

A section of the paper "For Decades To Come—On A World Scale," written by RCP, USA Central Committee Chairman Bob Avakian and adopted by a meeting of the Central Committee at the end of 1980. Another section of this paper, "Historical 'Moments' or Conjunctures," printed in the March 27, 1981 issue of the Revolutionary Worker, deals with the sharpening of all the basic contradictions on a world scale and the necessity and opportunity this presents to the revolutionary forces. The ellipses are the author's.

What follows is what the title above suggests—an outline of views on the historical experience of the international communist movement, in particular the Third International. It should be stressed that, while a basic position is presented here, it is in the nature of a "working thesis," and the outline setting this forth is meant to serve as the framework for further investigation, study and summation, to which not only myself and not only our party but others as well must and will contribute. The basic overview can be expressed by using Stalin as the focus and referring to the statement by Mao (cited in the "Philosophy" chapter of *Mao Tsetung's Immortal Contributions*)—that in the 1920s "Stalin had nothing else to rely on except the masses, so he demanded all-out mobilization of the party and the masses. Afterward, when they had realized some gains this way, they became less reliant on the masses" (see p. 147)—and the related assessment made in that chapter that, especially after the 1920s, Stalin was "not as consistently or thoroughly dialectical in his approach to problems." (*Ibid.*) Of course, it is not a question of one leader alone; but this assessment of Stalin does, I think, apply more generally to the leaders of the Third International (after Lenin). What follows, in outline form, is

a beginning (and tentative) elaboration of this view.

I. The Third International was forged (established) in the furnace of intense struggle—against imperialism and opportunism—brought to the boiling point in World War 1. In particular, it was forged in the bitter fight against social-chauvinism. But a distinguishing feature of it from the beginning was that the organizational center of it was the Bolshevik Party—a party in power—in the only socialist state. This had its positive aspect, in that the line of Lenin, having become a material force in this way, was in turn transformed into a tremendous ideological force, influencing communists, and others, very broadly and powerfully. But, of course, this itself involved contradiction (there were a number of forces attracted by the success of the October Revolution who were not really thoroughly won over to Bolshevism ideologically but nevertheless joined the International, while on the other hand there were tendencies to mechanically copy the Bolshevik experience, as well as other deviations) and, over a period of time, especially with the growth of erroneous tendencies

within the Soviet Communist Party, the contradiction of having an International dominated by the one party that was in power became more acute. While this was not the essential question—which was the question of line, in the Soviet Party and the Comintern—it nevertheless had a significant effect on the question of how line was determined and carried out, on the international level and within the different countries (this will show up more prominently later) . . .

II. With the failure of revolutions to develop or their defeat in other countries—especially Germany—in the years right after the October Revolution (by 1923), the "first period" (as formulated by the Comintern) came to an end. It was then clear that the new Soviet Republic would be the only socialist state to emerge out of the historic conjuncture that shaped up around World War 1. This confronted the leaders of this new socialist state with heavy necessity, if the victory of the October Revolution was to be preserved and socialism actually built in that country.

In this, the "second period" (1923-28), Stalin's leadership, especially in the struggle against Trotsky, Bukharin and other opportunists, was in the main correct. Certainly the fight he led to uphold the possibility of and undertake the task

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of establishing socialism in one country was essentially correct. But, while at that time Stalin drew a distinction between the victory of socialism in one country and the *final victory* of socialism—which he said could not be accomplished in one country alone—already there were within his line at that time erroneous tendencies that would further develop in the future; and within the international communist movement (before as well as after Stalin's influence became dominant in the Comintern) there were already developing economist, reformist and bourgeois-democratic deviations, rationalized in particular on the basis that the movement was in general in a period of "the defensive"...

