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EDUCATION FOR SOCIALISTS

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Towards a History of the Fourth International, Part 4

Struggle in the Fourth International

INTERNATIONAL SECRETARIAT DOCUMENTS 1951-1954

Volume 1 of 4 volumes

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INTERNATIONAL SECRETARIAT DOCUMENTS,
1951-1954

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Introductory Note

In 1953, sharp differences over Stalinism and organizational matters divided the Fourth International into two public factions, the International Committee of the Fourth International and the International Secretariat of the Fourth International. This division lasted until the Re-unification Congress of the Fourth International held in 1963.

The articles, documents, correspondence, and circulars published in these *Education for Socialists* bulletins are presented as an aid in tracing the evolution of this dispute. The material is divided into two parts. The first (Part Three of *Towards a History of the Fourth International*) is composed of four bulletins and contains materials from the International Committee. The second (Part Four of *Towards a History of the Fourth International*) consists of four bulletins containing material from the International Secretariat faction.

Both sets of bulletins begin with the discussion prior to the Third World Congress of the Fourth International held in 1951. They are divided into sections dealing with key stages in the development of the dispute. Each section opens with a brief introductory note. To the extent that these notes include historical interpretations or conclusions, the views expressed are my own.

The documents, correspondence, articles, and circulars have been subjected to minimal editing. In general the style, grammar, etc., have been retained as in the originals. Additions to the text for explanatory purposes appear in brackets.

The term "section" appears frequently in these documents. This word was used in two different senses within the world Trotskyist movement. On the one hand, it refers to those groups which are affiliated to the Fourth International. Secondly, it is used in reference to organizations that are barred from membership in the Fourth International by reactionary legislation, such as the SWP, but are in full political solidarity with the world Trotskyist movement and represent the continuity of Trotskyism in their countries.

The faction struggle in the world Trotskyist movement

occurred when the McCarthyite witch-hunt was at its height in the United States. Similar manifestations of political repression appeared in other capitalist countries, as the ruling class sought to whip up anticommunist hysteria. In view of these sharp attacks on democratic rights, many radicals found it necessary to use pseudonyms or pen-names in carrying out their political activity. This was true of the Trotskyist movement as well. In line with a policy of printing this material as it originally appeared, these have generally not been changed. Instead, a glossary of these pen-names is included in each volume. Note that some individuals used more than one pen-name on occasion.

The 1953-54 dispute was worldwide in its scope and repercussions. Many parts of the Trotskyist movement that participated in the struggle are not represented in this collection. An instance of this is the lack of documentation from Latin America. Material from the dispute in the Latin American Trotskyist organizations is now being translated and will appear in a future volume.

This selection is based on the documents and correspondence presently available to the National Education Department of the Socialist Workers Party. Because of the speed with which the dispute developed, once the differences had become apparent to both sides, many aspects of the struggle are not fully dealt with in official documents. Therefore, it was necessary to include a considerable amount of correspondence to allow maximum clarity for the reader.

Hopefully, the publication of these bulletins will inspire others who were involved in the dispute to make available the relevant materials in their possession. Special thanks are owed to James P. Cannon, National Chairman Emeritus of the Socialist Workers Party, and Tom Kerry and Karolyn Kerry for making their personal archives available for this project.

Fred Feldman
February 1974

Glossary of Pseudonyms and Pen Names Used by Key Figures

The individuals' names appear on the left, with the pseudonyms following in italics.

Harry Braverman: *Harry Frankel*

James P. Cannon: *Walter, Martin*

George Clarke: *Campbell, Livingstone, Livingston*

Colvin R. DaSilva: *Roy*

Farrell Dobbs: *Smith, Barr*

Ross Dowson: *Kane*

Leslie Goonewardene: *Tilak*

Sam Gordon: *Tom, Harry, Burton, Joe*

Joseph Hansen: *Herrick*

Gerry Healy: *Burns, Mason, Jerry*

John Lawrence: *Collins*

Ernest Mandel: *Ernest Germain, Albert, Jeb*

Sherry Mangan: *Patrice, Terrence Phelan, Patrick O'Daniel*

George Novack: *Manuel, William F. Warde*

Michel Raptis: *Michel Pablo, Gabe*

David Weiss: *Stevens*

Milton Zaslow: *Mike Bartell*

SECTION I: BEFORE THE THIRD WORLD CONGRESS

[In the discussion preceding the Third World Congress, Michel Pablo, the secretary of the Fourth International, deepened a number of ideas that he had first raised in the discussion of the class character of the Yugoslav state. Pablo predicted that deformed workers states would be the norm of revolutionary development for a period that would probably last for centuries.

[Pablo also expressed some new views on the nature and role of Stalinism, which he believed was changing under the conditions of an inevitable Third World War. The outcome of this war, in his opinion, was foreordained: a victory for the revolutionary forces, at least in Europe and Asia.

[Pablo's views were expressed in "Where Are We Going?" which is reprinted here from *SWP International Information Bulletin*, March 1951. He further defended them in "On the Duration and Nature of the Transition from Capitalism to Socialism," reprinted from *SWP International Information Bulletin*, July 1951.

[Although Pablo kept his most extreme formulations out of the main resolutions submitted by the International Secretariat for a vote by the congress, his positions aroused concern. Ernest Germain, for instance, responded by presenting a restatement of some of the basic Trotskyist positions on Stalinism, although he solidarized himself with the resolutions supported by Pablo. His "What Should Be Modified and What Should Be Maintained in the Theses of the Second World Congress of the Fourth International

on the Question of Stalinism?" is reprinted from *SWP International Information Bulletin*, April 1951.

[In addition, members of the SWP Political Committee collaborated on a document (reprinted in Part 3 of *Towards A History of the Fourth International*) that noted omissions and ambiguous formulations in the resolution, while supporting its general line.

[The most extensive criticisms were offered by the leadership of the Parti Communiste Internationaliste, the French section of the Fourth International. (Their main contribution, "Where is Comrade Pablo Going?," appears in Part 3 of this series.) They opposed the main resolution on the grounds that the views expressed by Pablo in "Where Are We Going?" were being smuggled into the line through ambiguous and incorrect formulations.

[At the congress, a number of amendments were passed to the main resolution. To most of the delegates, this appeared to place the resolution in the Trotskyist tradition. Germain sharply rejected the attempt of the French comrades to counterpose his document to Pablo's line.

[The main resolution passed by the Third World Congress, held in August-September 1951, was entitled "Orientation and Perspectives." It is reprinted here as it appeared in the November-December 1951 issue of *Fourth International*, the predecessor of the *International Socialist Review*. The sentences that were added to the text before the resolution was approved are marked with boxes in this edition.]

1. "Where Are We Going?" by Michel Pablo

The Ninth Plenum of the IEC has opened the preparatory discussion for the Third World Congress of our International and has set its date for the year 1951.

Two documents presented by the International Secretariat and approved by the Ninth Plenum will serve as basis for opening this discussion: the "THESES ON INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVES AND THE ORIENTATION OF THE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL MOVEMENT" and "THE YUGOSLAV REVOLUTION AND THE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL."

The first document has a general character and does not obviate the need to present a "Political Resolution" before the World Congress which will concern itself more particularly with the concrete analysis of the international situation and with our specific political tasks in the immediate future.

But it has appeared necessary to open discussion in the International primarily on the basis of a document which would trace the main lines of our outlook on the evolution of the international situation in the years ahead, and which would reaffirm and more sharply define a series of fundamental ideas determining the thought and activity of our movement.

For we have recognized, with far greater clarity than ever, since the Second World Congress and particularly in the most recent period, two factors to which we at-

tribute a fundamental importance:

1. Since the end of the last war we have entered a period essentially different from everything we have known in the past, with the tempo of this period speeding up.

2. In the face of this new period of rapid and abrupt change, it is vital, it is imperative for a real Marxist-revolutionary movement such as ours, to overcome the unavoidable discrepancy between its way of thinking, between its theory and the new developments in objective reality. This must be done by a constant effort at dialectically passing beyond every limited notion and discarding all schematism, all doctrinairism and every kind of thinking which is unable to encompass, analyze and comprehend the infinitely rich content of a new reality in full bloom.

Some comrades have written that, on the eve of the last war, our theory, that is to say, the way in which our collective thinking (the thinking of our movement) grasped the reality of that time, appeared solid, without cracks and fissures. Now, say these comrades, everything seems out of joint.

The truth naturally is far from what these comrades, shedding bitter tears (and we want to believe that the tears are genuine) imagine about the alleged broken harmony in our theory.

So far as we are concerned, we have never conceded

primacy to theory (no matter what the theory) over life since such an affirmation would be fundamentally contrary to the genuine, non-mystical, non-schematic, undogmatic outlook which is Marxism. We find an entirely different explanation for this phenomenon.

It is true that on the eve of the last war our theory appeared more global, more uniform, more harmonious, for it reflected a far less complicated and less dynamic content than is the case today. On the eve of the last war the world seemed to be in relative equilibrium and repose, so far as either the capitalist regime or Stalinism were concerned. Can we, even remotely, say the same for the present period?

For the genuine Marxist revolutionary movement the problem is not to desire to force the new reality at any cost into yesterday's norms of thinking, but to so widen and modify the latter as to bring these norms into accord with new objective developments. Naturally these must be well understood and grounded theoretically in the light of a principled line, not one which is empirical or opportunist.

That is what we have in part accomplished (within the measure of our collective capacities) mainly since the Second World Congress.

For it is in fact mainly since then that the line of the International became more defined and developed on a series of fundamental questions pertaining to a better understanding of the nature of the period in which we are living and of its perspectives.

The transformations undergone by the capitalist regime during and after the last war, its perspectives, as well as the changes undergone by Stalinism, its role, its perspectives, have been better understood by our movement. This came about not all at once but step by step, aided by events, and with unavoidable gaps and delays.

In the document "Theses on International Perspectives." etc., we have endeavored to reaffirm this acquisition of our movement and to render more precise the points which appeared to us essential for our orientation in the years ahead. The ideas formulated in this document are presented in a condensed and rather summary form and naturally call for further exposition. That is what we shall try to do in the present article.

* * *

For our movement objective social reality consists essentially of the capitalist regime and the Stalinist world. Furthermore, whether we like it or not, these two elements by and large constitute objective social reality, for the overwhelming majority of the forces opposing capitalism are right now to be found under the leadership or influence of the Soviet bureaucracy.

Therefore, to understand objective social reality and to be able to act effectively upon it we have to know both the present condition of the capitalist regime (in its static and dynamic state), and the way in which Stalinism is developing.

The Condition of Capitalism

What is the fundamental difference between the present and the prewar condition of capitalism?

This difference manifests itself mainly in the many-sided

breakdown of the equilibrium of the capitalist regime and in the fact that this breakdown tends to get worse.

Capitalism as a regime is characterized, as Trotsky has said, by an equilibrium which is simultaneously "dynamic" and "complex" (economic, social, international). That is to say, this equilibrium constantly tends towards breakdowns followed by a reestablishment of equilibrium. Capitalist equilibrium resulted from a certain interrelationship of its economic functioning, the class relations within each country, and its international relations. Since none of these main factors remains static but each is constantly evolving, a corresponding movement takes place from equilibrium towards breakdown—under the influence of an economic crisis, for example, a revolution or a war—to be followed later by a new reestablishment of equilibrium.

Up to the eve of the last war, capitalism evolved according to this general outline, the objective foundations for a new equilibrium still proving to be fairly weighty.

But this is not true now. The disequilibrium of the capitalist system which was engendered during and following the last war is proving to be basic, chronic and tending to grow worse. This results from the following basic causes, which we can now grasp with increasing clarity and in all their tremendous importance:

The breakup of the colonial sector of imperialism as a result of the colonial revolutions in Asia, especially of the Chinese revolution; the breakdown of the economic unity of capitalist Europe arising from the formation of the Soviet buffer zone; the apoplectic expansion of American capitalism in the midst of a narrowing and impoverished capitalist market, and the disruptive economic and political role which American imperialism is compelled to play in this capitalist world; and finally the political and economic power which the USSR itself represents.

All these new factors act together in the direction of maintaining and aggravating the breakdown of capitalist equilibrium on all levels: those of economic relations, of class relations, of international relations.

I do not believe it essential for this article (and do not have the necessary statistical data) to develop in detail exactly what is represented for certain capitalist countries, and for the regime in its entirety, by the economic loss (outlets for capital and goods, sources of raw material, balances of trade) of territories such as China, Indo-China, Korea, Indonesia, Malaya, Burma. Some of these territories are not yet actually lost to imperialism but they are in process of becoming so, and this is already determining certain reactions and preparations by imperialism.

The loss of Malaya, for example, would throw British imperialism into a grave financial crisis by depriving it of important resources it now obtains from exploiting this country.

It is necessary on the other hand to consider not only what these losses mean in terms of the past condition of capitalism but also how they relate to its future possibilities, to its perspectives. From this point of view, for instance, the loss of the Chinese market is a historic defeat for Yankee imperialism so far as its possibilities for expansion are concerned. The same considerations in their economic significance apply to capitalist Europe, particularly through the loss of those countries which now constitute the Soviet buffer zone.

