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REPORT ON THE CHINESE QUESTION

By E. Germain

The Historical Importance Of The Chinese Revolution

It has become a commonplace in our movement to consider the third Chinese revolution as the most important historical event since the great Russian Revolution of October 1917. This estimation of the exceptional importance of this revolution was based in the first place on its effects at the international level. It was this revolution which radically changed the relationship of forces between the classes on a world scale. By inspiring an expansion of anti-imperialist struggles throughout the world, beginning in Asia itself, it has determined the dynamics of the worldwide revolutionary upsurge from 1949 onward. The military defeats inflicted on American imperialism by the heroic Chinese armies in Korea have been the best illustration of the historical overturn which has taken place in the world of the colonial and semi-colonial countries, an overturn which will for years to come increasingly determine the physiognomy of our globe.

But the historical importance of the third Chinese revolution is in no way restricted to its effects on an international level. In China itself, that is to say, for a fifth of the world's population, social changes have already taken place whose sweep the imagination can hardly grasp. Agrarian reform is in process of being completed. Reducing the share of agricultural product which the peasants had to surrender from 50-60% to 17.5%, it is creating by this very fact and for the first time in Chinese history the basis for a great internal market, the precondition for a real industrialization of the country. Unification of the country, a task which the Kuomintang was unable to accomplish during 35 years of convulsions, has been concluded in the main within a few years. Centralization of the food reserve having thus been effected, the creation of a unified market and of a unified price system for food products will be the most effective weapon for ending endemic famine and thereby eliminating a century old source of suffering of the Chinese people. In this country, where agricultural productivity has for three thousand years been bound up with the natural water supply -- that is to say, with the struggle against drought on the one hand and against floods on the other -- unification of the country and centralization of its resources permit the undertaking of public works on a large scale in order to improve the return of agricultural labor and to develop the productive forces. A million soldiers in the Liberation Army and peasants are working on the project of controlling the course of the Huai River; 200,000 workers have been mobilized for a similar project on the Yangtse River. The area of cultivated land is rapidly rising in all regions as the reports of our own Chinese comrades indicate.

China was one of the most deforested countries in the world; this deforestation is one of the fundamental causes of the periodic droughts, the plague of agriculture. In the spring of 1951 alone, more new trees were planted in China than in the course of 22 years by the Kuomintang government. A great project of developing Chinese arboriculture has been elaborated, which anticipates converting 1,800,000 hectares of arid land (an area equal to one third of all the cultivated land of Great Britain) into cultivable land in the

next 15 years. This enormous task would be impossible without the effective unification of the country which has been achieved by the Mao Tse-tung government.

No less profound have been the overturns accomplished in the sphere of culture and custom. The number of pupils in Chinese schools has doubled in comparison with before the war. Tens of millions of workers and peasants are taking night courses in order to learn to read and write. Above all the liberation of 225 millions of Chinese women from the yoke of feudal custom represents an historical 2,000 year jump ahead in the course of a single year. Nothing could be more moving than to hear in the excellent report of our Comrade Kim how an old Chinese peasant makes use of political language and accuses communist cadres of a "lack of firmness" in their relations with the middle peasants. One must recall the state of intimidation and complete absence of rights of the Chinese peasants to grasp the progress which has been made.

The Chinese revolution in this way appears as a phenomenon of combined development on an enormous scale. China today has 7.5 millions of trade union members, as many as Germany, the second industrial country of the capitalist world. From the point of view of their social consciousness, the Chinese peasants are in process of outstripping the American proletariat, the most influential proletariat in the world: as our Comrade Kim indicates, they are in the process of learning to think in class terms. These facts must become part of the understanding of every revolutionary militant in the world. They do not at all mean that the center of gravity of the world revolution has been displaced toward industrially backward countries. But they do mean that the very process of world revolution is impossible without obliterating many aspects of the delayed development of these countries. For every genuine internationalist, what has happened there represents an historical advance whose meaning is still hard to grasp at this time.

THE THEORETICAL PROBLEMS POSED BY THE THIRD CHINESE REVOLUTION

It is not surprising that an event of such sweep should have posed new theoretical problems to every school of sociology. The bourgeoisie itself cannot be content with insulting and slandering the Chinese revolution, or by trying to suborn it. It is necessary for it to understand this powerful enemy, which it will have to confront in the decisive battles to come. Let us not talk of those who see in the Chinese revolution a simple expansion of "Russian imperialism." Their opinion is not taken seriously by the leading centers of Yankee and British imperialism. Among the more serious opinions, two are worth indicating. The first was defended for a long time by the responsible elements of the City and likewise found many defenders in the United States (notably the well-known military critic Hanson Baldwin). It considered the Chinese revolution as a genuine revolution, led by a communist party, which would go off its track as a result of its poverty in industrial equipment and the absence of any Soviet aid in this sphere. Consequently an attempt at wooing it by the Western powers, while premature today, would (later on -- translator's addition --) have good chances for success. The British businessmen in China, who came out with this theory three years ago,

no longer believe in it today. Their silent retreats from Chinese territory clearly demonstrate that their prognoses are very pessimistic regarding the future possibilities for realizing, under the whip of famine and poverty, a fusion between the Chinese people's government and the capitalist world market.

A second bourgeois theory, especially in vogue in liberal circles and picked up by quite a few social democrats and centrists, consists of denying completely the special role of the Communist Party in the Chinese revolution. For these commentators, this revolution represents solely a new agrarian revolution, of which there have been so many in Chinese history -- each time that a reigning dynasty fell apart internally because of the private monopoly by its functionaries of the agricultural surplus product and the resulting crushing load on the peasant masses of the double burden of land rent and taxes, and of usury. But what has taken place in China now is not a simple "agrarian revolution." It is an agrarian revolution led by a communist party in a period when the degree of development of the productive forces, when unification of the country and its progressive integration in a world which is throwing off the imperialist yoke, will permit the solution of all the historical problems of China. Those who are expecting to see a simple repetition of the "dynastic cycle" and do not understand how in our time and by the development of large industry all the traditional problems of Chinese history have been changed, are bound to receive some bitter surprises.

Even less understanding is exhibited by certain social-democratic theoreticians than by these bourgeois ideologists. Karl Czeretz, principal theoretician of the Austrian social democracy, the only section that still has certain theoretical pretensions, in his pamphlet "Will there be a third world war?" denounces the seizure of power by Mao Tse-tung as corresponding solely to a "thirst for power" on the part of the communists who have "deceived the peasants." The latter were not in need of land (!) but only of industrial equipment, and that only the western powers were able to give them. This absurd theory in no way explains why the Chinese peasants, with their so-called "indifference towards agrarian reform" (!), have given their enthusiastic support to the Chinese CP since the latter called upon them to carry out agrarian reform. No more does it explain by what miracle the Chinese CP, unaided by this peasantry, could have conquered the armies of Chiang Kai-shek, which, while they did not really distribute much agricultural equipment among the peasants, had on the other hand received an abundance of military equipment from American imperialism.

The bourgeoisie and petty bourgeoisie thus encounter insuperable obstacles in their attempts at analysis of the Chinese revolution. But the same is true for the Soviet bureaucracy. For both, the defense of material interests limits their capacity for grasping objective reality. Six months ago the Division of Juridical Works of the USSR published a work by a young Stalinist author, S. M. Tchernilovski, entitled "The State Order of the People's Revolution in China." Bureaucratization of Marxist theory has become so universal in the USSR that no censor could fear the infiltration of heretical ideas into works submitted for printing. The Division of Juridical

Works, estimating, and no doubt correctly, the enormous interest which the Chinese revolution had excited in the Soviet masses, decided to make a first printing of 300,000 copies of this work. Alas, V. Rogof, reviewing the work in Izvestia (January 27, 1952), discovered the really seditious character of this book. Has not Comrade Stalin explained dozens of times that the character of the Chinese revolution is that of a bourgeois-democratic revolution? And here is Tchernilovski daring to write that while the Chinese revolution has fundamentally bourgeois-democratic tasks to resolve, it is nevertheless fundamentally different from a bourgeois-democratic revolution, for it is compelled to pose socialist tasks at the same time and immediately, even though in not too consistent a fashion! This is more than heresy; it is practically Trotskyism... We do not know whether the Division of Juridical Works had to destroy the 300,000 copies of so dangerous a work immediately. We only salute in passing the fact that such a revolution as the Chinese revolution, which engraves in the fact the victory of many Trotskyist ideas, did not fail likewise to introduce some Trotskyist ideas in the theoretical works of young Soviet scientists...

The Third Chinese Revolution And The Problems Of The Permanent Revolution

For the Fourth International the Chinese revolution presents far fewer obscure and disquieting aspects, thanks to the incomparable analytical instrument for contemporary revolutions which we hold in the theory of the permanent revolution. But we must still avoid applying this theory in a simplified or elliptical fashion in order to be able to grasp the events which have unfolded in China since 1946 in all their complexity. For example some comrades have maintained the following mechanistic line of reasoning: "The permanent revolution is the affirmation that the tasks of the Chinese revolution cannot be resolved without the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat. But there is no dictatorship of the proletariat in China. Therefore the beginning of the solution of the tasks of the Chinese revolution has not taken place in conformity with the theory of the permanent revolution."

That the tasks of the Chinese revolution cannot be resolved finally and totally without setting up the dictatorship of the proletariat is definitely the ultimate conclusion of the theory of permanent revolution. But if we separate these conclusions from their premises; if we isolate this strategic formula from the overall analysis which precedes it and represents its foundation and its justification, it becomes impossible to understand the meaning of events and in fact disarms the movement.

For after all, what are these premises, what is this analysis out of which the theory of revolution emerges?

To reply to this question let us place the theory of permanent revolution in its historical framework, in the framework of the polemic of 1905 against Menshevism in Russia, the framework of the polemic of 1925-1928 against Menshevism as applied in China under the banner of the Comintern by Stalin-Bucharin and Martinov.

This polemic revolved fundamentally around the question of class leadership in the revolution. The Mensheviks said (and the Stalinists repeated in China): because the tasks of the revolution are bourgeois-democratic tasks, it is certain (the Stalinists said "it is probable" or "it is possible," and the centrists like the Brandlerites echoed: "it is not excluded") that the bourgeoisie will as a class find itself in the revolutionary camp, at least for a whole stage. This revolution will therefore take the form of a "coalition" (in China the phrase was: "of a single bloc") of several classes. The proletariat must not start anything which may "prematurely" break up this coalition; above all it must not start anything politically or militarily in order to attain "prematurely" its own leadership in the revolutionary camp. It must maintain its "right to criticism" within the framework of the discipline of the "united revolutionary camp."

In practice this meant: submission to the leadership of the bourgeois forces, of the bourgeois State (embodied in China in the Kuomintang) and leaving to the bourgeoisie the initiative for breaking up the coalition (that is to say, the initiative to decapitate the forces of the proletariat by counter-revolutionary force).

The experience of the Chinese revolution, of the Spanish revolution, has demonstrated that such a strategy is a strategy of suicide and defeat for the revolution. To it was opposed the strategy advocated by Trotsky as early as 1905 in Russia, repeated by Lenin in 1917, and victoriously applied in the Russian October revolution by the Bolshevik party. This conception asserts: the bourgeoisie, by virtue of its social weakness, its ties with the old native possessing classes, and its ties with imperialism, is basically incapable of accomplishing the tasks of the bourgeois-democratic revolution; consequently, only the conquest of leadership in the revolution by the proletariat, only the conquest of proletarian leadership over the peasant masses, and finally the destruction of bourgeois power and the establishment of a dictatorship of the proletariat will permit the realization of the tasks of the revolution.

It is enough to develop the content of the theory of permanent revolution in this way to understand in what measure the events which have occurred in China between 1946 and 1949 have confirmed our ideas, have justified 25 years of Trotskyist polemic on this question. So long as the Chinese CP applied the policy of coalition with the bourgeoisie, that is to say, admitted in practice the leadership of the bourgeoisie, the leadership of the Kuomintang, it only accumulated defeats: this was the case in 1927, in 1937, in 1945-1946. Only when it broke in decisive fashion, completely and totally with this coalition, when it engaged in a life and death struggle against the Kuomintang power, did it succeed in channeling the thinly spread revolutionary power of millions of peasants in revolt, and in really overthrowing Chiang Kai-shek and beginning the realization of the basic tasks of the revolution.