III. The line of the Comintern in relation to the "third period" (1928 and after) also divided rather sharply into two. On the one hand, there was the more or less correct prediction of the end of the temporary period of stabilization (and expansion) in the capitalist world (or most of it)—more or less correct because it did involve some mechanical materialist tendencies that marred this analysis and would be reflected more strongly later (both in the 1930s and after World War 2 as well, when they took the form of tendencies toward see-

ing an imminent major crisis of the capitalist world when none was then in the making). This is linked to errors in relation to the theory of the "general crisis" of imperialism, as opposed to the more dialectical view of the development of imperialism—yes, toward its ultimate end, but—through major war-to-war spirals.

The "third period" line was, in one sense, "left" not right—but "left" economist, again revealing mechanical materialist tendencies. This was connected with some significant departures from Leninism, especially from the Leninist emphasis on historic conjuncture and from the whole thrust embodied in *What Is To Be Done?* The campaigns for "Bolshevization" and for "mass parties" and an emphasis on "factory nuclei" must be seen in this light...

IV. Especially after the crushing defeat of the communists in Germany with the rise of the fascist form of bourgeois dictatorship (1933), heavy defensive and defeatist tendencies grew in the leadership of the Soviet Union and the Comintern. Together with the growing danger of world war, especially of attack on the Soviet Union, openly rightist deviations, of a fundamental nature, became predominant—the promotion of

nationalism, reformism and bourgeois democracy, the subordination of everything to the defense of the Soviet Union, etc., in a qualitatively greater way than before. While the line represented by the writings of Dutt during this general period were a part of this overall development, all this was concentrated in the Dimitroff Report to the 7th World Congress of the Comintern (1935) and the implementation and further development of this line—which, as we know, involved, among other things, as one of its key ingredients, the basic repudiation of the Leninist position on "defense of the fatherland." This whole line was in its essence erroneous ...

V. The line(s) of the Soviet and Comintern leadership in relation to WW2 overall (that is, during the period leading up to the war, from the mid-1930s on, and during the different phases of the war itself) was *basically wrong*. The point is not that particular policies and tactical maneuvers of the Soviet Union, in dealing with different imperialists and making use of contradictions among them, were absolutely wrong in principle, taken by themselves; the point is that the overall line guiding this was incorrect. Even when, in the first phase of the war (before the Soviet Union was in-

vaded) the line was put out that this was again an inter-imperialist war—a line which in form seems correct—this was largely a case of taking, at that moment, the correct position for the wrong reasons. . . it was still mainly determined on the basis of subordinating the whole world struggle to—and essentially reducing it to—the defense of the Soviet Union.

More essentially, it must be summed up that the analysis which our Party has upheld, that with the invasion of the Soviet Union the nature (the principal aspect) of the war changed—from an inter-imperialist war to one whose main aspect was that between socialism and imperialism— is *not correct*. While certainly this aspect was a very significant one once the Soviet Union was forced into the war, and while in addition the aspect of national liberation struggle vs. imperialism (most of all in China) was also very significant during World War 2 (in contrast to the first world war, when Lenin correctly said that this national liberation aspect was practically insignificant), still an objective analysis of the overall character of the second world war—of its principal aspect, which determines its essence—reveals, I believe, that its nature remained *mainly* an inter-imperialist war.

In such circumstances (an inter-imperialist war in which a socialist state is forced to fight a—legitimate—war of defense) it is not necessarily wrong for the socialist state to make use of contradictions among the imperialists, even to have certain agreements with one bloc or the other (or both), etc.; *but* this must be based on a correct analysis of the overall character of the war, and the defense of the socialist country must be made subordinate to the advance of the international struggle overall, and not the other way around. However, even with regard to the other just and progressive (revolutionary) aspects of the war—in particular the war of liberation of China against Japanese imperialism—this, too, was approached by the leaders of the Soviet Union and the Comintern in a way that would have sacrificed them for the sake of defending the Soviet Union (Wang Ming's *right* line, and the way the Soviet Union dealt with Chiang Kai-shek, among other things, were manifestations of this). And generally, in the contradiction between defending the Soviet Union on the one hand and supporting and advancing revolutionary struggle elsewhere and on