All these structural modifications (to which must be added the new relationships between capitalist powers

resulting from the crushing preponderance of Yankee imperialism over all the other capitalist countries), add up to this: that the capitalist regime, having lost its equilibrium, now has no possibility of recovering it *without restoring a world market embracing the lost territories, and without a more equalized redistribution of forces within the imperialist camp.*

Such a perspective is not theoretically excluded in the event of a victorious war waged by imperialism which would also bring with it a marked weakening of American imperialism while in an equal measure not draining the other powers such as England, France, Germany, Japan.

Actually, however, we are very far today from such a perspective.

Given the fact that all its attempts to restore a certain measure of equilibrium have failed, and that on the contrary it is constantly losing ground, nothing else is now left for capitalism except to take the road toward ever greater military, economic and political preparations for a new war.

This is the initial important point of departure and the initial fundamental perspective in the evolution of the international situation.

To understand that capitalism is now rapidly heading toward war, for it has no other short or long-term way out, and that this process cannot be stopped short of the unavoidable destruction of the regime, is equivalent to defining a fundamental line in the evolution of the international situation.

Neither the defeatist or "neutralist" tendencies which are prevailing among certain circles of the European bourgeoisie, nor the "isolationist" tendencies of certain sections of the American bourgeoisie, will be able in the long run to determine the fundamental line of the central core of the international monopolist bourgeoisie and of the American monopolists in particular. Even by itself, the latter, if it succeeds in maintaining its control over the American masses, would rather risk war than surrender without a fight to the revolution.

Consequently, discussion among revolutionary Marxists cannot take place over the question of whether war is inevitable or not, so long as the capitalist regime remains standing, but is limited to questions of *how soon, the conditions for the outbreak of war, as well as over the nature and consequences of such a war.*

On all these questions the documents of the International have contributed very important clarifications.

Against those who have already for a number of years put forward the positions of the "immediacy" of the Third World War, the leadership of the International has presented its argument, by and large confirmed by the events, *demonstrating the unpreparedness of imperialism for all-out war, and the fear, on the other hand, of the Soviet bureaucracy to engage in an all-out war which would place its own equilibrium in peril.*

It is nevertheless true that, within this correct general perspective of the international leadership, as it was more concretely set down at the time of the Eighth Plenum of the IEC, there were two weak points which have been clearly revealed in the light of the Korean war and its international consequences. The first point, which was implicit in this perspective, was the overestimation of the effective forces of imperialism and the corresponding underestimation of the opposing forces.

It is with the Korean war that our movement for the first time realized the important factor that the relationship of forces on the international chess-board is now evolving to the disadvantage of imperialism; that the internal dislocation and disequilibrium of the capitalist regime are greater than either we had thought or than the Soviet bureaucracy and the Stalinist leaderships themselves had supposed; that the weight of the colonial revolution in Asia presses more heavily than we had realized on the destinies of capitalism; that the true relationship of forces between imperialism and the forces opposed to it are to be measured not simply on the level of reciprocal material and technical resources, but also on the level of social relations and class relations and that these relations are developing internationally to the disadvantage of imperialism; that the revolutionary spirit of the masses directed against imperialism acts as an additional force, supplementing the material and technical forces raised against imperialism.

The second weak point in our perspective (which moreover flowed from this erroneous estimate of the actual trend of development in the international relationship of forces) was to have allowed imperialism the possibility to unleash a general war only after "many years." (Political Report of the Eighth Plenum of the IEC). This postponement flowed from the estimate that a "reciprocal neutralization" prevailed between the imperialist bloc and the bloc led by the USSR, and that this neutralization would last "many years," rendering war "impossible" in the meantime.

Actually the Korean war has demonstrated that the international relationship of forces (encompassed in this general formulation is the relationship of forces between the two blocs) was not tending toward a prolonged equilibrium but was developing to the increased disadvantage of imperialism.

On the other hand, in accord with this rectification, it would be wrong to set down as a necessary condition for imperialism to unleash a major war that its preparation should be completed so that it may also conduct and win (read: have good chances of winning) the unleashed war.

It may happen that imperialism, unsuccessful in stabilizing its present positions and finding itself compelled to retreat from certain positions which it considers fundamental, will plunge into war, despite all the risks and in spite of its diminishing rather than growing chances of success.

Such an attitude is above all applicable to American imperialism which constitutes the hard core of capitalist forces today.

It is possible that American capitalism, if it maintains its control over the American masses and feels relatively strong by virtue of the progress of its intensive rearmament, may in two or three years, for example, prefer war with all its risks to a new retreat on the Korean model.

This possibility, which flows precisely from the dimensions of the setback of imperialism now taking place in the world, and consequently of its crisis (even though that does not manifest itself immediately in all its acuteness), is no longer excluded, particularly for American imperialism.

It is the advance of forces opposing imperialism which brings nearer the possibility of a final and desperate

resort to war by imperialism—unless we can expect the disappearance without a struggle of the capitalist regime as a whole, including the still extremely powerful fortress which Yankee imperialism constitutes.

For this reason, in the "Theses on the International Perspectives and the Orientation of the Fourth International Movement," while we emphasize the reasons which cause imperialism to hesitate in unleashing war and to continue to temporize, *we do not exclude the possibility of a general war, even during the period in which the relationship of forces remains, as at present, fundamentally unfavorable to imperialism.*

The next question which poses itself is: *What can be the nature of a war launched under such conditions?*

Such a war would take on, from the very beginning, the character of an *international civil war*, especially in Europe and in Asia. These continents would rapidly pass over under the control of the Soviet bureaucracy, of the Communist Parties, or of the revolutionary masses.

War under these conditions, with the existing relationship of forces on the international arena, would essentially be *Revolution*. Thus the advance of anti-capitalist revolution in the world at one and the same time postpones and brings nearer the danger of general war.

Conversely, war this time means the Revolution.

These two conceptions of *Revolution* and of *War*, far from being in opposition or being differentiated as two significantly different stages of development, *are approaching each other more closely and becoming so interlinked as to be almost indistinguishable under certain circumstances and at certain times.* In their stead, it is the conception of *Revolution-War*, of *War-Revolution* which is emerging and upon which *the perspectives and orientation of revolutionary Marxists in our epoch should rest.*

Such language will perhaps shock the lovers of "pacifist" dreams and declamation, or those who already bemoan the apocalyptic end of the world which they foresee following upon an atomic war or a worldwide expansion of Stalinism. But these sensitive souls can find no place among the militants and least of all the revolutionary Marxist cadres of this most terrible epoch where the sharpness of the class struggle is carried to the extreme. *It is objective reality which thrusts this dialectic of Revolution-War to the forefront, which implacably destroys "pacifist" dreams, and which permits no respite in the gigantic simultaneous deployment of the forces of Revolution and of War and in their struggle to the death.*

The task of revolutionists fully cognizant of this period and of its possibilities consists above all *in solidly basing themselves on the growing objective chances in favor of the Revolution, fructifying these (by the most appropriate means of propaganda) for all the laboring masses drawn toward the Revolution.*

But let us more closely examine the character of this latter process.

The Evolution of Stalinism

Up to now the crisis of the capitalist regime appears to have directly benefited Stalinism. This constitutes the principal reason for the prevalent lack of understanding, even in our own ranks, of the profoundly revolutionary character of the overturns we are witnessing.

For revolutionary Marxists who do not want to fall prey to confusion or to petty-bourgeois reactions (resulting in part from this confusion), it is absolutely necessary to return to fundamental criteria, to the fundamental bases of our theory, in order to be able to grasp the direction of the evolution which we are witnessing, and to set their course on the basis of excluding all empiricism, all impressionism, all narrow-mindedness, every conjunctural, transitory, secondary aspect of the situation.

The deepest, most revolutionary, most decisive overturns of capitalism and of its imperialist stage, Marxist-Leninist theory teaches us, are engendered despite and against all subjective obstacles, despite and against the treacherous line of the traditional Social-Democratic and Stalinist leaderships, by the contradictions inherent in the present social regime, by the inevitable sharpening of these contradictions in direct proportion with capitalist development.

Such is the case today.

The capitalist regime, having attained its highest stage, is breaking up, decaying, and thus allowing a series of phenomena to appear which fall into the general framework of an epoch of transition between capitalism and socialism, an epoch which has already begun and is quite advanced.

This epoch of transition is disorienting the scholasticists of Marxism, the partisans of "pure" forms, of norms, because it follows a far more complicated, more tortuous, and longer course than that which the classics of Marxism had sketched out before the experience of the Russian Revolution.

But in further grasping reality as well as the spirit of our theory (as against what is essentially the letter of certain writings) we see that this epoch of transition exists for profound reasons of its own.

Even discounting the role played in the present historical process by the profound bureaucratic degeneration of the USSR and the Stalinist leaderships, it is necessary to single out an objective cause which is exercising its influence upon the epoch of transition: the gradual, partial development of the revolution, isolating it for a certain period and localizing it in countries which, moreover, are not among the most developed economically and culturally.

This pattern of development of the Revolution, which is the real pattern and has its reasons for existence, implies a more complicated, more tortuous, longer passage from capitalism to socialism, lending transitional forms to society and to proletarian power.¹

To this fundamental objective cause is added the influence which has been exercised up to now on the course of history by the Soviet bureaucracy and the Stalinist leaderships.

Our fundamental difference with certain neo-apologists for Stalinism, of the Gilles Martinet stripe in France, does not involve the fact that there are objective causes at work imposing transitional forms of the society and of the power succeeding capitalism, which are quite far from the "norms" outlined by the classics of Marxism prior to the Russian Revolution. Our difference is over the fact that these neo-Stalinists present Stalinist policy as the expression of a consistent, realistic Marxism which, consciously and in full awareness of the goal, is marching toward socialism while taking realistically into account the requirements of the situation. And the only reproach they have to make against Stalinism is that Stalinism conceals these realities

from the masses and strives, for example, to embellish the situation in the USSR by declaring that it has already succeeded in passing from "socialism to communism"²

These people who pose as sincere pretend to forget that, if things are this way, it is because Stalinism is not the expression of the policy of a "realistic" proletarian leadership but that of the Soviet bureaucracy, that is to say, of a vast privileged social layer in the USSR which has usurped political power from the proletariat and has theoretically formulated its position of exorbitant privileges, fiercely guarded from the Soviet masses by a monstrous oppressive apparatus, into "socialism on the eve of passing over to communism."

This layer can have neither a "socialist" consciousness or policy but on the contrary sees its mortal enemy in world Revolution and genuine proletarian power.

By virtue of the role of the Soviet bureaucracy in the present historical process and in the international working class movement in particular, the liquidation of the capitalist system in almost half of Europe, and of imperialism in Asia (a liquidation which has been facilitated and made possible primarily because of the internal dislocation of the regime, and of the revolutionary upsurge of the masses, owing to a favorable situation: the recent war), has taken on transitional forms which are even more deformed than objective necessity dictated. On the other hand, *the role played by the Stalinist leadership, impedes, just as in the USSR, the free socialist development of these forms and places all the realized conquests in constant danger.*

It is nevertheless necessary, for a correct orientation of revolutionary Marxists, not only to bear in mind that the objective process is in the final analysis the sole determining factor, overriding all obstacles of a subjective order, but also that Stalinism itself is on the one side a *phenomenon of contradictions*, and on the other a *self-contradictory phenomenon*.

Only Trotskyist analysis, as it was fundamentally laid down by Leon Trotsky himself, enables us to understand the specific dialectic of Stalinism, its *contradictory character* and the *contradictions inherent in its nature*.

At issue here is not an abuse of the term dialectic in order to impress others or to further obscure an inadequate outlook nor for that matter in order to contrive a false way out of a difficult situation.

To understand Stalinism is impossible for vulgar, mechanical or merely formalistic thinking. We constantly see the bankruptcy of this kind of thinking in the analyses, conclusions, perspectives of all those in the capitalist camp or in the working class movement who strive to explain Stalinism and to define it in this way.

The repercussions of such superficial thinking have made themselves felt in our own ranks. Before such phenomena as the formation and evolution of the Soviet buffer zone in Europe, the Yugoslav experience, the present colonial revolutions, the regime of Mao Tse-tung, confusion and perplexity have made their way right inside of our own movement.

Are we witnessing an expansion and a worldwide domination by Stalinism? Can the latter really overthrow the capitalist regime in some places? Can the Communist Parties lead a revolution and bring it to victory? Comrades pose these questions and speculate on the validity and future of our analysis of Stalinism with a certain anxiety.

But these comrades would be far less troubled and perplexed if they had genuinely and not mechanically assimilated the Trotskyist analysis of Stalinism, and if, in order to understand present phenomena, they started out from the following principle and the following consideration: *In order, as Marxists, to give correct answers to all these questions, it is necessary here, as in all other important social and political phenomena, to grasp the world dialectical process, to grasp its contradictions as they inexorably develop under the new objective conditions.*

The bogie of the "worldwide domination of Stalinism" is proper to people who are incapable of perceiving, for lack of a correct theoretical understanding of Stalinism, that the contradictions inherent in its nature, far from being ameliorated or eliminated in direct proportion to its expansion, are in reality being reproduced on an ever greater scale and will provoke its destruction. This will take place in two ways: by the counterblows of the anti-capitalist victories in the world and even in the USSR stimulating resistance of the masses to the bureaucracy; by elimination in the long run of the objective causes for the bureaucracy, for all bureaucracy, in direct proportion as the capitalist regime suffers setbacks and an ever increasing and economically more important sector escapes from capitalism and organizes itself on the basis of a state-ized and planned economy, thereby stimulating the growth of the productive forces.