As soon as we understand the decisive importance of this question of class leadership in the revolution, summarized in the famous formula "which class leads and which class is led," we grasp all the mechanistic futility involved in speaking of the present government

of Mao Tse-tung as a coalition government in the same sense as the coalition governments which we have in the past characterized as governments of defeat and betrayal. Coalition governments in the latter sense were governments in which the proletarian party submitted in practice to the leadership of the bourgeoisie, integrated itself in practice with the bourgeois State apparatus. The present coalition government is a government in which miserable remnants of the bourgeoisie, frightened and only hoping to "see the storm pass and better days come," endeavor to submit and efface themselves before the uncontested leadership of the Communist Party, which has begun to build a new State apparatus. There is really no common denominator between the two forms of "coalition."

In point of fact, the turn of the Chinese Communist Party towards asserting the leadership of the proletariat in the revolution is not solely a pragmatic turn. This turn was prepared by a considerable work of political elaboration on the part of Mao Tse-tung. However confused most of the conclusions of the Chinese communist leader may be, on this decisive level he has spoken an absolutely clear language since 1940 when he wrote:

"The enemy of the revolution has not only been imperialism but the regime of the big bourgeoisie as well, in alliance with the great landlords. The national bourgeoisie has become the extension of the big bourgeoisie, leaving it to the Chinese CP alone to carry on the revolution. Complete command in the hands of the CP has been the absolute pre-condition for being able to bring the war to a successful conclusion."

And recently, in its April 23, 1952 issue, Pravda strove with curious acrobatics to try to prove that Stalin's work "Problems of the Chinese Revolution," published in 1927, had been "applied" in China, despite the obvious fact that the opposite line to Stalin's had found its verification in the third Chinese revolution.

Special Characteristics Of The Third Chinese Revolution

Some comrades have tried to see a special kind of development in the fact that the Mao Tse-tung government has in general carried through agrarian reform without expropriating the commercial and industrial bourgeoisie. It is a fact that expropriation of the bourgeoisie, especially in southern China, has been and remains a pre-condition for the final solution of the agrarian question. However Trotsky never asserted that expropriation of the bourgeoisie was a pre-condition for dividing the land or for the conquest of power by the Communist Party. On the contrary, the transformation of the bourgeois-democratic revolution into the socialist revolution, in China as in Russia, can only be realized after this conquest of power, and then with time lags which can be quite different in a country as backward as China.

In Russia expropriation of the industrial bourgeoisie only began six months after division of the land and conquest of power by the soviets. In fact, Trotsky has emphasized that the agrarian reform carried out in Russia after October 1917 was, in its first stage, led by the rich peasants (that is to say, by the village bourgeoisie).

We have already often enumerated all the peculiarities of the Chinese situation following the second world war: the speedy military, political and economic decomposition of the Chiang Kai-shek regime; the discontent of all classes of society, including the bourgeoisie, with this regime; the hesitations of American imperialism, caught in the trap of its own "global strategy," unable to patch up at one time all the holes appearing in the world fabric of capitalism, in Asia, in Europe, in Africa, in Latin America. The special role which Stalinism is playing in this revolution must not be underestimated. The third Chinese revolution is not a "normal," "classical" revolution led by a Bolshevik party which consciously goes into this battle and with a well-defined strategy. The special role played by the Chinese CP in the revolution is explained by both the opportunist character of the policy which it has pursued for years and by the special combination of events which compelled it to modify this policy in part.

A powerful revolutionary upsurge broke out on the heels of the victory against Japan in all the industrial centers of China. Powerful strikes and demonstrations shook the Chiang regime. Toward these movements, the CP, whose center of gravity was in the countryside, could allow itself the luxury of maintaining a fundamentally treacherous attitude. It sacrificed the workers' movement to its last-minute attempt to find a compromise with Chiang Kai-shek. The rise of the peasant revolt in northern China compelled it to effect a turn legalizing the agrarian reform and breaking the bridge to the Kuomintang. But at the time this turn was being made, the workers' movement in the cities was already at full ebb-tide. The same causes which subsequently accelerated the victory of Mao Tse-tung reinforced the apathy of the city masses: galloping inflation; a halt and decomposition of economic life; administrative chaos; ferocious terror of the Kuomintang on the eve of its disappearance, etc. If the workers' movement did not in the first stage of the third Chinese revolution play the role we had always assigned it in our perspectives that is essentially due to this special relationship between the CP and the revolution, a relationship which implies specific relations between the revolutionary rise in the cities and the revolutionary rise in the countryside.

The Nature Of The Chinese Communist Party

It remains nonetheless true that the determining factor in the last five years of Chinese history is the fact that the Chinese CP has begun, in an opportunist and empirical manner, it is true, but has begun in reality to apply the theory of the permanent revolution in its own manner; it has begun in practice to lead the realization of this revolution. In the face of so monumentally important a fact it is impossible to close eyes and ears and avoid a careful reexamination of the question of the class character of such a party.

Comrade Peng in his report to the commission of the World Congress gave two criteria for determining the class character of a party: its social composition and the policy which it really follows. These two criteria are important but they are insufficient for answering the question posed here. Let us take a typical example. What is the class character of the social-democratic party in France or in the Netherlands? The social composition of these parties is

predominantly petty bourgeois, with a strong admixture of middle bourgeoisie and high state functionaries. The percentage of workers is very low. What policy is followed by the leaderships of these parties? A policy not only of class collaboration with the bourgeoisie, but of active defense of the bourgeois State, of capitalist property. The official doctrine of the Dutch social-democratic party even repudiates any idea of class struggle. Nevertheless we characterize these parties as degenerated workers' parties. Why? First of all by their origins, their traditions and the remnants of these origins and traditions in their program. These organizations came out of the working class movement. They represent the degeneration of a current, in the case of Holland of the majority tendency in fact, of the overall working class movement. Further, because this fact is not visible only to historians, but it is on this fact that the fundamental classes in society base themselves in judging the character of this party. The SP can prate as much as it pleases about class conciliation: the bourgeoisie does not consider it as "flesh of its flesh," and dumps it periodically when its presence becomes too annoying. Despite all the verbal and practical concessions to bourgeois ideology, the workers continue to vote for it; in the case of Holland, even an overwhelming majority of the class conscious workers. Under these circumstances, the objective role which these parties play in society is in contradiction with the ideology of the ruling sections of these parties. But Marx has taught us not to judge people and organizations on the basis of what they say about themselves, but in accordance with what they are objectively. For this reason it appears to us that the program of an organization is at least as important a criterion as its social composition, and that the the objective role played by this organization in society is the fundamental criterion for determining its class nature, a criterion which can even contradict and eradicate the impression created by the social composition and momentary day to day policy of its leadership.

Let us now consider the character of the Chinese CP in the light of these observations. It is true that the Chinese CP is still in large part composed of peasants. It is also true that its leadership has for years pursued a policy of class collaboration with the bourgeoisie. It is equally true that the program of the "new democracy" drawn up by Mao Tse-tung is an opportunistic and confused program. But it remains nonetheless true that the last Congress of the the Chinese CP has officially adopted statutes which declare that the "new democracy" is only a transitional stage toward the building of a socialist society by abolishing private property in the means of production. Have we ever known a peasant party which possessed such a program? Have we ever known a peasant party which affirmed its unshakeable loyalty to the USSR, the first country in which the socialist revolution triumphed? Have we ever seen a peasant party which declared, as the Chinese CP did in 1949:

"As a result of the disproportion between the peoples' forces and those of the enemy since the defeat of the Great Revolution of 1927 and upto now, the center of gravity of the revolutionary struggles of the Chinese people has been the rural sector, which gathered rural forces together to surround and take the cities... The period in which this method of work had to be adopted is now

over...The center of gravity of the work of the Party must be placed in the cities." (Resolution adopted by the CC of the Chinese CP, March 1949.)

Have we ever seen a peasant party adopt a resolution which completely halted the recruiting of peasants into the organization and concentrated exclusively on the recruiting of workers? Nevertheless, the Chinese CP so resolved in 1950...

It is no more correct to state that we may now -- and only now, as Comrade Peng declares -- because of the leftward swing of the CP, speak of a "workers and peasants party," that is to say, of a party with a dual social character. On this subject we must openly declare that the characterization made by the 7th Plenum of the IEC along this line was erroneous. This question has a long tradition in our movement. In his Criticism of the Program of the Communist International, just as in the whole Third International After Lenin, Trotsky subjects the idea of "workers and peasant parties" to severe criticism. In reality, experience has proved that only two kinds of parties exist which base themselves fundamentally on the peasantry: either revolutionary working class parties, or petty-bourgeois parties which are objectively in the service of the bourgeoisie. "Workers and peasant" parties are as absent in modern history as are "really independent peasant parties." It is useless to introduce this idea anew into contemporary Chinese history, particularly when this history is unfurling under the sign of the permanent revolution, whose realization is not exactly proper for a "peasant and workers" party.

Certain comrades retort: Then Trotsky was wrong in 1932 when he characterized the Chinese CP of that time as a peasant party? Or has this party changed its social character in the meantime? We think that this is a scholastic way of posing the question. Experience has taught us that not only does the past serve to explain the present; the present often helps us to better understand the past. There had to be a Russian Thermidor for Daniel Guerin to reexamine the French Thermidor. He thereby reached conclusions, fundamentally correct in our opinion, which differ considerably from those of Marx and Engels on this subject. This is an unusual way by which an old Marxist thesis is confirmed: that practice is the foundation of knowledge. The practice of today can modify, improve our knowledge of the past. This knowledge, which squares with the experience of our epoch, will be called "false" only by scholasticists who conceive truth and error as fixed and immutable entities.

This is not a philosophical digression unrelated to our discussion. When Trotsky spoke conditionally of the Chinese CP as a peasant party, he placed this sociological definition in the framework of a very precise historical perspectives: the new revolutionary upsurge of the Chinese proletariat, starting in the cities and stimulated by a new revolutionary upsurge mainly on the part of the west European proletariat. History decreed an important detour relative to this perspective. There was no revolutionary workers party capable of leading the workers rise in China in 1945-1946. Because of this, this upsurge did not come into open collision with the class collaboration policy of the CP -- a hypothesis which Trotsky raised

and which was not at all excluded -- but it declined before the agrarian movement reached its culminating point. Also because of this fact, the Chinese CP, having been compelled to take the leadership of the agrarian revolution, was compelled to take political power, and impelled by the internal logic of the revolution, was compelled to forge ahead on the road of the destruction of capitalism. This trajectory, we learn from mechanics, is in conformity with the laws of development of a working class party, opportunist and degenerated, but nevertheless working class. This trajectory, we learn from dialectics, was not the only possible one from 1935 on. With a different development of the working class movement in Europe, a different development of our own movement, events of a completely different character could have taken place. In this sense it would be absurd to discuss today whether Trotsky was wrong twenty years ago, when the fundamental question was to decide the terms of a future alternative. What would be sad would be to let ourselves make a mistake today, not on what will take place 20 years hence, but on what is unfurling right before our eyes.

The Left Turns Of The Chinese Communist Party

Characterization of the Chinese CP as a working class party is the prerequisite for a theoretical understanding of the third Chinese revolution, for discerning, behind the military events of the year 1949, the special way in which the leadership of the peasant revolt in China was taken over by the proletariat. This characterization is even more essential for understanding the laws of development of this revolution and correctly determining its perspectives.

In reality, the Chinese CP has been compelled since May 1946 to describe a series of successive left turns which are incompatible with the policy of a peasant or "workers and peasants" party:

1. There was the turn of May 1946 allowing a limited agrarian reform on part of the territory of northern China.

2. There was the turn of October 1947 proclaiming agrarian reform for all China and ending in an appeal for the overthrow of the Chiang Kai-shek government.

3. There was the decision of May 1950 to spread and generalize agrarian reform south of the Yangtse, temporarily halted after proclamation of the peoples' Republic.

