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Note: This material is reprinted from the Bulletins of the International Secretariat of the Fourth International for the information of our readers.

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NOTE

The material in this bulletin has been translated from the French Bulletins of the International Secretariat of the Fourth International. It contains two documents submitted by the International Secretariat in the preparatory discussion for the Fourth World Congress.

It is reported that these two documents open the preparatory discussion for the Fourth World Congress of the Fourth International. There will be at least six months discussion starting with August 1953 before the Congress is convened.

These documents are presented in the name of a unanimous International Secretariat.

In addition to these two, it is reported that the IS will present a short resolution on the class character of the Chinese Peoples' Republic, justifying in more detail than the text on "The Rise and Decline of Stalinism" the workers' character of this State. At a later date a general resolution on the international situation and the tasks of the Fourth International will be presented.

THE RISE AND DECLINE OF STALINISM

The evolution of the Soviet Union and of the world working-class movement since 1917 is fundamentally determined by the dynamic of the relation of class forces on the world scale. This development has passed through three major phases: the rise of the revolution in 1917-1923, the ebb of the world revolution in 1923-1943, and the new revolutionary rise since 1943.

The October Revolution was the starting point of a new historic stage in numerous fields:

-- It gave birth to the first workers' state upon one-sixth of the globe.

-- It impelled a part of the working-class movement forward on the theoretical plane and favored its independent organization through the creation of the Communist International and of the Communist parties.

-- It gave a powerful impulsion to the colonial peoples and their initial struggles against imperialism.

The period from 1917 to 1923 is in the first instance a period of struggle for the survival of the new state and for the formation and consolidation of the Communist vanguard throughout the world.

The defeat of the world revolution following World War I resulted in the Soviet Union in the destruction of Soviet democracy by a bureaucracy which established a dictatorial political regime under which the economic and cultural development of the Soviet Union has taken place for the last thirty years. Through the action and weight of this state, the Soviet bureaucracy has exercised a considerable influence over the mass movement throughout the world, especially over the organizations and movements created by the impulsion of the Russian Revolution.

The Communist International and the Communist parties ought to have adjusted their activity to the new stage, that is to say, ought to have consolidated themselves theoretically and politically, strengthened their ties with the masses and in this way prepared for a future revolutionary rise. But the pressure of the first workers' state and its bureaucratic degeneration upon these organizations that had just emerged from the Social Democracy, without solid cadres, likewise led to a degeneration of these organizations. The Communist International became the principal instrument through which the Kremlin transmitted its orders to the Communist parties. These parties, whose political and theoretical development was thus derailed and whose selection of cadres and central bodies was accomplished in a bureaucratic manner, utilized the masses and the mass movements not to promote the world revolution but for the benefit of the bureaucracy's interests.

This utilization of Communist parties in the service of the Kremlin's diplomacy provoked a series of heavy defeats of the workers' movement which culminated in the triumph of Nazism in Germany and in the unleashing of World War II.

On the eve of the Second World War, the Communist parties in the principal capitalist countries were minorities inside the work-

ing class. Stalinism, that is to say, the tight hold of the Kremlin -- expressing the interests of the Soviet bureaucracy -- operated through a relatively simple system: a workers' state under a police dictatorship; weak workers' organizations directed by the Communist International, itself tightly controlled.

At the end of World War II and in the years that followed, events of cardinal importance have caused the following complex totality to gravitate within the present orbit of Stalinism:

a. The Soviet Union, after putting up an extraordinary resistance during the war thanks to the power of the productive relations established by the October Revolution, has continued its economic development which has, in fact, made it the second industrial power in the world.

b. The new workers' states in Eastern Europe which have been established essentially by bureaucratic action, without prior plan by the Kremlin.

c. China where the Chinese CP has come to power on the basis of a formidable peasant uprising.

d. A series of colonial movements under Stalinist or pro-Stalinist leadership.

e. The Communist parties in the capitalist world. Those in Western Europe experienced toward the end of World War II important growth as a consequence of the "Resistance Movement." During the following years the Communist parties have lost ground which they had gained in a whole number of countries. In important cases such as France and Italy, these parties have acquired an influence over the majority of the working class and, despite certain fluctuations, have preserved it to this day.

f. Added to this, up to June 1948, was Yugoslavia where the YCP, conquered power thanks to a heroic mass struggle which it directed.

The fundamental conditions under which the Soviet bureaucracy and its tight hold over the Communist parties developed, namely, the ebb of the revolution, the isolation of the Soviet Union and the backward condition of its economy -- these conditions have disappeared.

The equilibrium which assured this tight control prior to World War II -- and which in its own way reflected the relative world equilibrium during this same period -- has been disrupted.

Far from constituting a factor of consolidation, the "expansion" of Stalinism contained within it tendencies acting toward the disintegration of Stalinism. These have been manifested by: the split of the YCP; the numerous purges of the CP leaderships in the "Peoples Democracies;" the acceptance of a sort of co-direction with the Chinese CP in regard to the Asian Communist movements; the weakening of certain Communist parties, to the verge of their virtual liquidation; the end of the political immobility within the Soviet Union; the changes that have taken place in the Soviet Union and in the buffer zone since Stalin's death.

One of the most striking manifestations of this new situation is the inability of the Kremlin to reestablish, in place of the Communist International dissolved in 1943, an international center in any way viable.

Finally, despite the growth of the mass Communist parties and of the attraction of the Soviet Union as a power, there have been formed in the course of this post-war period mass currents evolving toward the left and outside of the Stalinist influence (Bevanism, Asian Socialist parties. . .)

Diverse factors have in the meantime acted to prolong the Kremlin's influence over the world workers' movement and in the non-capitalist countries: the threat of imperialist war; the power of the Soviet state exercised over materially much weaker partners, the fact that the masses, making use of organizations at their disposal in order to solve problems posed by revolutionary situations, have gravitated in the first place toward the existing leaderships. There is finally the fact that the conceptions and methods acquired during the period of the rise of Stalinism continue to operate because of inertia and tradition, all the more so because the bureaucratic structure of these parties and countries and their relations with the Soviet Union, have survived.

In no place where the Communist parties possess a mass base, except in Yugoslavia, have mass breaks with the Kremlin been produced; and similarly there has not been any mass breaks within these parties. The disintegration of Stalinism begins by assuming the form of penetration of ideas opposed to the interests of the Kremlin bureaucracy within these organizations; and of a process of modification in the hierarchical bureaucratic relations previously established. It is above all in this manner that the disintegration of Stalinism will proceed for a whole period; the Communist organizations with a mass basis will maintain themselves, but within these forms of organization there will develop tendencies toward a new content, both as regards the ideas which they express and as regards the existing organizational relations through which the tight hold of the Soviet bureaucracy finds its expression.

The development of each of these parties will more and more be a resultant of the change in weight between its own specific social forces and the Kremlin, as the weight of the latter, formerly decisive, will relatively decline.

In countries where the Communist parties constitute a small minority of the workers' movement, the revolutionary rise, by channelizing itself in other organizations, accentuates the isolation of these Communist parties and thus provokes profound crises in them.

The events which have taken place in the Soviet Union following Stalin's death do not constitute only the first stage of a process which must end in the socialist regeneration of the Soviet Union. These changes likewise constitute the relaxation of the brake, which has operated in the most conservative and even reactionary way upon the organizations which today still group together the largest number of revolutionary militants, even in the many countries where the Communist parties are extremely weak. As a result there has opened up a new stage not only in the Soviet Union but also in the

development of the Communist parties and of the non-capitalist countries, accelerating the disintegration of Stalinism in the sense indicated above.

The role of the Fourth International, which was created in order to assure the continuity of Marxist revolutionary program and organization is to intervene in this disintegration in order to rally around its banner the forces influenced to this day by Stalinism.

I.

The Rise and Decline of Stalinism in the Soviet Union

1. The revolutionary rise unleashed by the First World War shook only the weakest of the imperialist powers. It left intact the colonial empires and thus permitted the imperialisms, possessing colonies, to crush in the bud the upsurge of the revolutionary movement by granting important concessions to the masses (8-hour work day, universal suffrage, etc.). When this revolutionary rise occurred, the United States, having passed through a half-century of feverish economic growth, still did not experience a social crisis sufficiently deep-going to bring the mass of the American industrial proletariat, constantly renewed by waves of immigration, to trade union or political consciousness. The field of action of the revolutionary rise was thus limited to Central and Eastern Europe, essentially to Russia, Germany and Italy among the great countries of the world. The proletarian revolution triumphed in Russia. But Russia was a country economically and culturally backward, with a very small industrial proletariat, relatively low in skill and culture, crushed under the weight of scores of millions of illiterate peasants. Only the fusion of the Russian Revolution with the German and Italian revolutions could have provided the dictatorship of the proletariat with a material and social base broad enough to guarantee Soviet democracy. The defeats of the Italian revolution in 1922 and of the German revolution in 1923 marked the end of the revolutionary wave, leaving the revolution isolated in a backward country. This isolation imposed enormous material sacrifices upon the Russian proletariat, led to the progressive exhaustion of its combat potential and enthusiasm and to an increasing abandonment of political activity and interest. In this way the objective conditions were created for the political expropriation of the Russian proletariat by the Soviet bureaucracy.

2. However, the termination of the revolutionary wave of 1917-1923 did not signify a prolonged profound defeat of the world working-class movement. The sections of the world proletariat which remained relatively quiet during the revolutionary rise began to move in the following decades: Great Britain in 1925-26; China in 1925-27; Spain in 1931-38; France 1936-38; the United States 1934-37. In Germany itself, the 1929 world economic crisis created conditions favorable for a new revolutionary rise. If, in the end, despite these many opportunities the ebb of the revolution became more and more accentuated, it was not at all due to any automatism of the mass movement but, on the contrary, to the pernicious role played by the workers' leaderships. In numerous cases, it was above all the Stalinist leadership which provoked the defeat of these movements. While the appearance and rise of Stalinism were determined in the last analysis by the accentuation of the ebb of the world revo-

lution, this development was neither fatal nor inevitable. The efforts of the revolutionary forces in the Soviet Union and the world over (the Russian Left Opposition, the Bolshevik-Leninists of the International Communist League) to reverse the trend, to reinforce the weight of the proletariat in the Soviet Union thanks to the industrialization and to victories, even if partial ones, gained on the world scale, revealed themselves to be perfectly realistic with the unfoldment of the events. The junction of a Russian revolution with the world revolution remained possible during this entire period. If such a junction did not come about, it was above all owing to the role played by the leadership of the Soviet Union and of the Communist International. Stalinism is just as much the product as the cause of the revolutionary ebb of the entire epoch from 1923 to 1943.

3. The isolation in a backward country, the overwhelming specific weight of the peasantry, the numerical and cultural weakness of the proletariat, its lack of democratic traditions -- all these factors provoked in the Soviet Union the stifling of proletarian democracy, the growing passivity among the masses, the more and more exclusive wielding of political power by party and government functionaries. The existence of such a body of functionaries is unavoidable during the epoch of transition from capitalism to socialism. But normally they must decrease in number and importance to the extent that the productive forces develop, to the extent that the society and the economy issuing from the socialist revolution become consolidated; and the classes, the social inequality, and the social contradictions begin to wither away. Their withering away is in large measure identical with the withering away of the state; up to this withering away a rigid control exercised by the democratically organized working class in power over the functionaries must limit these abuses to the maximum. What happened in the Soviet Union was quite different. Under conditions of universal scarcities and poverty, the political power administering or distributing all of the country's wealth swiftly became the regulator of distribution, arrogating to itself the essential privileges of consumption. The bureaucratic elements began by constituting a distinct and conservative bureaucratic layer which defended in an alliance with the exploitive or petty-bourgeois elements (kulaks, Nepmen, etc.) material interests opposed to those of the proletariat; and, later, they constituted a bureaucratic caste conscious of having special social interests and determined to defend them against all other layers of society. The formation and consolidation of this bureaucratic caste found its principal expression in the political field, in the factional struggle which tore the Bolshevik party apart, the only arena of political struggle in the country. The Stalinist faction triumphed in this struggle because it received the support of the bureaucracy. This triumph culminated in the destruction of internal party democracy, the last bastion of proletarian democracy in the USSR; it ended in the overthrow of the entire social superstructure of the country (but left intact the property relations); and it ended in the establishment of the Bonapartist Stalinist dictatorship, resting essentially upon the interests of the Soviet bureaucracy and basically defending them.

4. The revolutionary rise found its clearest expression in the victory of the October Revolution. The ebb of the revolution found its essential expression in the victory of the Soviet bureaucracy in

the Soviet Union. But this retreat took place within the framework of world capitalism profoundly characterized by the decline of its system. This decline was already very advanced at the time, the imperialist antagonisms were very acute on the basis of this decline, the workers' movement was still too powerful on a world scale, the wretched remnants of former Russian possessing classes or the nuclei of a new bourgeoisie still too feeble inside the Soviet Union itself for the ebb of the proletariat to bring capitalism back to power there. The counter-revolution was, by and large, confined to the domain of the superstructure. The mode of production characterized by the nationalization of the means of production, foreign trade monopoly, and over-all planning of the economy, this foundation, produced by the October Revolution which detached the Soviet economy from the world system of capitalism and opposed it to the latter, was maintained, strengthened and consolidated in the course of the history of the Soviet Union. The struggle between capitalism and socialism, which according to Lenin's formula characterizes the transitional epoch, passed within the Soviet Union itself from the field of production -- where all capitalist forms were eliminated -- to the field of distribution. The Bonapartist dictatorship of the Soviet bureaucracy is therefore the product of a political counter-revolution; a political revolution is needed to overthrow it. But the Soviet state is the product of the social revolution of October whose economic and social conquests the bureaucracy continues to defend, even though it does so in its own special and often quite inadequate manner. This state cannot be overthrown except by a social counter-revolution, reestablishing, if only by stages, the rule of capital and of private ownership of the means of production. Our definition of the Soviet Union as a degenerated workers' state embraces two fundamental elements of modern Soviet social reality: the survival and growth of the social foundations deriving from the October Revolution, on the one side; the victory of a political counter-revolution on these very same foundations, on the other. Our policy of the unconditional defense of the Soviet Union corresponds to this contradictory Soviet reality. Our policy aims to assure the progress of the Soviet Union through the overthrow of the bureaucratic dictatorship and the establishment of socialist democracy; to prevent the defeat of the Soviet Union which would entail the overthrow of the social foundations of the USSR and the re-establishment of capitalism.

5. Within the framework of this same Soviet reality there appears the contradictory character, the dual nature of the Soviet bureaucracy:

a. On the one side, it is a parasitic caste whose privileges derive from the special social structure of the Soviet Union. This bureaucracy is therefore obliged, in order to survive, to defend in its own way this structure against the internal and international bourgeois and petty-bourgeois forces which are seeking to destroy it and to reestablish, whatever may be its form, capitalist economy.

b. On the other side, it is a parasitic caste whose privileges could not be extended and temporarily stabilized except through the political expropriation and the political passivity of the proletariat its lack of revolutionary perspectives. The bureaucracy is therefore obliged to maintain, against the proletariat, domestic and world conditions which would prevent a new upsurge and new revolutionary activity of the Soviet proletariat.

The contradictory nature of the bureaucracy reflects itself equally in the fact that to the extent that it defends the Soviet Union and its social base against imperialism and against restorationist forces of all kinds, this entails in the end, the rebirth of Soviet democracy inside the country; while, conversely, to the extent to which it succeeds in holding back temporarily the Soviet proletariat or the world proletarian rise, it undermines and disorganizes, in the end, the social base from which its own privileges derive.