the international level as a whole on the other hand, not only was the first aspect (incorrectly) treated as the principal one but the other aspect (which should have been treated as principal) was liquidated insofar as it conflicted with the (narrowly, one-sidedly conceived) defense of the Soviet Union (the dissolution of the Comintern itself during the war, and especially the explanation given for this, is a sharp expression of this). The fundamental deviations during this war were concentrated in Stalin's speeches "On the Great Patriotic War of the Soviet Union," where the erroneous, anti-Leninist positions consistently put forward are so thoroughly (and extremely) incorrect that they cannot be explained merely by the necessity Stalin faced but must be taken as the expression of fundamental departures from Marxism-Leninism.

Of great importance in all this is the understanding that the line of the Soviet and Comintern leadership in relation to World War 2 represented carrying to an extreme—and turning into their opposite—certain analyses and lines that were in the main correct, and dictated by necessity, when it became clear (in the early 1920s) that it would be necessary to build socialism in one country. These earlier policies largely corresponded to the conditions that existed when the historic conjuncture represented by World War 1 (and its immediate aftermath) had passed, and when a new major spiral was only *beginning*. But the policies in relation to the second world war basically extended—again, to an extreme—this earlier orientation, *precisely when a new historic conjuncture was shaping up, when that major spiral was reaching its concentration point and resolution*—raising qualitatively greater possibilities for revolutionary advance on a world scale, which the Soviet and Comintern leadership's line largely worked against.

The essential point here can be seen, in a concentrated way, in the speech by Stalin to the 18th Congress of the C.P.S.U.(B) in 1939, where he not only puts forward the seriously erroneous view that antagonistic class contradictions have been eliminated in the Soviet Union (and the contradictions between workers, peasants and intellectuals are treated as if there is no possibility of serious conflict arising from them), but he goes on to say that the Soviet Union is "moving ahead, towards communism." From the correct in-

sistence on the possibility of establishing socialism in one country—and the fight to actually achieve this—things have turned into their opposite: into the completely erroneous notion of achieving *communism* in one country! It is basically inevitable that such a position would be accompanied by the tendency to sacrifice everything—in particular revolution in other countries—for the defense of the Soviet Union, and by an erroneous line overall for the international communist movement . . .

VI. The serious deviations from Marxism-Leninism that arose and found increasing expression from the mid-1930s through World War 2 were never really thoroughly criticized, nor certainly rooted out. After the war, even allowing for powerful necessity faced by the Soviet leadership, their policies (including those promoted by Stalin), with regard to the emerging socialist camp, and overall, continued to contain significant aspects of economism (including the "theory of productive forces"), bourgeois democracy and nationalism, especially Great-Russian chauvinism, and fundamentally a failure to rely on the masses and lead them in a revolutionary way. This is true despite some attempts by Stalin to combat some of the more flagrant revisionism among the Soviet leadership. (Stalin's "Economic Problems of Socialism in the USSR" must be assessed, more deeply, in this light.)

Overall, during the period from the end of the war to Stalin's death (1953) revisionism was further strengthened in the USSR itself. In Eastern Europe the policies and means for mobilizing the conscious initiative of the masses to carry out socialist transformation were not really and consistently developed and applied—significantly, Mao comments (in two separate places) in his *Critique of Soviet Economics* that, although the People's Democracies in Eastern Europe were established as the outcome of class struggle internationally (that is, World War 2), a good job was not done in leading class struggle there in the period after the war. Thus, no solid basis for socialism in those countries was ever laid, even though significant steps were taken in transforming the ownership system. As a result of all this, the socialist camp, even as it was reaching its "height" in the early and mid-50s was already disintegrating from

within. And in general the conditions were ripening for the triumph of revisionism in most of this camp and more broadly for the complete degeneration of the majority of the parties that had been part of the Third International . . .