4. There was the turn of October 1950, under the influence of the Korean war, which consisted of launching a vast campaign against counter-revolutionaries, Kuomintang agents and imperialist spies, a campaign which liquidated a whole section of the old State apparatus which had been retained by the people's Republic.

5. There was a campaign launched in October 1951 against waste, corruption and bureaucratism, which struck heavily at another section of this State apparatus and which began a policy of harrassment of the industrial capitalists and big businessmen.

The sociological meaning of these successive turns is absolutely clear: what began as a relatively restricted turn hardly visible to

the bulk of the Chinese population, because limited to a small portion of this territory in 1946, has grown and expanded into an immense movement, mobilizing tens of millions of men and women in this vast country. What began as a small maneuver in May 1946 has been transformed into the permanent revolution unfurling before our eyes.

What are the social forces which determined this dynamic? On the one hand, the pressure of the masses themselves, undeniable in 1946 according to all the proofs which are still being supplemented as in the last report of Comrade Kim, undeniable equally in the present stage; on the other hand, the pressure of the class enemy who, refusing the outstretched hand of the CP opportunists each time and attacking the latter when they sought conciliation; compelled them to defend themselves in their fashion, and to go ahead in a pragmatic way on the revolutionary road.

It is one thing to discuss which was the "decisive" pressure, that of the masses or that of the class enemy, for each of these turns. It is something else to decide, in the light of these turns, what is the class nature of the Chinese CP. Even in the face of the pressure of Chiang or the bourgeoisie, only a working class party, no matter how opportunistic it may be, can react in this specific way, that is to say, by forging ahead on the revolutionary road. This should be clear to every Marxist.

Nevertheless, the attitude of the Chinese CP has progressively changed in the course of these successive turns. In 1946 and 1947 the CP submitted to these turns reluctantly; it was an object in the historical process, compelled to take an unforeseen road unwillingly. Today the CP has in advance prepared and organized its left turn. From an object in the historical process, it has become its subject, a motor force. In 1946-1947, in northern China, the CP was to the right of the masses who compelled them to make a turn. In 1950-1951, in southern China, the CP was to the left of the masses, which compelled them to send thousands of communist agitators from the cities to the countryside in order to mobilize the peasants, win their confidence and direct their struggle for agrarian reform against the lords and village bourgeoisie. In the light of such events, can anyone still express doubts on the class nature of such a party?

Every sociological definition is at the same time a historical prognosis. In emphasizing, since 1950, the working class character of the Chinese CP, we have, at the same time, stressed the perspective of inevitable new left turns. We even predicted that the CP would be compelled to mobilize the peasantry in the south, and that this would in practice result in giving power, on the local scale, to the Peasant Associations (see our article in "Quatrieme Internationale," January 1951, pp. 22-23). The Chinese comrades most consistent in their old positions, predicted on the contrary -- as we can read in articles published in the Internal Bulletins of the IS -- that the CP would never effectively mobilize the poor peasants, etc. The facts have already rendered a verdict on the correctness of one or the other of these two perspectives. It is at the same time a verdict on the correctness of one or the other estimation of the social character of the Chinese CP. We must start from there in order to understand the inevitable future left turns.

The Character Of The State And Of The Government

For after all, what we have seen up to now in the way of successive left turns in the policy of the Chinese CP will prove of lesser importance than the turns still ahead of us. The reason for this is simple: class contradictions are sharpening on the international level; they are sharpening on the national level. Opposing class forces will act with increasing violence, exercising an increasingly heavy pressure on the Chinese CP. The field for maneuver, the margin for conciliation and postponement is becoming increasingly contracted. The explosion of all the contradictions still enclosed in the policies of this party is thus becoming unavoidable.

The resolution which we are presenting for a vote at this Plenum strongly emphasizes the influence, which is already being exercised and which will be exercised all the more in the future, of the worldwide polarization of class forces on the course which the Chinese CP will pursue. The outbreak of the Korean war has already signaled an initial and violent offensive against the bourgeois formations which still remain in China. Is it at all conceivable that the Peoples Republic of China could tomorrow enter the third world war alongside the USSR and allow bourgeois property in the largest part of the industrial apparatus of the country to remain intact? The Chinese bourgeoisie knows that its only chance of salvation lies in a world victory of American imperialism. In the war between the USSR and China on one side and the imperialist powers on the other, it will not restrict itself to desiring the victory of the latter with all its heart. It would work practically and with all its means for this victory. It would be the most defeatist class toward the State of its "own" country that has been seen in the wars of the 20th century. It would sabotage the war economy, the industrial effort, supplying the war front. It is impossible that the Mao government should even allow so defeatist a class to retain control, in the event of war, over the light industry of the country. Wholesale expropriation of the industrial bourgeoisie would inevitably follow upon the outbreak of the third world war.

The polarization of class forces in China itself is moving no less rapidly toward such a final settling of accounts. In the editorial of Peoples China of March 15, 1952, devoted to the present movement "against waste, corruption and bureaucratism," Liu Tsun-chi writes that never have the capitalist private enterprises known such a prosperity in China as they are currently enjoying. "But to the same degree that these enterprises have developed and begun to flourish, the bourgeoisie has become less inclined to conform to the 'Common Program' and 'to obey governmental regulations'." Big capitalists have set up secret monopolies to control supplies to the State or to State enterprises. The forced concentration of enterprises and of capital has made rapid progress. Surprised, Liu Tsun-chi notes that the Chinese bourgeoisie has "used the same lamentable methods as are habitually used by big capitalists in the capitalist States"...The surprise is his alone. For us it is clear that the capitalists who are now collaborating with Mao's government have been doing so only out of considerations of the lesser evil or of immediate necessity, and not out of idealism or faith in the "Common Program." It was equally clear that precisely in the degree that Mao's policy

tended toward stabilizing and enriching these private enterprises, that is to say, in the degree that the bourgeoisie again became rich, it would also become bolder, more determined to defend its own interests against the intrusion of the State into its private affairs, more inclined to intrude in its turn into State affairs, especially in the bureaucratic central State apparatus which became a bacteriological culture for all kinds of corruption.

The official authorities of the Chinese CP still declare, it is true, that the present struggle is directed solely against the "mangy sheep" of the bourgeoisie. But in the previously mentioned article in Pravda of April 23, 1952, Chen Po-ta expresses himself in the following way:

"Spurred by their hunger for profit, their inclination to speculation and to attaining advantages at the expense of others which is characteristic of the bourgeoisie, they (the capitalists) placed their agents in our state institutions and our public organizations, hired some of the employees of the State and of public bodies as their agents. Corruption on a very wide scale, concealment of income so as not to pay taxes, appropriation of state property...all that caused great damage...Bourgeois elements did not give up their hope of conquering power bit by bit in the Peoples Republic of China, which is led by the great working class. They dreamed of delaying the preparations embarked on by the great Peoples Republic for passing over from the building of a peoples democracy onto the road of socialist development...THE BOURGEOISIE IS STRIVING TO PUSH CHINA ONTO THE ROAD OF CAPITALISM...But it is perfectly obvious that if the bourgeoisie persists in its efforts, it will meet with total defeat."

This analysis is on the whole accurate. Naturally it does not mention the fact that bourgeois elements could "infiltrate" so easily into "our" State apparatus, because the latter, as is acknowledged in the People's China article mentioned previously, was taken over in its entirety in the big cities just as it was in the days of the Kuomintang. It does not mention the overwhelming responsibility of the leadership of the Chinese CP for this state of affairs, a leadership which could without any difficulty whatever have created a soviet China in 1949, even though it might have been necessary, for economic reasons, to retain large sectors of bourgeois property in light industry and in trade. But it is amply sufficient for us to observe: because of the nature of the Chinese CP, the central government of the peoples Republic is not some kind of "neutral," subject to the "parallel" pressure of two opposing classes. Fundamentally, it acts and will act more and more, under these pressures, in the direction of completing the revolution. We must be absolutely clear on this point if we do not want to meet up with new surprises and lose new opportunities for inscribing our movement in events.

But it is precisely for the same reason, because we are expecting these decisive left turns which are ahead of us, that we refrain for the moment from characterizing the Chinese State as a proletarian dictatorship. We repeat: it is not, by itself, the existence of bourgeois property in light industry and in trade which restrains us. We have seen in Russia and could more readily expect to see in China the coexistence of a proletarian dictatorship with bourgeois

property in large sectors of the economy. What restrains us is the twofold consideration of the structure of the State and the general dynamics of the revolution.

In large parts of China, notably in most of the provinces south of the Yangtse, the Mao Tse-tung government has purely and simply taken over on its own account the old central administrations of the Kuomintang, including the very governors themselves. Only the armed power has been completely recast and represents an armed power with a different social character. State administration there has remained on the whole what it was before. Moreover, this involves the richest provinces in China, containing the center of light industry and of the bourgeoisie. The latter's representatives in the central government, even though they do not wield much power on the national level, represent useful observers for their class and are preparing positions for retaking power "bit by bit," as Chen Po-ta has said.

Naturally this situation is not stable. On the morrow of the pacification of all of China, bourgeois power in the south was not only solidly entrenched in the cities, but equally well established in the villages, where the kulaks, as is confirmed by Comrade Kim's report, had concentrated all power in their hands. With the development of agrarian reform, the Peasant Associations or associations of poor peasants have in many places practically conquered power and are exercising it like genuine soviets. These examples represent a magnificent agitational weapon for us. But they are not yet generalized to the point where we can say that the poor peasants exercise political power everywhere in the countryside. Nor, on the other hand, are they suppressing the duality of power, which factually exists in the measure that they must deal with the old apparatus, controlled by the class enemy, in the cities and administrative centers.

It is solely in the special conditions of this State apparatus that the bourgeois property which survives takes on an exceptional significance. For in this way it allows the bourgeoisie simultaneously to exert control from within, and to disintegrate and corrupt from without, the sectors of a new State apparatus which the Chinese CP is compelled to build.

The question becomes even clearer if we view the general march of the revolution. The latter has not been halted; it is not on the decline; its major surge is not behind but ahead of us. It is precisely the general attack against bourgeois property, the future and decisive left turn of the Chinese CP, which, by compelling the latter to mobilize the city proletariat on a vast scale for the first time, will mark the apogee of the revolution. If we state today that there is a proletarian dictatorship in China how would we characterize this decisive phase which lies ahead of us? How would we characterize the phase in which not only will the bourgeois representatives be truly eliminated from the central government and the old bourgeois State apparatus in the south destroyed, but in which undoubtedly and for the first time the proletariat will in action assert as a class its leading role in the revolution?

We leave not the slightest ambiguity as to the general direction in which the situation is evolving. We leave not the slightest

ambiguity on the conscious role which the Chinese CP will play in these events. Nor do we leave the slightest ambiguity on the function which the central government of the peoples Republic of China will consequently fulfill. But we think that it is more prudent and more correct to stop at this point for the moment, to acknowledge the elements of dual power which still remain in China today, to characterize the government therefore as a workers and peasants government which has in practice already broken the coalition with the bourgeoisie and is rapidly advancing toward setting up the dictatorship of the proletariat.

The Tasks Of The Chinese Organization

There is an undeniable historical tragedy for us in the Chinese events. The theory of permanent revolution has begun to be put into practice by those who fought it savagely for 25 years, and in part against those who have during this same period been its fiercest defenders, even passing in part over their dead bodies. Some of the blows that our Chinese organization suffered might have been avoided if it had effected the necessary turn in time. To a great degree, however, these blows were inevitable. They arise from the Stalinist past of the Chinese CP, from its brutal bureaucratic sectarianism toward us, specially aggravated in China by a mean spirit of revenge toward those who were long-term leaders of the CP itself before they became Trotskyists. The Chinese comrades recently reported that the government dynamited the tomb of Chen Du-Sieu, the father of Chinese communism, and sent his widow, who is now very old, to a concentration camp. These facts are sufficient to indicate that despite any possible political flexibility on our part, blows from the bureaucrats leading the CP would have been inevitable.