In the prodigious rise of American imperialism which followed the First World War, most people have seen only one aspect of the process: the expansion and trend towards world domination by Wall Street. The other aspect, which we are witnessing precisely at present, which consists in this: that this expansion simultaneously includes within the foundations of American imperialism's structure "the powder magazines of the whole world" provoking the "greatest military, economic and revolutionary convulsions, beside which all those of the past fade into the background." This was clearly grasped at the time by Leon Trotsky.³

This is an example of dialectical analysis of a phenomenon which, despite its outward appearance of power, its fleeting historical successes, *rests fundamentally on irreconcilable contradictions.*

Stalinism is such a phenomenon.

Since the Second World Congress, our movement has succeeded in better seeing, better grasping and better understanding the contradictory process of Stalinist expansion in a definite sphere: that of the relationship between the Communist Parties where they have attained power and the Soviet bureaucracy. Fundamental ideas (several of which moreover are to be found at least implicit in our prewar theoretical arsenal) have been reaffirmed, clarified, developed in the documents of the International and the writings of leading comrades on the Soviet buffer zone, the Yugoslav affair, the Chinese revolution, the crisis of Stalinism. We have insisted, and rightly so, on the specific dialectic of the relations existing between the Soviet bureaucracy, the Communist Parties and the mass movements, emphasizing the following principal ideas: The Yugoslav affair as well as the march and the victory of the Chinese revolution, also the other unfolding colonial revolutions (Korea, Vietnam, Burma, Malaya, the Philippines) have demonstrated that the Communist Parties retain the possibility, *in certain circumstances*, of roughly outlining a revolutionary orientation, that is to say,

of finding themselves compelled to engage in a struggle for power. These circumstances *have revealed themselves during and following the Second World War to be the extreme dislocation of the regime of the possessing classes and of imperialism, and of the revolutionary upsurge of the masses.*

Under these *exceptional conditions*, the mass movement, which found only the Communist Parties available as a channel, compelled these parties to go further than their leaderships and above all the Kremlin would have wished, and literally pushed them into power.⁴

By virtue of the weak resistance and at times the virtual nonexistence of the class enemy (internally demoralized and displaced), the Communist Parties have been able to win despite their opportunism (Yugoslavia, China). In other cases, power was turned over to them by entry of the Red Army (European buffer zone), but it was not monopolized and consolidated until after the break between the Soviet bureaucracy and imperialism, and the beginning of the "cold war."

Thus the rise of Communist Parties to power is not the consequence of a capacity of Stalinism to struggle for the Revolution, *does not alter the internationally counter-revolutionary role of Stalinism*, but it is the product of an exceptional combination of circumstances which has imposed the seizure of power either upon the Soviet bureaucracy (in the case of the European buffer zone), or upon certain Communist Parties (Yugoslavia, China).

In the case of the Soviet European buffer zone, the overthrow of the economic and political power of capitalism and the installation of the Communist Parties in the government was above all the outcome of the military-bureaucratic activity of the Soviet bureaucracy, the mass movement having played a secondary role (Czechoslovakia) or practically none. In the case of Yugoslavia and of China, the assumption of power was occasioned principally by the internal displacement of the class enemy and of the exceptional upsurge of the revolutionary movement of the masses.

I have already dealt to a certain extent with the problems regarding the significance, the causes and the trend of the transformations which have taken place in the Soviet buffer zone in my two articles contributed to the discussion held in the International on the Yugoslav affair. ("On the Class Nature of Yugoslavia," Oct., 1949; "Yugoslavia and the Rest of the Buffer Zone," Feb. 1950). I will return to these same questions soon in another article.

We have already discussed the problems regarding the significance, the causes and the consequences of the taking of power in Yugoslavia and in China, in a series of documents by the International and in articles by comrades in the International leadership and in our sections. These have thrown light on certain important aspects: the influence of the mass movement upon the Communist parties at its head (in the absence of any other organization), which tends to tear them away from strict discipline at the hands of the Soviet bureaucracy; the possibility, and even in the long-run the inevitability, of an opposition arising to the Soviet bureaucracy to the degree that these Communist parties have a mass base of their own which has enabled them to conquer power by and large through their own means.

The most important lesson we have drawn from the

Yugoslav affair, from the new China of Mao Tse-tung, and other Asian revolutions in progress is this: not to confuse every victory over capitalism and imperialism achieved by the revolutionary movement of the masses, although it may be led by Communist parties, with a pure and simple victory of the Soviet bureaucracy.

To take the case of China alone, we are now forced to admit, after the Korean experience, what I had partly put forward in my articles on the crisis of Stalinism (*Quatrieme Internationale*, March-April, 1950) and on the Korean war (*Quatrieme Internationale*, August-October, 1950) that China could not play the role of a mere satellite of the Kremlin but rather of a partner which henceforth imposes upon the Soviet bureaucracy a certain co-leadership of the international Stalinist movement. This co-leadership is, however, a disruptive element within Stalinism which is based on the rigid application of the policy of the Soviet bureaucracy corresponding to its interests. The role of China in the unleashing of the Korean war and its conduct that many attribute exclusively to the Kremlin have shown itself to be much more important and decisive than had been thought. China has become an international power of the first order, with far more possibilities than Yugoslavia, for example, of playing an independent role between Moscow and Washington. Consequently, the evolution of China can prove different from that of the Soviet bureaucracy and introduce powerful elements of differentiation within the Stalinist camp.

It is in the light of all this experience and all these considerations that we must place the possible perspective of a war which may break out before imperialism can radically change the existing relationship of forces which is unfavorable to it. Such a war, launched under such conditions, will quickly acquire, as we have already pointed out, the character of an international civil war, at least in Europe and in Asia.

To the attempts of the bourgeoisie and of the imperialists to mobilize the masses for their war against the USSR, the "People's Democracies," China and other Asian revolutions in progress, and to crush the Communist parties and the revolutionary movements in their respective countries, large sections will react by revolt, open struggle, armed struggle, a new *Resistance*, but which would this time take on a far clearer class character. It is possible that, thanks to these reactions of the masses, and to the convulsions and the exasperation which such a war would quickly create, different Communist parties would find themselves obliged to undertake a struggle, under pressure from the masses and their own rank and file, which would go beyond the objectives fixed by the Soviet bureaucracy.

Such a war, far from curbing the struggle which would actually unfold to the detriment of imperialism, would intensify it and bring imperialism to its death throes. Such a war would upset all the equilibriums, drawing all forces into the struggle, *speeding up the process already initiated of the convulsive transformation of our society which would be abated only with the triumph of socialism internationally. The fate of Stalinism would be settled precisely within this period of gigantic overturns.*

People who despair of the fate of humanity because Stalinism still endures and even achieves victories, tailor History to their own personal measure. They really desire that the entire process of the transformation of capitalist

society into socialism would be accomplished within the span of their brief lives so that they can be rewarded for their efforts on behalf of the Revolution. As for us, we reaffirm what we wrote in the first article devoted to the Yugoslav affair: this transformation will probably take an entire historical period of several centuries and will in the meantime be filled with forms and regimes transitional between capitalism and socialism and necessarily deviating from "pure" forms and norms.

We are aware that this statement has shocked certain comrades and served others as a springboard to attack our "revisionism."

But we do not disarm. *A century has already elapsed since the Communist Manifesto and more than half a century since imperialism, "the highest stage of capitalism."* The course of history has shown itself to be more complicated, more tortuous and drawn-out than the predictions of men who had the legitimate aim of shortening the intervals separating them from their ideals. The best Marxists have not avoided being mistaken, not to be sure on the general line of development, but on its time-spans and concrete forms. What is today, in all countries, the possible strategic aim, is the Revolution, the taking of power, the abolition of capitalism. But the taking of power in one country does not settle the entire question. The conditions for a free development toward socialism are still more complicated and more difficult. The example of the Soviet Union, the "People's Democracies," Yugoslavia and China prove that.

However, it would be no less false to minimize the historical importance of the progress accomplished along the road of overturning capitalism and the victory of the Revolution in the world.

Those who wish to reply to the anxiety and perplexity of certain people in the face of what is called the victories of Stalinism by minimizing the objectively revolutionary significance of these facts are compelled to sink into an anti-Stalinist sectarianism at all costs which scarcely conceals, under its aggressive appearance, its lack of confidence in the basic revolutionary process of our epoch, which is the most positive pledge of the ultimate destruction of Stalinism and which will be realized all the more rapidly as the overturn of capitalism and of imperialism progresses and wins an ever more important section of the world.

The Orientation and the Future of our Movement

Our basic orientation today flows essentially from the analysis of the period in which we struggle, *from the basic revolutionary character of this period.*

We do not attach ourselves exclusively to any episode within this period, however important it may be. We do not say, it is now or never; we do not consider any defeat as a defeat which shuts off revolutionary perspectives. A revolutionary movement leaves lamentations to spectators of the struggle and not to those participating in this struggle. It solidly supports itself on revolutionary perspectives which are objective and real and attempts to reinforce them to the best of its ability by its own subjective weight.

To be sure, the objective revolutionary process is not automatic and we cannot, even at the present time, when the relationship of forces is evolving to the disadvantage

of imperialism, categorically affirm that victory is definitely at hand. To be sure, the danger exists that a general war may engender extensive destructions which will render still more difficult, more complicated and more protracted the socialist reconstruction of humanity. Under certain conditions, the theoretical possibility of a descent into barbarism is not excluded.

To be sure, the policy of the Soviet bureaucracy constantly places in peril all the conquests up to now and can facilitate a new shift in the relationship of forces to the advantage of capitalism.

But what distinguishes a genuine revolutionary movement from a tendency which is at bottom petty bourgeois is that the revolutionists base their fundamental orientation on the perspective of the Revolution and Socialism. As against the counter-revolutionary alternative of the period they base themselves on the revolutionary possibilities which are practical, actual and not theoretical; they appraise these possibilities at their full value; they survey the revolutionary process in its ascending objective totality and do not get lost in this or that secondary episode of this process.

Certain people have been astonished, and even indignant, at our abrupt change when the course of the foreign policy of Yugoslavia began to slip into the orbit of the "democratic forces" of imperialism. In reality, our turn developed with a certain delay following the sharp turn in Yugoslav policy itself under the international pressure unleashed by the Korean war.

The change was primarily objective, in the situation outside of us. It signified a defeat, let us hope a transitory one, for the Yugoslav revolution. From this moment, with this fact as the starting point, for us it was not an occasion to weep or to hesitate or to remain indecisive. In the revolutionary period in which we struggle, there will be many ups and downs, victories and defeats, and we base our fundamental orientation only on the essential line of this period, characterized by the growing objective perspectives of the revolution which is unfolding on the ruins and the crisis of capitalism and imperialism.

The policy of the Yugoslav leaders has isolated, as it still does, the Yugoslav revolution from the support of the proletarian and colonial masses for the sake of entrusting its defense to the "democratic" imperialism that has now with such hastiness been discovered by Milovan Djilas.

Between this policy and unconditional support of the struggles of the proletarian and colonial masses, we have very naturally chosen the second pole of the alternative which corresponds with the general struggle for the world Revolution of which the Yugoslav revolution forms only a subordinated part. This conception of our orientation, of our conduct, acquires exceptional importance precisely at the present stage which is characterized *by the greatest tension ever known in the international class struggle and the greatest pressure ever exerted upon movements and individuals.* This pressure is incontestably far greater now than on the eve or during the Second World War *and it will go on being reinforced.*

Without a clear and principled line, without a firm and revolutionary orientation, we run the risk of falling into confusion and petty-bourgeois deviations of all kinds, which have likewise marked our movement in the past.

The leading elements of our movement ought to be

aware of this danger, I would say of its manifestations which is to a certain degree unavoidable.

That is why we place such emphasis, in the "Theses on the International Perspectives and the Orientation of the Fourth International Movement," on the need to reaffirm and to define more precisely our programmatic position toward the USSR, the Soviet bureaucracy, the Communist Parties and the colonial revolutions in progress. The experience of what has happened around us with the different anti-Stalinist tendencies in the workers' movement, as well as the still more important experience which the Yugoslav CP is now passing through, clearly demonstrates that without a Marxist orientation on these questions, one can imperceptibly glide over objectively into the enemy camp in the present period of the extreme polarization of class forces.

Our movement is naturally not "neutral" between the so-called two blocs, that of imperialism and that led by the USSR. First of all because neutralism always work objectively in favor of one of the antagonistic forces. There is no such thing as pure "neutralism." Next because, in the relations and above all the conflicts of the bloc led by the USSR with imperialism, we give critical support to the first while we unreservedly contend against the second. Our support to the colonial revolutions now going on, despite their Stalinist or Stalinized leadership, in their struggle against imperialism is even *unconditional*. Our movement is *independent* of Moscow's policy, of the policy of the Soviet bureaucracy, in the sense that it is not at all bound by this policy. Our movement does not identify it with the interests of the international proletariat and the colonial masses, but on the contrary combats this policy in all its pernicious and hostile aspects toward the world revolution. Without having thought through all these questions, without having clarified and further defined them in our minds, it would be impossible for us in the days ahead to link ourselves with the mass revolutionary movement as well as with the proletarian vanguard, which in Asia and in Europe follow Stalinist or Stalinized leaderships. It would also be impossible for us, in countries where this strong influence of the Stalinist leadership over the masses does not exist, but where on the contrary a powerful reactionary pressure from the bourgeoisie and its reformist agencies is exercised, as in the United States, England, Canada, Australia, Belgium, etc., to resist this pressure and adhere to a clear and firm class line. Without that it would above all be impossible for us, in the event of a general war, to correctly and effectively orient ourselves to assure the triumph of the revolutionary forces over capitalism and, in the course of this struggle, over the Soviet bureaucracy itself.