6. This dual and contradictory nature of the Soviet bureaucracy reflects itself in the totality of its domestic and world politics since 1923. But the concrete manner in which this manifests itself fundamentally depends upon conditions beyond the control of the Soviet bureaucracy. And this is: the relation of forces between the classes on the world scale and inside the Soviet Union itself. From this point of view two major phases are delineated:

a. From 1923 to 1943: the retreat of the revolution and of the workers' movement on a world scale, along with the aggravation of the general crisis of the capitalist system and of the internal contradictions of imperialism, permitted the bureaucracy to consolidate its power by balancing itself between imperialism and the international revolutionary movement, between the different imperialist powers, between the classes inside the Soviet Union itself. The Bonapartist dictatorship is the product of these equilibriums. The end pursued by Soviet bureaucracy's policies is to maintain the status quo, to maintain the equilibrium. In this sense the global balance sheet of the Soviet bureaucracy's international policy is a reformist one, because the bureaucracy aims not to overthrow world capitalism but simply to maintain the Soviet Union within the framework of status quo.

b. Beginning with 1943: the new international revolutionary rise, along with the aggravation of the crisis of the capitalist system and the establishment of the crushing supremacy of American imperialism in the capitalist world, disrupted the equilibrium between the international proletariat and imperialism, as well as the equilibrium between the different imperialist powers. These factors forced these powers to accept, whether they wished to or not, a united world imperialist front against the revolution and the anti-capitalist forces and rendered more and more illusory every seesaw policy and the maintenance of status quo. The disruption of the basic equilibriums of Stalinist bonapartism undermines the very foundations of the bureaucratic dictatorship in the Soviet Union. At the same time, the upsurge of the productive forces in the Soviet Union, the numerical and cultural growth of the proletariat and the repercussions of the international revolutionary wave have likewise broken within the country the equilibrium of social forces (based on prostration) and are preparing the reappearance of the proletarian struggle for Soviet democracy.

7. During the phase from 1923 to 1943, the dual and contradictory nature of the Soviet bureaucracy manifested itself at home as well as abroad in a number of sharp turns:

a. 1924-1927: alliance of the bureaucracy with the kulak and Nep elements in the Soviet Union against the proletarian vanguard.

A course to the right internationally: alliances with Chiang Kai-shek, with the British trade union bureaucracy, with Balkan peasant parties, etc.

b. 1928-1934: Destruction of kulaks and Nepmen; forced collectivization of agriculture and headlong industrialization. At the same time, the destruction of the remaining political rights of the workers deriving from the October Revolution, the establishing of the omnipotence of the director of each enterprise, the accelerated growth of inequality within the working class. Ultra-leftist course internationally at a time when imperialism was weakened and paralyzed by economic crisis.

c. 1935-1939: A course to the right in the USSR, restoration of private peasant ownership of part of the cattle and of small strips of land; abolition of the old Soviet constitution; extermination of the entire generation of Old Bolsheviks; triumph of reaction in the sphere of morals, culture, etc. At the same time, a course to the right internationally: alliance with the imperialist democracies, acceptance of national defense in these countries and in their colonies; the policy of People's Fronts; the strangling of the Spanish and French revolutions.

d. 1939-1941: Preparation for war accompanied by the halt of mass purges in the Soviet Union, and the consolidation of the individual positions of the bureaucracy. On the international scale, the sudden shift of diplomatic alliances results in an ultra-left policy of the Stalinist CP's.

e. 1941-1943: A course to the right during the war. At home: "A great patriotic war," the enrichment of the peasants, massive private appropriation of collective farm land, dissolution of the Communist International, restoration of the church as an instrument of state policy, Pan-Slavic propaganda, etc. Abroad: close alliance with imperialism, policy of the National Front, struggle against liberation uprisings in the colonies, against the defense of the economic interests of the workers in the allied countries, etc.

8. The period from 1943 to 1947, during which the Soviet bureaucracy appeared to reach the peak of its power, discloses itself as a transitional period between the ebb and the new rise of the world revolution. It is, for the same reason, a transitional period between the phase of the rise and the phase of the decline of Stalinism. The world revolutionary rise was still not powerful enough to permit the bypassing and engulfing of Stalinism; this wave remained, in general, restricted within limits where the bureaucracy and its agencies were able to control it through more or less traditional methods (France, Italy, Indo-China, Malaya, and in part Indonesia and China). The sole exception was Yugoslavia. But this wave was sufficiently menacing to bring imperialism to seek a modus vivendi with the Soviet bureaucracy. The latter undertook to halt or try to force back the revolution in return for territorial and economic concessions. This was the meaning of the Teheran, Yalta and Potsdam pacts; of the dismemberment of Germany and the division of Europe into two spheres of influence; of the counter-revolutionary policy of the CP's of Western Europe and of the Far East colonial countries during this same period; of the maintenance of bourgeois remnants in Western Europe; of the joint efforts of U.S. General

Marshall and Stalin to set up a coalition government in China. Favoring this same tendency were: the domestic situation in the Soviet Union, the terrible devastations of the war, the extreme scarcities of consumer goods, the 1945-47 economic crisis of reconversion, the pillage of the buffer countries as a bureaucratic means for ameliorating this situation to some extent.

9. But the international revolutionary wave, above all the victory of the Chinese revolution, overcame this total attempt by the Soviet bureaucracy to maintain a policy of equilibrium. Engulfed by the revolution, stifling within a vital area far too narrow for its needs and menaced by terrible economic shocks, imperialism sought to pass to the offensive, at first, by restoring capitalist economy in Western Europe with the aim of loosening the Soviet Union's tight hold on the buffer zone (the Marshall Plan), and later by militarily opposing the colonial revolution (the wars in Indonesia, Malaya, Korea), and finally by preparing a final settlement of accounts with all the anti-capitalist forces (the Atlantic Pact, MSA, Balkan pact, Middle East pact, Pacific pact, remilitarization of Japan and Germany, etc.). Caught between the imperialist threat and the colonial revolution, the Soviet bureaucracy found itself obliged to ally itself with the second against the first. This implied a de facto recognition of the autonomy and the independence of the Chinese CP and of the People's Republic of China; and Sino-Soviet co-direction of the entire communist movement of Asia. Every general attempt to use the colonial revolution as small change in the transactions with imperialism had to be abandoned. This marked the opening of a new phase in the world situation in which the Soviet bureaucracy finds itself. This phase is characterized by the exacerbation of world class contradictions and by the evolution of the relation of class forces in a manner more and more favorable to the revolution. This new situation restricts more and more the capacity of counter-revolutionary maneuvers by the bureaucracy. Attempts to utilize the inter-imperialist contradictions continue to subsist; so do the attempts to gain the support of certain bourgeoisies in colonial and semi-colonial countries (India, Argentina, Indonesia) by muzzling on the sly the anti-capitalist struggle of masses in these countries, by attempts to mobilize all the classes in these countries, including the "national bourgeoisie" against imperialism; so do the attempts to arrive at a temporary and partial agreement with imperialism. But the practical effects of these attempts become more and more limited and ephemeral in proportion as, on the one side, the upsurge of the masses becomes more accentuated despite all the attempts to curb them, and, on the other, as the pressure and the march of Yankee imperialism toward war is stepped up.

10. A parallel evolution has been, in the meantime, produced inside the USSR itself.

The important successes of Soviet economy since the reconversion crisis of 1945-47 (a crisis corroborated by Malenkov's report to the 19th Congress) have profoundly altered the position of the country and its population. If, in regard to the principal products, per capita production still lags behind the most advanced countries, it has already surpassed the level of backward capitalist countries and approaches the level of those capitalist countries which remain stagnant, such as France and Italy. On the other hand, gross production has considerably surpassed the level of all capitalist countries

except the USA and, in a number of basic products, has even outstripped the total production in two or three of the most important capitalist countries, such as Britain, Germany, Japan. The Soviet Union has become the second industrial power in the world, possessing the second largest stock of machines and increasing its productivity at a more rapid rate than any other country except the USA. If Soviet agriculture has not been able to advance at an equal pace and lags considerably behind, its progress has nevertheless sufficed to eliminate famine or chronic undernourishment. For the population in the great industrial centers the supply of the manufactured consumer goods, although still very inadequate, has been regularized and surpasses anything previously seen in the USSR.

11. As a result of these economic advances, an important social transformation is taking place which finds its expression in a modification of the composition and dynamism of the principal social strata of the country.

a. The proletariat has greatly increased in number and skills, the number of industrial workers continuing to increase at the rate of many millions with each Five-Year Plan. It has become the largest section of Soviet society from the small minority it was in 1917 and in 1927. Illiteracy has disappeared from its midst. The tremendous requirements of mechanization felt by Soviet economy for the past seven years have entailed a considerable growth in the number and role of the skilled workers. The unskilled laborer no longer typifies the Soviet worker but tends to become the exception. Because of this the differentiation of income among the proletariat, although greater than ever, no longer tends to depress the great majority of the working class to the hunger level.

b. The peasantry has been shaken the most. Year by year the supplementary unskilled labor is drawn from its ranks. The number and social weight of this stratum tends constantly to diminish. Its upper layers are continually being drawn away and converted into the kolkhoz bureaucracy (directors, accountants, agronomists, heads of machine and tractor stations). The peasantry has not been able to restore the advantageous position it gained during the war and the immediate postwar period. The introduction of the system of labor brigades and the amalgamation of the collective farms have marked important steps along the line of a progressive industrialization of agriculture.

c. The bureaucracy has increased in number and in weight but at a less rapid rate than the proletariat. Two important modifications have taken place in the composition of the upper circles of the bureaucracy. First of all in respect to social origin, the number of former capitalists or bourgeois technicians and Nepmen on the one hand, the number of old revolutionary militants of the pre-1917 vintage (Thermidorians) has been still further reduced; the bulk of the bureaucracy is recruited from privileged individuals who have become adults since the revolution. Second, in their mentality: the tops of the bureaucracy are in their majority no longer a young and rapacious social layer, striving to conquer privileges in the field of consumption in the midst of prevailing poverty, the majority constitutes a layer of men of mature years or heading into old age, attempting to conserve the best possible living standards for themselves.

12. Although the rise and the consolidation of the Bonapartist dictatorship in the USSR came as the products of a political counter-revolution, the bureaucracy has placed its special seal upon Soviet society in all the fields of social life:

a. The economy: the entire economy of the epoch of transition is characterized by the contradiction between the non-capitalist mode of production and the survival of bourgeois norms of distribution. But the Soviet bureaucracy has aggravated this contradiction by the tremendous development of its privileges, and of social inequality. The bureaucratic centralization of planning, the abolition of all workers' control of production, the omnipotence, the despotism and the greed for privileges of the factory bureaucrats provoke new contradictions and new disruptions of equilibrium within the very field of production. These become more and more accentuated to the degree that the economy achieves important progress.

b. The state: The abolition of the remaining vestiges of Soviet democracy together with the disappearance of internal party democracy has resulted, in fact, in an autocratic regime, in which the bulk of the bureaucracy, including its upper circles, is itself excluded from the exercise of political rights. The Bonapartist dictatorship rests essentially upon the apparatus of repression, upon the terror of periodic purges and in addition imposes a system of plebiscitary "elections." Great Russian nationalism flourishes and the accusations of "bourgeois nationalism" are lodged against national minorities affirming their history and their own rights.

c. The army: The old Red Army which took the oath of loyalty to the Soviet constitution and to the Communist International has been replaced by a "patriotic" Soviet army narrowly controlled by the dictatorship, and within its framework have been introduced the selfsame manifestations of monstrous inequality, despotic rule and the omnipotence of the apparatus which prevail in society as a whole.

d. Ideology: Marxist theory has been transformed into a pragmatic ideology, tending to justify the practical requirements of the bureaucracy's current policy. The history of the party, the history of the International and of the various countries is systematically and periodically revised, rewritten, falsified. Scientific research and free theoretical discussions are suppressed in all the fields of social science and are beginning to be "oriented" even in the field of certain natural sciences. From this suppression stems the necessity for an infallible Pope who is omniscient and who formulates, at each turn, the suitable dogmas to maintain the interests of the bureaucracy at the moment.

e. Morals: The liberation of women and of the youth which the October Revolution realized in life during its years of ascendancy has been reversed. The equality of women has become the equality in expending the super-human physical effort exacted from the workers and not the right to freely dispose of their own lives. The divorce legislation has become ever stricter; the right of abortion has been annulled. The prohibition of the youth from participating in politics is consecrated in the statutes of the youth organization.

13. But the Soviet masses absorbed a great experience during the war (where at one and the same time the limits of the repressive capacity of the apparatus and the reality of the living standards of

the Western workers were revealed to them). The Soviet masses, above all the advanced working class youth, are beginning to take more and more cognizance of the contradictions which are encompassing the Soviet society and the Bonapartist dictatorship. They are becoming above all aware of the economic contradictions, all the more so because they have transferred all their dynamism and their creative effort into the economic field. The discussions which preceded the 19th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and those which have taken place during and after this congress, have revealed the following:

a. That to the mind of the vast majority of the Soviet people, the power acquired by Soviet economy more and more appears to come into greater contradiction with the still extremely low level of mass consumption. Above all, the housing crisis is felt by these masses as inexplicable and was universally criticized during the 19th Congress.

b. That to the minds of the advanced sections of the working class, the lower layers of the party and trade union functionaries, the Soviet bureaucracy more and more appears as a brake upon the growth of the productive forces.

Having attained for themselves a high level of privileges as consumers, the top circles of the bureaucracy no longer have a major interest in the maximum expansion of production. The greed for gain among the directors of industry, regarded as the principal motor force of accumulation has turned into a factor limiting and impeding this accumulation. Because of the primacy given to attaining the financial plan at the expense of the plan of production, a disorganizing force is being more and more introduced into the planning process to the degree that the realization of the plan targets continues to principally depend upon the interests of these sections of the bureaucracy. The bureaucratically centralized elaboration of the plan comes into collision with the growing complexity of the economy.

14. In the ideological domain the contradictions of the bureaucratic dictatorship have culminated in a serious theoretical crisis which found its reflection not only in the discussion over political economy, but also in the discussion around the "transition to communism," and a number of other ideological problems.

a. The ruling circles of the Kremlin have been forced to affirm in the same breath both the disappearance of classes in the USSR, and the survival, even the sharpening of the class struggle.

b. They have been forced to emphasize that to the degree that advance is made toward communism, social conflicts do not wither away but become accentuated.

c. They have been forced at one and the same time to insist upon the fact that the state, far from withering away, "will be reinforced" with the transition toward communism, and to recall that

the state will end up by withering away with "the triumph of socialism in the principal countries of the world."

d. They have been forced to confirm at one and the same time that the socialist society has as its "fundamental law" the satisfaction of the needs of the population, and that the economy of this society continues to be regulated by "the primacy of the production of the means of production over the production of the means of consumption."

e. They have been obliged at one and the same time to represent the tendency toward personal enrichment as the principal "vestige of bourgeois mentality" in Soviet society, and to preserve this same tendency as the principal lever of planning.