VII. An overall summation of this whole period—from the triumph of the October Revolution and establishment of the world's first socialist state to the turning of this into its opposite, with the triumph of revisionism in the USSR and most of the countries of the socialist camp in the mid-1950s—must thoroughly and all-sidedly examine the dialectically related aspects of ideological and political line on the one hand and material basis on the other, not only in the Soviet Union itself but on a world scale. But, in brief, as I see it, it was indeed possible and necessary to build socialism in one country (the Soviet Union) after the failure or defeat of revolutions in other countries, and this was actually done and was only finally reversed with the rise to power of the new bourgeoisie led by Khrushchev—which did represent a qualitative change from one class rule and one system to another, despite the very serious errors that marred the line of the Soviet (and Comintern) leadership, especially from the mid-1930s on. *But*, on the other hand, once the line becomes consolidated that defending what has been gained in one country is the highest principle and that risking this, even for greater advances on a world scale, is something that is not dared, then, unless such a position is reversed, the loss of even what has been gained, as well as serious setbacks in the international struggle overall, is bound to occur sooner or later (and not *that* much later). Here is where I feel the principle of warfare, expressed in concentrated form by Mao—to preserve oneself and destroy the enemy, with the *latter* being principal—applies. And this links up especially with the importance of grasping and applying the Leninist line on historic conjunctures and the analysis of major war-to-war spirals. Only by firmly grasping and applying this, and much more penetratingly and thoroughly making a critical analysis of the experience of the international communist movement with this in view, can the serious errors of the past be avoided (and at least *new* and less serious ones committed) in carrying the revolutionary struggle of the international proletariat forward toward

its final aim: world communism. . . .

VIII. The line and leadership of Mao Tsetung, especially in the fight against revisionism, represented a major leap in the international communist movement. In my opinion, however, it should be viewed as the *beginning* of the way forward out of the swamp into which in the main the international communist movement had been sunk. Mao refused to slide into that swamp and he pointed the direction, and led in taking crucial steps, on the opposite, the high road of proletarian revolution. It is indeed true that he led the international proletariat to unprecedented heights. But the point is exactly to forge further ahead up that tortuous ascent. The task is definitely not retreating to the path of Stalin, but neither is it simply *standing* with Mao; rather, it is to dig deeper into the past and to advance further, higher in the future.

It is objectively necessary to make a dialectical analysis of the role of Mao. This means, first of all, upholding and building on the overwhelmingly principal aspect—his truly immortal contributions, especially in the realm of philosophy, his development and enrichment of the dialectical-materialist basis of Marxism-Leninism, and most particularly in the line of continuing the revolution under the dictatorship of the proletariat. But it also means critically summing up his errors, especially some tendencies toward seeing things too much from the point of view of nations and national struggle. More specifically, it must be said that, even in the struggle against revisionism, including in the polemics against the Soviet revisionists, there are aspects of promoting nationalism, and the line of “picking up the national flag” in the imperialist countries (other than the imperialist country or countries identified as the main enemy) is not broken with but put forward. This, I believe, is related to the erroneous tendency on Mao's part to extend the principle of “defeating our enemies one by one”—applied (overwhelmingly, at least) correctly during the course of the Chinese revolution, particularly in its first stage—onto the world scale in such a way as to deviate to a certain degree from the Leninist line on “defense of the fatherland.” Mao, as we know, was not of course the initiator—nor certainly the worst practitioner—of this error in the international communist movement, and in fact he did