In all those cases where sectarian and mechanistic anti-Stalinism, which identified the leadership with the mass movement or which has not grasped the contradictory character of Stalinism, including the actions of the Soviet bureaucracy, has taken hold in our organization, it has led our movement to virtual disaster and to complete political and theoretical disorientation. Such was the case in certain of our movements during the war and since its end in Europe. Such was particularly the case in certain tendencies of our movement in China and partially in Indo-China.

Ought we to repeat such errors? Can we live side by

side with a developing revolution which, arms in hand, combats imperialism and simultaneously deals weighty and sometimes mortal blows at the native possessing classes, as is the case in the current Asian revolutions, and be content with our former attitude toward the Communist Parties leading these revolutions, when these parties, applying the rigid policy of the Kremlin, collaborated with imperialism and class enemy?

Can we see the preparation and possibility of an all-out war and neglect getting closer from now on to the ranks of the Communist Parties which in many important countries in Europe and in Asia are still the polarizing force for the proletarian and colonial masses, the readiest for struggle against the war of the imperialists and the most valuable in the struggle for the revolution?

How otherwise would we be capable of carrying on our struggle against the war-preparations of imperialism which implies the struggle to disarm and conquer the bourgeoisie through the revolutionary masses?

How could we hope to effect our link-up with the revolutionary forces which will emerge from this struggle and will inevitably launch the assault upon capitalism and imperialism and orient them in the course of this very struggle against the Soviet bureaucracy as well?

Unexpected as that may seem at first glance, the new conditions in which the Communist Parties in those Asian countries which are currently going through a revolution find themselves, dictate to us, as a general attitude toward them, by and large that of a Left Opposition which gives them *critical support*. That applies, for example, to China. Following the victory of Mao Tse-tung, our movement in China, instead of ignoring or minimizing this victory and continuing to attack the Chinese CP on the absolutely correct basis of the treacherous policy of this party (when it submitted to the political leadership of the bourgeoisie and collaborated with Chiang Kai-shek) should have addressed itself, in my opinion, to the Chinese masses in the following terms: The Chinese Communist Party, propelled and lifted up by the revolutionary movement of the masses, benefiting from the advanced internal disintegration of the native possessing class and the weakness of imperialism, and being compelled in the course of events and under pressure from the masses, to partially change the line which subordinated it to the political leadership of the bourgeoisie in the accomplishment of the revolution in China, has come to power. That constitutes an important victory and opens possibilities for a forward march of the Revolution and for its final triumph through the establishment of a genuine democratic power of the Chinese workers and poor peasants. For to assure the proletarian character of the power remains the key problem of the revolution. We Trotskyists, who have always championed the theory that the Chinese revolution can conquer only under the political leadership of the proletariat and its revolutionary vanguard, will defend the conquests achieved as well as each forward step made in the direction of the creation of a democratic power of the Chinese workers and poor peasants. We give critical support to the Chinese CP and to the government of Mao Tse-tung, and we demand our legal existence as the Communist tendency of the workers' movement.

Such a declaration and such an attitude by and large would have chances of being understood by a certain number of conscious elements in the revolutionary van-

guard of China, by every class-conscious worker, and would place the leadership of the Chinese CP before this dilemma: either accept our legal existence or impose illegality upon us, which would demonstrate its bureaucratic and Stalinist character.

In Europe where the Communist Parties manipulate the proletarian masses to assure the success of the foreign policy of the Soviet bureaucracy and its special aims in each country and does not at all struggle for the revolution and the taking of power, such a policy toward these parties is naturally excluded. On the contrary, to get closer to their ranks, to link ourselves with them in all possible united-front actions against the war-preparations of the imperialists and to emphasize the revolutionary possibilities of this period that the Stalinist leadership deliberately hides, is an essential duty of all our organizations operating in countries where the majority of the working class follows the Communist Parties. *Much closer to the ranks of these parties:* such is our slogan in all these countries which results from the analysis of the situation and from its perspectives.

In those countries where Stalinism is practically non-existent or exercises weak influence over the masses, our movement will strive to become the principal leadership of the proletariat in the years ahead: in the United States, England, Germany, Canada, in all of Latin America, in Australia, Indonesia, perhaps in India. *The main immediate future of our movement* resides far more in these places than in countries where the Stalinist influence still reigns. Certain of these countries play a key role in the international situation and because of the conditions of their economic development remain favored countries for socialist construction: the United States, England and Germany. The future of Stalinism is barred in these countries.

The development of our movement in the United States in particular would influence the entire course of the international workers' movement and would accelerate the crisis and decomposition of Stalinism.

Other variants are naturally possible, like that which appeared at a certain moment with the progressive development of the Yugoslav revolution before the latest turn of its leaders. It is difficult to foresee the precise form through which the reinforcement of the conscious revolutionary tendency will pass and the forms which the inevitable decomposition and elimination of Stalinism will take. It is also difficult to describe all the tactical moves which our movement will employ the better to link itself with the masses and to move ahead.

Since the close of the war and especially since the Second

World Congress of our International, the progress of our movement has been undeniable. These gains express themselves in the decisive break effected by most of our organizations with the illusion of revolutionary activity outside the real mass movement and its peculiarities in each country; in the real, conscious quest, felt by the cadres and the militants, for avenues of access to the movement of the masses in each country or to the essential currents of that movement; in the patient, methodical and long-range work undertaken within these tendencies in order to call forth a revolutionary differentiation within their ranks, in accord with the matured possibilities of their own experience and the objective conditions; in the advanced proletarianization of our organizations and of their leaderships, which is the surest pledge of the application and the prosecution of such a policy toward the working class and with that class.

This progress has been made possible thanks to the solidity of our theoretical orientation, to the indestructible solidity of Trotskyism and thanks to the revolutionary character of the period. It is the reinforcement of this latter in the years ahead, it is the growing revolutionary perspectives that more and more dominate the historical scene which nourish our revolutionary optimism and our absolute confidence in the destiny of Trotskyism, the conscious expression of the Communist movement in our epoch.

January, 1951

Footnotes to "Where Are We Going?"

1. The writings and policy of Lenin after the Revolution and especially between 1921 and 1923 are significant of the flexibility of his thinking when confronted with reality and its concrete problems. We are already far from the schema of Revolution as conceived prior to its victory and its concrete experience.

2. See among others the writings of G. Martinet, "On the Socialist State" in the *Revue Internationale*, October-December 1950.

3. *The Third International After Lenin*, by L. Trotsky. Chapter on "The United States of America and Europe."

4. Our Transitional Program foresees this possibility. It states: "One cannot categorically deny in advance the theoretical possibility that, under the influence of completely exceptional circumstances (war, defeat, financial crash, mass revolutionary pressure, etc.) the petty-bourgeois parties, including the Stalinists, may go further than they themselves wish along the road to a break with the bourgeoisie."

2. "On the Duration and the Nature of the Period of Transition from Capitalism to Socialism," by Michel Pablo

What I wrote in my article on "The Class Nature of Yugoslavia" and subsequently in the article "Where Are We Going?" on the subject of the period of transition from capitalism to socialism, its probable duration and its nature, has called forth a series of comments and divergent reactions in our movement. That compels me to undertake a further explanation of this question which

has a considerable interest, it seems to me, not only from the theoretical but also from the practical viewpoint.

I actually wrote and emphasized that this transitional period would probably take *a few centuries*. Comrades who find this *probable* duration excessive may not have paid enough attention to this precise point: that what is involved is the whole interval in which the transition

from *capitalism* to *socialism* will be consummated.

The taking of power is not yet *socialism* in the economic and social meaning of this term in the Marxist vocabulary. I use the term *socialism* in its classical sense as first defined by Marx himself, in reference to the regime where the productive forces will have acquired a degree of development permitting the effective progressive abolition of the classes, of the state, of the distinction between physical and intellectual labor, and between the city and the countryside.

The consummated socialist society is the direct vestibule to the communist society in which the formula of "from each according to his ability, to each according to his needs," will actually be applied and which will put an end to the various "birthmarks of the old society"—as Marx wrote—which the society emerging from capitalism after the taking of power by the proletariat still bears "in every respect, economically, morally and intellectually."

This period of transformation of capitalism into *socialism*, this latter term being understood in its economic and social content, and not simply its political significance (taking of power by the proletariat) is from all evidence an entire historical period extending over a few centuries.

The Marxist classics have conceived of this matter, it seems to me, in this general sense, independently of the nuances we may distinguish between the various exponents.

In his letter to Bracke on the Gotha program dated May 5, 1875, Marx speaks of the "period of the revolutionary transformation of capitalist society into communist society," to which *period* there also corresponds "a political transition period in which the state can be nothing but the revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat." One indication of the *probable duration* of this period, in Marx's estimation, is contained in the key passage of the *Criticism of the Gotha Program* where Marx gives an economic and social analysis of the future society. Let us review the essential points of this passage which will also serve as well for a better comprehension of the specific character of this *period of transition*.

Marx insists on the fact that the society issuing from capitalism after the taking of power could not be immediately a "communist society such as it has developed on its own foundations, but, on the contrary, as it emerges from capitalist society; which is thus in every respect, economically, morally and intellectually, still stamped with the birthmarks of the old society from whose womb it emerges."

On the economic and social level, this society is still regulated by *bourgeois right* which even though being a constant improvement in respect to a *thoroughgoing bourgeois right*, "is nevertheless still stigmatized by bourgeois limitations. The right of the producers is proportional to the labor they supply; the equality consists in the fact that measurement is made with an *equal standard*, labor."

Nevertheless, the needs of individuals not being equal, "with an equal output, and hence an equal share in the social consumption fund, one will in fact receive more than another, one will be richer than another, and so on." But "these defects are inevitable in the first phase of communist society as it is when it has just emerged after prolonged birth pangs from capitalist society." (Our emphasis.)

According to Marx, all this will disappear when the socialist phase of the post-capitalist society will be completed and the higher communist phase will begin, that is to say, when "the enslaving subordination of individuals under division of labor, and therewith also the antithesis between mental and physical labor, has vanished; after labor, from a mere means of life, has itself become the prime necessity of life; after the productive forces have also increased with the all-round development of the individual, and *all the springs of cooperative wealth flow more abundantly*." (Our emphasis.)

In my opinion, it becomes clear, from these passages, that Marx, even while considering, as he says in his above-mentioned letter to Bracke, that "the program (of the Party) does not now deal with this (the period of transition) or with the future state in communist society," envisaged an entire historical period between *capitalist society and its transformation into a consummated socialist society* (in the economic and social sense, we repeat, of the term).

Let us now come to Lenin. He found himself both compelled and disposed by the conditions of his time to speak much more concretely on this transitional period and its character, especially after the taking of power in Russia. Trotskyists know the puerile manner in which Stalin and his school have tried to buttress their theory of "socialism in a single country" with Lenin's name by means of quotations falsified not only in their spirit but even in their letter.

The essence of their perversion consists in giving to the term "socialism" that Lenin actually employed in a number of his articles with the meaning of the possible "taking of political power" in a single country, the meaning of completing the economic and social content of socialism, a completion in a possible socialist society which can be built in a single country.

In reality, both in the spirit and the letter of innumerable writings on this question Lenin does not envisage the possibility of achieving a socialist society except *on a world scale*.

And *in what time intervals*? Here are some typical quotations: "It is hardly to be expected that our next generation, which will be more highly developed will effect a complete transition to socialism." (Report of April 29, 1918 to the All-Russian Central Executive Committee of the Soviet Government.)

On December 3, 1919 Lenin declared to the Congress of Communes and Artels: "We know that we cannot establish a socialist order at the present time. *It will be well* if our children, perhaps our grandchildren, will establish it." (Our emphasis. — Works Vol. XVI, p. 398.)

This estimate by Lenin acquires its full importance when it is added that Lenin is not here envisaging the duration of the achievement of socialism in backward and isolated Russia alone but socialism on a much more extensive scale through the victory of the revolution he expected and on which he counted in Europe, and especially in Germany.

But naturally, up to now it has been Trotsky who was obliged and who could express himself most concretely on the probable duration and the nature of the period of transition *from capitalism to socialism*.

To combat the confusion and falsifications to which the Stalinist school had subjected such fundamental conceptions of Marxism as what ought to be understood politically,

economically and socially by the term socialism, Trotsky was above all forced to emphasize the *material conditions* which characterized a truly socialist regime.

"Socialist society can be built," Trotsky considered, "only on the most advanced productive forces, on the application of electricity and chemistry to the processes of production including agriculture; on combining, generalizing and bringing to maximum development the highest elements of modern technology" . . . "Socialism must not only take over from capitalism the most highly developed productive forces but must immediately carry them onward, raise them to a higher level and give them a state of development such as has been unknown under capitalism." ("Third International After Lenin," p. 52 — Our emphasis.)