But as Marxists we know that we have no special interests to defend outside those of our class. Every triumph of the revolution, especially if it has been secured by application of the theory of permanent revolution, is a triumph for us, despite the blows which we may temporarily suffer. It is not only a triumph for us in the historical sense, but even in a more direct, more immediate sense. Only the revolution can finally liberate the boundless creative forces of the masses which will assure the victory of soviet, proletarian democracy. Every progress of the revolution is progress in this direction, and not in the direction of some sort of "bureaucratic power."

Our Chinese comrades will not overcome pessimism and skepticism which are in danger of developing in their ranks, as Comrade Peng has explained, by closing their eyes to reality as it is, by obstinately refusing to concede to this reality the social characterization which it warrants, by obstinately continuing to condemn CP policy for past crimes which it is no longer committing today. They will be able to overcome pessimism and skepticism only by holding a clear view on the perspectives of the third Chinese revolution. By assimilating the analysis and perspectives of the International, they will understand that the decisive phase, the phase of demonstration of proletarian power, is before us, and that we have every chance of distinguishing ourselves mightily in this future phase of the revolution. We can do so only by understanding right now that this phase

will not unfurl in opposition to the CP, but under its leadership and apparently at its initiative. To push the CP, its party organizations, the mass organizations, and the masses themselves ahead on this road of completing the revolution, toward which, moreover, the entire situation is thrusting the regime,-- there lies the task of the Chinese Trotskyists in the months and years ahead.

This task can only be resolved successfully if our Chinese comrades root themselves even more firmly in the mass organizations, if they even further adapt their language and their methods of work to the new conditions in which they are placed. But this gives us at the same time an immense opportunity to reaffirm in practice what we must always be: revolutionary militants marching in front in the most energetic, resolute and effective way along the revolutionary road. The International stands ready to give all necessary assistance to the Chinese section for resolving this task. The discussion we are now engaged in already represents important aid along this line. It will not be closed by this Plenum. It will continue, in China itself and on an international scale, to the profit of all our members. But the moment has arrived for our movement to take a clear position on questions which have already been settled by history, and it is in this spirit that I ask you to vote for the resolution submitted by the IS.

DISCUSSION

I. REMARKS BY COMRADE PENG

The Chinese question is not only important for the Chinese comrades but for all comrades in backward countries. The discussion in the International up to now has been inadequate, and it will certainly be necessary to continue it.

Two Errors To Be Avoided

I would like to refer to the method which Trotsky used in the Russian question. In In Defense of Marxism, Trotsky explains how facts and norms must be distinguished. There are two errors which must be avoided on the subject of the Russian question. It is an error to start from a norm in order to deny the working-class character of the State, on the ground that the latter deviates from the norm. It is equally erroneous to start from the facts of degeneration in order to create the belief that the norm has become inoperative, that what has taken place in the USSR represents the normal process of evolution for every workers State.

There are similar errors to be avoided on the Chinese question. The first error would consist of denying the revolutionary character of what has taken place. This error has been committed by a minority tendency in the Chinese section. The second error would consist of starting with objective facts in order to try to fit them into the permanent revolution, that is to say, to deform the theory of permanent revolution in order to say that Mao Tse-tung is objectively realizing this theory.

The result of the first case is sectarianism; of the second, it is an idealization of the Mao Tse-tung movement and an adaptation of our movement to that of Mao. That is why we must criticize these

two tendencies, for both of them are having bad effects on our movement, and especially on our Chinese organization.

In my report to the World Congress, I had already pointed out that there have been manifestations of the two errors in the Chinese section: standing apart from the real movement and capitulating to Mao. Since then, I have received a report from our Chinese organization stating that some comrades are claiming that the movement led by Mao is the third Chinese revolution, that there is consequently no need for a revolutionary organization, and they are leaving our organization in order to enter the CP.

I stress this fact only to point out that we must combine the recognition of objective facts with the maintenance of our program, so as to reach correct conclusions, as Trotsky did on the Russian question, and so that we may avoid the two parallel errors.

The Chinese Events And The Theory Of The Permanent Revolution

To return now to the resolution which has been submitted to us: I submitted four points of criticism which the reporter has answered, but I must now return to these criticisms, for the reply of the reporter has not convinced me. Germain has stressed the dynamic of the social forces which pushed Mao to the starting point of the development in China. The theory of permanent revolution naturally starts with the motor forces of revolution, in Russia as well as in China. It defines the revolutionary and reactionary classes in society. Its conclusions were confirmed positively in the course of the Russian revolution, negatively in the course of the second Chinese revolution. It has thus been established once and for all that the revolution can only be victorious under the leadership of the proletariat, and in a struggle against the landlords and the bourgeoisie. But the central question which flows from this analysis is the following: under what political form, under what state organization, can the proletariat lead the poor peasants in the struggle against the landlords, the bourgeoisie and even the top layers of the petty bourgeoisie? To this question Trotsky has given a clear answer: only the workers' state, the dictatorship of the proletariat, can guarantee such a leadership.

This answer crystallizes the experience of the USSR and of the second Chinese revolution. From this point of view I must say that the reporter has not grasped the central point of the theory of permanent revolution. We all agree as to the objective facts. The seizure of power by Mao is certainly the result of his break with Chiang Kai-shek, and this break has a great revolutionary importance. But at the same time we must say that this represents a disturbance of the normal process of permanent revolution, which is the seizure of power by the proletariat as a class. By intervening in the revolution on the basis of his theory of "revolution by stages," Mao has succeeded in smashing the natural course of the permanent revolution.

Let us pass from theoretical analysis to facts. According to the theory of permanent revolution, the proletariat as a class must be the vanguard of the revolution. The reporter has said that the

Chinese proletariat is comparatively weak; but despite this weakness, it was mobilized, and seriously played the role of vanguard, in the course of the second Chinese revolution. In the course of the present revolution, however, it has not been mobilized. On the other hand, in the course of the second Chinese revolution, the reactionary character of the bourgeoisie and of the top layers of the petty bourgeoisie was completely exposed. Despite that, in the present revolution, Mao still maintained an alliance with bourgeois forces. Fundamentally, the policy of the CP is still based on the theory of the "bloc of four classes." Mao has in fact deformed the theory of the motor forces of the revolution: he still considers the "national" bourgeoisie and petty bourgeoisie as among these motor forces. From the standpoint of the dynamics of revolution, he therefore still stands on a menshevik position. Trotsky often repeated that there would be no period of democratic revolution in the Chinese revolution. He repeatedly said that at the culminating point of the democratic revolution, the proletariat must take the power, establish the dictatorship of the proletariat and poor peasants, accomplish the democratic tasks, expropriate the bourgeoisie, and advance on the road of socialist construction. I could refer a great deal to the writings of Trotsky.

Mao should have been able to set up the dictatorship of the proletariat, but by using the menshevik theory of "revolution by stages," of the "bloc of 4 classes," and of the "new democracy," and by protecting the capitalists, as he is now doing, he has preferred not to take this road.

Naturally existing social forces cannot allow the objective prolongation of this situation for a long time. But at this moment, we still see how the revolution has been deformed out of its natural course because of the menshevik theories of Mao Tse-tung. The manner in which the resolution submitted by the IS attempts to apply the theory of permanent revolution to the Chinese events cannot explain the real facts of the deformation of the natural course of the revolution, and is equally in disagreement with the content of the theory itself. Without a clarification of the theory of permanent revolution and its application to the real facts, you cannot explain the meaning of these facts nor, above all, convince the Chinese comrades of the correctness of the analysis of the International. Without this clarification, you cannot give a correct estimation of Stalinism and of the party of Mao Tse-tung.

To my second point of criticism, the comrade reporter has not replied. I have said that the victory of Mao Tse-tung is the result of a refusal on Chiang Kai-shek's part to collaborate with him, and that it was secured in agreement with Moscow or under its instructions. The resolution of the IS enumerates five points which would indicate that the turn of the Chinese CP was not effected in agreement with Moscow. I have criticized these five points but Comrade Germain has not answered me. In my opinion these five points are not in agreement with the facts. There has only been a mechanical repetition of what has been said before, and correctly, for Yugoslavia, and its application to China without verifying the facts.

The Class Character Of The Chinese CP And Of The Movement

In the supplement to my written report published in Internal Bulletin No. 4 of the IS, I corrected my original position on the class character of the Chinese CP. I do not want to repeat what I wrote but only to answer the argument of the reporter on this subject. Germain does not reject Trotsky's characterization of the Chinese CP as a peasant party in 1932. Nevertheless the Chinese CP was pursuing an ultra-left policy in that period. The CP was then campaigning for a workers and peasants government and for setting up soviets. If the reporter wanted to be consistent with his own criteria for determining the social character of a party, he would then have to call such a party a workers' party. That is why I maintain what I wrote in my report concerning the criteria which must determine the social character of a party.

On the question of the class character of the State, I have also revised my position and there now are no longer any major differences between us on this question. The main disagreement now lies in the characterization of the government. I think that it is an error to characterize the government as a workers and peasants government. I think on the contrary that our Chinese comrades could obtain an excellent response among the masses by launching the slogan of a workers and peasants government, that is to say, by urging the Chinese CP to break with the bourgeois parties, to halt all collaboration with the bourgeoisie and to exclude bourgeois elements from the government. But we cannot conduct such an agitation if we say that the present government is already a workers and peasants government.

The resolution is not quite clear on the matter of perspectives. It states that there will be a tendency for the Chinese CP to change into a centrist party. That is insufficient. Our Chinese comrades must have a clear understanding of the terms of an alternative and must know the goal for which they must struggle. It is insufficient therefore to speak of "centrism," but it is necessary to say that the CP as a whole may, in accordance with the relationship of forces on the international and national scale, go to the right or left, and that the pressure of social forces will in all events end in the crystallization of right, left, and centrist tendencies within it. We must not forget that the Chinese section must apply this resolution, and we must be careful not to discourage comrades by a lack of clarity which would have its repercussions in action. In order to be firmly convinced of the line to be applied, our Chinese comrades need clear perspectives which the resolution does not give them. This resolution will be faithfully applied by the Chinese comrades.

I wish to add in conclusion that I agree with the position of critical support for Mao.

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2. REMARKS BY COMRADE CLAUDIO

I wish to point out the same error in formulation indicated by Comrade Dumas*, as well as a passage on page 4 of the document, which

*Comrade Dumas took the floor to point out the need, in his opinion, of changing the formulation of two passages on pages 2 and 6 of the proposed resolution, which might give the impression that a dictatorship of the proletariat already exists.

gives the impression of jumping to a conclusion.

I am not in complete agreement with the passage which indicates that the Chinese CP will become a centrist party. If we consider the great many organizations which are included in this category of "centrist," we must say that the Chinese CP is already a centrist party, bearing in mind what it has already accomplished. We have said this for the Yugoslav CP; there is no reason whatever for not saying it for the Chinese CP.

The reporter has enumerated the criteria for determining the class character of a party. Something should be added which was implicit in his analysis: the consciousness which the members of the party themselves have of their objectives, the reason why they join this party. If it is because they want to enter the class struggle, we have, in general, to do with a working class party.

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3. REMARKS BY COMRADE MANUEL

In general it is better to be wise before the event; but it is fatal if we fail to be so after it has taken place. We have three different positions before this Plenum. The position of Comrade Peng, the position of Comrade Germain and that of the comrades who explain that there is already a dictatorship of the proletariat in China. There is not as much difference between these two last positions, as there is between them and the first position. The differences between the second and third position are limited to an exact estimation of the present stage of the movement, and there is common agreement that further development will bring them into agreement. On the other hand the position of Comrade Peng is based on a superannuated opinion which events have passed by, and it is primarily that position which we must criticize.

Special Characteristics Of The Third Chinese Revolution

What are the sources of the errors committed by the Chinese comrades? First of all was the brusque and rapid turn of events. Trotsky often warned us that such turns were in the nature of our epoch, but we did not recognize this turn in time. We did not understand the sweep of the agrarian revolt and the rapidity of the collapse of Chiang Kia-shek.