15. In this way the historically unstable character of the Bonapartist dictatorship in the Soviet Union clearly reveals itself. With the modification of the relation of forces between the classes on the international scale; with the concurrent modification of these relations of forces inside the Soviet Union itself, the objective foundations of the dictatorship are in process of rapidly disappearing. Traditionally, the historically transitional and passing character of the Bonapartist dictatorship in the Soviet Union was analyzed correctly in the sense that this dictatorship could lead either to a reinforcement of the restorationist tendencies within the peasantry and the bureaucracy, that, with the aid of imperialism, would restore capitalism in the Soviet Union by means of a civil war; or, thanks to the extension of the world revolution and the aid brought by the world proletariat to the Soviet proletariat and thanks to the "Reiss tendency" of the bureaucracy (a tendency which will rally to the side of the proletariat for the defense of the social bases of the USSR), would lead to the overthrow of the Bonapartist dictatorship and the reestablishment of Soviet democracy. But it is evident that the two variants of this alternative imply a special dynamism of the class struggle on the world scale. The first appears as the result of the retreat of the world revolution, the second as the product of the international victories of the revolution. The actual dynamic of the class struggle on the world scale indicates very clearly which is the more likely of these two variants. The entire domestic evolution of the Soviet Union also speaks in the same sense. There, before the upsurge of the productive forces, the small islands of petty commodity production which still exist and constantly revive no longer possess more than a very reduced specific weight in the totality of economic life. The aggravation of social contradictions; the mounting pressure of imperialism; the signs of proletarian awakening may provoke within very limited layers of the bureaucracy reflexes of capitulation and desertion to the bourgeois camp; but that will be nothing more than a by-product of the evolution and not its dominant characteristic. It therefore follows that in the USSR itself the relation of forces tends to become modified in favor of the working class, parallel with an analogous modification on a world scale. The coming decisive battle within the Soviet Union will not be waged between the restorationist forces aiming to restore private property and the forces defending the conquests of October. It will be, on the contrary, waged between the forces defending the privileges and administration of the bureaucracy and the revolutionary working-class forces fighting to restore Soviet democracy upon a higher level.

16. Stalin's death has aggravated all the above-described tendencies and has lent them a direct and dramatic manifestation. This is to be explained by the special role of Stalin played in the Soviet Union. Arbiter between the classes, arbiter between the classes and the bureaucracy, and between the different layers of the bureaucracy, Stalin represented in his person the link between the socialist foundation of the Soviet Union and its bureaucratic superstructure. He represented a major guarantee for the economic bureaucracy and the intelligentsia that they would continue to enjoy their privileges and at the same time a major guarantee for the lower levels of the bureaucracy (minor party and trade union functionaries, Stakhanovists, rising cadres of the youth) that socialized property in the means of production would remain intact. His sudden disappearance has deprived the regime of one of its main elements of stability, all the more since the equilibrium of social forces has previously been gradually shaken. To this must be added the element of uncertainty and anxiety in the Bonapartist heights of the dictatorship, accustomed to follow the line laid down by the "Chief." They are without personal prestige among the masses and incapable of predicting the effects of Stalin's death on the attitude of different sections of Soviet society. This uncertainty and even panic in the top circles has no doubt aggravated the tendencies which are challenging the absolutism of the dictatorship.

17. The bureaucracy is not a homogeneous social stratum. It consists of millions of individuals, with roots extended into the working class (Stakhanovists) and the peasantry (kolkhoz functionaries); it rises through numerous secondary functionaries of the government and the economy (petty administrators) toward the higher layers of technicians and engineers, celebrated artists and writers, the higher echelons of the army and the police, all the way up to the heights of the economy (directors of big factories and trusts), of the army (generals and marshals), of the government and of the party (members of the central committees of the parties of the Soviet Republic and of the USSR, ministers of the republics and the USSR, members of the central administrations of the government and of the party). The most conservative and at the same time the most privileged group is indubitably the section of directors of the factories and of the central administration of the economy to which can be added the chief engineers and principal technicians of the planning: the "economic" bureaucracy, so to speak. This layer has acquired a high level of privileges as consumers and felt itself threatened by the new purge wave announced before the 19th Congress and certain of its representatives had already been attacked and criticized in recent months.

18. Confronting the most privileged heights of the "economic" bureaucracy are the Bonapartist summits of the bureaucracy, who have wielded political power for more than two decades; who personify the Bonapartist dictatorship and represent the personal connection between the tops of the party and of the government. It is this section which been hardest hit by Stalin's death, who have been seized with panic before the sweep of the discontent arising from the entire population, who took the initiative for dramatic measures to "liberalize" the regime (amnesty, announced revisions of the penal code, liberation of the doctors, attack against police arbitrariness and against national and racial discriminations, purge of the GPU, the tendency to shove into the background the cult of the chief, the new tone introduced into the Soviet press, the modification of the five-year plan increasing the weight of production of the means of consumption).

These measures pursue following aims:

a. To establish the dictatorship on a broader basis: to associate broader sections of the bureaucracy more directly with the exercise of power by guaranteeing them against arbitrary purges.

b. To establish the dictatorship on a more popular basis, by taking measures favorably greeted by the entire population, by promising to restore easier conditions, less harsh ones, by tacitly disavowing the bloodiest phases of the terror of Stalin's epoch, by appearing to concede on the three principal points of this popular discontent: the low level of consumption, the police regime, and national oppression.

Historically the Malenkov era thus signalizes the beginning of the decline of the Bonapartist dictatorship. That regime can now maintain itself only by suppressing -- temporarily or definitively -- the most hideous aspects, that is to say the most characteristic ones of the regime. It is not excluded that before falling, the Bonapartist dictatorship will suddenly once again have recourse to the bloodiest terror. In any case, the bureaucracy, seeing its power and privileges threatened, will bring into use all the resources at its disposal to defend itself against the rising tide of the Soviet masses. But history has demonstrated that autocrats doomed to disappear can save themselves neither by "liberalizing" nor by tightening their regime, nor by alternating between these two methods.

19. Until now there has been no sign that the proletariat has been able to pass to organized action under the new conditions created by Stalin's death. That is not surprising. For a quarter of a century the Soviet proletariat has been politically atomized and its advanced cadres wiped out by police terror. If the advances of the international revolution since the end of World War II have reawakened the old hopes among the Soviet workers, the inflexibility of the dictatorship up to Stalin's death did not permit such sentiments to be voiced directly. At most the indirect expressions of their concerns, demands and aspirations could have been found in the lower layers of the petty functionaries, of the trade unions and of the youth. Moreover the "liberalization" of the regime announced by Malenkov cannot have immediate effects favoring political action by the working class. But from now on molecular forces come into play in the very midst of the Soviet proletariat. Tests of strength are being prepared in the factories and the trade unions, which will no doubt begin over technical questions whereby the working class will strengthen its consciousness and confidence in its own forces without directly colliding with the Bonapartist dictatorship. To cope with this threat, the new regime, having weakened the GPU, has to lean more on the army which probably helped liquidate Beria. At the same time within the party and especially within the Youth, a spirit of criticism is advancing, questioning the theoretical "heritage" of the Stalinist era, venturing into the domain of political elaboration, winning its first spurs in an ideological struggle against the most petrified representatives of the Stalinist era. Thus the era of the "liberalized" dictatorship announces itself as the era of the regroupment of the objective and subjective forces of the Soviet proletariat.

20. Under the panic of the moment, the first defensive reflex of the directing nucleus, the Bonapartist tops, has not been exclu-

sively the "liberalization" of the regime. Its first reflex has been as much a concern with its own reorganization and its own extreme centralization.

Momentarily the Bonapartist heights of the bureaucracy tried to regroup themselves without major conflict or division around the new chiefs, Malenkov-Beria-Molotov-Kruschev. But this phase of unity and regroupment could only be a fleeting one. The centrifugal forces appearing in the dictatorship, that the "liberal" regime had accentuated, are beginning to get the upper hand over the monolithism of the ruling group itself. Herein is the significance of Beria's fall, of the setting aside of the GPU apparatus by that of the State and the army. The "liberalism" was supposed to satisfy all layers of the population: the masses because they suffered the most from the police dictatorship; the tops of the bureaucracy because they feel themselves freed from the nightmare of a new wave of military purges; the lower layers of the bureaucracy, because they hope to be more closely associated with the wielding of power. But if the bureaucracy considered that these measures would help consolidate its basis to better defend its own privileges, the proletariat is trying to use them to challenge these privileges. After an initial phase of expectation, hope and joy, these two divergent tendencies have already begun to collide. The higher layers of the bureaucracy have been impelled to demand more and more legal guarantees to the degree that the popular pressure is deepening, and these demands and disturbances are finding their expression in the very midst of the directing nucleus through Beria's elimination and the important blow delivered to the GPU. At the same time the growing mass pressure, that the "liberalization" of the regime has already fostered, likewise found an expression, even though indirect and deformed, at the top of the regime. This process of differentiation in the midst of the party and of its upper circles has been influenced by the beginning of the revolutionary rise in the buffer zone. It will be still more deeply influenced by the evolution of the international situation. An accelerated outbreak of the war could delay this differentiation for an initial period. New victories of the world revolution, a sharpened differentiation within the Communist parties abroad, would accelerate it.

On the other hand, if the new leading group seeks to gain time on a world scale by making concessions in form and tone to imperialism, it can less than ever before make substantial concessions that may result in a genuine compromise with Wall Street (liquidation of the colonial revolution, opening up of the "People's Democracies" to American capital and goods, etc.). In these conditions the course toward armaments and toward the preparations for the imperialist war remain basically the same as set down in the report of the 12th Plenum of the IEC.

21. Events unfolding in the Soviet Union since Stalin's death considerably modify the world situation. They signalize the end of the relative stability of the Bonapartist dictatorship in the Soviet Union. Thus one of the principal forces of social conservatism in the world finds itself challenged. The development of the world revolution and the struggle for its conscious leadership by the Fourth International find themselves considerably facilitated. A series of conditions favorable for the promotion of our ideas and our organizations flows from this and it is necessary to take full advantage of them with the aid of an appropriate tactic.

The most urgent tasks are posed for our movement in the Soviet Union itself. The first cracks in the Bonapartist dictatorship

place on the order of the day the struggle for the socialist regeneration of the Soviet Union. The program of action put forward in this connection by the Transitional Program and which the Second World Congress reaffirmed and concretized now acquires burning actuality.*

*A fresh upsurge of the revolution in the USSR will undoubtedly begin under the banner of the struggle against social inequality and political oppression. Down with the privileges of the bureaucracy! Down with Stakhanovism! Down with the Soviet aristocracy and its ranks and orders! Greater equality of wages for all forms of labor!

The struggle for the freedom of the trade unions and the factory committees, for the right of assembly and freedom of the press, will unfold in the struggle for the regeneration and development of Soviet democracy.

The bureaucracy replaced the Soviets as class organs with the fiction of universal electoral rights -- in the style of Hitler-Goebbels. It is necessary to return to the Soviets not only their free democratic form but also their class content. As once the bourgeoisie and kulaks were not permitted to enter the Soviets, so now it is necessary to drive the bureaucracy and the new aristocracy out of the Soviets. In the Soviets there is room only for the representatives of the workers, rank-and-file collective farmers, peasants and Red Army men.

Democratization of the soviets is impossible without legalization of soviet parties. The workers and peasants themselves by their own free vote will indicate what parties they recognize as soviet parties.

A revision of planned economy from top to bottom in the interests of producers and consumers! Factory committees should be returned their right to control production. A democratically organized consumer's cooperative should control the quality and price of products.

Reorganization of the collective farms in accordance with the will and the interests of the workers engaged therein!

The reactionary international policy of the bureaucracy should be replaced by the policy of proletarian internationalism. The complete diplomatic correspondence of the Kremlin to be published. Down with secret diplomacy!

All political trials staged by the Thermidorian bureaucracy to be reviewed in the light of complete publicity and controversial openness and integrity. The organizers of the frame-ups must pay the proper penalty. (Extracts from the Transitional Program.)

But the significance of this regeneration has been modified. Today the Soviet Union, because of its industry and its working class, is the second basis of support for socialism in the world. The socialist regeneration of the Soviet Union, almost as much as the socialist revolution in the USA, will decide the world victory of socialism. The fact that the hesitations, doubts and retreats of the new ruling group in the dictatorship militate in favor of the struggle for this regeneration places our international movement in

new historical conditions which must be fully grasped. The conditions are being created for the reconstitution and the upsurge of the Bolshevik-Leninist party in the Soviet Union. It is not accidental that at the 19th Congress Malenkov, after 15 years of silence, referred to the activity of "deviationist, anti-Leninist" groups in the Communist Party of the Soviet Union! It is not accidental that the Malenkov amnesty expressly excludes political offenders! The International must look for and find the means to aid our Soviet brothers to benefit from conditions favorable for their regrouping; this will be a decisive stage in the world upsurge of our movement.

At the same time our sections ought to resolutely combat any tendency toward apology or justification for the present political regime in the Soviet Union, a tendency which will manifest itself in petty-bourgeois circles inclined to make their peace with the Malenkov power. Even though "liberalizing" itself, the dictatorship nonetheless remains a dictatorship. The proletariat remains politically expropriated in the Soviet Union. The new penal code, a genuine habeus corpus, will defend the bureaucratic privileges just as police arbitrariness has defended them up to now. The task of smashing the dictatorship and the privileges of the bureaucracy, the task of a new political revolution in the Soviet Union remains more burning than ever. The significance of the entire recent development is that the conditions which prepare and facilitate this revolution are ripening.

22. The coming war will coincide not with an ebb but a new leap forward of the world revolution. The war will therefore act only to fundamentally accentuate still more the process of the disintegration of the Bonapartist dictatorship in the Soviet Union, and the process of revival and revolutionary rise of the Soviet proletariat. The extension of the revolution to West European countries with their workers at a higher level of culture, higher technical skills and democratic traditions; the contact between the Soviet Army and populations accustomed to a relatively higher living standards than those of the Soviet toilers; the victories over imperialism; the difficulties of all types as well as the bureaucracy's general behavior in the course of the war - all these factors will operate in the same direction. They will heighten the confidence of the Soviet masses in their own strength, undermine still more the prestige of the apparatus and of the GPU; harden the will of the masses to acquire living conditions much closer, economically and politically, to the socialist ideal; weaken and disorganize the bureaucracy's capacity of resistance and of counter-action in the face of the masses; accentuate dissensions and the centrifugal tendencies within the ranks of the bureaucracy. Whether the open, external manifestations of the rise will become accentuated and break out even during the very first stage of the war, or whether these will begin by receding before the menace of imperialism only in order to reappear more powerfully than ever at a subsequent stage of the war, when this menace appears to have been overcome -- this will depend upon the rapidity with which the revolution extends itself; upon the capacity of the proletariat of the advanced countries to realize this revolution under their own leadership upon the maturity of the political conditions inside the USSR itself; upon the presence of a new revolutionary leadership. In any case, in the course of the final settlement of accounts with imperialism, the Soviet proletariat aided by the world proletariat will learn how to regulate the settlement of accounts with the Soviet bureaucracy and to overthrow its dictatorship.

During the entire span of time from 1943 to the end of the Third World War, a period which is nothing else but a chain of partial wars and temporary armed truces, will be confirmed the prediction of Leon Trotsky that the bureaucracy is incapable of withstanding the test of a decisive battle with imperialism and of the world revolution.