Trotsky believed that the "genuine socialist development" dependent on a high development of the productive forces, advanced well beyond the levels obtained by the most advanced capitalist countries, would begin after the victory of the proletariat, "at least in several advanced countries." Trotsky thereby spoke "of the *epoch* of genuine socialist conception" which would be inaugurated only at that stage. ("Third International After Lenin," p. 54.)

However it is later in "The Revolution Betrayed" that Trotsky was able to best express his views on all these questions, the aim of the analysis set forth in *this book* being to grasp the real development of the Revolution in our epoch by proceeding from the concrete experience of the USSR.

What are the fundamental conclusions of this book on these points?

a. The taking of power, which is on the order of the day for all countries in our epoch and which is therefore possible in each country separately, does not immediately establish a *socialist* regime, in the economic and social meaning of this term, but a *transitional* regime "between capitalism and socialism or preparatory to socialism." This regime will apply "socialist methods for the [solution of] pre-socialist tasks."

b. The *epoch* of "genuine socialist development" will begin with the victory of the Revolution on an international scale, that is to say, encompassing at least a number of advanced countries, on the foundation of a level of productive forces at least equal from the start to that "to which the most advanced capitalism has attained."

c. Contrary to what Marx thought, and even Lenin who "based himself wholly upon the Marxist theory of the dictatorship of the proletariat,"¹ it is impossible to abolish "bureaucratic deformations" immediately after the taking of power and before having reached a certain level of productive forces *much higher than the level of the most advanced capitalism*, and these cannot be combated by "purely political" measures (election and recall at any time of all plenipotentiaries, abolition of material privileges, active control by the masses). "A socialist state even in America, on the basis of the most advanced capitalism, could not immediately provide everyone with as much as he needs, and would therefore be compelled to spur everyone to produce as much as possible." (*The Revolution Betrayed*, p. 53.)

d. Bureaucratic tendencies and deformations are not confined to the development of the backward and isolated USSR alone. "The tendencies of bureaucratism, which

strangles the workers movement [in capitalist countries], would everywhere show themselves even after the proletarian revolution." (*Revolution Betrayed*, p. 55, our emphasis.)

"But it is perfectly obvious that the poorer the society which issues from a revolution, *the sterner and more naked would be the expression of this "law"*, the more crude would be the forms of bureaucratism and the more dangerous would it become for socialist development." (Page 55, our emphasis.)

e. "A development of the productive forces is the absolutely necessary practical premise (of Communism), because without it want is generalized, and with want the struggle for necessities begins again, and that means that all the old crap must revive." (Marx, quoted by Trotsky in *The Revolution Betrayed*, p. 56.)

It therefore conforms to Trotsky's spirit (if not to the very letter of his writings) that *the transformation of capitalism into socialism will actually take an entire historical epoch, filled with bureaucratically deformed transitional regimes, and that these inevitable bureaucratic deformations (which have basically economic causes) will disappear only to the degree that the Revolution conquers in the advanced countries and the level of the productive forces reaches and surpasses that of the most advanced capitalism.*

From this there naturally follows the prime importance of the Revolution in the advanced countries and of the international victory of the Revolution in order to speed socialist reconstruction and attain as rapidly as possible the full *economic and social content of socialism.*

I believe that what I wrote in my two articles on the *probable duration* and the *characteristics* of the transitional period completely conforms with these real views of Trotsky on these questions.

So far as the duration of the transitional period is concerned I added in "Where Are We Going?" the remark that it should not be forgotten that we are already in the *second century* since the publication of the *Communist Manifesto* which put the Socialist Revolution on the order of the day, and more than 50 years since the beginning of "imperialism, the last stage of capitalism."

Can one seriously believe that all the rest, that is to say, the actual transformation of capitalism into socialism is no more than a matter of a few decades?

Even in the event that in the near future the Revolution succeeds in the United States, this indispensable and by far the most important sector of the capitalist system in which is concentrated the highest degree of development of productive forces capitalism has known, the consummation of a world socialist society would remain a work of *long duration*.² On the other hand, in the much more probable event at the present moment that the victory of the world proletarian revolution would yet have to undergo the experience of a third war, with all the destructions caused by it, including this time the USA itself, it would naturally have to cope with still more extended delays and supplementary difficulties.

These views have nothing "pessimistic" in them. What in our opinion would really be illogical, childlike and mechanical is a conception according to which the most profound transformation of society (emerging from its thousand-year barbarism) in all its economic, moral and

intellectual relations could be miraculously effected along a straight and direct line of development.

And what is the practical importance of insisting so much on the *probable duration* and the *character* of the transitional period? It appears considerable to us. It is first of all a question of arming the communist cadres of our movement with a historical perspective and with clear notions of the aims to be attained so that they can master whatever is conjunctural and avoid any activist impatience or impressionism. It is also a question of rendering them capable of grasping the development of the Revolution in our epoch in its real and concrete manifestation unhampered by any formalistic thinking.

The developments which have taken place during and after the last war, the formation of the European buffer zone, the Yugoslav and Chinese revolutions, the other colonial revolutions now going on in Asia, have called forth divergent reactions in the revolutionary vanguard.

A number of elements have interpreted these events as the expression of a "progressive" historical role of Stalinism and have been led to "conciliation" with it, to "idealize" it or to pure and simple capitulation before it, especially in countries where the pressure of Stalinism remains exceedingly great.

Other elements undergoing a contrary class pressure, which becomes much greater to the extent that we approach the crucial testing moment, refuse to draw any distinction *between the social character of the regimes and movements and their temporary Stalinist or Stalinized leaderships, and reject the one along with the others.*

These elements have an "ideal" conception of the real and concrete revolutionary process in our epoch, and admit it only in its pure forms, the "norms" described by Marx and Lenin.³ They consider the bureaucratic deformation of the proletarian power which has marked the Russian Revolution, and, because of its degeneration, a considerable part of the revolutionary process in our time, as the pure and simple negation of all class content, different from capitalism and which has been attained only through the struggle against this latter and *the destruction of its foundations, that is to say, the relations of production and of property corresponding to it.*

Situated between these two tendencies, we are obliged to reaffirm and to defend the fundamental criteria of Marxist theory and the key ideas given by the Trotskyist analysis of the USSR and of Stalinism. We have patiently explained under what exceptional specific conditions the Soviet bureaucracy has been led to the economic and political expropriation of the bourgeoisie in the countries of the European buffer zone and under what *exceptional* conditions the Yugoslav CP and the Chinese CP were propelled to power by the powerful movement of the masses. In this light we have analyzed and demonstrated most particularly the Yugoslav experience and the crisis of Stalinism in the other countries of the buffer zone, the elements of crisis and of differentiation which exist in the expansion of Stalinism.

We have especially emphasized this fundamental idea of our theoretical arsenal, that the bureaucratic deformation of the proletarian power and particularly the monstrous form it has taken with the Soviet bureaucracy in the USSR will be eliminated only with the triumph of the revolution on an international scale embracing the advanced coun-

tries.

But whoever speaks of Revolution speaks above all of the abolition of capitalism, the abolition of its productive and property relations and the establishment of new relations. Here is the decisive factor.

The Stalinist form of the bureaucratic deformation of proletarian power has taken shape only in the case of a backward and half-barbarous country which remained for a long time isolated from new important advances of the world revolution.

The political expropriation of the proletariat and the formation of an omnipotent and uncontrollable bureaucratic caste like that existing in the USSR is excluded in the event of an international triumph of the revolution embracing the advanced countries, and especially in the event of a victory in the United States.

We have never written or wanted to suggest that the *political expropriation of the proletariat after the taking of power on an international scale* could be envisaged as possible, and even less that it can *stretch over centuries*. Such an affirmation would be theoretically equivalent to admitting the theory of "bureaucratic collectivism," that is to say, the possibility of an *historical regime intermediate between capitalism and socialism*. On the contrary, we have written this word for word ". . . the (proletarian) power will inevitably become swiftly bureaucratized and would risk culminating in a complete expropriation of the proletariat *if the revolution remains isolated in a country encircled by imperialism.*" (Now emphasized.) ("On the Class Nature of Yugoslavia," Internal Bulletin of the IS, October 1949.)

"The modifications of the *norm* of proletarian power, we wrote further on, would diminish only to the degree that the basis of proletarian power would pass beyond the framework *of a single country* and would embrace an ever more important sector of world economy." (Now emphasized.)

Even for the USSR we have not admitted that the development of the bureaucracy favored by powerful economic causes would necessarily and fatally transform "the Bolshevik party and through it, the whole Communist International into organs of the bureaucracy." ("On the Class Nature of Yugoslavia").

We locate the downfall of Stalinism in the unfolding of the struggle already engaged between imperialism and the Revolution in all its forms: the USSR, the "Peoples Democracies," Yugoslavia, China, the colonial revolutions now in progress and the international revolutionary movement.

This struggle will not last for centuries but a much briefer period.

It will lead, as we have many times repeated in all our writings, through the abolition of capitalism and imperialism, also to the downfall of the Bonapartist power of Stalin and of Stalinism.

That is the foundation of our optimism and our revolutionary perspectives.

June, 1951

Footnotes to "On the Duration and the Nature of the Period of Transition from Capitalism to Socialism"

1. Lenin did not succeed . . . either in his chief work dedi-

cated to this question (*State and Revolution*), or in the program of the party, in drawing all the necessary conclusions as to the character of the state from the economic backwardness and isolation of the country." (*The Revolution Betrayed*, p. 58)

2. Were it only to raise the level of the productive forces and economic progress of the world up to that of the USA.

3. In their writings before the Russian Revolution.

3. *What Should Be Modified and What Should Be Maintained in the Theses of the Second World Congress of the Fourth International on the Question of Stalinism?* (Ten Theses) by Ernest Germain

FOREWORD—The theses on general orientation adopted by the 9th Plenum of the IEC have defined the general perspectives of the revolution and of our movement in the years ahead. They represent the basis on which the discussion for the Third World Congress should be conducted. Without understanding them, without assimilating them, our sections would inevitably be perplexed and disoriented by the successive upheavals in the political and social situation which will mark the preparation and unleashing of the Third World War by imperialism.

However, these Theses do not pretend to define the exact attitude of our movement toward all the important questions now under discussion. In particular, they cannot present a comprehensive conception on the question of Stalinism. Our International possesses a fundamental document on this subject: the Theses of the Second World Congress. Within the framework of the traditional Trotskyist conception, we have since been led to make certain modifications in the views expressed in this document, especially in the resolution of the 8th Plenum on the revolution in the Far East, in the resolution of the 9th Plenum on the Yugoslav Revolution, and in the theses on the orientation of the 9th Plenum. For the international discussion to proceed with complete clarity, it is necessary to undertake once more a comprehensive analysis of Stalinism, specifying just what we are modifying and what we are maintaining in the Theses adopted by the Second World Congress. That is the aim of the following document.

* * *

I. "... between capitalism and communism there lies a definite transition period. The latter cannot but combine the features and properties of both these systems of social economy."

These lines by Lenin, cited from an unfinished article, "The Economy and Politics of the Epoch of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat," (*Selected Works*, English edition, Vol. VIII, page 3), remain to this very day the basis from which one must start in order to understand the USSR. In Lenin's time, capitalism and nascent communism struggled against each other in Russia under the form of two different modes of production. The capitalist mode of production has been conquered; the fundamental contradiction in Soviet society today resides in the antagonisms between *the non-capitalist mode of production and the bourgeois norms of distribution*.¹ However, this antagonism, which is inherent in every transitional society, does not diminish in acuteness and does not tend to disappear

in the Soviet Union with the development of the productive forces, but is, on the contrary, being accentuated because of the special role played by the bureaucracy. The increasing inequality, the bureaucratic administration of the economy, the monstrous degeneration of the state, all these phenomena in the last analysis express this fundamental contradiction which consists in the fact that, despite the abolition of the capitalist mode of production in Russia, the worker continues to receive as income only the strict minimum necessary to regenerate his labor power.

The essential error of the revisionist theories of the nature of the USSR consist in their inability to grasp this contradiction. The theory of bureaucratic collectivism recognizes the non-capitalist nature of the Soviet mode of production, but in denying the bourgeois character of the norms of distribution, it is forced to invent "a new form of slave exploitation." It does not understand that in reality the *capitalist* past and the encirclement of Russia have hampered and deformed the new society which has issued from a proletarian revolution. The theory of State Capitalism recognizes the bourgeois nature of the norms of Soviet distribution and thereby, the *capitalist* origin of the entire degeneration of the USSR. But it mechanically transposes and generalizes these facts to all the levels of Soviet economic life and thus constructs a "State Capitalist" mode of production which is completely mystical. Only the traditional Trotskyist theory combines an understanding of these two antagonistic characteristics of the Soviet economy and explains their meaning while disclosing their historical origins and their dynamism.

The maintenance of the bourgeois norms of distribution, the increase of inequality, the absence of any participation of the masses in the administration of the economy and the planning, more and more hold back the development of the productive forces in the USSR. The rate of accumulation decreases from one Five-Year Plan to the next.

The bureaucratic administration produces anarchy on an ever-increasing scale through the development of a parallel market and illegal trade, not only in food products and means of consumption as before 1941, but also in labor power, raw materials, machines and means of transport.