Subsequently the opening and development of the revolution took the Chinese comrades by surprise. The latter were expecting that

events would follow the classical pattern of the Russian revolution. But great national revolutions do not follow foreign models. If that is true in general, it is especially true for revolutions breaking out in backward countries. The way in which the Russian revolution of 1917 broke out was also a surprise for the Russian Bolsheviks who had to rearm rapidly in order not to be left behind by events.

What are the principal special characteristics of the third Chinese revolution? Instead of proceeding from the cities to the countryside, it passed from the countryside toward the cities. Instead of basing itself essentially on proletarian movements which were supported by peasant revolts, it rested fundamentally on peasant revolts in order only afterwards to secure the support of the workers. Instead of being led by a Bolshevik party with a conscious and consistent policy, it happened to be led by opportunism of Stalinist origin. It is this subjective factor which has brought about a deformation of the course of the revolution which Comrade Peng has emphasized, a deformation which we all know and understand.

But we must distinguish between the spark which sets the motor going and the motor itself. All sorts of events can begin a revolution; in our epoch, only the proletariat can carry it through to the end. That is what is fundamental in the theory of permanent revolution. The events in China have not invalidated this theory, but only the doctrinaire interpretation of this theory. And since Comrade Peng considers that this is the most important point which we must treat in this discussion, I want to reply to him on this subject.

The Permanent Revolution, A Unity Of Contradictory Elements

Marxism is the conscious expression of the unconscious historical process. It is a unity, but a unity of opposites, a unity of contradictory elements. Comrade Peng commits the error of identifying two contradictory aspects in all historical stages. But in reality, these two elements can diverge up to the point of coming into outright opposition with one another. That is what happened in the course of the third Chinese revolution.

In the first place, it is not accurate that the revolution must begin with a workers' revolt. We have just had another completely fresh example of this in Bolivia. The revolution can begin with a military coup d'etat just as well as with a peasant revolt; it is by its development that it carries the working class more or less rapidly into action. It is in this development of the revolution that its outcome is finally decided, by the more or less resolute intervention of the proletariat.

Second, it is no more true that the proletariat must find itself at the head of the revolution in all its stages. If the latter were true, in what would the permanent character of the revolution consist? The proletariat must fight precisely for attaining the leadership of the other revolting classes of the nation. In China, the struggle of the working class movement to gain leadership of the revolution has unquestionably been made difficult both by virtue of the

opportunist leadership of the CP and by our own weakness. But objective developments increasingly force the workers to move ahead. And even this does not take place in a completely unconscious way. The Stalinist party in effect reflects the interests of the masses in a deformed way. Neither does this take place, of course, in an entirely conscious way, for only our party can give such a conscious leadership to the masses. But events are pushing the CP toward becoming more and more conscious of what must be done to rebuild the country on new foundations.

Perspectives Of The Chinese CP

How can it provoke discouragement in our Chinese comrades if we say there will be left-centrist tendencies developing in the Chinese CP? Such has not been the case in any other country; wherever left-centrist tendencies have developed, our comrades have recognized this fact as a sign of possibilities of greater work and success for our movement. This does not mean to say that we must underestimate the difficulties in which our Chinese comrades find themselves. In reality, these difficulties are the most formidable encountered by any of our sections since the Left Opposition in the USSR. To assist them in hurdling these difficulties, we must, in addition to clarifying the developments in China itself, give our Chinese comrades a clear understanding of the perspectives of the world revolution. And that under two aspects.

First, it is entirely false to consider that the Kremlin exercises complete control over everything happening in China. Comrade Pablo has already emphasized the change in the relationship of forces between the Kremlin and the Chinese CP, and this will be increasingly confirmed. No one can say whether there will be a rapid break, or whether it will be Peking which will take the initiative, but we must follow this development very closely. We know that the fundamental interests of the Chinese revolution are different from those of the Kremlin, even though they may coincide at fixed intervals, as they coincide at present on the international level.

Secondly, it is not in China alone but on the international level that in the final analysis the test between Trotskyism and Stalinism will be decided. The fact that the Chinese revolution has been able to find support only in the USSR has to a certain degree helped the side of Stalinism. But war and the revolutionary rise can completely upset this situation. They would open up new perspectives for Peking and for the Chinese revolution. If we are convinced of the worldwide victory of Trotskyism because it identifies itself fundamentally with the victory of the international socialist revolution, there can be no reason whatever for supposing that this final victory will not also take place in China.

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4. REMARKS BY COMRADE P. FRANK

SPECIAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE CHINESE REVOLUTION

Comrade Germain has correctly stressed the changes which the Chinese revolution has already effected in China itself. We had particularly stressed the international significance of the Chinese revolution at the Third World Congress, but this other aspect, its internal meaning for China, should have been emphasized more. When we see this movement which has projected a fourth of humanity so far ahead, we cannot in truth speak of a peasant revolt, for no peasant revolt brought that about. Most certainly it is the permanent revolution that is involved here. The enormous consequences of the conquest of power by Mao Tse-tung are sufficient for characterizing this movement as a revolution with a very great sweep.

It would be a serious error to undertake the characterization of the Chinese State with the same criteria which Trotsky used for characterizing the USSR. In the USSR we were confronted by the problems posed by the degeneration of a worker's state; in China we are confronted by the rising development of the revolution. Certainly this revolution starts from a very low level, lower even than the Russian revolution's, which was one of the lowest in the world. Moreover it starts under a leadership which is Stalinist by origin and education. But if we take the reality of China as our point of departure, we must understand that even under a Trotskyist leadership, it would have remained far from the norms. This does not do away with the need for criticizing the Chinese CP. But it does demand that we make only accurate criticisms, that is to say, those which take into account the objective conditions of China.

On the relationship between workers and peasants in the Chinese revolution, there is an interesting letter addressed by Trotsky in January 1931 to the Left Opposition. Some Chinese comrades had issued the slogan of "dictatorship of the proletariat and of the poor." Trotsky approved this and added that this slogan is not in the least in contradiction with the slogan of dictatorship of the proletariat, but on the contrary completes it. Trotsky added that we are for the dictatorship of the proletariat in China but that we must understand that the proletariat represents a small minority in Chinese society, and that it can take power only if it groups the poor of the cities and countryside around itself.

Other comrades in China and in the International had developed erroneous ideas on the peasant armies. They considered these armies to have been mainly composed of lumpen elements. Trotsky, while admitting that lumpen elements slip into any insurgent army, underscored the fact the overall peasant army has profound roots in the reality of the Chinese countryside and that it represents one of the principal elements on which the dictatorship of the proletariat will have to support itself.

While the resolution of the IS distinguishes between the present situation in China and the dictatorship of the proletariat, this is not so much because it involves differences in the political tasks to be resolved, but it does represent a difference in sociological

definition. On this level, it is always preferable to be prudent. We were so, correctly, in the buffer zone regarding the going over toward a worker's state. And China is a vastly different country from Roumania! The process of revolutionary transformation there is enormous and is still far from being concluded.

The Class Character Of The Chinese CP

We must never confuse the social character of a party and the class character of its policy. Its policy can change greatly from one period to another; the class character of the party does not change easily. On this subject we have had erroneous opinions in the past about the Chinese CP, just as we had opinions on the Stalinist parties as a whole which were inadequate in precision as regards the development of these parties. Trotsky, for example, explained in the Third International After Lenin that the Stalinist theory of socialism in a single country would lead some of the CP's to social patriotism. The experience of 1939 has shown that this perspective was incorrect. The CP's remain fundamentally linked to the Kremlin, and each time that the Kremlin opposed their bourgeoisies, they also in their entirety opposed these bourgeoisies.

Regarding the relationship between the Chinese CP and the Kremlin, I must support what Comrade Manuel has already said. It is not accurate that the Kremlin decided the turns of the Chinese CP and that the latter simply followed its instructions. We had already declared at the Third World Congress that it was events which compelled the Chinese CP to make a turn. All of that was not imposed either by the Kremlin or even by the leadership of the Chinese CP itself, but this leadership was subject to the development of the revolutionary forces in the world.

At the editorial Committee of "Verite" we had a discussion on the "theoretical" changes of Mao Tse-tung. It is impossible to understand what has happened if we start out with the idea that a decisive ideological break between the Chinese communists and Stalinism has determined the course of these events. Nevertheless, that is what an article published in "Verite" claimed. Bleibtreu did not sign this article but he has supported the same idea. This idea is incorrect. The bonds between the Kremlin and the CP's are not ideological bonds. Stalinism is purely parasitic from the ideological point of view. The bonds between the CP's and the Kremlin are purely bureaucratic bonds. There is potentially a future break between the Chinese CP and the Kremlin but we should not proceed any faster than the fiddles. It would be erroneous to consider this break as a fait accompli now.

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5. REMARKS BY COMRADE PABLO

THE CHINESE REVOLUTION AND THE THEORY OF PERMANENT REVOLUTION

The Chinese revolution is so great, so important an event that it is possible and necessary not only to examine whether it confirms the elements of the theory of permanent revolution but also to explore its creative force for new elements which are valid to asso-

ciate with a genuine understanding and an enrichment of Marxism. Every great revolution creates special forms of expression of the revolutionary movement of the masses. From this point of view, it was inevitable that the Chinese revolution, far from mechanically borrowing its forms of expression purely and simply from those of the Russian revolution, itself creates its own forms of expression, in conformity with its own special characteristics, with the special characteristics of China itself. It remains nonetheless true that the general course of the third Chinese revolution confirms the theory of the permanent revolution, which is nothing else but the brilliant generalization of the proletarian revolution in the epoch of imperialism.

What was the question of decisive importance which was discussed in 1925-1927? It was the question: Which class will take the leadership of the revolution? The Trotskyists replied: The proletariat and the proletarian party. The Stalinists said, on the contrary: The proletariat must subordinate itself to the bourgeoisie and its party, the Kuomintang. There was no question, in the course of this discussion, of denying the necessity for concluding temporary agreements with the bourgeoisie since a semi-colonial bourgeoisie was involved. What was being questioned was that in the course of the development of the revolution the proletarian party and the proletariat itself had to be forewarned against the inevitable danger of a change of attitude on the part of the bourgeoisie, which would openly pass over to the camp of counter-revolution.

Can we seriously affirm that the victory of Mao Tse-tung was not secured by breaking in practice with menshevist theory? Can we seriously affirm that victory was not secured under the leadership of the Chinese CP and in a life and death struggle against the centralized political power of the bourgeoisie? On this first decisive point, the victory of Mao Tse-tung has strikingly confirmed the theory of permanent revolution.

If you want to refer to detailed questions discussed in 1925-1927, you can find confirmation of a whole series of other points in the theory of permanent revolution. Trotsky always stated that the agrarian revolution would not be primarily directed against a feudal caste, but against the rural bourgeoisie, the rich peasants and usurers. Wherever the agrarian reform has taken place, it is in effect this struggle which has taken place. Read in this connection the remarkable report of Comrade Kim, present secretary of our Chinese section. It concretely describes the realization of agrarian reform. This report confirms everything we have written on the Chinese revolution. The Chinese CP, confronted by spontaneous mass movements, was pushed into the struggle for power by the latter. Similar movements constantly lashed it to move ahead on the road of revolution. Eyewitnesses as well as the official documents of the Chinese CP unmistakably tell us that it was the spontaneous revolt which forced the turn on the Chinese CP, that the Chinese CP even had to sacrifice cadres and members opposed to agrarian reform, and abandon them to the anger of the masses, who killed them. The Chinese CP was compelled to say to the masses, when it was in danger of alienating their sympathy and their support: Whenever you are confronted by a bad leader, punish him, kill him! And involved here

of course were members and cadres of the party! All this is beyond question and one cannot come here and again question its validity.

What Determines The Social Character Of A Party?

On the other hand the discussion has raised a series of theoretical problems of the greatest importance. We must push this discussion to the end in order to rid our movement of false conceptions, of poorly understood schemas, which can prevent us from grasping the revolutionary content of great movements. This discussion will permit us not to repeat errors, and will better prepare us for revolutionary perspectives which are opening up before us.