23. The Soviet bureaucracy is henceforth placed in new conditions which differ profoundly from the conditions of the epoch of the bureaucracy's rise and growth; and these new conditions are of those of the bureaucracy's decline and ultimate downfall. To understand this does not in any way mean to modify the traditional Trotskyist evaluation of the objective and subjective role played by this bureaucracy in the Soviet Union and the world over. The upsurge of the Soviet productive forces has resulted not from the activity of the bureaucracy but despite it. The bureaucracy began by impeding industrialization for a period of five years; and then it plunged the entire national economy into disorganization, causing a terrible crisis of agriculture and over-all food supply which required 20 years before it was surmounted. To this day the bureaucracy prevents a complete and rational utilization of the huge productive apparatus with which the dynamism of planning has endowed the country. Similarly, the upsurge of the world revolution did not in any respect come about thanks to the Soviet bureaucracy's leadership, but has taken place despite its interventions in the world labor movement. The bureaucracy began by causing the terrible historical defeats of the proletariat from 1923 to 1943. Subsequently it retarded and partially halted the revolutionary wave between 1943 and 1947. To this day it still prevents the complete and rational utilization of the colossal revolutionary potential of the masses on the five continents. It is more correct than ever to say today that the domination of imperialism subsists over half of the globe only thanks to the role played by the bureaucracy and its agencies. In the principal country where this domination has been abolished -- in China -- this was due to the fact that the Chinese CP was able to shake itself loose from the orders of the Kremlin. What is new in the situation is that we have reached the stage where, as forecast in the Transitional Program, "the laws of history" reveal themselves "stronger than the bureaucratic apparatus." The two factors determining the orientation of the masses: the death agony of capitalism which unlooses immense revolutionary forces on a world scale, and the policy of the reformist and Stalinist bureaucratic apparatuses which play the role of a brake upon the masses -- of these two factors it is the first that is coming more and more to the fore.

The revolutionary tide which the Soviet bureaucracy is no longer capable of smashing and arresting is even being nourished by the methods of self-defense applied by this bureaucracy and prepares the conditions for the overthrow of the bureaucracy by the Soviet proletariat.

II.

The Rise and Decline of Stalinism in Other Non-Capitalist Countries

24. Since the eruption of the revolutionary wave of 1943, new non-capitalist states have made their appearance in Europe and Asia. These states may be put in two categories:

a. States produced by the victory of the revolution in these countries as in the case of the People's Republic of Yugoslavia and the People's Republic of China.

b. States produced by the expansionism of the Soviet bureaucracy, the occupation of these countries and their structural assimilation with the Soviet Union by military-bureaucratic means, supported in certain instances by a limited mobilization of the masses: this is the case in the European buffer zone and in the case of the People's Republic of North Korea (where, incidentally, the mobilization of the masses was on a larger scale).

To these countries it is necessary to add: a) the democratic State of Vietnam, produced by a revolutionary wave in Vietnam similar to that in China but which still continues the anti-imperialist war and the civil war in order to gain control of the entire national territory. b) Albania, where there has also been a strong revolutionary movement of the masses.

The appearance of these states represents a fundamental modification of the world situation, extending the global area withdrawn from the domination of capitalism from one-sixth to one-third on the geographical plane, and from one-twelfth to one-third as regards the world population.

25. The victory of the revolution in Yugoslavia and in China, the first revolutionary victories since 1917, have dealt a mortal blow to the direct hold of the Soviet bureaucracy upon the Communist parties of these two countries and has inaugurated the world crisis of Stalinism. In this way has been confirmed the prediction of Leon Trotsky to the effect that "the disintegration of the Comintern (i.e., of the apparatus of subordinating the CP's to the Kremlin) which has no direct support except in the GPU, will precede the downfall of the Bonapartist clique and of the Thermidorian bureaucracy as a whole." The blow dealt to Stalinism by the victory of the revolution in Yugoslavia and in China, as well as by those revolutions which are being led by parties issuing from the Comintern, expresses itself in the fact that this victory resulted from their "breach of discipline" so far as the Kremlin is concerned. Threatened with being engulfed by the revolutionary wave of the masses and faced with no alternative other than being crushed politically and physically by reaction, the Yugoslav CP, and later the Chinese CP, went beyond the orders of the Kremlin and marched to the conquest of power. From this they gained a genuine material independence in relation to the Soviet bureaucracy, and this has created the objective base for a political and ideological differentiation between them and the Kremlin. The system of rigid subordination of the Communist parties to the political directives of the Kremlin and of the automatic and servile repetition of each successive Stalinist revisionism of Marxist-Leninist theory has thus been breached.

26. However, neither in the case of Yugoslavia nor that of China did the victorious CP's decide on their own initiative upon a public political break with the policy of Stalinism. The explanation for this is to be found in

a. The Stalinist origin and traditions of these leaderships and of the majority of their cadres, who sought, for the most part, to excuse within their narrow circles the "errors" of Moscow and to hide them from their own party members and from the masses.

b. The objective support which these parties received, after the revolutionary victory, through their alliance, diplomatically, politically, militarily and economically with the Soviet Union in the face of the imperialist menace confronting them and before the existing imperialist blockade. Even though this Kremlin support was considered by them as insufficient, it was worth more in their eyes than the abandonment of all support.

c. The opportunist character of these leaderships who saw no pole of attraction other than the Kremlin or imperialism, and who underestimate or ignore the upsurge of the world revolution and the international working-class movement.

27. In the case of Yugoslavia it was the Kremlin itself that took the initiative for the break with the YCP, conscious that this party represented a mortal danger for the bureaucracy by introducing into its system of parties a Communist Party with an independent base, capable of reacting independently not only in relations between the states (Yugoslav policy in relation to mixed companies, Balkan federation, relations with Italy, etc.) but also as regards the policy of other Communist Parties (the attitude of YCP toward the Greek partisan movement, toward the policy followed by the French and Italian CP's during the "liberation," etc.). The bureaucracy preferred to push Yugoslavia into the embraces of imperialism and in this way opened up a dangerous breach in its line of defenses in the Balkans rather than incur the risk of having the Yugoslav example disintegrate the entire buffer zone and the entire Cominform. Toward this end the bureaucracy utilized every resource in its power: the break of diplomatic relations; the rigid economic blockade disorganizing the Yugoslav economy; provocation of border incidents; attempts at organizing a terrorist movement inside Yugoslavia itself; a permanent campaign of intimidation via press, radio, etc. But it was above all able originally to indulge in such a counter-revolutionary attitude because the preparations for the imperialist war were still only in their preliminary stages, and then primarily because Yugoslavia is a small country which cannot basically alter the world relation of economic and military forces. It was otherwise in the case of the Chinese revolution. The Kremlin could not permit a break of a coalition which represented the keystone of its military defense system and which in effect destroyed the imperialist encirclement of the USSR. That is why in the case of the Chinese CP, despite its apprehensions analogous to those it nursed toward the Yugoslav CP, the Kremlin was obliged to accept a collaboration on a basis of equality and even on the basis of co-direction with the Chinese CP of the entire Asian Communist movement.

28. Both the Yugoslav state and the Chinese state, born of a victorious revolution resulting from the destruction of the political power of the bourgeoisie and of its state, have moved at a rapid tempo toward the complete economic expropriation of these same bourgeoisies. After the first hesitations and compromises, to the extent that this tendency has been manifested more and more, and to the extent that the structure of these states has accordingly been adjusted to its new non-capitalist social base and character, the working-class character of these states has clearly manifested itself. But, even though born of a victorious revolution, the Yugoslav state and the Chinese state bear the stigmata of a workers' leadership that is opportunist and bureaucratic. In the case of

Yugoslavia these features were notably revealed between 1945 and 1948 in a servile imitation of Soviet practices, methods and institutions, and in the suppression of all workers' democracy within the state and within the party. After an attempt at a genuine democratization of the regime in 1948-1950 the opportunist character of the YCP again found expression in the state structure as a result of the recent changes in the constitution and in the party statutes which, far from guaranteeing workers' democracy, represent on the contrary an attempt to eliminate the influence of advanced layers of the proletariat on the conduct of public affairs. This is the meaning of the dissolution of the YCP and of the utilization of the People's Front as the sole instrument of political power. In the case of China, the opportunist and bureaucratic character of the Chinese CP equally stamps its seal upon the constitution and upon the evolution of the state in the People's Republic of China. Its desire to collaborate with important fractions of the "national bourgeoisie" led it in the beginning to sabotage and impede a revolutionary mobilization of the proletariat in the cities conjointly with the revolutionary rise of the peasants in North China. The same desire then led the Chinese CP to take entire segments of the old Kuomintang state apparatus and incorporate them into the newly constructed state apparatus. And then, after the Chinese intervention in Korea, the offensive was opened up against the bourgeoisie and a certain mobilization of the masses of the poor took place (mobilization of the peasant masses in the South in order to achieve the agrarian reform; mobilization of the workers in the campaigns "Against Five Ways" and the campaign "Against Three Ways"*) the

*campaigns against pillage, corruption, bureaucratism, etc.

Chinese CP did everything possible to limit this mobilization and halt it before it gave birth to organs of self-administration of the working-class masses in the cities; and it even utilized this occasion in order to employ terror against the vanguard revolutionary elements. As in the case of Yugoslavia so in the case of China the new workers' states are not based upon organs of self-administration (soviets, committees), and where such organs formally exist, they are void of their revolutionary content because of the absence of political freedom and the freedom of expression for the various workers' tendencies. That is why what is involved in these two cases are bureaucratically deformed workers' states.

29. There is no contradiction whatever between the fact that, on the one hand, the Yugoslav CP and the Chinese CP have been able to lead a revolution victoriously and independently of the Kremlin and have in these instances ceased to be Stalinist parties in the proper meaning of this term; and that, on the other hand, these parties have followed and continue to follow an opportunist orientation which restricts, disorganizes and places in danger the heritage of the revolution -- an opportunist line essentially derived from the Stalinist past of the leaderships of these parties. The Marxist theory of revolutions by no means implies that no revolution could ever triumph, no matter what the circumstances, without a 100% Marxist leadership. The Yugoslav CP and the Chinese CP freed themselves from the tutelage of the Kremlin, but did so pragmatically, under the pressure of events, under the pressure of the revolutionary movement of the masses which threatened to engulf them. Therein resides their merit, but therein also resides their weakness. What

our epoch demands is not an opportunist leadership which permits itself to be dragged along in order to somehow accomplish the revolution despite itself and without a clear vision of the totality of tasks and means for the accomplishment of the revolution. Our epoch demands a conscious revolutionary leadership, conscious of its mission in its full scope, conscious of the enormous possibilities inherent in the colossal wave of international revolution, capable of coordinating international revolutionary forces and of leading them to victory as quickly as possible. In this sense it may be said that the more the revolution progresses and the closer it approaches the advanced industrial countries, the more the existence of such a leadership becomes necessary for victory. In the same sense, the experiences in Yugoslavia and China do not invalidate but on the contrary confirm the need for the Fourth International, not only on a world scale but also in these two countries themselves.

30. By the scope of the transformations which the Chinese revolution has brought about in China itself and throughout the world, the People's Republic of China occupies a special place among the new non-capitalist states which have appeared since the end of World War II. The Chinese revolution and the People's Republic of China are today the principal motor force of the colonial revolution, the essential element of the international revolutionary wave. This imposes upon the People's Republic of China a set of special relations with American imperialism; it is upon the People's Republic of China that the U.S. concentrates its principal fire at the present stage. This is precisely the meaning of the Korean war, of the first rank occupied henceforth by Asian affairs in the diplomacy, in the policy and military strategy of American imperialism. That is why it is a vital question for the People's Republic of China to assure itself of Soviet aid and alliance so long as the revolution has not triumphed in other advanced industrial countries. At the present stage and for the entire stage to come, it is not the Kremlin which "imposes" an alliance upon China, it is the People's Republic of China which demands guarantees that this alliance is maintained. The more the colonial revolution extends to other Asian countries, the stronger will grow the pressure exerted by the People's Republic of China in this sense upon the Kremlin. But the maintenance and the consolidation of the Sino-Soviet military alliance are by themselves independent of the Kremlin's degree of influence upon the Chinese CP, that is to say, of the extent of the decline of Stalinism in China. The latter is a function of the relation of forces between the Chinese CP and the Kremlin, fundamentally a function of the progress of the colonial revolution, of the economic reconstruction of China and of the progress achieved by the proletariat in the rest of the world, including the Soviet Union itself.

31. From this flow the actual stages which have been traversed up to now by the relations between the Chinese CP and the Kremlin:

a. From the victory of Mao up to the American offensive to the Yalu River -- the Chinese CP affirmed its de facto independence including its independence in the ideological domain. The stress was placed upon the equality between the two allies, upon Mao's role as the guide of the revolution in all the colonial countries.

b. From the American offensive to the Yalu up to the death of Stalin -- the Chinese CP affirmed the vital character of its alliance with the Kremlin, the decisive aid which it has obtained and which it must continue to obtain from the Soviet Union in military, economic, technical, cultural and other fields. The stress has been placed on the great example and lesson of the Soviet Union, on the role of Stalin as the guide of the world proletariat, including the Chinese proletariat.

c. Since Stalin's death Mao's prestige has risen considerably throughout the entire non-capitalist world and among all the Communist parties. Domestic economic difficulties impel China toward an armistice in Korea. Stress is once again being placed upon the equality between the two allies. The Soviet Union's economic aid has taken the first place in propaganda.

One inescapable part of this entire evolution is inherent in the objective world situation; the other part derives from the opportunist policy of the Chinese CP, the lack of revolutionary audacity on the part of its leadership and its lack of confidence in the dynamism of the revolutionary forces in Asia.

32. Mao's victory has signified only the beginning of the Third Chinese Revolution. The tasks of this revolution are only beginning to be solved. After the unification of the country, a unified national market for food products and for manufactured consumers goods has been created; the conquests of national independence have been by and large achieved; the agrarian reform has been extended and achieved over the entire territory of China. Age-old social relations have been overthrown in the Chinese countryside (relations between peasants and landlords and merchants-usurers, between men and women, between parents and children), and this represents an enormous progress whose effects will be manifest for decades to come. In this process the Chinese CP, after being pushed into action by the peasant masses which engulfed it in the North, found itself later obliged to mobilize the peasant masses in the South in order to achieve the agrarian reform. This led it to attack for the first time in a massive way the positions and property of the bourgeoisie. But the bourgeoisie preserves to this day 20% of heavy industry, 60% of light industry and the greater part of the retail trade; its complete expropriation will be a long and arduous task, above all in the sector of trade, which is nourished by scores of millions of small private peasant enterprises. But holding in its hands the chief keys of the economy, the major part of the heavy industry and of the transport system, the banks, foreign trade and wholesale trade, the People's Republic of China can and must begin the planned development of state industry even before the expropriation of the bourgeoisie has been achieved. To the extent that this process has begun and clearly indicates the future dynamic of the whole evolution, the working-class nature of the state is delineated. In the Soviet Union, too, the Left Opposition demanded the launching of large-scale industrialization without demanding the suppression of all the measures of the NEP. But so long as the situation remains as it is, the Chinese CP will be able to limit its appeal to the masses and their mobilization, as has been the case for the last two years. These appeals to the working masses, while they have not entailed an enormous upsurge of the workers' movement in the cities, have nevertheless obliged the government to modify its policy toward

the workers, to ameliorate the workers' position by a new regime of social security, of special forms of workers' participation in the administration of the enterprises, and improvements in living standards, thereby creating a more favorable climate for a new rise of the workers' movement. It is in connection with the outbreak of the war, with the aggravation of class contradictions, with the necessity of expropriating the bourgeoisie which will confront the Chinese CP, that such a rise will be genuinely produced in order to carry through the conquests of the Chinese revolution.