The vitality of the Soviet system of production has proved greater than was thought possible before the war, and in the short run there has not been any stagnation of the productive forces in the USSR. At the same time the possibility of the development of centrifugal forces within this system also exceeds our previous predictions. This fact

alone explains why, after four Five-Year Plans, the Soviet Union continues to appear as a retarding and predatory economic force in respect to such countries as Czechoslovakia, Poland, Hungary, not to speak of Western Europe.

The Theses of the Second World Congress on the question of the USSR outlined this dynamic of the Soviet economy for the first time. This conclusion remains an integral part of our program. The overthrow of the bureaucratic dictatorship in the USSR has become an urgent necessity, even from the purely economic standpoint, if the USSR is to continue to benefit from its progressive bases and bridge the still enormous distance separating it from the United States.

* * *

II. By its very existence and nature, the bureaucracy reflects and concentrates the contradictions of Soviet society. The bureaucracy remains attached to the non-capitalist mode of production in the USSR, to the planned economy and collectivized property, and in its own manner defends these against their internal and external enemies. At the same time, by its own existence, its parasitism, its irrational and arbitrary administration, it constantly gives rise to tendencies corroding this planned economy and this collectivized property. What is here involved is not the tendency of the *individual* bureaucrat toward private appropriation—a real but secondary factor—but rather the objective function of the bureaucracy as a *caste* which ceaselessly undermines the economic bases of the USSR. Proletarian democracy has more and more become an *indispensable* condition for promoting a new upswing of the productive forces.

Stalin's internal policy contains all the contradictions which result from this special role of the bureaucracy in Soviet society. It defends and protects the privileges of the bureaucracy—but only to the extent that these do not tend to *directly* break the framework of collectivized property and planning. It defends and protects the economic base of the USSR against bureaucratic "excesses," but by constantly strengthening the vise of the dictatorship against the masses, it reproduces these "excesses" on a constantly growing scale. Thus the *Bonapartist* character of the Stalinist dictatorship still best expresses the real policy of the Kremlin in respect to the present social forces in the USSR.

The foreign policy of the bureaucracy extends the contradictions of its own social nature beyond the borders of the USSR. On the international arena, the bureaucracy seeks to defend, with its own methods, the economic bases of the USSR without which its own social existence is impossible. At the same time its highly counter-revolutionary policy prolongs the existence of world imperialism. By its efforts to completely subordinate the international workers' movement, it weakens the anti-capitalist forces on a world scale and time and again brings serious conjunctural defeats to the proletariat. Despite all the apparent successes the bureaucracy has obtained, it is truer today than ever that the bourgeoisie continues to rule over a great part of the globe thanks only to the crimes of the Kremlin.

Before the Second World War, the international politics of the Soviet bureaucracy relied primarily on maneuvering between the imperialist groupings; the proletariat was utilized only as a subordinate instrument within the frame-

work of these maneuvers. After the Second World War, the international politics of the bureaucracy was above all based on maneuvering between imperialism on the one hand and the anti-imperialist forces on the other (proletariat, colonial peoples); the exploitation of the inter-imperialist contradictions now play no more than a secondary role. This change is the product of two decisive upsets in the world. The transformation of the relationship of forces between the great imperialist powers has precluded an alignment of two imperialist blocs against each other for an entire epoch. The new world revolutionary upsurge, which began with the August 1942 days in India and with the Italian revolution of 1943 in Europe, likewise excluded the possibility of using the anti-imperialist forces in the world as no more than a pawn on the political chessboard. So long as this new world situation is not profoundly modified, no change in this fundamental strategy of the Kremlin can be foreseen.

Within the framework of this over-all strategy, different stages have succeeded each other. During the initial stage, the Kremlin collaborated with imperialism against the revolution in Europe and in Asia. During the second stage, the Kremlin leaned on the colonial revolutions against imperialism. But neither case involved a new strategic line; they both represented no more than special aspects of one fundamental policy of *playing one side against another*. The Soviet bureaucracy can no more collaborate firmly for any length of time with the international bourgeoisie than it can with the proletarian world revolution. Decisive victories of the international bourgeoisie or of the proletariat always carry with them the threat of destruction of the bureaucracy. That is why the Theses of the Second World Congress on the question of the USSR have correctly emphasized the fundamentally *reformist* character of the Soviet bureaucracy and its international politics. Its aim is not the overturn of world imperialism, but the establishment of an advantageous *modus vivendi* with the latter. That does not result from the political errors of the bureaucracy or its timidity, but from its social nature: the incapacity it finds of controlling the forces liberated by the international development of the revolution which would stimulate the combativity of the Soviet proletariat and push the bureaucracy to its downfall.

III. The contradictory nature of the Soviet bureaucracy is only partially reflected in the Stalinist parties.² The dual nature of these parties is of a different social origin; it does not flow from the special role of a parasitic bureaucracy in a workers' state, but from the *dual function* of these parties, which are working class because of their mass base in their own country as well as international instruments for the Soviet bureaucracy. In their respective countries they have to strive to conquer and maintain an extensive mass base in the working class and the middle class; that involves the necessity of following a policy which allows them to exploit at least partially the aspirations of these masses. For the Kremlin, the usefulness of this mass base consists exclusively in serving its diplomatic designs. But these designs periodically involve a political line diametrically opposed to the most elementary aspirations of the masses. From this flows the possibility

of the outstripping of the Communist parties by their own mass base which, in action, can go beyond the objectives set by the Kremlin and escape from its control. This possibility has always been one of the fundamental perspectives of the Trotskyist movement. It can happen only in the event of a genuine and powerful revolutionary upsurge of the masses; a *limited* upsurge, in the absence of a revolutionary party of the masses, like that experienced in Europe after 1943, generally enables the Stalinist leadership to adapt itself step by step to the combativity of the masses while maintaining its control over them and continuing to serve the diplomatic objectives of the Kremlin.

Our movement has traditionally conceived the outstripping of Stalinism by the masses as involving profound splits inside the Communist parties. The Yugoslav and Chinese examples have demonstrated that, placed in certain exceptional conditions, entire Communist parties can modify their political line and lead the struggle of the masses up to the conquest of power, while passing beyond the objectives of the Kremlin. Under such conditions, these parties cease being Stalinist parties in the classical sense of the word. However, such an eventuality, which has more-over been foreseen by our Transitional Program, demands above all a genuine and deep-going mobilization of the masses. In the case where Communist parties are installed in power by the bureaucratic action of the Kremlin, the opposition between the needs of the independent development of the revolution in their countries and the demands of the Kremlin leads only to impotent attempts at independence by the Communist leaders (Rajk, Kostov, Gomulka, Patrascanu, etc.).

The outstripping of the Communist parties by the masses, within the framework of a genuine and powerful revolutionary wave, does not ever begin by a break of the masses with these parties. In the beginning it signifies an outstripping *in action* of the opportunist Stalinist *policy* by the most advanced layers, when a veritable influx of the most backward sections is still coming towards these parties. The former are then obliged to adapt themselves, at least partially, to this new situation in order not to lose control over the masses in the coming revolutionary upsurge in Western Europe, during the period of preparation and unleashing of war, the growing pressure of the masses is liable to force the French and Italian Communist Parties to modify their pacifist course of "neutralizing" the bourgeoisie. These parties could then, as the Theses of the 9th Plenum of the IEC declare, "project a revolutionary orientation" and "see themselves forced to *undertake* a struggle for power," if they wish to avoid having the masses advance directly towards the second stage of outstripping them, which would mean an organizational break with the leadership of these parties and the direct struggle against them.

The projecting of a struggle for power is one thing, and *the effective conquest of power* is quite another.

In the two cases where the Communist parties have actually conquered power through the action of the masses (in Yugoslavia and China), this has not immediately culminated in a break with the political and organizational methods of Stalinism nor in a public rupture with the Soviet bureaucracy. Only subsequently, through the necessity for maintaining and extending their mass base in order to conserve and consolidate the conquests of their revolution, were these Communist parties impelled towards a policy more and more independent of the Kremlin.

This dialectical development can be explained by the following facts:

a.) Yugoslavia and China are very backward countries, having a not very numerous proletariat with a weak Marxist tradition, which moreover passed through two decades of prostration under a reactionary dictatorship. The Communist parties, even with their Stalinist line, found themselves at the extreme left of the working class forces.

b.) The revolutionary struggle has its center of gravity in the countryside and assumes the form of a military centralization by the Communist parties of the uprisings of the poor peasantry. The Soviet bureaucracy fears the struggles of these masses less than those of the industrial proletariat. The objectives of this peasant struggle do not immediately run counter to the objectives pursued by the Kremlin.

c.) The revolutionary victory was obtained by the military conquest of the cities, where, for a number of historical reasons, no proletarian uprisings occurred.

d.) For all these reasons, the revolutionary victory could be secured without the Communist Party having to break completely with an opportunist tactic and publicly demarcate itself from the Kremlin.

The listing of these factors permits us to specify that a similar conquest of power by an independent Communist party could be duplicated in the Middle East and in East Asia, but is extremely improbable in an industrially advanced country of Western Europe or America. In these countries the revolution could never advance from the countryside to the city, but will always proceed from the cities to the countryside.³ A large-scale military struggle could not precede but only follow the revolutionary mobilization of the industrial proletariat. This proletariat, by virtue of its traditions, its past, its level of class consciousness, possesses a considerable vanguard which is consciously oriented toward the socialist revolution, even if it still follows the Communist Party. An independent assumption of power by the Communist parties of these countries is possible only through a genuine revolutionary mobilization of the *proletarian* masses which demands a genuine outstripping of the program, the policy, and the organizational forms of Stalinism. On its own side, the Kremlin, for whom such a development in an advanced country would represent a thousandfold more deadly threat than the Yugoslav revolution, would really do its utmost to prevent such a development. A friendly coexistence for any length of time of the victorious revolution in an advanced country and of the Soviet bureaucracy is therefore not very probable.

It is thus necessary to conclude that the Communist Parties are not simply reformist parties because they can, under certain exceptional conditions, conquer power in an independent fashion. Just like centrist parties, and even certain left Social-Democratic parties (Austria and Spain, 1934), they can further be compelled, under pressure from the masses, to modify their customary counter-revolutionary course in a turn toward the left, which can lead them up to the point of projecting a struggle for power, these cases being less exceptional than the before-mentioned cases. The exact relations of these parties with the Soviet bureaucracy could be modified by virtue of these political turns, to the degree that they lead the Communist Party to positions imperiling the *Bonapartist* character of the

Soviet bureaucracy whose power also rests upon an *international* balance between the fundamental classes of modern society.

IV. The continually more advanced decomposition of world capitalism is the historical background against which it is necessary to view the movement of the masses beyond Stalinism and the conquest of power by certain Communist parties with the forces of the proletariat in their own country. The world revolutionary upsurge continues to widen and deepen, even if between 1948 and 1950 it undeniably experienced a temporary recession in Europe. Today it embraces all Asia, tomorrow it will cross the Atlantic and confront Capital in its last stronghold. The development of this upsurge is the semi-automatic product of the extreme decay of capitalism. In the absence of a sufficiently strong revolutionary leadership, this revolutionary upsurge temporarily assumes new or transitory forms, such as we have seen in Yugoslavia and presently see spreading through Asia.

For ten years the forward march of the world revolution has assumed the most diverse and unexpected forms and the most audacious and perplexing combinations. We have seen a national anti-imperialist movement with extensive bourgeois participation advance to the verge of a general armed insurrection in India in August 1942; we have seen the proletarian revolution raise its head under a tottering but not yet beaten dictatorship in Italy in 1943; there were petty-bourgeois parties proclaiming the dissolution of the regular army and the imposition of workers' control over production in Warsaw in 1944; there were the armed struggles of the workers for power veiled by the ideological facade of "the National Front" with their own bourgeoisies, as in France and Greece, 1944; there was the dictatorship of the proletariat established following the departure of bourgeois ministers from the government in Yugoslavia in 1945; we have seen the most backward peasant masses put the Soviet state on the agenda in Vietnam, Indonesia, Burma, 1946 to 1950; the Bolivian miners compelled to take the destiny of their country in their own hands on several occasions, 1948-1949; a Communist party still imbued with the most opportunist ideology taking power in China, 1949; a monarchist and ultra-reformist Socialist Party actually calling the workers to the barricades in Belgium, 1950.

Not to understand this concrete development of the world revolution and to take refuge behind schemas of an "ideal" world revolution is to turn one's back on the real movement in the name of a chimera and to degrade communism from the status of a science to that of a utopia.

V. Soviet expansionism originated in the fact that the Stalinist bureaucracy, obliged to defend the USSR in its own manner to maintain and extend "its power, its privileges and its prestige" (L. Trotsky), was confronted with such a degree of decomposition of the capitalist regime in the neighboring countries as permitted it to extend its zone of influence without the risk that the international proletarian revolution would sweep over the bureaucracy's head. In the last analysis, this situation resulted from the

modification of the *world* relationship of forces between the classes and does not at all demonstrate the existence "of expansionist aspirations" on the part of the bureaucracy. It does not at all correspond to a "profound logic" of Soviet society, or to any inherent need in its economy.