not repeat the worst expressions that this took, on the part of Stalin and others. But the point is that neither did he break in any qualitative way with this error. (Perhaps some principles of military line also have some relevance here too: Mao had to wage a bitter struggle in the course of the Chinese revolution against the disastrous line of attacking the major strongholds of the enemy all at once, and he correctly posed in opposition to this the line of protracted people's war in China, encircling the cities from the countryside; and, even though he noted that in the imperialist countries the correct military line was centered around mass insurrections in the cities, perhaps the general-political implications of this for the world struggle were not grasped by Mao—that is, the possibility of attacking and seizing power from the reactionary ruling classes in a number of countries [in *both* imperialist blocs] during the same, relatively short, period, especially at a historic conjuncture, and particularly in the context of inter-imperialist war, rather than seeking an alignment of the people of the world, with a socialist country [or countries] at the center, to fight, in alliance with some imperialists, against one “main enemy” [one imperialist bloc]. How a socialist country can contribute to *this* possibility, and how its own defense fits into this perspective, even if it has to make use of contradictions among the imperialists, should, I believe, be the orientation of the international communist movement—including, even especially, when only one [or a few] socialist country[ies] exist, surrounded by imperialism still dominant in the world, and including, even in the context of world war, which represents the concentration point of the major spiral and presents greatly heightened revolutionary possibilities, taking the world as a whole.)

Mao's line on classes and class struggle under socialism, on the importance of the superstructure and on continuing the revolution under the proletarian dictatorship must also be evaluated in the light of what has been said above. While there is no question that these are indeed truly immortal contributions and led in the achievement of unprecedented advances, there was still some tendency to separate this too much from the whole international class struggle, to treat the class struggle within socialist China too much as a “thing in itself,” apart from the whole, world-wide struggle against

imperialism, reaction and all exploiting classes. And this I believe is true, even though Mao certainly never advocated "communism in one country," and in fact stressed that the final victory of communism could only be achieved on a world scale, as the outcome of the revolutionary struggles of the oppressed peoples and nations and fundamentally of the international proletariat, which, Mao insisted, a socialist country must support.

The essential point of what has been outlined above is that, especially ap-

proaching the historic conjuncture shaping up, with its tremendous challenges and opportunities for the international communist movement, a vigorous struggle must be carried out to forge further ahead on the revolutionary road indicated by Marxism-Leninism, Mao Tsetung Thought, to strike more deeply at the roots of revisionism, to draw more fully the profound lessons from the errors as well as the great leaps forward in the past, and thereby to seize to the fullest the prospects ahead. As the draft document, "Basic Principles..." emphasizes:

"History advances not in a straight line but through twists and turns, it advances in a spiral—but it does advance. And this is most certainly true for the historic process of the world proletarian revolution and the replacement of the bourgeois epoch by the world-historic epoch of communism. Grasping and acting in accordance with this law in order to accelerate this advance is not merely a general and long-term requirement of proletarian revolutionaries but is of immediate, pressing importance in today's situation and with future developments in mind."

Addendum On The Character of WW2... and why it did not change

First, in restudying the material we have produced relating to this general question (and specifically to the position that the character of the war did change with the invasion of the USSR and its entry into the war), I am struck by the superficiality of the arguments. To cite a flagrant example, in the original Party *Programme*, in the section "The Present Situation," it merely says that since the end of WWI the Soviet Union had been established as a socialist state and... "So, with the German invasion of the USSR in 1941, WWII changed... It became a battle for the defense of the future, as it was already being realized by the Soviet working people in building socialism." (p. 11, emphasis added) Similarly, in the article "On the Character of World War 2" (*The Communist*, V1, N1) at one point it is simply stated that "Everything described above changed with drastic swiftness on June 22, 1941... This changed the nature of the war and required a totally new orientation." (p. 90); and in the "Conclusion" of the article, this point is summed up as follows: "World War 2 changed in character *overnight* with the invasion of the Soviet Union which changed the objective situation, the necessity, and thus the opportunities for advancing the struggle of the working class." (p. 108, emphasis added)