33. The tasks of the Fourth International in Yugoslavia and in China are determined by the specific nature of these states and of the Yugoslav and Chinese Communist parties. Since workers' states are involved, we are obviously for their defense against any attempts to overthrow them and to alter the social bases created by the Yugoslav and Chinese revolutions. Both the Chinese CP, and to a certain extent also the Yugoslav CP, are in reality bureaucratic centrist parties. They still find themselves under the pressure of the revolution in their countries, and so we do not call upon the workers of these countries to constitute new revolutionary parties or to prepare a political revolution in these countries. We are working toward the constitution of a left tendency within the YCP and within the Chinese CP, a tendency which will be able, in connection with the development of the world revolutionary rise, to assure and to lead a new stage forward in the revolution in these two countries. In China our forces shall orient themselves particularly toward raising the level of consciousness and of organization of the working class and shall use every opportunity offered by official government policy in order to prepare and accelerate the entry of the industrial proletariat into the revolution. In Yugoslavia, on the basis of unconditional defense of the conquests of the revolution against imperialism and against the Kremlin, including the conquests of the period from 1948 to 1950, our forces will attempt to constitute an opposition which will seek to replace the present leadership of the party; to break the military and diplomatic alliance of Yugoslavia with the imperialist bloc which is leading the revolution to ruin; to officially reconstitute the YCP; to establish a genuine socialist democracy with freedom of expression for all working-class political viewpoints; to reorient theoretically and politically toward revolutionary Marxism and toward the international revolutionary movement. Without a doubt, the evolution of the situation in the Soviet Union since Stalin's death, and the approach of the revolutionary upsurge within that country and within the buffer-zone countries, will greatly favor such an orientation.

34. Unlike the new state of China, that of Yugoslavia and of Vietnam, the non-capitalist states of the buffer zone in Eastern Europe were not the product of a revolutionary rise of the masses in these countries that swept beyond the policy and the organizational control of the Kremlin and obliged the Communist parties of these countries to go forward on the road of revolution, independently of Moscow's orders and contrary to them. They are, on the contrary, the product of Soviet expansion, of the tight hold which the Kremlin has succeeded in maintaining over the Communist parties and over the masses of these countries, owing either to the absence or to the very limited character of the revolutionary rise which took place there toward the end of World War II. The wartime weakening of the bourgeoisie of these countries permitted the Soviet bureaucracy to struc-

turally assimilate these countries without being obliged to mobilize the masses on a large scale, without being menaced by a mass movement sweeping over their heads. Wherever the bourgeoisie still remained too strong to be eliminated in this cold way, as in Finland and Austria, the attempts at structural assimilation miscarried and these countries returned to the capitalist orbit. From this basic difference between the origin of the non-capitalist states of the buffer zone and the origin of the People's Republic of China and of Yugoslavia flow important differences both as regards the reciprocal relations between these Communist parties and the Kremlin, and between these CP's and the masses.

35. The attitude taken and the aims pursued by the Soviet bureaucracy in the buffer countries have passed through three phases:

a. From 1944 to 1947: The basic aim was that of immediate economic pillage of the buffer zone. Toward this end the Soviet bureaucracy utilized the existing capitalist relations of production, introduced reparation treaties, the seizure of former German property, the creation of Soviet stock companies, of mixed companies, etc. Economic reforms remained limited to agrarian reform and to the nationalization of key industries. In general, coalition governments with the bourgeoisie and with the petty-bourgeois parties were maintained, governments in which the Communist parties meanwhile remained assured of the commanding levers (the army, the police, the courts, etc.).

b. From 1948 to 1950: Faced with the launching of the Marshall Plan and the imperialist attempt to economically disintegrate the buffer zone, the bureaucracy replied by eliminating the bourgeois parties from power, extending the nationalizations, projecting through the two-year and three-year reconstruction plans the basis for overall planning of the economy, and beginning to develop peasant cooperatives and transforming the structure of the state.

c. From 1951 on: The five and six-year plans developed the industries of the buffer zone, integrating and tying them more and more closely with the Soviet Union; collectivization of agriculture has been pursued at varying rates in each country. The arms program imposed considerable sacrifices upon the economy and upon the workers. The direct hold of the Soviet Union upon these countries, their "Russification" by the respective CP's became accentuated, indicating that social and economic contradictions tend to become reflected inside these parties. To consolidate its hold upon these CP's has become task No. 1 and the most difficult task for the Soviet bureaucracy in the buffer countries.

36. The evolution of the workers' movement and of the mass moods in the buffer zone differs from country to country. The essential criteria for judging this evolution are, on the one side, the extent to which the post-1948 industrialization has effectively overthrown the previously existing backward economic, cultural and technological conditions, and, on the other side, the extent to which the CP's in the respective countries have been able to gain or preserve the confidence of the important layers of the working class.

As regards Albania, Bulgaria, Rumania, Slovakia and, in part, Hungary, the industrialization has taken place at the relative higher

rate than in the Soviet Union itself, and has had in these countries effects analogous to those produced in the Soviet Union with regard to the social modification that has taken place there. The difficulties with restorationist layers among the peasantry, plus the elements of national oppression introduced into the life of these countries, along with the terror of the regime and the still low living level of the masses have acted to retard a new workers' rise in these countries. Despite this, the development in these countries will end by producing such a rise there as the product of these same causes. The Yugoslav CP could have played a leading role in unleashing this revolutionary rise; today its capitulationist course plays instead the role of a brake.

On the other hand, as regards East Germany, Poland, western Czechoslovakia and particularly Hungary, the industrialization -- while swiftly developing the productive forces -- has not basically modified the weight, the technical skills and the culture of the working class which had already attained a relatively high level there. In these countries, during the first stage, the workers' resistance against the relative or absolute decline of living standards, against the dictatorship and arbitrariness of the consolidating Stalinist bureaucracy, has not ceased to sharpen and is becoming an increasingly greater obstacle to realizing the Soviet bureaucracy's projects. In Hungary and partly in Poland this resistance has been limited because of the relative stability of the CP leadership. In Czechoslovakia and East Germany, where this resistance was combined with violent shocks within the leading apparatus, it is resulting in a very grave and prolonged crisis, marking the inception of the revolutionary rise (strikes and workers' demonstrations May to June, 1953). As in the Soviet Union there is maturing at an ever-increasing pace in these countries the struggle for the conquest of socialist democracy.

37. It is still too early to predict the precise organizational form which the revolutionary rise will assume in the buffer-zone countries. Two variants are possible:

a. The development of autonomous mass actions transmitting themselves to the native Communist parties and giving rise to leftist currents capable of giving leadership to the upsurge. This variant is most probable for those CP's that have old traditions and have preserved a large enough workers' base, Hungary, Bulgaria, partially Czechoslovakia and East Germany.

b. The development of independent mass movements finding their coordination outside the legally existing organizations through the appearance of new political currents or the revival of Social Democratic organizations. This variant is most probable for those countries where the CP has only a feeble tradition or a narrow mass base: Albania, Rumania, Poland, and in part East Germany and Czechoslovakia.

A combination of these two organizational forms can by no means be excluded. We ought to be prepared for these two possible organizational forms of the future upsurge so as always to enable us to work within the real movement of the masses when it will burst forth. It is naturally necessary to distinguish carefully genuine working-class resistance movements, no matter how confused they may be in the

initially appearing forms, as against the restorationist movements instigated by the remnants of former possessing classes and by imperialism and led by them, movements which it is necessary to combat. On the other hand, the more the outbreak of the revolutionary rise is retarded, the more will the young generation awaken to political life. This generation will have known no form of political organization other than the CP, and the latter will tend to become the natural arena in which the leadership of the new revolutionary rise will develop. That is why our forces must seek to realize their tasks, which are in general similar to those we have in the Soviet Union, through an entrust tactic toward the CP's, while remaining prepared to join quickly any other mass organization which may appear at the beginning of the upsurge. Our basic task within the buffer zone is to assure a Bolshevik leadership to this upsurge and to prevent its falling under the domination of reformist, semi-restorationist forces.

38. The general dynamic of the decline of Stalinism in the buffer-zone countries may be clearly outlined as follows:

a. In all these countries structural assimilation has not been able to be effected except through the taking over of political and economic power, in large measure, by the native Communist parties. These parties thereby acquired a relatively independent base even in cases where, because of lack of mass support, this power remains precarious and depends upon support of the Kremlin.

b. In all these countries the national CP leadership has sought to avoid the most disastrous aspects of Stalinist policy in the Soviet Union, above all, forced collectivization. They did so in the first instance against the Kremlin, and since the death of Stalin perhaps partially with the Kremlin's encouragement.

c. In all these countries, after a transitory period of retreat, passivity and confusion, the working class emerges stronger and more active than before to fight for socialist democracy.

d. In all these countries the objective factors (the war devastations, the low level of the productive forces, etc.) and the subjective factors (absence of workers' organization, the onerous past of a fascist or military dictatorship, lack of revolutionary perspectives, intensification of nationalistic sentiments, etc.) which checked the upsurge in 1944 and which favored the exercise of rigid control by the Kremlin, are beginning to disappear and are only partially compensated for by the elements of demoralization produced by the Stalinist dictatorship, its national oppression, the relative reduction of living standards in the entire last period, etc.

39. In all these countries the changes occurring in the Soviet Union since Stalin's death have had considerable repercussions. These have affected simultaneously the internal regime of these parties, their ties with the Kremlin, and their ties with the masses.

Special economic conditions -- the monetary reform in Czechoslovakia, the increase of norms in East Germany -- have caused the resistance of the masses to the bureaucratic dictatorship to culminate in an open revolt of the proletariat in these countries. This revolt has doubtless accentuated the "new course" proclaimed in most of the countries of the buffer zone. But even before this revolt this "new

course" had been decided upon, and moreover the particularly bureaucratic way in which it was applied in Germany speeded up the outbreak of the workers' revolt there.

This "new course," the most complete example of which has been represented by the reorientation of the Hungarian government, includes these noteworthy features:

a. An improvement in economic conditions for all layers of the people; relaxation in the development of heavy industry; relaxation in agrarian collectivization; improvement in supplying the people with industrial goods; softening of the repressive legislation on "violations of labor discipline," etc.

b. A softening of the atmosphere of extreme tension in the mass organizations; less rigid language, less "prefabricated" discussions, greater possibilities for the lower cadres to make their grievances understood, etc.

This new course, very likely ordered by the Kremlin, is designed as a means of strengthening the grip of the Stalinist parties in the buffer countries by making it more flexible, less rigid. But, through the social and political forces it will liberate, through the differentiation it favors in the CP's and the youth organizations, it will facilitate the rise of the proletariat toward the political revolution even more than in the USSR.

It goes without saying that the accentuation of the revolutionary rise and its extension into Western Europe and into the USSR, before or during the war, will play a decisive role in the emancipation of the proletariat of the buffer zone from the bureaucratic strait-jacket imprisoning it.

40. The program of political revolution on the order of the day in all the buffer countries include the following noteworthy points:

1. Democratization of the workers' parties and organizations.
2. Legalization of all workers' parties and organizations.
3. Election and democratic functioning of mass committees.
4. Independence of the trade unions in relation to the government.
5. Democratic elaboration of the economic plan by the masses, for the masses.
6. Abolition of repressive anti-labor legislation.
7. Freedom for working class prisoners.

III.

The Rise and Fall of Stalinism in the Communist Parties of the Capitalist World

41. The Communist parties took shape above all under the impetus of the October Revolution within the Social Democratic parties and, subordinately, within other formations of the pre-1914 workers' movement. The victory of the Soviet bureaucracy in the USSR enabled it to exploit the prestige of the October Revolution among the world proletarian vanguard. That is the primary cause for the rise of Stalinism in the CPs. The inherent weaknesses of these parties facilita-

ted such a process. The absence of a left-wing organized on a clear-cut program inside the Social Democracy of pre-1914 vintage resulted in the political and theoretical weakness of most of the CP leaderships in the early years of the Communist International. This led, on the one hand, to the crushing political preponderance of the Bolshevik Party inside the International and, on the other, to the lack of preparation of other party leaderships to seriously cope with the controversial issues beginning with 1923. Once the Bolshevik Party had been bureaucratized, Stalin's faction met with little serious organized opposition in transplanting bureaucratic centralism inside the Communist International. The process of Stalinization of the Communist parties was accentuated by the reflux of the workers' movement in the period from 1923 to 1943, the year when Stalin proceeded to dissolve the CI.

42. The CI and the Communist parties were converted into instruments of the Kremlin diplomacy for a bureaucratic defense of the Soviet Union. They abandoned the struggle for the world revolution and sought to exert pressure upon various national bourgeoisies for the sake of obtaining from them a diplomatic orientation conforming to the Kremlin's views. These transformations of the CP objectives provoked swings from adventurism to opportunism, and led certain Communist parties to take directly counter-revolutionary actions at certain periods (notably in Spain during the People's Front days).

The Stalinist policy resulted in numerous defeats of the working class, of which the Nazi victory in Germany came as the fruit of the policies of both the Germany Communist party and the German Socialist Party. Each of these defeats accentuated the ebb of the world revolution and reinforced the tight hold of the Soviet bureaucracy upon the USSR as well as upon the vanguard which remained attached to the Russian Revolution.

The bureaucratic regime within the CI and within the CPs entailed a theoretical decline. The CI became less and less a center for the elaboration of the international political orientation. The CP leaderships were selected and changed from above, depending upon their aptitude in following orders from the Kremlin through all the multiple turns and zigzags. The CPs functioned under the aegis of empiricism, monolithism and historical falsification. Thus came about a selection of leaderships in reverse which eliminated the most independent and the most politically capable elements. This regime, in fact, suppressed any possibility of collective political work by the national leaderships, transforming them instead into mere transmission belts for the Kremlin's orders.

43. Originally constituted in order to become the national sections of a world revolutionary party, the Communist parties, under the Stalinist leadership became instead degenerated workers' parties. Their bureaucratic leaderships depended upon the Kremlin, above all because they lived politically upon exploiting the prestige of the October Revolution and of the Soviet Union among the masses. Nevertheless, unlike the CP of the Soviet Union, the leadership of the Stalinist parties did not express the interests of a special social layer with enormous material resources at its disposal. Because of this fact the dual nature of these parties is not identical with the dual nature of the Soviet bureaucracy. By their rank and file, which in contradistinction to the Social democratic parties, was generally

constituted by the most exploited and the most militant layers of the working class, they were obliged to reflect, to a certain extent and however inadequately, the interests of the proletariat. By their leadership they were subjected to strict control of the Kremlin which sought to maintain the status quo of the revolution "in a single country," precisely at the expense of the revolution in other countries.

By their bondage to Soviet diplomacy, the Communist parties were brought at various periods to practice an opportunist policy very close in its effects to that of the Social Democracy. Even in those periods the Communist parties never went so far as to fuse with the Socialist parties because they were not the instruments of their own national bourgeoisie but rather the instruments of the Kremlin. All doubts on this score were dissipated by the decisive test which came with World War II: In their overwhelming majority the Communist parties (the leadership as well as the rank and file) remained faithful to the policy of the Kremlin bureaucracy, notably during the period of the Soviet-German Pact.

44. In the pre-war period the Communist parties of the capitalist countries experienced varied developments. Some, like the French CP, have seen their influence over the masses grow; others, like the British CP, never experienced a genuine upsurge. But during this period all of the numerous crises which erupted within the Communist parties were surmounted by Stalinism in a way which strengthened its hold upon these parties.

The main reason for it was that during this period of ebb of the revolution, every great mass struggle ended in defeat, and what became detached from the Communist parties was either a very small revolutionary vanguard on the program of Trotskyism, or currents renouncing revolutionary struggle while the Communist parties retained militant layers of workers who attached themselves to the Soviet Union in a global fashion without distinguishing between the state and its leadership.