We were first enlightened about the class character of a party, about the relationship between the leadership, the ranks, and the masses, especially as regards the Stalinist parties, by what took place during the war and subsequently. It is of vital importance for our movement to draw correct conclusions from this experience. What criteria must we use to judge the class character of a party? It is incorrect that social composition should be the decisive criterion. In many countries, bourgeois and petty-bourgeois parties may have a large following of workers and poor peasants. They nevertheless remain bourgeois parties. Even in the framework of the working class movement, social composition does not tell us enough. Even a party having the best proletarian social composition can follow an opportunist, centrist, and hardly a Bolshevik policy.

The decisive criterion for judging the class character of a party is its program and its practical behavior over a period of years. The program by itself is not enough. The number of working class organizations claiming to be working class and professing a socialist faith is legion. But what is the real worth of these professions of faith? Basically, it is what emerges from the practical behavior over a number of years which permits us to judge whether we have to do with an opportunist, centrist or revolutionary party.

The Stalinist Parties, The Kremlin And The Masses

Insofar as the Stalinist parties are concerned, what is decisive for characterizing them as working class parties, is their allegiance to the Kremlin bureaucracy, that is to say, to the bureaucracy of a degenerated workers state. It is this allegiance which explains why, despite all changes in social composition, there remain unvarying elements in Stalinist policy. These parties keep on playing the game of the Soviet bureaucracy all the time.

But on the other hand, experience has taught us that the Kremlin is not under all conditions the sole pole of attraction for these parties. The other pole is the revolutionary movement of the masses. Oscillations between these two poles can take place in the policy of the Stalinist parties. In the case of a very strong revolutionary movement of the masses with whom this party is linked, we may see it executing a revolutionary orientation, the dynamic of which can eventually lead to a break with the Kremlin. But experience has at the same time proved that there was not a single Stalinist party which fell under the influence of the bourgeoisie. Nor will such a

case, we can predict with assurance, occur in the future either.

From this point of view, the Chinese Communist Party cannot be characterized as a peasant party, despite its social composition. Trotsky said that an independent peasant party is impossible. There are peasant parties which are either under bourgeois leadership or under proletarian leadership. According to this analysis of Trotsky, a peasant who joins the CP adopts the proletarian point of view on the question of private property in the means of production, and such a mass of peasant members is not the same thing as the mass of a "peasant party." Of course we cannot conclude that social composition plays no role. It intervenes as an important factor in the capacity of the CP to free itself with greater or less rapidity from the control of the Kremlin. It is an important factor for determining whether the CP will be more or less sensitive to the revolutionary pressure of the masses.

The experience of the Chinese revolution has not only made it possible for us to secure clearer ideas but also to confirm completely ideas expressed by Leon Trotsky. All his life Trotsky combatted the idea of a peasant party which was neither working class nor bourgeois. His criticism of the positions of Bucharin and of Stalin were particularly vigorous on this question. Bucharin and Stalin used to say that the Kuomintang was a "bloc" rather than a party, that it was a "neutral arena" in which 9/10 of the members were "to the left." Trotsky answered that if this were so, the 1/10 of the Kuomintang which controlled the tops of this party, at the same time controlled the whole of this party, and consequently it was the bourgeoisie which dominated this whole. He always fought the idea that there could be a transfer of power in the Kuomintang from one class to another by means of electing a new leadership. The decisive factor for him was that the leadership of the peasants was not in the hands of the proletariat but in those of the bourgeoisie. The decisive role was played this time by the fact that the leadership of the peasants was not in the hands of "peasants" but in those of the Stalinists. The Stalinists can change their policy, they can play an extremely opportunistic role, which inevitably influences the social composition of their party, but they remain nonetheless Stalinists, and not peasant leaders in the service of the bourgeoisie.

Perspectives Of The Chinese Revolution

The difference between those who say that there is already a dictatorship of the proletariat in China and those who still speak of a workers and peasants government has to do with the evaluation of the stage reached at the present time by the Chinese revolution. The Chinese People's Republic was established at the time when the revolutionary army completed the conquest of the North. At that moment the bourgeois apparatus had not yet disintegrated in the South where the bourgeoisie was strongest. This apparatus has been purely and simply integrated into the new State apparatus. Its representatives sit in the central government. But this central government does not express the pressure of the bourgeoisie and that of the proletariat in an equal fashion. Proletarian preponderance there is clear, thanks to the leading role of the CP. However, in the South this preponderance does not as yet rest on a state apparatus controlled by the CP. There we have only a beginning of dual power.

From this point of view, the revolution is only beginning in the South. But the dynamics of the national and international situation make the general and rapid destruction of this dual power in favor of proletarian power as the most probable, the almost certain variant.

In our Chinese movement there is at present a struggle of ideas. Some forces have emerged there which are orienting themselves on the same road as the International. To alleviate this crisis and secure a favorable outcome, we must support this tendency and inform the whole section quickly of the point of view of the International. Those who are taking the same orientation as ours are not demoralized elements but are those who have deeply comprehended that this great victory over capitalism is in the last analysis also a victory over Stalinism and for Trotskyism.

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6. REMARKS BY COMRADE THEO

I am in agreement with the general line of the resolution, but it is naturally difficult to judge certain facts. I cannot come to a conclusion on the question of directives from the Kremlin to the Chinese CP at the beginning of the peasant revolution. In any event, the most important thing to understand is the general march of events in the world situation. Following this we must consider our theory in the light of these events, in order to see if there is agreement or disagreement between the two. We can today give positive replies to both question.

From events, there are two essential points which must be grasped. The defeat of the Kuomintang sealed a decisive defeat of the bourgeoisie. In the perspectives which we have, the perspectives of war-revolution, this defeat must be considered as irreversible. Theoretically we could elaborate several possible variants. But to guide our immediate action, we can set aside all other variants and retain only that of the march toward the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Comrade Peng complains that discussion in the International has been insufficient on this question. It is impossible for us to judge of special questions of fact. But we have followed and discussed all the documents received, and we have answered questions of principle in accordance with our general understanding of the world situation.

I am in agreement with the definition of the State and of the party as they are given in the resolution. The formula of a workers and peasants government appears to me the most satisfactory for the time being. The Bleibtreu amendments consider that the break between the Chinese CP and the Kremlin has already taken place. I think we have there a mechanical way of posing the question and of answering it. It is necessary to analyze the class forces in action in the Chinese revolution which are preparing a break. The resolution defines the reality in a more correct way (the Chinese CP has acted outside of the Kremlin's control in certain cases, and has succeeded in installing a system of co-direction over the CP's of Asia).

7. REMARKS BY COMRADE BLEIBTREU

The action of the Communist Party in China and the reaction of the Kremlin have a great significance for us. Since 1946 the function of the Chinese CP is in opposition with the function of a CP controlled by the Kremlin in a period of inactivity of the masses, as is the case at present in France. When Mao goes to Moscow he is compelled to take different positions from those taken by Thorez because of the activity of the Chinese masses. That is why it is dangerous to draw automatic conclusions from the Chinese CP for other CP's.

The Chinese revolution is the main motor of the present world revolution. Its role is more direct in smashing imperialist positions than the totality of previous positions conquered by the working class. That is why we reject all characterizations such as military victory, peasant war, etc., used in conjunction with the triumph of Mao Tse-tung. The resolution uses unclear formulations in this connection. It speaks of the military victory of Mao, whereas what is involved is a revolution unleashed in 1946 and triumphing in 1949.

It is as a function of this historical analysis that the question of the State is posed. Therein lie two questions which cross each other and coincide: how does the permanent revolution start? How and when did the third Chinese revolution start? To speak of dual power, as the resolution does, answers nothing. A dual power in a State cannot remain symbolic. The remark that certain elements of dual power effectively exist is insufficient for setting aside the question of the character of the State. This question can be answered only as the function of a single decisive criterion: which class holds the essential elements of coercion? Germain has said: the role of the government is very unilateral. But he draws no conclusion from this observation in the resolution, insofar as the character of the State is concerned. The problem we are confronted with is precisely the meaning and function of this central government. If the resolution does not take a clear position on this question it is because it does not clearly characterize the mass movement since 1946 as a revolution and a civil war.

The discussion on the class character of the Chinese CP gives the answer to the question: which class holds the State power? The working class holds it through the CP as intermediary. In order to reestablish their power the former possessing classes cannot change the government through cold means. We can maintain that a return to former conditions in China would require a counter-revolution, a civil war. On the other hand, however, is it necessary to destroy the existing State in order to go ahead toward the solution of the tasks of the permanent revolution? Must a new State be built? Is a civil war necessary for that? It is by the road of reform that this can be realized, by very profound reforms, of course. But the proletarian class struggle is not directed toward the destruction of the present State.

The question "which class holds the State power?" is a very important methodological question. The decisive criterion is not the

question of nationalizations, but that of intervention by the masses. This factor is also a determinant in elaborating the perspectives of the Chinese CP. When the masses enter into struggle with such a sweep as they have in China, the CP ceases to be dependent on the Kremlin, ceases to be a Stalinist party in the classical meaning of the word.

Finally, the Chinese revolution is of great instructional value to our movement as regards the activity of a CP in a backward country. It is because the first objectives which the revolution had to resolve were bourgeois-democratic objectives that the CP could be carried to the head of a revolutionary development without immediately entering into conflict with the Kremlin.

(The speaker then reads his amendments. See appendix.)

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8. REMARKS BY COMRADE JACQUES

I will vote against the resolution. I am in general in agreement with the positions which Comrade Peng has developed, on the basis of the documents which have up to now come to my attention.

My vote against the resolution is motivated by three reasons:

1. In characterizing the present regime in China, different confused formulations are used, which permit contradictory interpretations: dictatorship of the proletariat or dual power. What Bleibtreu has said on dual power is erroneous. A precondition for being able to speak of dual power is that the oppressed class has set up its own organs against the old State apparatus. That is the way things happened for example in Russia in 1917 with the soviets. In China, the State apparatus is working for the bourgeoisie. Where is there anything in China which permits of a comparison with soviets?

We must see in what organs the working class finds expression as a class. In truth, the proletariat did not show itself as an active factor during the decisive events, as Comrade Peng has reported to us. The bourgeoisie was organized in the State of Chiang Kai-shek; it is organized today in the State of Mao. But where is the organization of the workers?

No more is it correct to speak of the government of Mao as a "workers and peasants government." In 1917, neither Lenin nor Trotsky gave that name to the Kerensky government. On the contrary they issued the slogan: "Throw out the capitalist ministers." But in China of today these capitalist ministers still continue in the government.

2. Evaluation of the Stalinist party. On this subject I am in complete agreement with what Comrade Peng has said on the criteria by means of which we determine the class character of a party. More precisely, in my opinion there is no contradiction between these criteria of Comrade Peng and the general remarks of Comrade Pablo. We call a workers party a petty-bourgeois workers party when in

practice it does not follow a working class policy but defends petty-bourgeois conceptions. In a bureaucratized party, the apparatus possesses a very heavy weight. Social composition by itself is not the decisive factor, but it helps to explain why the CP does not defend the workers' interests.

The question of the Chinese revolution is very important because it sharpens the crisis of Stalinism. At the same time, it is also one of the reasons why great masses continue to follow the CP's. The Chinese revolution can give a great stimulus to revolutionary struggles. It is also the expression of forces which no longer allow the CP and the Kremlin to seek a long-term compromise with the national bourgeoisie. Because of this there will be a tendency on the part of the CP to exploit the mass movement more and more.

3. The method of relating ourselves toward the Stalinist parties. It is erroneous to confuse the permanent revolution with the proletarian revolution, as Bleibtreu does. I am in agreement with what Manuel said on this subject, but I note that the IS report commits the same error in its thesis number 10.

It is correct to expect the formation of a left wing in the Stalinist parties and to forecast their eventual break with Stalinism. But in order to exploit such a situation, we must, alongside our internal work in Stalinist organizations, continue to conduct our independent work. Nor can we resolve this question when we omit the possibility of a left or right differentiation in the very midst of the Soviet bureaucracy in the event of war.

I therefore propose that the article of Comrade Peng be taken as the basis for elaborating a new resolution. There is one point, however, on which I separate myself from Comrade Peng: the question of "critical support." I am of the opinion that we must work for the overthrow of the Mao government, while giving attention to defending it at the same time from imperialist attacks.