Of course, arguments with more substance (than is found in the statements cited above) were made—and I will turn to these next—but I think that the rather obviously facile nature of these statements already provides at least a hint that our position (up to now),

that the character of the war did change, has represented in fact a rationalization for—and an attempt to give the best interpretation to—the overall erroneous line of the leadership of the USSR (and the Comintern... as long as it existed) on WW2. This was actually a line of *incorrectly* subordinating everything to the defense of the Soviet Union and *along with that* downplaying or even denying the need to advance revolutionary struggles elsewhere that conflicted with this narrowly (and overall erroneously) conceived defense of the USSR, and it seriously deviated from the correct, Leninist analysis of imperialism and imperialist war and from the Marxist-Leninist stand on the nature of the state (as opposed to bourgeois-democratic camouflage of this nature) and other cardinal questions. In short, while we have criticized a number of the particular deviations associated with this overall line, we have not (up until now) made a deep-going analysis of this—nor *fully* broken with the overall erroneous orientation of Stalin et al. on this question, which represents a concentration of much of what constitutes the roots of revisionism in the international communist movement... But let's turn to the somewhat more substantive arguments we have made in support of the idea that the character of WW2 changed with the invasion of the USSR...

One of the main arguments is that once the Soviet Union was attacked (and entered the war) the decisive battlefield in WW2 became the Soviet front, that the Soviet forces took on—and defeated—the bulk (and "pride") of the

German army, that victory at Stalingrad was the decisive turning point in the whole war, etc. (See, for example, pp. 90-93 in *The Communist*, V1, N1; and pp. 62-65, V2, N2, "On the Outcome of World War 2 and the Prospects for Revolution in the West.")

There is, of course, a great deal of truth to all this (although it is the case that, as opposed to Europe for most of the war, the "Allied" imperialists, and in particular the U.S., did fight for real in the Pacific against Japan; this was largely a naval and air war and much of the ground fighting was over island outposts and not with the masses of troops that were involved in Europe). But, again, as an argument as to the character of the war, it is superficial and does not address, let alone answer, the decisive question: what *objective interests* were mainly in conflict during the war? Even though it is true that the Soviet armed forces and people were the main force that defeated Germany—and this was decisive in the defeat of the "Axis" imperialists overall—that does not change the fact that the main opposition being struggled out through the course of the entire war was that between the two groups of imperialists.

While the alignment of military forces, the actual configuration of the battles, etc. is of course important in determining the nature of a war, it is not the decisive, determining thing. It is precisely the case that a major way in which the U.S. and British in particular pursued their imperialist interests during the war was to maneuver to make the Soviets do the bulk of the fighting

against "the common enemy" (the "Axis" imperialists and Germany in particular) until such time as they could move in to clean up the spoils. But that *does not* mean they weren't fighting (nor certainly that they were not pursuing their imperialist interests by military means). Take the infamous statement by Truman, that the thing to do was to let the Germans and Soviets kill off the largest possible number of each other and then intervene on the losing side—if Germany had, as it expected, rolled over the Soviet Union and subdued it or conquered the strategic parts of it within a very short time, the U.S. and British imperialists would very probably have had no choice but to throw everything they had, right then, at their German rivals. While all this involves by definition a great deal of speculation, what is important to grasp is that the *military tactics* of the various forces in the war are not the determining thing—it is rather the objective interests being battled out, through whatever tactics and tactical shifts and maneuvers, that determine the character of the war and specifically determine that WW2 was from the beginning and remained throughout an inter-imperialist war in its principal aspect, its overall character. Of course if neither the British nor even the U.S. had been able to play any significant role militarily at any stage in the war (or after a certain point and for the rest of the war)—if, in short, they had been incapable of moving decisively when there was the necessity and the opportunity—then that would be a different matter. But that was hardly the case—especially with regard to the U.S.—and this brings us to a crucial point. Not only did WW2 *arise out of* inter-imperialist rivalry, but the *main aspect* of the *resolution* of the war was once again an *imperialist redivision* of the world, even though the progressive, revolutionary aspect—especially the defense of socialism and the revolutionary liberation struggle in the colonies, above all China—was a major factor (and much more of one than in WW1).