Each turn was regarded by the militants as a mere tactical maneuver dictated by the need to save at all costs the first workers' state. In any case it should be noted that the role played by Stalinism in the Spanish Civil War, an openly counter-revolutionary role, while it did not turn the Communist militants, who fought in the International Brigades, against Stalinism, it did, nevertheless, for the first time, sow doubts among them, as was revealed much later -- after the break with Yugoslavia.

As a consequence, almost everywhere, the Stalinist parties remained face to face with the Social Democratic parties as organizations revolutionary in appearance, the strongest numerically, and it was toward them that the newly politicalized militant elements turned during each new workers' upsurge. This was the case even during World War II, in the course of which the Communist parties became strengthened thanks to their activity inside the Resistance Movements and thanks to the prestige of the Soviet victories.

But it was during this same war period that for the first time a Communist party, the CPY, ceased to act in accordance with the strict requirements of the Kremlin's policy. During the war, by

reason of the acuteness of the struggle against the armies of occupation and the tensions within Yugoslav society, the CPY was prevented from practicing class collaboration in the name of the National Front; the CPY was obliged to build a new army, mass organs of power, and to seize power at the head of the insurgent masses. For several years the Yugoslav leadership tried to adjust this situation in accordance with the Kremlin's demands but finally the conflict erupted in 1948, demonstrating the profound incompatibility between the Soviet bureaucracy, the product of the ebb of the revolution, and a powerful revolutionary movement.

It was likewise after the end of the war that the Chinese CP, confronted with a mighty uprising which posed before it the alternative of either putting itself at its head or of disappearing from the political scene, renounced rigid adherence to the Kremlin diplomacy, engaged in a mortal combat with Chiang Kai-shek and conquered power through a struggle of Chinese Red Armies resting upon a giant peasant uprising.

In the course of the war the Kremlin's relations with the Communist parties were loosened. The leadership of the CI was isolated from many parties. It was this moment that was chosen by Stalin to dissolve the CI. In this same period, under pressure of the incipient revolutionary upsurge (France, Greece, ...), differences within the CP leaderships having a mass base began to manifest themselves. Other leaderships went beyond the required limits of opportunism and were called to order by Moscow (the United States, Holland. . .). The unfolding post-war situation no longer permitted the Kremlin to reestablish the rigid control over the Communist parties which existed prior to the war. The formation of the Cominform was less intended to attain this than to take firmly in hand Yugoslavia and the buffer zone.

45. With the victory of the Chinese revolution over the Kuomintang regime, the period of the revolutionary upsurge, which began in 1943 with the downfall of fascism in Italy, entered a new stage, basically marked by a relation of international forces favorable to the revolution and evolving on a global scale more and more favorably for the revolution. The revolutionary wave spreads from country to country, from continent to continent. It has recently reached the Soviet Union itself and the buffer zone.

The Communist parties of the capitalist countries consequently find themselves placed in conditions absolutely different from those of the pre-war days.

In those countries where the Communist parties are in the minority in the working class, the revolutionary upsurge has generally manifested itself through an influx of the masses into the majority parties, isolating still further the Communist parties, and, at the same time, beginning to produce leftist currents, such as Bevanism, within these majority parties.

In countries where the working class has not yet formed its own mass parties, as is the case for the Latin-American countries, among others, the Communist parties as a rule represent the strongest tendency in the existing political movement of the class. Their Stalinist degeneration, especially their treachery during and immediately after

the war, has caused a permanent crisis in these parties, which is becoming accentuated with the rise of the mass movement in Latin America and their incapacity to project a revolutionary outcome for it. The crisis of these parties can lead the major part of the Communist cadres to come close to the Fourth International and even join its ranks. This on condition that the Trotskyist organizations fulfill their task of revolutionary leadership of the masses and adopt a flexible and dynamic attitude toward the communist militants by seeking a common basis in action which would facilitate their transition to Trotskyism.

As for the mass Communist parties, their relations with Moscow are being subjected to conditions drastically different from the past: The very power of the mass movement in their own countries, developing in the direction of revolutionary struggle, asserts itself increasingly. Relations with Moscow become loosened (during the war there were even prolonged disruptions in certain cases). Finally, it is in place to add, since the recent developments in the USSR, there has been an uncertainty on the part of the CP leaderships about the policy of the Kremlin and -- on the part of the rank and file -- there are the possibilities of a critical attitude toward the regime in the Soviet Union and in the "People's Democracies."

This international situation and its repercussions among the Communist parties of the capitalist countries thus open up two ways for the decline of Stalinism in the workers' movement under its control:

In countries where the CPs are a minority in the workers' movement, the tendencies around which the masses tend to polarize themselves (whether it be the revolutionary party as in Bolivia or centrist tendencies as in England or Japan) have increasing chances to definitively eliminate Stalinist influence over the workers' movement provided they acquire a correct revolutionary leadership and orientation. These tendencies serve in effect as the pole of attraction for all the healthy workers' forces, causing the Stalinist influence to dissipate, and subsequently promoting internal crises and even splits under the very pressure of isolation. But an erroneous policy or acts of treachery by the centrist leadership can at a later stage revive the chances of the CPs even in these particular countries.

In countries where the CPs are a majority in the working class, they can under the pressure of the masses be led to project a revolutionary orientation counter to the Kremlin's directives, without abandoning the political and theoretical baggage inherited from Stalinism. They will do this all the more so because the masses, which are still seeking, as they will continue to seek for a whole period to come, to make use of those parties to satisfy their aspirations, have acquired a more critical attitude toward their leaderships than in the past and are no longer prepared to follow any turn of these parties, regardless of what it may involve. Under these conditions, the disintegration of Stalinism within these parties ought not to be understood in the next immediate stage as an organizational disintegration of these parties or as a public break with the Kremlin but as a progressive internal transformation, accompanied by a political differentiation within their midst. It is even possible that such a process of Stalinist disintegration may be accompanied in some Communist mass

parties by a certain consolidation or an organizational strengthening, to the extent that, under the pressure of circumstances, they modify their policies to conform closer to the interests of the masses. This perspective, the understanding that what is involved is not an organizational disintegration of the mass Communist parties, but rather a disintegration, molecular in its nature for an entire period, of the Stalinist ideas inside these parties as well as of the bureaucratic relations which extend from the Kremlin down to the ranks of these parties -- such an understanding is essential for determining the forms of intervention by our movement in this process in order to make it evolve in a direction favorable to revolutionary Marxism.

46. The evolution of future relations between the Kremlin and the leaderships of the mass Communist parties -- and between these parties and the masses, depends on many factors:

In the first place on the scope and rate of the revolutionary upsurge the world over, and notably in the industrial countries of Western Europe.

On the resurgence of the proletarian masses in the USSR itself and the consequences of this upon the regime in Soviet society.

On how the war unfolds between imperialism and the anti-imperialist camp.

On the capacity to intervene evinced by a revolutionary leadership, and its ability to place itself at the head of the mass currents, notably those which appear either inside the mass Communist parties or inside the mass Socialist parties.

It is impossible to foresee exactly the action and interaction of these basic factors. In any case it is possible to indicate that the greater the scope of the revolutionary upsurge will be, the closer it impinges upon the advanced industrial countries and the more the political initiative slips out of the Kremlin's hands, all the more will the centrist tendencies become accentuated inside the mass Communist parties under the impact of this upsurge. In the same way, the more that the revolutionary upsurge will pass under a consistent revolutionary leadership, the greater will be the tendencies for direct repercussions in the Soviet Union itself, and the more able will this leadership be to deal mortal blows to Stalinism in its very heart, even before all the Communist parties have freed themselves from the Kremlin's control and influence.

This entire dynamic is neither unilateral nor uniform. It must be understood as a complex dialectical process with many contradictions and partial swings backward. It does not exclude but on the contrary implies: (a) the possibility for the mass Communist parties to carry through temporary turns to the right within given conditions, so long as the mass pressure has not reached its culminating point; (b) the possibility of expulsions or break-aways of numerically restricted groups of militants and cadres; (c) the possibility, during the war, of open counter-revolutionary actions by the Kremlin against the mass movements, especially those that will be once again isolated.

But it is important to understand the general significance of the evolution in which these variants will occupy a more or less important place, in which the mass revolutionary movements will more and more succeed in liberating themselves from the Kremlin's control, whatever may be their initial form or their initial leadership.

This process of disintegration of Stalinism by no means signifies that among the mass Communist parties there will take place a gradual transformation of these organizations into revolutionary Marxist parties. Crises and grand transformations will be necessary and inevitable for revolutionary Marxist parties under the banner of the Fourth International to emerge from this. But these transformations which will mark the complete end of Stalinism will come as the culminating points of a process which at present begins by stages in the course of which the Communist parties, compelled to seek to strengthen their ties with the masses, begin to shake off in often imperceptible ways the rigid ties of Stalinist obedience.

IV.

The Role and Future of the Fourth International

45. The Fourth International issued from the Bolshevik-Leninist faction of the Third International. At its birth is to be found the defense against Stalinist revisionism of Lenin's program, of Leninist strategy and tactics, of the principal lessons of October and of the revolutionary defeats in Europe and Asia. The Fourth International, along with the Soviet Left Opposition and the International Left Opposition which preceded it, was born in a large measure in the struggle against the theory of "Socialism in one country;" against the theory of the "bloc of the four classes," [in the Chinese Revolution of 1925-27]; against the conceptions of building socialism at a "tortoise pace" or "in giant leaps;" against the opportunist tactics of unprincipled alliances with the reformist bureaucracy, with the peasant parties, with the national bourgeoisie in the colonies; against the ultra-left tactic of "social-fascism." This principled origin of the Trotskyist movement represents its great power. For the first time in the history of the workers' movement, an international organization was constituted exclusively on the basis of agreement of the cadres with a program, strategy and tactics which were precisely set down. But at the same time in this power resides a certain danger of a great weakness by reason of being cut off from the workers' movement. It is that of the transformation of the Trotskyist organization into a discussion club and into an academic sect of Marxist critics of Stalinist politics. The founders of the Fourth International, in the first instance Leon Trotsky, were conscious to such a degree of this danger that early in 1933 they concentrated all their efforts upon rooting the Trotskyist nuclei in the mass movement, to reestablish ties with this movement wherever these ties had been broken, to select a new generation of Trotskyist workers' cadres. In some countries, such as the United States, this task had already made great progress prior to World War II. In Europe, in Asia, in the greater part of the Latin American countries, the blows dealt to our movement by Stalinist terror and by imperialist and fascist persecutions, by the lack of continuity of our leadership and our principal cadres, but above all by the effects of the world ebb of the workers' movement, prevented the solution of this task prior to and during the Second

World War. It is only in the course of the new revolutionary upsurge, beginning with 1943, that the international movement became fully conscious of this new stage into which the Trotskyist organizations are obliged to enter, the stage of the practical application of the Transitional Program. It is beginning with the Third World Congress and with the Tenth Plenum of the IEC that the majority of the Trotskyist organizations acquired a concrete conception of the manner in which they must root themselves within the mass movement and conquer leadership there.

48. The origin of the Fourth International in a factional struggle inside the Third International against the Stalinist faction of the international Communist movement has resulted in deviations of the Trotskyist movement which considered the struggle against the deviations and crimes of Stalinism as their main function. In reality the role of the Fourth International was and remains quite different. It was not by accident that at the very inception of the Trotskyist movement is to be found the struggle for the theory of the Permanent Revolution which is the most conscious expression of the social dynamic of our epoch. The Fourth International opposes all other workers' leaderships which represent nothing else than special, selfish, bureaucratic and narrow national interests, whether they are reformist, centrist, Stalinist or of any other variety. The Fourth International opposes any attempt to limit the action of the workers to the defense of positions already conquered, whether these be bourgeois democracy, the Soviet State or the Yugoslav State. It represents the interests of the international proletariat as a whole and its historic goals, the world realization of the socialist revolution, the world construction of the Communist society. It is because the socialist revolution is distinguished from every other revolution by the high degree of consciousness demanded from the vanguard of the class which realizes it, that this goal cannot be definitively achieved without the building of a workers' leadership that has assimilated the program of the Fourth International. The Fourth International does not conceive of the conquest of the workers' vanguard and of the masses to its program and to its organization by opposing itself to the actual movement of the masses, but by integrating itself with this mass movement, by fusing itself with it and by promoting through its political and practical intervention the progress of this mass movement and of the selection of new leading cadres from its ranks.

49. The particular conditions in which the Fourth International has been born -- in contrast to the First, the Second and the Third Internationals, it was born not in the period of rise but that of ebb of the working-class movement -- determined in the last analysis the slow rate of growth of its organizations and their great weakness at the beginning of the upsurge in 1943. From this fact as well as from the still limited character of this upsurge, above all in the countries of Western Europe, has flowed the impossibility for the Fourth International to become a leading force of this upsurge in most of the countries of the world. This in its turn has facilitated the maneuvers of the Soviet bureaucracy for controlling, checking and arresting this upsurge. But is precisely during this same stage that in many important countries more solid Trotskyist leaderships

and cadres have been selected. For this reason the Fourth International enters the next stage of the upsurge and notably it will enter the Third World War with a solidity far superior to that of 1939 and with far more serious and tangible chances of strengthening itself and of rallying around its program a genuine revolutionary mass leadership in many countries.

50. The rise of Stalinism was inaugurated by a ferocious struggle against the Left Opposition in the Soviet Union and against the International Left Opposition because these incarnated, as against the conservative interests of the Soviet bureaucracy, the genuine interests of the international and the Soviet proletariat. Despite the attempts of the state apparatus, the most powerful in the world, to crush them, the handful of conscious revolutionists who constituted at this epoch the Trotskyist movement not only succeeded in surviving but also in transmitting intact to the younger generations in most of the countries of the world the entire Leninist programmatic heritage as against the falsifications of the Kremlin. The decline of Stalinism opens up, in varying degrees, favorable conditions for an upsurge of the Trotskyist movement in the entire world. In all those countries where the decline of Stalinism is the direct product of the power of the revolutionary upsurges, Trotskyism, Trotskyist ideas and the Trotskyist program will experience a striking confirmation, and it depends, at bottom, upon the tactical organizational flexibility of our organizations whether they profit to the full from this confirmation. In the USSR itself and in the buffer-zone countries, the existing stage, preliminary to the revolutionary upsurge and characterized by a process of differentiation, of uncertainty, of sharp turns, and even panic among the Stalinist leaders, is very favorable for the revival of our ideas and our current among the working-class movement. Upon the capacity of the International to utilize the slightest fissures in the apparatus for the introduction of our ideas will depend whether this revival will take place in a conscious and organized form or whether it will begin by assuming more confused and more complicated forms. As for the countries which will be drawn into the revolutionary upsurge at the next stage, immediately on the eve or in the course of the war, the International has been specially armed to utilize to the maximum the opportunities offered for increasing the influence of our organizations and assuring their growth. The disorder and confusion, which reign in the leading Stalinist circles arising from political problems they are unable to solve as well as from the latest events in the Soviet Union, will aid us greatly in this task.

The significance of our intervention in the world crisis which is shaking Stalinism can be specified as follows: regain the maximum of the cadres and honest revolutionary militants working for the communist cause in the ranks of the CP that the crisis of Stalinism is cracking and will crack more and more; to assure the new revolutionary leadership of the proletariat; to assure the proletarian victory with the least possible expense in regard to the defense of the already existing conquests of the revolution as well as the duration and convulsions of the revolutionary epoch. If we learn how to combine intransigent principled firmness with maximum tactical flexibility with regard to the integration of our forces in the real mass movement, we shall make the decline and downfall of Stalinism coincide with the triumph of the Fourth International.