Historically, the bureaucracy can consolidate its power over the countries in its zone of influence only by structurally assimilating them into the USSR. But that is true only from an *historical* point of view. Experience has already proved that the ruling bureaucracy of a degenerated workers' state can, under certain conditions, temporarily manipulate bourgeois property relations for its own benefit. The Kremlin has done so for many years in the case of the Chinese Eastern Railway. For five years it has had mixed companies in purely capitalist countries like Finland, Austria and Iran. For years it has exploited to its profit economies based on private property in the means of production in Rumania, Bulgaria and Hungary. An understanding of this possibility, contained in the Theses of the Second World Congress on the question of the USSR, is from now on part of our program.

If the Theses of the Second World Congress did not envisage as assured the complete destruction of the bourgeoisie in all the "buffer zone" countries, that is not because our movement forgot Trotsky's teachings, according to which the bureaucracy does not wish to share its privileges with the bourgeoisie. We have affirmed from the beginning and reiterated that the bureaucracy *tends* to assimilate its buffer zone into the USSR. What was put in question was not the *desire* of the bureaucracy, but its *capacity*. The error committed was not one of over-estimating the capacity for resistance of the bourgeoisie in the buffer zone whose extreme weakness, of not non-existence by virtue of events during the war, was clearly manifest from the beginning. The Theses made a different error. It consisted in the proposition that the bureaucracy could not lean on the masses to eliminate the remnants of the bourgeoisie in the whole of the buffer countries *without running the risk that these masses would go over the bureaucracy's head*. This thesis was realized in only one case and in an unexpected form. In Yugoslavia, the only country where the bourgeoisie was crushed by the action of the masses from the first stage, the Kremlin actually lost control over events. But because of the extremely *limited* character of the mobilization of the masses in the other countries of the buffer zone, because of the passivity and even the growing apathy of the workers in these countries, unexpected by our movement, such a development was not duplicated, and the Kremlin could eliminate the vestiges of the bourgeoisie step by step, while maintaining a strict control over the masses. The Soviet bureaucracy has actually *subordinated* structural assimilation of its buffer zone to its own work of destruction of the possibilities for the free development of the workers' movement, but these possibilities have been, *because of the very consequences of Soviet expansionism*, reduced to the minimum. That is why, from the viewpoint of the *international* revolution, structural assimilation achieved in the case of this or that country is infinitely less important than the destruction of the living workers' movement which has preceded it (Poland).

Thus our movement ought to guard against *two* errors: the error of *underestimating* the importance of the mass movement by permitting ourselves to be blinded by the

temporary Stalinist leadership (an error committed by certain sections in the case of Vietnam, of Greece, of China, etc.) and the error of *overestimating* the scope of this movement by considering it necessarily and in advance capable of passing beyond bureaucratic control (the error committed in the case of the buffer zone). The distinction here is between a *limited* development, utilizable and controllable by the Kremlin, and a *powerful* and *general* sweep of the movement and of the consciousness of the masses. That is what gives rise to these two variants of development in the last analysis.

VI. To resolve the problem of the perspectives of the future of Stalinism, one must distinguish between *two* phenomena which, *up to now*, have been mutually exclusive: Soviet expansionism (military occupation of certain countries by the Soviet army) and the conquest of power by the Communist parties with their own means, that is to say, propelled forward by a powerful revolutionary upsurge. Wherever Soviet occupation has occurred, as a general rule the revolutionary upsurge has been halted and broken; the Kremlin has not lost but increased its control over the Communist parties; moreover the Communist parties have always been cut off from the masses; they have more and more been transformed, through a series of crises, into pure and simple machines under the command of the Soviet bureaucracy. The bureaucracy has not been weakened but reinforced by this process. Wherever, on the contrary, the Communist parties have been propelled into power by the mass movement, *Stalinism* has actually found itself weakened. But that has not come as a result of its "expansion" but rather because of the depth of the revolutionary movement of the masses. Here one of the fundamental theses of Trotskyism finds itself confirmed: Stalinism is a phenomenon of the recession of the *workers'* movement and can extend itself only under conditions of recession. Wherever, on the periphery of the bureaucracy's sphere of influence, powerful revolutionary movements have broken out, the bureaucracy has tried with might and main to produce their retreat, either by abandoning these arenas to imperialist repression, as in Greece or by actively contributing to it, as in Poland. Only in Yugoslavia did this same tactic of the bureaucracy (Eden-Molotov agreement) fail, thanks to the depth of the movement of the masses and to the empirical assimilation of certain experiences of revolutionary struggles by the Yugoslav CP leadership.

A mechanical opposition of Soviet expansionism to the revolutionary upsurge, obviously simplifies the problem in the extreme. Reality has produced many more variants. We have seen cases where the *approach* of the Soviet armies stimulates the revolutionary activity of the masses. The effects of the occupation only later lead to a recession in the movement of the masses. On the other hand, occupation by the Russian army has had completely reactionary effects from the viewpoint of this movement, above all in countries where living standards and culture are higher than in the USSR. Temporary occupation of countries which are on a *lower* level (such as Inner Mongolia, North Korea, North Iran, etc.) can produce opposite effects because, in these countries, the bureaucracy does

not appear as a rapacious force and the low level of political consciousness amongst the masses permits the establishment of a control over them by methods which appear progressive in their eyes compared with the oppression they have previously experienced. The de facto United Front which today exists between the colonial revolutions in Asia and the Soviet bureaucracy, which has its *objective* origin in their being both menaced by imperialism, is rendered *subjectively* possible by this difference in the relations of the bureaucracy and the masses in Asia as against those existing in Europe. In the long run, the antagonism between the international revolution and the Soviet bureaucracy will also reveal itself in Asia, but in the first place on the political plane.

In Europe on the other hand, this antagonism should appear as quickly on the political plane as on the economic plane. It is no mere coincidence that the bureaucracy has conceived its theory that socialism can no longer conquer in Europe without occupation by the Soviet army. It appears certain that the bureaucracy cannot, under penalty of self-destruction, favor an extensive revolutionary mobilization of the masses in Western Europe. Under these conditions it will tend to limit the insurgent activities of the Communist parties there in the event of an outbreak of war and will try to impose on them a course of neutralizing the bourgeoisie in these countries, as well as collaborating with certain sections of the bourgeoisie. Even more than in Eastern Europe will it try to make every attempt to smash the free development of the workers' movement there. But, unlike Eastern Europe, an eventual Soviet occupation of the advanced countries in Western Europe would occur in the face of masses *engaged in a full revolutionary upsurge*.

The capacity of the Soviet bureaucracy to manipulate the movement of the masses as it pleases, or to intervene brutally against it, will therefore be far more restricted, and will be determined *by the relationship of forces* between the proletariat and the bureaucracy. The more extensive the revolutionary upsurge, all the more will it tend to accentuate *the crisis of Stalinism* by forcing the Communist parties to partially adapt themselves to the revolutionary aspirations of the masses. The more a new leadership, independent of the Communist parties will strengthen itself by adroitly utilizing the twists and turns of the Communist parties, the more restricted will become, not the *will* but the counter-revolutionary *capacity* for action, of the Kremlin. Only the overturn of the capitalist regime in many important countries on the continent before an eventual Soviet occupation will eliminate any danger that the proletariat may have to pass through this new bitter experience. If, primarily because of lack of an effective leadership, the revolutionary upsurge should fail to overturn in time the decayed rule of the bourgeoisie, this rule would not be destroyed by an eventual Soviet occupation but only obliged, after an intermediary period, to modify its form as the resistance movement of the working masses for proletarian democracy develops against the occupation regime that the Stalinist bureaucracy would impose upon them.

Our revolutionary optimism is expressed in the prediction of our Transitional Program that the objective conditions of a decadent capitalism will in the long run surmount all the bureaucratic obstacles on the road to the revolution. The revolutionary upsurge at the begin-

ning of which we find ourselves will fully justify this prediction. It will sound the knell of the Soviet bureaucracy and of Stalinism, products of a stage of world reaction which has irretrievably gone by.

VII. The role of the Soviet bureaucracy in the Third World War is determined by the specific character, by the entirely new character, this war will possess, which was specified for the first time by the Theses on orientation of the 9th Plenum. It will be fundamentally different from the Second World War for two reasons: it will not break out at the end of a long period of defeats and retreats of the proletariat to which war came as the logical and final culmination (1923-1939). It will on the contrary occur in a profoundly revolutionary epoch, during which the international bourgeoisie would have shown itself unable to crush the proletarian forces in Asia and in Western Europe, an incapacity of which the war itself will this time be the ultimate culmination. It will not break out between two imperialist blocs but between the united imperialist front on the one hand and the USSR, the buffer countries and the colonial revolutions on the other. Precisely because on the eve of the Second World War the revolution had reached its lowest ebb did this war have *first of all* the character of an inter-imperialist war. Its counter-revolutionary nature came forward as decisive only in the period of its liquidation. Precisely because on the eve of the Third World War the world revolution has attained a more threatening and universal point than ever, will this war first of all be a *counter-revolutionary war*. American imperialism will not launch the war in order to punish the crimes of Stalin or to combat the privileges of the bureaucracy; it will launch it, economically, to force the USSR, the buffer zone, China, Yugoslavia to return into its orbit by destroying collectivized property there, and, politically, to attempt through a final desperate effort to drown in blood the revolution which will unfold on the five continents. It is this specific character of the Third World War which will determine at one and the same time our unequivocal position of defending the USSR, the buffer zone, China, the colonial revolution and Yugoslavia against the war of imperialism, and our assurance that the Soviet bureaucracy will perish together with the international bourgeoisie.

During the period of liquidating the Second World War, the decay of the imperialist system and the appearance of a new revolutionary wave were sufficiently advanced to save the USSR from destruction but the revolutionary wave was inadequate to break the Stalinist grip upon the workers' movement in the countries in the centers of the revolution. Two new developments, products of the postwar period, radically modify this capacity of the Soviet bureaucracy to maintain itself and survive. The infinitely greater decadence of capitalism has already liberated and will yet liberate revolutionary forces of such magnitude that they can definitively destroy the international equilibrium between the classes and prepare a new revolutionary upsurge of the Soviet proletariat, which can overturn the reactionary bureaucratic caste in the USSR. The universal extension of the revolutionary wave *has already created*, in numerous future centers of the

revolution (USA, Great Britain, Germany, Latin America, even India and Japan) a new situation in the workers' movement which will no longer permit Stalinism to play a decisive counter-revolutionary role there. Moreover, because it clearly understands this situation, the Soviet bureaucracy will do everything possible to avoid the outbreak of war. But precisely because it is more and more losing its ability to control—and thus to betray—the international revolution, it can no longer, in the last analysis, halt by its own concessions the march of American imperialism toward this war.

The existence of the Soviet bureaucracy objectively originated in the setbacks suffered by the Soviet and the international proletariat, as well as in the low level of the productive forces in Russia after October. The world development of the revolutions ahead of us will destroy to their roots these foundations of the Kremlin's domination. The Kremlin will succumb under the blows of the Russian proletariat aided and supported by the proletariat of the advanced countries where the revolution will triumph, above all in the United States, Great Britain, and Germany. It is not excluded that the widespread devastation produced by an extended Third World War will provoke vast collapses in the machinery of production in great parts of the world which would thus facilitate initial bureaucratic deformations of new victorious revolutions. These deformations would not however be comparable to the monstrous bureaucratization of the USSR, a product of twenty-five years of special historical development. The experience of the Yugoslav and Chinese revolutions—despite all their weaknesses—fully confirms the prediction of Marx that each victorious proletarian revolution would surmount in large part the weaknesses and setbacks of the preceding revolutions. Our conviction in the victory of the American revolution, giving the socialist world a prodigious productive capacity even after a devastating war, allows us to envisage with confidence perspectives of proletarian democracy after the Third World War.

VIII. The defense of what remains of the October conquests, as a strategic task of our movement, has been correctly specified by the Theses of the Second World Congress on the question of the USSR following the new developments which occurred since the outbreak of the Second World War. Since then, we have been led, for the first time in the history of our movement, to raise as an *immediate concrete* possibility, the waging by the Soviet bureaucracy of an historically reactionary war against a workers' state, against the victorious proletarian revolution in Yugoslavia, in the course of which revolutionary defeatism would have to be the task of the Soviet revolutionists. This example, added to the experience of the counter-revolutionary intervention of the Soviet armies in the buffer countries, demands that we maintain the utmost precision regarding the tactical significance of our strategy in defending what remains of the October conquests in different concrete situations.

We defend what remains of the October conquests *against the restorationist attempts of imperialism*. But the proletarian masses are not and cannot be restorationists; that

is why the defense of the USSR cannot in any respect imply the defense, the justification or critical support for the military actions of the bureaucracy, either against workers' states like Yugoslavia or against insurrectionary movements of the peoples in the buffer zone. Even in time of war, and independently of the repercussions it may have on the immediate development of hostilities, we will always unconditionally support every insurrectionary movement of the masses against the Soviet bureaucracy, if this movement corresponds to the real aspirations of the masses, because an independent development of the revolution in the world represents a thousandfold more deadly blow against imperialism than any advance here or there of the Soviet armies. Our position is not that of defending one "diplomatic bloc" against another. We reject the notion of orienting our policy as a mere function of the existing "two blocs." Our policy is a class policy. We defend the Soviet Union against imperialism, and at the same time the world revolution against the Soviet bureaucracy. We do not identify the revolution with its bureaucratic usurpers. While imperialism does not merely combat the bureaucracy but also the Soviet Union and the revolution, the bureaucracy does not merely defend in its own manner the Soviet Union against imperialism, but also its privileges and its power against the masses and against other victorious revolutions. Our policy takes into account both sides of the question.