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9. REMARKS BY COMRADE BURNS

The present discussion is the continuation of the discussion which we conducted at the World Congress, a discussion which has rearmed our movement for countries where the Stalinist parties hold control over the mass organizations. As the fruit of this discussion, we not only secured clearer theoretical views on the class character of the State and of the CP in China, but also a precise conception of the way our Chinese organization should function, what its perspectives are, and how it can play its revolutionary role.

In some respects the problem which is posed in China is similar to that which is posed in France. What is involved in these two discussions is an understanding of the concrete revolutionary processes which are actually current in the world. If we consider our organizations from the numerical point of view as it confronts stupendous enemies, if we do not understand the historical forces which have already begun to work in our favor, then there really is room

for great pessimism. That is why it is vital for our sections to understand thoroughly the nature of the revolutionary forces which are entering into action on a world scale. That is why it is vital for our sections to weld themselves everywhere to these forces in motion. That is why we must continue relentlessly to struggle against sectarianism in methods of approaching the masses. The situation is more complicated and difficult for us; but at the same time it is more revolutionary, that is to say, more filled with promise for our movement if it knows how to intervene adequately.

In saluting the colonial revolution, we must become permeated with the idea that it does not involve so much a victory brought about under leadership of national Stalinist parties, but an enormous victory for the whole international revolutionary movement. It is not a victory for the tactics of Mao or of his ideological conceptions, but on the contrary a victory for the perspectives and strategic conceptions which we have advocated since the beginning of our movement.

The remark of Comrade Peng that we would discourage our Chinese comrades by calling the Chinese CP a left centrist party is disturbing to me. Our Chinese comrades have to overcome great difficulties, but the dynamic of the situation is the development of the revolution and that will solve no small number of our difficulties. Our comrades in China, in France, in the buffer zone, must understand that their first duty is to aid the revolutionary movement of their own class. Their fears and hesitations arise from personal resistance before a revolutionary movement which has taken unexpected forms. We must rid ourself of the resistance which manifests itself around definitions. It is useful to make precise definitions, but not to the point where definitions result in the movement's no longer knowing what it must do.

As regards the relations between Peking and the Kremlin, I am afraid that Bleibtreu is taking his wishes for the reality. Naturally there are differences between what Mao says and what the Kremlin says. But the Kremlin is pretending not to notice these differences, for it is not blind to the real relationship of forces existing between the USSR and China. These are intelligent people who understand that statements are one thing, but what is taking place in the world, the preparation for war, the need to maintain the alliance with China as a cover for its back exposed to imperialism, that is something more important. That is why they show a great flexibility in their relations with China. It is an error to believe that directives constantly come from Moscow. Moreover, the same thing applies not only to China. The French CP itself is not following a policy which is exclusively determined by Moscow. Because it has an important place in the calculations of the Kremlin, the latter uses great flexibility in applying its line. Even toward so weak a CP as the British CP, such a flexibility exists. Everybody knows that the Soviet bureaucracy has been extremely displeased with the British CP and has had no confidence in its leadership. And nevertheless there has been none of the changes in this leadership which have been predicted and announced so often.

10. REMARKS BY COMRADE PENG

I am here as representative of the Chinese organization and in this capacity I must make a statement. I have been given the rather clear impression that some comrades believed that there were sectarian tendencies in the Chinese organization. I must state that we decided as early as 1948 to participate in peripheral Stalinist organizations and in the CP itself. In 1949 we held a C.C. meeting which decided upon entry and we adopted resolutions stating that our comrades must work as the best militants in these organizations. We also took special measures on the attitude to be adopted regarding liasons, etc. Some cells were destroyed as a result of penetration by Stalinists but elsewhere the work is continuing successfully (certain precise indications on recruitments, etc., are given by Comrade Peng which we omit for reasons of security).

There has been no such sectarian error as is represented by that of the French majority. Comrade Burns was surprised because I said that characterizing the Chinese CP as a left centrist party would discourage our comrades. The great difficulties of the work demand a very clear consciousness of perspectives. That is the reason for my criticisms. But I reaffirm my agreement on two fundamental points: unconditional defense of the Chinese Peoples' Republic against imperialism; critical support of the government of Mao. On other questions, I reserve the right to formulate my ideas in later stages of the discussion.

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11. SUMMATION BY THE REPORTER

Facts are powerful. If we try to deny their existence, we will break our necks in collision with these facts. It is unfortunate that some leading comrades in our movement still will not acknowledge this. As Comrade Burns has said, this inability to recognize facts in their real character is a result of their appearance in new and unexpected forms, which are far from the norm. What was familiar to our movement because of the Russian tradition has appeared new and hard for it to understand in the new, Chinese form. But it remains nonetheless the primary task of a revolutionary movement to understand a revolution even when it appears different from what one has been accustomed to anticipate.

Once Again On The Class Character Of The State And Of The Government

Some very strange remarks have been made on this subject by Comrade Peng and Comrade Jacques. Comrade Jacques has compared the government of Mao with that of Kerensky. Comrade Peng has been of the opinion that we take away a weapon from the Chinese section by calling the Mao government a workers and peasants government, because, you see, our Chinese section should call for the establishment of such a workers and peasants government by expulsion of the capitalist ministers from the present government. Comrade Peng has even found a contradiction in what we say, because, he says, we admitted that in 1929, when the CP advocated the establishment of soviets and of a workers and peasants government, it was a peasant party, and today,

when there is no question either of soviets or of a workers and peasants government, but only of the "new democracy," we call it a workers party...

All this reasoning bears the hallmark of absolutely mechanistic and formalistic thought.

It is not because certain gentlemen in black frock-coats commonly termed bourgeois sat in his government that Kerensky was Kerensky. It was because, at the order and in the service of these gentlemen, he prevented agrarian reform, allowed free rein to the speculation and economy-strangling maneuvers of the capitalists, and plotted in the corridors with the Russian Chiang Kai-shek, named Kornilov or Krasnov, to drown the power of the workers and peasants in blood. Mao Tse-tung on the contrary has smashed the power of the Chinese Kornilovs, Krasnovs and Kerenskys by crushing them militarily, supported by the overwhelming majority of the poor peasants and with the sympathy, at any rate, of the overwhelming majority of the proletariat. He has not prevented but has carried out agrarian reform. He has not safeguarded but has seriously restricted the "freedom of speculation" and of profit of the capitalists. He has not reversed but has advanced, developed, and accelerated the revolutionary process. Isn't it an aberration, under these conditions, to compare him to Kerensky, supporting oneself solely on the fact that there are several bourgeois in his government, without asking oneself what is the power of these bourgeois, without posing the question: "Who controls, who rules whom?"

In 1932, in the full ebb-tide of the revolution, the CP found its forces isolated in the countryside. Trotsky was absolutely correct in indicating the danger of the infiltration of petty-bourgeois ideology into the CP, the danger of corruption by this milieu and by this ideology under the concrete conditions of defeat and isolation. These conditions were infinitely more important in determining the physiognomy of the party than radical phrases about soviets and a workers and peasants government, which influenced nobody anyway. Today, the CP, carried ahead by an overwhelming sweep of the revolution, has been compelled to crush the central power of the bourgeoisie and to carry out the agrarian reform, thereby in practice breaking with the bourgeoisie and in practice realizing the workers and peasants government. This practice is infinitely more important in determining the present physiognomy of this party than reactionary and deceptive phrases about the "bloc of 4 classes" and the "new democracy." Only those who judge the policies of a party by its words and not by its acts can say under these conditions that the policies of Mao remain "fundamentally the same." For us, an abyss separates these policies from those of the past. This abyss was hewed out by a colossal fact: the revolution, the revolutionary action of tens of millions of poor peasants!

Bleibtreu commits a mechanistic and formalistic error similar to that of Comrades Peng and Jacques. Must the bourgeoisie make a counter-revolution to reestablish its power? he asks. Yes. Must the proletariat make a revolution to complete the realization of the revolutionary tasks? No. Therefore, we are confronting a workers State. Bleibtreu forgets a little thing: that the struggle between

the revolution and counter-revolution is still taking place, that the civil war of the bourgeoisie of which he speaks is not a thing of the future but is now unfolding in China. That is what we are talking about when we say that the permanent revolution is unfolding before our eyes in this immense country. When you try to apply the categories of formal logic to movement, mistakes are inevitable. When you try to apply to a situation of civil war, of revolution in process but not yet completed, the criteria used for judging the nature of established, recognized, stable states, mistakes are equally inevitable. On the level of the central government, two governments do not confront each other in China, as was the case in Russia, or in Germany in 1918, or in Spain, at least in an embryonic form, in 1936. But read the report of Comrade Kim to find out what the situation is in the villages, the cantons, the provinces of the south. A veritable civil war is raging there, whose existence moreover is conceded by the central authorities since they speak of thousands of "bandits" who are periodically "wiped out" and who are mobilized in defense of the landlords. And who holds the power in the cities and in the capitals themselves of the southern provinces? In numerous cases, it is the old leaders of the Kuomintang, that is to say, the representatives of the village bourgeoisie and of the landlords. Who holds power in the villages after the realization of agrarian reform? The peasant associations and poor peasant associations, who are factually functioning like genuine soviets. Do we have dual power there or don't we when city and village confront each other in this way? Is there a civil war there in which for the time being the state power of the old classes has not as yet been completely liquidated but is to have its fate sealed by the outcome of the struggle itself? Regarding the outcome of this struggle, no doubt exists, neither for us nor for Bleibtreu. Thanks to the "unilateral" role of the central government and of the peoples army, the old possessing classes will be crushed. But this does not yet justify, in analyzing the facts as they exist, that we, today, jump over this stage of their subsequent and final destruction, and consider as already existing what will come into being in a year or two.

The Future Development Of The Chinese CP

Comrade Peng is not satisfied with the way we outline the perspectives of development of the Chinese CP. He does not think they are precise enough. In truth, these perspectives are very precise: what Comrade Peng has against them is that they differ considerably from his own. For him, the CP will, under the pressure of antagonistic classes, give birth to two centrifugal wings, a pro-bourgeois right wing and a proletarian left wing. Between these two wings, the "center" with Mao will maintain a kind of equilibrium until it will be compelled by the struggle to decide for one or the other. We are in complete disagreement with this schema. It seems nicely balanced, in an abstract way. But it does not at all take into account the real relationship of forces in the world and in China. We must repeat what Comrade Theo has already very correctly stated on this subject: in a world situation of a growing polarization of class forces, in which it will increasingly seem to the whole world bourgeoisie that the sole road to salvation lies in a desperate attempt to crush the USSR, the People's Republic of China and the international working class movement; in a situation in China itself in which the bourgeoisie will be compelled to become more and more hostile and "defeatist"

toward the State; with the growth and strengthening of the anti-imperialist forces on a world scale -- it is extremely improbable, given the totality of these factors, that the CP can play the role of an "arbiter" above the classes, or that it can "yield" to bourgeois pressure (which would mean surrendering power without a struggle!). It is infinitely more probable that the great majority of the party and of its leadership will be propelled by the logic of its position, of its class nature and of its struggle to safeguard what has already been conquered, to carry the revolution through to its completion. This does not exclude the possibility that certain individuals, or even embryonic tendencies will yield to capitalist pressure, capitulate and betray. But it does make it extremely unlikely that such a betrayal will involve an important section of the leadership, and consequently this is not a variant on which we should base either our perspectives or our activities.

Comrade Peng complains that I did not answer his criticisms regarding the opposition between the turn of the Chinese CP and the directives of the Kremlin. It is not difficult to make a reply on this point since it involves facts which everybody can verify. The first turn of the Chinese CP, that of May 1946, coincided with the most rightist line of the Kremlin, with the unconditional support which it gave to the Marshall mission. And there are Russian documents which were still taking the position of favoring a coalition government after the Chinese CP had already publicly called for the overthrow of Chiang Kai-shek. Possibly this represents only an instance of inertia in the political commentary of some subordinate bureaucrats. But there is no indication whatever that Moscow approved, not to mention ordered, the change in policy of the Chinese CP in 1947. The latter is a product of the whole internal situation of the country, of everything which resulted from the May 1946 turn, and not of "foreign directives." Moscow certainly had to accept a fait accompli after it occurred. But this fait accompli was not a product of the genius-like thought of Stalin, but of the reality of the revolutionary struggle of the peasants in northern China.