August 1953

OUR INTEGRATION IN THE REAL MASS MOVEMENT,
OUR EXPERIENCE AND PERSPECTIVES

The Building of Genuine Mass Marxist Revolutionary Parties
to Assure the Victory of the World Socialist Revolution

The tactic defined by the Third World Congress and later by the Tenth Plenum of the IEC is based in the first instance on the appreciation of the profoundly revolutionary character of the period and the evolution of the relationship of international forces fundamentally favorable to the revolution. This is the case despite the orientation and the concrete march of imperialism toward war.

This orientation and march to war can no longer occur on the basis of the relationship of forces favorable to imperialism because of a series of defeats inflicted on the proletariat and the colonial masses (as was the case before the Second World War).

For this reason the Third World Congress deemed that even the outbreak of war could not now signify a decisive and lasting setback to the class struggle, an act of even temporary strengthening of imperialism, but quite the contrary it would signify its impotence to cope with the rising forces of the world socialist revolution in any other way. The war would carry the class struggle to its paroxysm.

If, despite these conditions and perspectives unfavorable for imperialism, it continues nevertheless its orientation and its march toward war, this is due to its organic inability to deal with its difficulties in any other way; it is due to the historic impasse of imperialism. It is also due to the fact that its essential power resides in American imperialism which, unlike all other imperialist powers, still retains exceptional economic and social vigor (although it is being undermined by more explosive contradictions than ever within a relatively brief period). This strength is quite exceptional from the relative as well as the absolute point of view (in relation to the entire past of capitalism).

Under these conditions of a fundamentally revolutionary period, with the relationship of forces evolving fundamentally in a favorable way for the revolution, despite the orientation and the concrete march of imperialism toward war, the Third World Congress and afterward the Tenth Plenum of the IEC outlined a tactic of penetration and as total and deep-going an action as possible inside the real mass movement of each country.

In defining this tactic we have taken account of supplementary considerations which flow at one and the same time from the character of the period, the relationship of forces, the orientation and the march of imperialism toward war and from the effects of this situation on the international working-class movement and upon our subjective forces.

While our strategy, as the only revolutionary Marxist tendency, is the conquest of power by the proletariat and the triumph of the

socialist revolution on a world scale, our tactic must take into account the concrete objective and subjective conditions so as to create the most timely and the most effective possible regroupment of conscious revolutionary forces larger than our own, and to form in the fusion with them big Marxist revolutionary parties.

In the final analysis our tactic is aimed at the creation of such revolutionary parties which are indispensable for the rapid and complete victory of the world socialist revolution.

But we envisage their creation concretely as part of the process of the movement of the class itself in each country, in the course of its maturing politically through its concrete experience, which will be assisted on the one side by the favorable objective conditions of the period, and on the other side by our own participation in the real class movement, with the aid of our program, ideas and our activity.

We neither can nor do we wish to leap over the stages, which are fixed for each working class partly by the specific characteristics of capitalism of the country (its concrete economic, social and political physiognomy) and the political and organizational traditions of the proletariat, as well as by the character of the period.

We neither can nor do we desire to conquer the political confidence of the class and of its vanguard by in any way remaining outside its mass formations which, regardless of their level of development, express its actual political movement, or by the exclusive means of counterposing to them from the outside our program and our activity (as mere models).

We wish to do more, we want to fuse in action with the class movement at its present level. We repeat: In action and not in program.

On the contrary, in the sphere of program, ideas, political line, this work of the Trotskyists among the masses, among their movements and their many formations, should be more clearly defined and strictly demarcated than ever, should be free of all confusion, of any alteration arising from reformist, centrist or Stalinist pressures.

The present mass work of the Trotskyists (the only work which genuinely deserves this name) would have no meaning if the Trotskyists who are now organized on a world scale in a single international party, the Fourth International, and in separate organizations as national sections of the Fourth International in each country, did not preserve to the highest degree their theoretical and political principles, did not constantly develop their Marxist revolutionary line and did not find the means, regardless of the mass work they are carrying on, to express and to openly defend through their organs and appropriate publications, the complete program and line of revolutionary Marxism, of Trotskyism, of the Fourth International.

The principal difficulty in the past of the workers' movement, including that of the Leninist beginnings of the Third International, consisted in rooting out the doctrinaire sectarianism among truly revolutionary Marxist tendencies which opposed or in any way resisted

complete and unreserved participation in the real mass movement.

But in general, the principal difficulty in the history of the workers' movement on the plane of tactics has proved to be that of finding a healthy balance between the necessary and absolutely justified rigor in program and the genuinely Marxist revolutionary line of the vanguard on the one side, and its activity among the masses which should be free of all sectarianism as well as all recourse to bureaucratic command on the other.

The most difficult but also the most necessary rule to carry out for the existence, the development and the final triumph of the revolutionary Marxist tendency is that of acting completely within the class, completely with the class, by constantly and at every stage of this close connection giving expression as the vanguard to the general, historic and conscious interests of the class as a whole.

It is no exaggeration to declare that with the tactic we have worked out at the Third World Congress and which we are now applying that our movement is in the process of applying this rule with a comprehension never before equaled in the history of the entire working-class movement.

We take the class as it is in each country, with its peculiarities, we study its natural movements, we discern in them the progressive features, and we adopt our tactic accordingly.

The form matters little to us; the class content often deformed, concealed, latent or even potential, is, however, of decisive importance. But to discover this requires a high level of political maturity of which our movement has generally given proof.

Thus we are, for example, the only ones who have been able to correctly analyze the character of the numerous movements of the exploited masses in the colonial and semi-colonial countries through which their political maturity necessarily develops; and far from ignoring or condemning them, we have accorded them all the importance they deserve, and, if such should be the case, integrating our forces within them and following from within the development of the masses to a higher level (this is the case whether we are dealing with the progressive content of Peronism insofar as it is an anti-imperialist and anti-capitalist movement of the masses, of the Bolivian MNR, of Ibanism in Chile, or of the Vietminh Resistance Movement, etc.).

We also are the only ones who have understood and deliberately chosen as our principal sphere of work in the class, the movement and the formations influenced either by a reformist leadership, or by a Stalinist leadership, in those countries where the principal movement of the class is now under such influence.

As regards these above-mentioned types of work, our corresponding tactic toward them was determined not only by the mass character of these movements and formations, but above all by the consideration that these movements and formations under reformist or Stalinist influence would not be able to escape from this influence in the present conjuncture, in the absence of any perspective for a general

and lasting compromise, and as long as the "cold war" would continue and the perspective of an early war would remain valid.

The chronic crisis of these movements and formations, which has its roots in the fundamental contradiction between the radical, even revolutionary aspirations of the masses, and the opportunist, treacherous policy of their leadership, far from being overcome, will tend to become more acute. But it will remain an internal crisis since it is held in by the perspective of a general and decisive and relatively early showdown which in the opinion of the masses it is necessary to face united in the ranks of the big traditional organizations.

Moreover, we said, that the reformist or Stalinist leaderships of the important mass movements and formations would be obliged to avoid moving clearly or fundamentally against the prevailing current, to relatively radicalize their policy (in relation to their previous course) in this objective atmosphere. This factor will contribute to preventing the crisis from taking a centrifugal organizational form that would lead to important splits and give rise to important regroupments outside these movements and formations.

All of this has been amply confirmed by the development of all mass organizations, reformist as well as Stalinist. We cite among the most striking examples in this connection, those of the Labor Party and Bevanism, and that of the French Communist Party, in the light of the crisis that was caused by the Marty-Tillon affair which occurred without any organizational breaks and with the CP regaining its broad influence. Are there any reasons to believe that the recent evolution of the international situation will in any considerable way alter these considerations and these perspectives? None whatever.

The inter-imperialist differences, stirred up by the difficulties which imperialism as a whole is meeting in preparing its counter-revolutionary war, by the fears it feels, as well as by the diplomatic maneuvers of the anti-capitalist states ("Peace" offensives) can hinder, complicate, impede the war plans and affect the time-intervals and the means of unleashing the war, but cannot result in a genuine easing of the situation, in a relatively prolonged "co-existence," in a general and lasting compromise.

The objective basis for that is lacking. For the anti-capitalist states, which are still influenced by the Soviet bureaucracy, the basis of such a compromise consists in "co-existence" on the foundation of the present division of the world. For imperialism -- and particularly for the decisive imperialism of the United States -- it consists, as a beginning, in the reintroduction of the capitalist system in the colonial revolution as well as in the European "People's Democracies." Thus the climate of the "cold war" will be transformed either into a hot war pure and simple which will become general, or into the isolation and, in the final analysis, the certain defeat of American imperialism by the revolution at home without its recourse to a major international war.

Of these two foreseeable variants resulting from the "cold war" in the next few years, the one that is by far the most probable in practice, and upon which it is still necessary to count, is the unleashing of the counter-revolutionary imperialist war. As of now,

this variant becomes possible since imperialism, being seriously re-armed, runs the risk of getting caught in a complete economic and social crisis as well as of finding itself faced with a definitively unfavorable relationship of international forces should it hesitate in the next few years to plunge into war.

For this reason, our tactic especially toward mass movements and organizations under reformist or Stalinist influence still remains perfectly valid and necessary.

Following the broad outline of what has been written since the Third World Congress on our tactics, we present in broad form these guiding ideas so as to help in their thorough assimilation by the whole of our movement:

1. The tactic of the International for penetrating the real mass movements is developing in three directions --

- a. Independent.
- b. Entry into the movements and formations under reformist influence.
- c. Entry of a special type into the movements and formations under Stalinist influence.

2. In each case it is only essentially such (independent, entrism or entrism of a special type), that is to say, it is the main orientation directed toward the main sphere of work according to the peculiarities of the workers' movement in each country.

The choice of a principal sphere forms an essential part of the conception of our tactics because we are concerned not with putting all possible spheres of work on the same plane and of carrying out our work eclectically, but of deliberately choosing a main sphere and of concentrating our maximum forces in it.

Having said that, it is not excluded that minor forces be placed in secondary spheres of work or even in spheres which at a given moment may lead occasionally to rapid and relatively important gains for us (in relation to our present forces).

3. The tactic consists not only in selecting or being able to choose an essential sphere of work but of elaborating a line of conduct there conforming to the peculiarities of this milieu and corresponding to the numerical and political level of our forces. The tactic should aim at linking us with the masses of this milieu; attempting first of all to establish ourselves as the best militants of this milieu; making ourselves then known as the extreme left-wing elements who are trying to acquire a distinct political physiognomy, little by little, in accord with favorable opportunities and possibilities; and thus in the long run making ourselves known as the left tendency par excellence of these circles. If it would be an error to jump prematurely, to act impatiently, in a rigid doctrinaire manner and without tactical finesse, it would be no less dangerous in the long run to become imprisoned in an attitude that fails to distinguish us from the political features of the average political physiognomy of these circles or even of their extreme left-centrist tendencies.

4. Our tactic nowhere aims at transforming the traditional reformist or Stalinist movements and formations as a whole, or as such, into revolutionary Marxist parties.

We continue to consider this eventuality as extremely improbable and we have to guard against sowing any illusions on this subject, even indirectly.

We consider all these movements and formations as a sphere of work, as channels through which the majority political movement of the class is now passing, as places that we utilize to make contacts with the class in the present stage of its organization and political consciousness, and nothing more.

We work there in order to activate the politicalization of the class, in order to link ourselves to its most advanced elements, in order to break loose the revolutionary forces (which in any case could only emerge from these circles) which (in accord with still unforeseen tempos and forms) will build the genuine revolutionary Marxist parties of tomorrow.

5. In all those cases where we are active mainly within reformist or Stalinist movements and formations, it is imperative, if not at the beginning at least after a first stage of integration, to envisage and to realize the publication of a genuinely revolutionary, Marxist, Trotskyist periodical which openly defends the full line and program of the Fourth International. Such a periodical should not be confused with periodicals which are not completely Trotskyist which we already publish or which we are attempting to publish particularly within reformist or Stalinist movements and formations. We refer here to the issuance of completely or essentially independent periodicals that we will try to publish and keep alive by our own means (or if possible with the assistance of others who are sufficiently close to a revolutionary Marxist point of view, and are not hostile to Trotskyism).

From the same point of view, the work of thoroughgoing revolutionary, Marxist, Trotskyist education should be considered as a permanent central task of our sections along with the publication of the largest quantity possible of Trotskyist literature (works of Leon Trotsky, pamphlets and books applying our complete line on timely political questions).

6. Our entire tactic acquires its most profound meaning because it is situated within the framework of our revolutionary perspective. We proceed from the appraisal that we are living in a profoundly revolutionary period characterized by a relationship of forces which is developing fundamentally in favor of the revolution and which is moving toward a decisive and final struggle in a relatively brief period (without any practical possibilities of decisive retreat or of a prolonged stand-still) with all the consequences this connotes, which have already been analyzed, on the state of mind of the masses now organized in large formations under reformist or Stalinist influence as well as on the policies of these leaderships. For these reasons we give priority to our concern with and our efforts at rapid and total integration wherever the masses are, together with all the reservations required for our completely independent action where we act as completely independent groups.

If the character of the period, and its consequences within the present working-class movement and its perspectives of development were different, our activity within mass movements and formations under reformist influence and even more within movements and formations under Stalinist influence would not have the same character as we give it today.

For in reality entrism work, or entrism of a special type, acquires its full meaning only when placed within present conditions and perspectives which are such that the masses continue to remain organized in these movements and formations, and within their midst essentially develop their inevitable and speeded-up radicalization and through which they will conduct the first stages of their decisive struggles of tomorrow.

7. The International cannot and does not pretend to indicate in its documents and resolutions all the tactical forms to be followed in every country. This is the work of each national leadership which should be capable of providing a concrete content to the general lines of policy and tactic outlined by the International.

No general indication by the International exempts national leaderships from making the necessary effort to grasp the peculiarities of their own national situation at a given stage and to adjust their tactics accordingly.

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On the basis of all these considerations and after the experiences of the various sections with the tactic outlined by the Third World Congress and the Tenth Plenum, we have now come to a point where it is possible to derive a number of lessons; to better set forth certain features; to single out certain tendencies which, should they fully develop, could prove erroneous in the future; and to get a better view of the future evolution and perspectives of our tactic.

First of all there is the independent work, that is in countries and cases where reformism and Stalinism do not constitute important political forces in the working-class movement and consequently, are not major obstacles to the formation and the development of revolutionary Marxist parties.

This category embraces organizations in Latin America generally and notably Bolivia, the African colonies, Switzerland, Greece, the United States and Ceylon. In Switzerland, however, a more intense work toward the socialist movement and formations should be seriously contemplated. In Greece the present complete illegality as well as the organizational dislocation of the movement under Stalinist influence, determines that the Trotskyists undertake a kind of eclectic independent activity toward any legal or semi-legal formation around which important mass currents are polarized, and especially at the present stage toward the Socialist Party and the trade unions.

For a number of these organizations essentially independent work does not mean that they can act from now on in a straight line without temporary tactical detours precisely as though they were genuine revolutionary mass parties. Rather, it signifies an orientation

toward this end which could be realized without major detours of entrust work in a reformist or centrist organization built up in the meantime. Under certain conditions of development this perspective appears to us as most probable at the present stage and in order to maintain these conditions we throw the very decisive weight of our own action in this direction.

