even military and police terror cannot stop the masses, as we see from the actions of the Indian tin miners and other working people in Bolivia; in the strikes in Chile and in Venezuela. Under the leadership of the newly rising proletarian class, the popular masses come to the forefront in the struggles for social and economic emancipation. In the struggle for national emancipation from imperialist rule and control, the working masses are the most consistent fighters for expropriation and nationalization of the basic industries, such as the nationalization of the petroleum industry in Mexico. The same demand is being made by the Venezuelan and Colombian petroleum workers.

Herein lies the hope for its future! The young and rising proletariat of Latin America is not only developing rapidly and becoming the most cohesive unit in the organizational and political fields. The conditions of the workers under semi-colonial status are so scandalously sub-human they do not feel the slightest attachment to the system of private property, but cherish only hatred and rebellion toward it. Their material needs and social position impels the workers to lead the struggle for the social and national liberation of their own immediate country and of the entire continent, both for their own class and for other sectors of the population that have no room under the sky of the ruling class, such as the landless peasants and the poorer sections of the middle class. The banner under which the working class will conduct its battles to victory will not be that of the decaying and outlived capitalist system, but, as the author of the book properly concludes: the new banner of the Socialist United States of Latin America.