Thus, another argument made (including by ourselves) as to why the inter-imperialist aspect of the war was no longer principal after the Soviet Union was involved—namely, that the necessity for an alliance with the Soviet Union (and other progressive and revolutionary forces) put objective limitations on the "Allied" imperialists in pursuing

their imperialist interests and aims—can be seen not to be correct. It is true that there was such necessity and such limitation for these imperialists, but not to such an extent or in such a way that their pursuit of their imperialist interests—and the opposition between them and interests and aims of the rival imperialist group—was relegated to a secondary position in the war after the USSR entered it. This, again, is indicated in the (principal aspect of the) outcome of the war. (Of course, it could be argued that if the Communist Parties in a number of countries—Western Europe, to cite an important example—had carried out more revolutionary policies while making defense of the USSR paramount and treating the war vs. the "Axis" as just, then the outcome, and what happened in the more or less immediate aftermath, of the war might have been quite different, etc. . . . On the other hand, it could just as well—or more meaningfully—be raised: what if the Soviet Union and the international communist movement overall had carried out a correct, revolutionary line in relation to WW2, including in the period leading up to it as well as during the war itself, after as well as before the Soviet Union was invaded?! But in this type of questioning the aspect of speculation goes so far as really to divorce the subjective factor from objective reality and to get mired down in "what ifs" instead of scientifically analyzing the different class interests and forces in conflict and thereby determining the main aspect and overall character of WW2, before and after the Soviet Union became involved.)

It might possibly be argued: well, the principal contradiction (for a time) after WW2 was that between socialism and imperialism, so might that not indicate that the principal contradiction during the war, which gave rise to the situation after WW2, was between socialism and imperialism? As far as I know, no one has actually put forward this argument (at least not in this form)—and it is a bit of a "straw man," since it is obviously marred by a considerable amount of metaphysics—but it nevertheless seems worth addressing here briefly, partly to combat the metaphysics of this *kind* of argument and more specifically to make clearer why the war remained inter-imperialist and how its actual outcome indicates that. Essentially what is wrong with the above (theoretical) argument is that it ignores the particularity

of contradiction and the principle that qualitatively different contradictions are resolved by qualitatively different means. The contradiction "between socialism and imperialism" during and after the war was *not the same contradiction*. During the war the USSR, a socialist country, was aligned with certain imperialist states (the "Allied" imperialists) and at war with the opposing group of imperialist states; after the war the *socialist camp*, headed by the Soviet Union, came into open antagonism with the *imperialist camp as a whole* (including all the imperialist states) headed by the U.S. This difference was precisely because of the outcome (resolution) of the war—again, *principally* the resolution among the *imperialists themselves*, indicating that the main aspect and overall character of the war remained inter-imperialist. All this points us back to the conclusion that the analysis that the principal contradiction during the war—after the USSR entered it (in alliance with one group of imperialist states)—became that between socialism and imperialism, representing a basic change in the overall character of the war . . . such an analysis is incorrect.

In sum: the second world war, from beginning to end, was the second world *inter-imperialist* war—this was its principal aspect and overall character even after the Soviet Union was invaded and became involved in the war (and even though it did play the decisive role in defeating the "Axis" imperialists). The aspect of socialism vs. imperialism, and more generally of progressive struggle (warfare) against imperialism, was far greater in this second world war than in the first, but it was not the principal aspect and did not determine the character of the war as a whole (which remained inter-imperialist). Summing this up and analyzing the errors on this of the leaders of the USSR (and the Comintern)—much more deeply—is crucial in order to strike more penetratingly and powerfully at the roots of revisionism in the international communist movement. (Here it should be re-emphasized that these views, as well as the ideas presented in "Outline of Views . . ." in general—are, as stated there, in the nature of a "working thesis" and "meant to serve as as framework for further investigation, study and summation, to which not only myself and not only our party but others as well must and will contribute."