But on the other hand there is little likelihood that, even where reformism and Stalinism do not now constitute major political obstacles, the movement of the political maturing of the masses will develop in a direct line towards its polarization around our present nuclei.

A more or less prolonged activity is necessary which revolves essentially around this or that milieu which at the present stage polarizes the mass movement, regardless of its level.

This applies, for example, to the Peronist movement in Argentina, or the Ibanez movement in Chile, as well as to other movements of a special type, often still led by the petty bourgeoisie, under a confused revolutionary national democratic program, which at the present stage attract the masses in such countries as Columbia, Venezuela, Brazil, several countries of the Middle East and the African colonies.

On the other hand the perspective in the United States that the first wave of mass politicalization may be concretized in the formation of a labor party based on the trade unions naturally still remains essential. In such a case an entrust tactic within this organization by the Trotskyists would be called for.

However in all these cases, the tactic of essentially independent work at the present stage is expressed by the distinct independent existence of the Trotskyist organization with its independent press and its direct political appeals to the masses.

The manner of acting practically as the revolutionary Marxist party of the masses depends on the concrete conditions in each country, on the precise political conjuncture, and naturally on the forces available.

In each concrete case it is necessary to establish a healthy, reasonable balance between objective and subjective possibilities and, in the final analysis, between agitation and propaganda.

So far as Bolivia especially is concerned, where the experience and possibilities of independent work were pushed further than elsewhere with such remarkable and promising success, the main thing to be noted is the following: In all cases where our organizations are called upon by revolutionary developments in their respective countries to actually play from now on their role as genuine mass revolutionary parties, they will only be able to successfully carry out this task to the degree that they succeed in forging a solid organization in struggle which is profoundly rooted among the working class and the poor peasantry.

The conquest of the masses for the revolution cannot be made simply around program and ideas, regardless of how broad the influence of the party is, but through the organization and day-to-day mobilization of the masses by members of the party recruited from their ranks

and living in their midst. Strengthening, proletarianizing the party, training new cadres, transforming the entire organization into an instrument of struggle, becomes an essential task in all cases where the quality and the role of the party becomes at a certain moment the condition of victory.

These comments are also valid for the Ceylonese organization and which must knit together its organizational structure, temper itself, proletarianize and politicalize itself.

In the United States the Trotskyist organization is now subjected to the effects of an economic situation favorable to the bourgeoisie and from a reactionary political atmosphere, accentuated by the victory of the Republican Administration. This is in sharp and striking contrast with the rest of the world. Its essential task consists in coping with the present difficult stage with the greatest tactical ingenuity while in no way sacrificing its future possibilities. This means that while all possibilities for activity and recruitment should be ingeniously exploited, so as to break out of isolation and stagnation, no matter on how modest a scale (according to conditions of time and place), it should maintain and strengthen its presence within the big trade union organizations, the CIO in particular, in whose crucible there is still being forged the political destiny of the great American masses, and of exploiting therein to the maximum every chance, every possibility of trade union activity, of agitation and of mobilization of the masses even for their most elementary demands or for the extension of trade union organization or of its better functioning.

A healthy, reasonable relationship should be maintained between propagandist and direct agitational activity, work in the trade unions and work in any milieu offering opportunities or contact with advanced elements, and of immediate recruitment. Herein is the test of the ingenuity, the flexibility and the capacities of its leadership.

In regard to the perspectives of development in the United States, if uncertainty can still remain for some time concerning a change in the economic and social conjuncture, which is now favorable to the bourgeoisie that benefits from it, the impasse toward which this bourgeoisie is moving internationally can no longer be placed in a remote future. If the difficulties which American imperialism is now encountering internationally impede its war plans and cause it to hesitate and postpone the unleashing of the war for a period, then economic and social crisis threatens to break out in the United States.

If on the other hand these difficulties plunge Washington into war, the international relationship of forces which is so unfavorable to imperialism will quickly make itself felt with the same results so far as the domestic situation in the United States is concerned: a social crisis of an even more acute character.

This means that in any case the perspective of impasse toward which American imperialism is now inevitably moving within a relatively brief time interval, as well as the consequences which flow from this, should constantly clarify the orientation of the American organization.

The "Theses on the American Revolution," adopted by the organization at the end of 1946 have not been invalidated, although they have still to be realized. They constitute an essential document in the programmatic arsenal of the American organization. There should not be the slightest decrease in the unshakeable confidence which all members of the SWP should have in the capacity of the Trotskyist-Bolshevik nucleus, patiently created through long effort in that country, to serve as the basic nucleus of the revolutionary Marxist mass party of tomorrow and to block the road to any centrist, non-revolutionary-Marxist, provisional leadership of the masses.

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Regarding work toward movements and formations under reformist influence:

A number of our organizations have plunged into this work seriously and with remarkable success.

Without succumbing to mere activism or opportunism they are carrying it out on the whole, intelligently and with flexibility.

However, as the first phase of integration in these movements and organizations has been more or less accomplished, it is necessary in all these cases in a general way to soon publish and assure the existence of a completely Trotskyist theoretical organ, that is, one which fully develops our line and which seeks every occasion to mention the name and work of Leon Trotsky, the name, the existence and the program of the Fourth International, and to draw attention to them. Naturally such a publication should not be confused with periodicals which are not fully Trotskyist and are published or will be published inside these movements and in order to promote the work within these movements.

Parallel to this task the publication programs of all these organizations should be developed with the aim of publishing works of our Trotskyist literature in the language of their countries as well as the writings of our national leaders on the problems of the working class movements of their country.

In addition the revolutionary Marxist and Trotskyist education especially of their cadres and members in general should be conceived of as an essential, permanent task which should be carried out by means of classes, schools, seminars, systematic and organized lecture series.

The question of recruitment poses a problem for almost all these organizations. If this question had to be subordinated at the first stage for the primary task of integration and security, it is also obvious that later on the expansion of work necessitates a larger membership; in any case, it cannot be projected, maintained and carried out without augmenting the Trotskyist fraction as such.

The idea of being able to influence and even lead a broad mass movement without a relative increase of the Trotskyist fraction will

prove totally inoperative and can give rise to a false conception of entrust work as a whole.

The attention of certain organizations should be drawn to the following special recommendations:

In England, the task of our organization is to organize around a lively, timely and completely revolutionary Marxist organ all elements who are now moving actually or potentially from reformism, centrism, Stalinism, toward full revolutionary Marxist positions.

The understanding of these conceptions is being greatly facilitated, and will be even more so in the future by the entire development of the English workers' movement itself which is immersed in the more and more markedly favorable international revolutionary situation.

Regarding work towards movements and mass formations influenced by Stalinism: We are going through a new experience in this sphere.

Although work in this sphere began relatively late, with limited forces (especially in France as a result of the split), without sufficient preparation and especially without previous experience in this new field of work, the results obtained up to now have been conclusive and satisfactory.

As was expected, it has already been proved that this work is possible, that it permits a rapid integration of our elements who were previously isolated, into the movement and formations which, in all these countries, polarize by far the majority of the active masses and for the first time permits their transformation into leaders of working-class sectors which are incomparably more important and more promising than any of those in the past.

It is now also proved that the principal difficulties in this sphere of work do not arise so much from obstacles put in the way of our integration by the Stalinist leadership (at least for all our elements who were not known nationally as being among the outstanding Trotskyist leaders). The principal difficulties have rather arisen from the youth of many of our members and especially from inexperience in how to conduct themselves tactically in this new field as well as in real mass work.

Despite these obstacles, which are primarily of a subjective kind, a large number of our members in these countries have already been able to integrate themselves, to carry out the responsibilities of leadership on different levels, to adjust themselves in their individual conduct. This has also already led to a very perceptible transformation of the general internal atmosphere of our organizations in these countries.

Particularly interesting are the results obtained in trade union work and in the activity of our members in factories; the new tactic permitted them to effectively break out of isolation, to link themselves to broader masses of workers influenced by the Stalinists and to be designated to various trade union posts.

It was almost inevitable that in the first stage, which aimed at the integration of our members and in their proving themselves the

most capable and active members, the activity of the independent sector should have been slowed down.

But everything that has been said pertaining to entrust work within mass movements and formations under reformist influence is even more valid for entrust work of a special type.

Entrust work proper cannot acquire its full significance unless it is constantly clarified by the work of the independent sector. Consequently, the question of establishing a healthy and reasonable relationship between the two sectors is very important and should be constantly reviewed by the leaderships. In particular, publication activity of our organizations carried out through the most frequent possible issuance of their fully Trotskyist papers and magazines, through the publication of Trotskyist books and pamphlets, as well as their broadest distribution possible is a task which cannot be slowed down in any way whatever. On the contrary, it should be consolidated and further developed. Only the outbreak of war would cause a change of such a relationship between the independent and entrust sectors which would be much more marked in the favor of the latter.

In addition, to the degree that entrust work develops and roots our members more deeply in circles influenced by the Stalinists and brings them to positions of higher leadership, they will feel a growing pressure at the same time from these circles which has to be fought by constantly raising the theoretical and political level of our members, and in reality by their transformation into genuine Trotskyist cadres who are completely trained in the programmatic principles, line and perspectives of the International.

Only such a training, only such a transformation of our organizations carrying on entrust work into real cadre organizations can immunize our militants from any corrupting reformist or Stalinist influence.

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The International as a whole is now experiencing the most important progress since its birth. It is in the process almost everywhere of marching along with the real movement of the masses, of distinguishing itself from this movement only as a conscious vanguard, as its revolutionary Marxist conscience.

By persevering on this road the International is preparing within the framework of our precise revolutionary perspectives its definitive triumph.

We reply as follows to those who object that our tactic dissolves us into the various movements and blurs if not effaces the perspectives of the International as such:

The Fourth International was launched after the historic events, culminating in the defeat of the German working class without a struggle before Hitler (1928-33), demonstrated that it was then absolutely illusory to conceive of a revolutionary Marxist theoretical regeneration of the Third International dominated by Stalinism, that is by the ideology of the Soviet bureaucracy.

The launching of the Fourth International was not an arbitrary act, but a necessity which flowed from the logic of the events, which corresponded to the new needs. It represented the clear formulation and the practical defense by fractions of conscious revolutionary Marxist militants on five continents of the program of revolutionary Marxism, which had been betrayed and abandoned by the Stalinists.

This program, moreover, has not remained static, elaborated for all time. On the basis of a number of principles of revolutionary Marxism formulated by Marx and Lenin and then by Trotsky, it is being constantly elaborated, it is developing, it is being enriched by the new revolutionary experiences of the masses and of new world developments. But if it is to remain as such, that is to say if it is to remain alive, constantly incorporating new elements, it has to exist not only as an untouchable text elaborated by this person or that but as a collective theoretical and political activity of a world proletarian revolutionary vanguard effectively participating in the movement and in the real struggles of the masses.

Hence the necessity of the Fourth International is conceived not only as a program but also as an organized vanguard of the international proletariat without which the program runs the risk of remaining a dead-letter and ossifying.

Moreover, the usefulness and the effectiveness in action of limited groups of revolutionary militants should not be minimized even at the present time when they still represent very small minorities of the class and of its political formations.

The Fourth International has acted not only as a program, as a living force capable of continuing to elaborate the program of revolutionary Marxism, but also as a political force acting at the present time, spreading correct ideas, catalyzing the revolutionary energies of the class in specific spheres where the entire class can be enlisted, facilitating progress toward genuine revolutionary Marxism on the part of still confused centrist elements in the entire proletarian vanguard.

It suffices to view the daily activity of the sections of the Fourth International throughout the world in the past to perceive the perfect correctness of this appraisal of the role of the Fourth International. We have disseminated correct ideas, we have contributed toward catalyzing the revolutionary energy of the masses at a given stage, in a given country, in given factories, in given trade unions; we have contributed toward facilitating the evolution of confused centrist elements of the vanguard toward revolutionary Marxism (as for example in the results of past entrism work).

But the role of the Fourth International is not even limited to that. To the degree that the world revolutionary upsurge continues to spread and moves toward the world victory of the proletarian revolution and of socialism, the program and organization of the International will be validated.

The world victory of the proletarian revolution and of socialism cannot be conceived as the arithmetical sum of partial victories obtained through centrist programs and formations. It will be the victory of full revolutionary Marxism.

The objective revolutionary process, the extreme aggravation of the crisis of capitalism, a kind of self-decomposition, can here or there facilitate the seizure of power, the victory even of a centrist party. But the world victory of socialism cannot be conceived of as the effect of partial, conjunctural, exceptional victories of such a type.

In reality the quality of the program, of the ideas, of the leadership of the revolution have to change, have to draw closer to a revolutionary Marxist program and leadership so that the revolution, encompassing more culturally and economically developed regions and masses, can triumph and consolidate itself.

In this sense the evolution toward the world victory of the revolution and of socialism is drawing closer to the Fourth International. It is drawing closer first of all in the sphere of program and ideas. For the program and the ideas of the Fourth International are none other than those of revolutionary Marxism applied to our epoch.

Despite empirical waverings and errors, anyone who seriously takes part in the revolution is obliged to more or less come over to this program and these ideas. The development of the colonial revolution and the victory in China in particular is a masterful demonstration of the correctness of the Trotskyist revolutionary Marxist theory of the Permanent Revolution. Thus the Chinese CP has found itself and is now obliged to bend its policy in practice in a manner which approximates the fundamental positions of Trotskyism.

We can say that the logic of the international situation, of its development, is Trotskyist, Fourth Internationalist.

At a higher stage of the world revolution, now inevitable, the conversion of still-confused centrist program and ideas into genuine revolutionary Marxism, that is to say, into complete Trotskyism, will appear still more clearly. In this sense the inevitable victory of the program and the ideas of the Fourth International is inseparable from the world victory of the revolution.

But what is to be said of the Fourth International as an organization?

Naturally the world victory of the revolution will not be the exclusive work of the present national nuclei of the Fourth International but of their close fusion with broader revolutionary forces. From this fusion there will arise new revolutionary mass parties of tomorrow, as well as a new form of the world party, of the International.

In this organic process, our contribution is simultaneously that of program, ideas and cadres. Despite their limited number, the Trotskyist cadres constitute important nuclei, in some places already even decisive ones for the formation of mass revolutionary parties. And this is not only because of their ideas but also and perhaps even more because of their already serious integration into the real mass movement of each country.

Wherever the mass movement is in some way independent, where neither Stalinism nor reformism constitute a major obstacle, the Trotskyists should play and already play (as in Bolivia, in Latin America in general, in Ceylon, etc.) the role of the real revolutionary mass party upon which the victory of the revolution in these countries depends in the next years.

Elsewhere they operate within the real movement of the masses influenced by the reformists or the Stalinists as conscious elements catalyzing both the revolutionary energy of the broad masses and the molecular processes which are at work in the consciousness of the most advanced elements.

Therefore we can say in summary that the role of the Fourth International consists now as in the past in maintaining alive, in constant development, the program and the ideas of revolutionary Marxism, in catalyzing the revolutionary activity of at least certain sectors of the class through the daily activity of its members rooted in the real movement of the masses in each country, in aiding the ideological progress of other and still confused elements of the vanguard so as to win from them the broadest revolutionary forces for the building of mass revolutionary Marxist parties in these countries, of leading the struggle from today on in certain countries at the head of the masses for the conquest of power and the victory of the revolution.

Therefore the Fourth International on the plane of program as well as of action appears as the most conscious organized force which will the most effectively contribute to the complete world victory of the revolution and of socialism.

This victory, on the other hand, as it is realized, will identify itself with the victory of the Fourth International.

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