Comrade Jacques has spoken of the necessity for struggling for the overthrow of Mao. It is necessary to reply violently on this question, especially since certain Chinese comrades have written the same thing.

-- PENG: They have since revised their positions.

-- REPORTER: So much the better! I will say to Comrade Jacques, with whom I worked for many years and whom I esteem for his political capacity and for his courage in leading a revolutionary struggle in the most petty-bourgeois country in the world: such words are absolutely irresponsible. The revolution is a serious thing for us. We cannot play with it. What social force will have to make this new "revolution?" The proletariat? But it will receive no support whatever from the peasantry, which for an entire period has been satisfied by agrarian reform. Will it be necessary then to start a struggle between the proletariat and the peasantry? Or will it be necessary to wait until Mao proceeds to agrarian collectivization in order to set up a new kind of alliance between the peasantry and the proletariat? Don't you see that such ideas, despite all restrictive formulas on the necessity for defending Mao against imperialism,

are objectively, we must say it, counter-revolutionary ideas?

-- JACQUES: And in the USSR?

-- REPORTER: In the USSR we are confronted by a revolution in the period of its worst degeneration, when, after liquidation of all the old possessing classes, the despoiling and totalitarian bourgeoisie is concentrating the hostility of all the laboring layers of the population against itself. In China, we find ourselves in the rising epoch of the revolution, whose firing power is concentrated on the old possessing classes which are far from being liquidated. How is it possible not to see the fundamental differences between these two situations?

FINAL REMARKS

I am in agreement with the proposals of Comrades Dumas and Claudio. As for the Bleibtreu amendments, a series of them which involve only questions of formulation can be accepted by us. Bleibtreu has used a great deal of time and energy to sharpen non-existent differences artificially. We know as well as he does that there has been an enormous revolution in China and not a military campaign. The only difference between us is regarding the evaluation of the present stage attained by this revolution. In passing, there are numerous errors of fact in his amendments on which I cannot enlarge.

Finally, a word regarding the tasks of the Chinese section. In order to defend it against pessimism and demoralization, it is first of all necessary to face the facts courageously, to get rid of formulas which events have passed by, and to find new tasks in the dynamics of the situation. If we ask the section to conduct a campaign to "break the coalition" when for 99% of the population this break has already obviously begun, we will remain without an echo. If we understand, however, what the CP will be compelled to do, we will carry through the integration of our movement in the mass movement and will allow our section to play its real role when the working class will mobilize and take the lead of the real movement.

We print below all the amendments presented by Bleibtreu. As seen from the reply of the reporter, only those which are in line with the resolution, will be considered for integration in the final editing of the resolution; the others, notably on the character of the regime, have been rejected.

APPENDIX

AMENDMENTS ON THE CHINESE RESOLUTION

Presented by BLEIBTREU

Paragraph 1.

The third Chinese revolution began in 1946 with the turn of the Chinese CP toward agrarian reform. Assuming basically the form of a

military struggle from the fact (1) of the backward character of Chinese economy, and consequently, of the considerable weight of the peasant class and of bourgeois-democratic slogans, (2) of the conditions in which the Chinese CP found itself since the defeat of the second revolution and the long march, (3) from the fact also of the wish of the Chinese CP not to appeal to the city proletariat; the third Chinese revolution ended in 1949 with the destruction of the old State apparatus serving the landlords and compradores and with the establishment of a new State.

In a country of the colonial or semi-colonial type like China, establishment of a new State, victory of the revolution, can only be the starting point for an entire period of realizing bourgeois-democratic tasks: national independence and unification, liquidation of landlord property, liquidation of the feudal heritage in the sphere of economy, administration, customs, culture, etc.

In the imperialist epoch, every bourgeois-democratic revolution has the significance of a proletarian revolution from a tri-fold point of view:

1. It can only be launched by starting with the destruction of the old feudal and bourgeois State and by the creation of a State with a working class character.

2. Accomplishment of the bourgeois-democratic tasks themselves imposes the realization of certain socialist tasks, the growing over of the bourgeois-democratic revolution into the socialist revolution.

3. On the world scale, the bourgeois-democratic revolution in a backward country is only a link in the chain of world socialist revolution.

These three theses of the permanent revolution have been completely verified in specific forms by the third Chinese revolution, overturning the theoretical edifices of the opportunist leaders of the Chinese CP and leading them to profound revisions:

- 1) on the necessary leading role of the proletariat in the revolution;

- 2) on the idea of revolution by stages which they have had to refashion partially step by step;

- 3) on the place of the Chinese revolution in the world revolution.

Paragraph 2.

Line 2: Replace "the pre-condition" by "the condition."

Line 9: Write: "The Chinese revolution began, not in alliance with Chiang Kai-shek, but with the breakup of this alliance and with the open offensive against Chiang unleashed in 1946."

Paragraph 3.

First sentence: "The establishment of the People's Republic of China represents the beginning of a process of permanent revolution which is now unfolding."

Eliminate at this point the sentence: "The imperialist threat ...American bases in Japan."

Lines 6 to 11: Like the imperialist intervention against the USSR from 1918 to 1921 (war communism), so this threat serves as an accelerating factor in the solution of the tasks of the People's Republic in China, as is attested by the sharpening of the left turn since the Korean war.

Write the last sentence as follows: "Since Hong Kong, Formosa and the Russian enclaves in Chinese territory (especially in Inner Mongolia and Sinkiang) remain outside the jurisdiction of the central government, their return is necessary for the total realization of Chinese unity."

Elimination of the last sentence in the paragraph.

Elimination of paragraph 4, except for the part to retain: "For the historical tasks of the Chinese revolution...democratic of the workers and poor peasants," lines 4 to 11 of paragraph 4, and

replace by:

Paragraph 4.

The class character of the State in peoples China is that of a workers State.

To the question: what class holds the central power? the answer is: the working class through the intermediary of the Chinese CP.

To the question: can there be a retreat effected by cold means, without destroying the new State? the answer is: a retreat would necessitate the destruction of the new State either by a new civil war and the installation of another State, or by direct colonization, that is to say, the disappearance of the national State.

To the question: does accomplishment of the bourgeois-democratic tasks and the going over into the socialist revolution necessitate the destruction of the new State and the installation of another by means of a civil war: the answer is:

The dynamics of the new State born of the revolution are proceeding in the direction of accomplishing the tasks of the permanent revolution. Profound changes are necessary; the proletariat as a class must secure total control; the problem of a political revolution might have to be posed at a given stage, but not that of a social revolution. At present, the dynamics of the revolution in China and in Asia make it more probable that an evolution in a progressive direction will take place, which imposes on the Fourth International a reformist attitude regarding the new State.

The answer to these three questions constitute the decisive criterion which permit characterizing the State of the People Republic of China as a workers State, as a dictatorship of the proletariat, with specific traits drawn from the opportunist policies of the Chinese CP and the given historical conditions of backward China.

This confirmation completely verifies the basic affirmation of the conception of permanent revolution regarding the historical impossibility of a "peasant revolution," on the impossibility of a bourgeois revolution under bourgeois leadership in the imperialist stage, on the impossibility of a "democratic dictatorship of workers and peasants," on the inevitable necessity of the dictatorship of the proletariat as a prior condition to the solution of the bourgeois-democratic tasks.

The dictatorship of the proletariat in China contains great elements of weakness which are:

-- the persistence of bourgeois property on a scale which corresponds to a deliberate policy of the Chinese CP but also to the needs of a completely indispensable N.E.P.;

-- the bureaucratic tendencies of the CP apparatus and the slightness of its eagerness to call upon the city proletariat;

-- as accessory, the participation of bourgeois elements in the central government.

Undeniably these weaknesses leave the door open to a consolidation of the relationship between capitalist property in the cities and the countryside; to infiltration of the class enemy in the State apparatus and in the CP; to the opening of a counter-revolutionary civil war for the destruction of the new workers State, and the reconquest of State power by the old ruling classes.

But this eventuality is rendered extremely improbable by the whole situation in Asia and in the world in which the Chinese revolution, whose dynamic is in an ascending direction, continues to play the role of a major motor force in the worldwide extension of the revolution. The recent left turn of the Chinese CP is an expression of this dialectical interaction.

Chapter II.

Next to last line, in place of: "dealt a mortal blow," write: "delivered to the mortal blows of the revolution."

Paragraph 6, last sentence, write:

"Unable to engage its military and economic potential on all continents at the same time, and overwhelmed by the stormy rise of the revolution in China, before which the Chiang Kai-shek regime was disintegrating at an accelerated pace, American imperialism was

compelled in 1947-1948 to renounce its hope of smashing the soaring revolution and to turn its efforts toward the consolidation of capitalism in western Europe. Its retreat from China surrendered Chiang Kai-shek to his coup de grace."

Paragraph 7, line 1:

eliminate: "however and in its turn," and write: "is fundamentally explained by..."

eliminate: "the internal dissolution" and write: "the disintegration of the power of Chiang Kai-shek..."

Paragraph 8, end of first break, add:

"During the summer of 1946, the Chinese CP and the army under its control found themselves in a very serious situation. The policy of compromise with Chiang and Marshall imposed by Stalin had failed. The white army was going over to a massive offensive. Stalin, by drawing out of Manchuria, allowed it to complete the encirclement of the communist territories.

"It was under these conditions that the Chinese CP, under pressure from the other side by the peasant masses, who were spontaneously proceeding to action against the landlords, broke with the policies of the Kremlin, and primed its historical turn toward agrarian reform. This turn, although limited in content, gave a decisive impulsion to the peasants' war, inspired the rapid growth of poor peasant committees, brought about the decomposition of the peasant army of Chiang Kai-shek under the mounting flood-tide of the revolution."

Chapter III

Paragraph 10, add line 8:

"Nevertheless the tragic experience of 1926 had left evident traces in the Chinese CP and had awakened a certain critical spirit regarding the infallibility of the Kremlin. Moreover, the ties of bureaucratic control were not very solid."

Eliminate the sentence: "that is the surest criterion...opportunist working class party," lines 17 to 19, which carries the risk of bringing into question the working class character of the social-democratic parties.

Paragraph 10, add at the end:

"The transformation of the role of the Chinese CP under the pressure of events and of the class struggle, without an apparent break with the Kremlin, expresses the greater tolerance of the Soviet bureaucracy toward the bourgeois-democratic revolution in backward countries, a revolution which does not in its first stage represent a threat to the power of the bureaucracy of the USSR, particularly when it is made with the city proletariat deliberately kept on the sidelines."

Paragraph 13

Eliminate the first 15 lines and begin:

"On the whole the central government is compelled to support itself more and more on the workers and poor peasants. Bourgeois remnants within the workers State correspond to an eminently transitional situation."

"Representatives of the bourgeoisie share in the central power. They could equally..."

resume the text of the resolution at line 18.

Paragraph 14

Begin: "The direction of evolution is determined by the relationship of forces between the classes on the national and international level. The decisive factor..."

continue with the text of the resolution up to the 11th line.

eliminate the end of paragraph 14.

Chapter IV

Paragraph 16, eliminate lines 16 to 21. Replace by: "The outbreak of world war will precipitate the liquidation of bourgeois remnants. The failure of this liquidation would apparently mean"... Resume the text of the resolution at line 22.

Paragraph 18

Eliminate the last sentence on the breakup of the Sino-Soviet alliance.

"While the breakup of the Sino-Soviet diplomatic and military alliance is a danger whose eventuality is most unlikely, this is not true regarding the political and organizational relationships of the Chinese CP with Kremlin control: the break in fact from Stalinist tutelage took place with the turn of 1946 toward revolution.

"The deepening of the centrist course of the Chinese CP toward power places on the agenda its conscious and open ideological break with the Kremlin apparatus, a break which is compatible with a policy of diplomatic and military alliance with the USSR on the part of the Chinese CP."

Chapter V.

No amendments.

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