The tragic lesson of the Warsaw Commune ought to be assimilated by the revolutionists of all countries. The development of anti-imperialist insurrectionary movements behind the front lines whose justification ought to be determined by the relationship of forces between the classes and not by the military needs of the Soviet army, should not in any event culminate in a coordination of these forces with the bureaucratized general staffs of the Soviet armies, or a subordination to the latter. The tragic experience of the last war demonstrated that the bureaucracy would far more prefer a setback or a temporary military weakening to the reinforcement of the independent armed forces of the proletarian revolution. It would not hesitate, if it felt necessary, to try and crush such forces right in the middle of the world war. To bind oneself militarily to the general staffs of the bureaucracy in the name of defending the Soviet Union would signify digging a grave for the revolutionary movement of the masses.

Thus, except for the USSR itself, where the defense of what remains of the October conquests imposes specific military tasks on revolutionists, in the rest of the world this strategic task is completely identified with the task of promoting the victory of the socialist revolution in the different countries themselves or in defending and completing the revolutionary conquests already made in those countries (Yugoslavia, China, the buffer countries). In time of peace as in time of war, any policy which lessens the cohesion of the proletarian forces, lowers their level of class consciousness and their confidence in their own strength, diverts them from their revolutionary objectives or utilizes them for aims which are not those of their own class, will be pitilessly fought by the Fourth International, whatever semblance of "military" justification might be alleged in this or that concrete situation.

IX. The method by which our movement has resolved the question of the class nature of Yugoslavia in the resolution adopted by the 9th Plenum of the IEC, is directly linked with its Marxist-Leninist tradition, already successfully defended in its solution of the question of the Soviet Union. The resolution of the 9th Plenum settled the Yugoslav question by taking its point of departure from the real *class* forces and not from the property relations *isolated* from their historical origin. At the same time it "legalizes" the use of the formula of "Workers and Peasants Government" to designate certain transitional stages between the crumpling of the power of the bourgeoisie and the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat, the construction of a state apparatus of a new type. This formula, inscribed in our Transitional Program, has since demonstrated its full usefulness in the case of China, where our movement uses it to characterize the present stage of development in the Chinese revolution. It is part of our programmatic arsenal needed to understand the transitional phenomena belonging to our epoch.

The international discussion now under way on the class nature of the buffer countries could be positively concluded only on condition that the theoretical acquisition which constituted its point of departure is not abandoned. Everyone admitted, at the beginning of the discussion, that in the buffer zone we had to deal with countries dominated by the Soviet bureaucracy *since 1944*. In the course of this domination, certain structural transformations had been effected in these countries within the framework of the policy of structural assimilation pursued by the bureaucracy. The difficulty consists in this: how to determine at what moment the transformation of quantity into quality was effected in the process of structural assimilation. Where a proletarian revolution occurs in a country, the very fact of this revolution dispenses with the need to seek for other criteria to demonstrate the shift in the domination from one class toward another; the Yugoslav example is a new proof of this. We could very well conceive that the proletariat, after taking power in certain countries, might maintain private property in the means of production in certain sectors there for an entire period. The *complete* nationalization of the means of production has not even yet been accomplished in the Soviet Union. A *generalized* nationalization can only serve as proof of the previous existence of a workers' state, no bourgeois state presumably being able to undertake these measures. In the buffer zone, the problem is quite different: there has not been a proletarian revolution and the question to be determined—the form of the passage of power from one class to another—is complicated by the fact that the bureaucracy has effectively exercised power *from the very beginning* there. It is in this sense (to determine the moment of structural assimilation) that we have raised the question of planning and the abolition of *effective* frontiers, and not at all to limit the possibilities for action of victorious revolutions in small countries, or to introduce new criteria for a revolutionary victory.

Consequently it is necessary to admit that the bourgeoisie very quickly lost political power—the dates differing from one country to another—with the power passing over to the Communist parties, supporting themselves on the military and police forces of the bureaucracy. And they have ruled for an entire period without radically transforming the structure of private property and the

state apparatus. The changes which have recently taken place in numerous countries in the state apparatuses mark a new stage in the transformation of these workers and peasants governments into deformed workers' states. At the same time, this transformation is accompanied by an ever stricter and more direct control of the *Soviet* bureaucracy over the entire social life of these countries. The culmination of this process is the *effective* integration of their economy into Soviet planning, of their armies into the Soviet army, which will terminate the process of structural assimilation. So long as this process is not concluded, the situation of each country in the buffer zone remains unstable and transitory and subject to the oscillations of the international relationship of forces (the examples of Germany and Austria have quite recently demonstrated this). One can discuss concretely whether this process has already been concluded in this or that country (it appears most advanced in Poland and Bulgaria). But it would be necessary to admit that the criterion of property relations, as important and decisive as it may be, cannot *by itself alone* enable us to settle the question, if it is isolated from its entire historical context.

X. The tasks of our movement in respect to Stalinism cannot be conceived in isolation from the nature of the epoch in which we live, powerfully emphasized by the events which have unfolded in the past two years. The collapse of imperialist domination in East Asia, the independent development of the Chinese revolution, the outbreak of the Yugoslav affair prove that the world revolution, passing to a new stage of its expansion, has at the same time strongly accentuated the crisis of Stalinism. What matters above all in the present period is to give the proletariat an international leadership capable of coordinating its forces and proceeding to the *world* victory of communism. The Stalinist bureaucracy, forced to turn with a blind fury against the first victorious proletarian revolution outside the USSR, is socially incapable of accomplishing any such task. Herein is the historical mission of our movement. We ought to prepare ourselves, in line with the genius-like prediction of Trotsky "for long years, if not decades, of wars, uprisings, brief interludes of truce, new wars and new uprisings." During this period we will fulfill the central task of forging the international general staff of the revolution.

The historical justification for our movement does not reside in the fact that it is more democratic than Stalinism, that it makes the revolution with less overhead expenses or that it is alone capable of constructing a socialist society. Its only possible justification, confirmed by three dramatic decades, resides in the incapacity of Stalinism to overturn *world* capitalism, an incapacity rooted in the social nature of the Soviet bureaucracy. That is why its final defeat is as certain as that of the international bourgeoisie. No more than the bourgeoisie will it survive a war which will be transformed into a world upsurge of the revolution. The period elapsing between the Second and Third World Wars will appear in history as a temporary interlude, and the prediction of Trotsky that the bureaucracy would not survive a war would find itself historically confirmed.

It is not because the defense of what remains of the October conquests acquires a new and higher importance in the present conjuncture of events that our movement has in the past two years taken a turn toward the Communist workers. On the contrary, it is because the new revolutionary wave contains in embryo the destruction of the Stalinist parties as such that we ought to be much closer today to the Communist workers. This is only one phase of our fundamental task: to construct new revolutionary parties. Experience has shown us that in certain countries, these parties can come forth in an unexpected form, or even that Communist parties can, under pressure of grandiose revolutionary experiences, take the first steps on the road toward a regeneration. But all these cases are located in the perspective of *the crisis of Stalinism*, and not in its even temporary revitalization. If our slogan today is "Closer to the Communist Workers," that is because we feel the moment coming when we can deliver a mortal blow to Stalinism, it is precisely because the revolutionary preoccupations of this worker collide more and more with the counter-revolutionary policy of Stalinism. To be "closer to the Stalinist workers" then signifies *at the same time* to affirm more than ever our own program and our own *Trotskyist* policy in opposition to the Stalinist *policy* which leads them into a blind alley. There is no other possibility for an international victory of the revolution.

However, this orientation is itself of limited application. It does not apply to the Anglo-Saxon countries where the Stalinist parties represent an insignificant minority and this embraces three of the most industrialized countries in the world, the USA, Great Britain, Canada. It no longer applies to many countries in Western Europe, and above all to Germany. It does not yet apply to most of the countries of Latin America. It does not apply to certain countries of the Far East like Ceylon and even perhaps to India. And when the masses will revive tomorrow in all the countries of the buffer zone, it will very likely no longer apply there, with the possible exception of Czechoslovakia, where this reawakening could still begin with the Communist Party.

The historical task of Trotskyism, in the USSR itself, in the buffer zone and in other countries which may be later occupied by the bureaucracy, takes on a new meaning in the framework of our revolutionary perspectives. It consists in assuring to the insurgent movements of the masses, which will inevitably break out in these countries in the event of a prolonged war or a world revolutionary upsurge, a leadership independent of imperialism, capable of leading these countries forward toward proletarian democracy and not backward toward capitalism, capable of cementing the alliance of the workers and peasants on the maintenance of the collectivized property, combined with the democratization of all social life. An indispensable condition for the realization of this task is the participation in the resistance movements of the masses against the Soviet bureaucracy, just as participation in the revolutionary movement of the masses directed by the Communist parties in Asia and eventually in Europe is an indispensable task for passing beyond and doing away with Stalinism in these countries. The participation in the *real* movements of the masses, the conquest of as large a section as possible of the masses in the different countries at the present stage, are the necessary preconditions for realizing our task in

the following stage, whatever be the concrete nature of this stage. Our task is world-wide. It consists in embedding ourselves in the movement of the masses in all countries, in coordinating these movements on an international scale, and this task cannot at all be summed up in an attitude towards the problem of Stalinism alone.

If our movement shows itself capable of establishing and deepening its contacts with the masses in all the important countries; if it continues to form a new generation of cadres and workers' leaders on an international scale; if it remains the only center where the *international* experiences of the mass movement and the revolution are progressively assimilated, its future and its victory are assured, whatever be the conjunctural advances this or that opportunist party can still make here or there.

January 15, 1951

Footnotes on "What Should Be Modified and What Should Be Maintained in Theses of the Second World Congress of

the Fourth International on the Question of Stalinism (Ten Theses)" by Ernest Germain

1. "Distribution, however, is not a merely passive result of production and exchange; it has an equally important reaction upon both of these. The development of each new mode of production or form of exchange is at first retarded not only by the old forms and the political institutions which correspond to these, but also by the old mode of distribution; it can only secure the distribution which is essential to it in the course of a long struggle." (Engels, *Anti-Duhring*, page 169.)

2. Certain Stalinist parties in the buffer countries and the Communist Party of the Soviet Union are, of course, not included in the following definition.

3. Italy and Spain, because of their special geographical and social structure, represent borderline cases which have to be examined from a special standpoint.

4. *Theses on Orientation and Perspectives* (Resolution Adopted by the Third World Congress of the Fourth International)

I. Having failed in the many attempts it has made since the last war to arrest the disintegration of its world system and to restore its equilibrium, and finding itself threatened by a new crisis of overproduction, imperialism has plunged anew into accelerated military and political preparation for a new world war.

II. This tendency to war, inherent in the capitalist system in its imperialist phase of decadence and decomposition, naturally was present since the conclusion of the Second World War and the beginning of the "cold war." However, what essentially characterizes the course recently embarked upon in the policy of the imperialists is the passage from a primarily ideological preparation of the new war (by means of a general anti-Soviet and anti-communist crusade) to more pronounced military and political preparations for war.

This turn is concretized by the essential orientation of the economies of the principal capitalist countries towards armament and war economies, and the subordination of the political character of all their "plans" and ideas ("Marshall Plan," "Schuman Plan," "Unification of Europe") to military needs.

III. To this development of imperialist policy the Soviet bureaucracy counterposes the acceleration of its own armaments program and military plans, the more complete integration of its European satellite countries into its economic and political orbit, efforts to prevent an autonomous development of the Chinese Revolution in order to utilize it for its own ends, and a policy of obstruction by the Communist Parties of the anti-Soviet plan of the bourgeoisie, a policy of harassment and pressure aimed at forcing them into a compromise which would postpone the outbreak of the war.

IV. For fundamental reasons which are inherent in its very nature, the Soviet bureaucracy, despite appearances, fears an abrupt rupture of the equilibrium, dreads the rise and the world triumph of the revolutionary forces even if, in the first period, they are led by the Communist Parties, and it pursues an essentially conservative and defensive policy concentrated above all on the economic, diplomatic and military strengthening of its bastion, the USSR.

From this point of view, the attempt to place the inherently aggressive and expansionist character of imperialist policy, of which war is only an inevitable consequence, on the same plane as that of the Soviet bureaucracy and to speak of similar aspirations on the part of the USA and of the USSR for world domination is to become mired in theoretical confusion from which flows a whole series of basically erroneous political conclusions.

Unfavorable Relationship of Forces

V. Despite the now reinforced orientation of imperialism toward war, the perspective of temporary compromises between the USSR and the USA continues to remain open.

Imperialism is aware that the relationship of forces at the present stage is unfavorable for winning a war against the USSR, its European satellites and China, a war which will necessarily be transformed from the beginning into an international civil war. Although this does not mean that the war will necessarily assume the form of civil war in all countries, or simultaneously or from the beginning in all countries, *its dominant general tendency will be that of an international civil war.*

Imperialism cannot yet count upon any very effective support from any of the capitalist countries in Western Europe which, in case of war, run the risk in their totality of coming rapidly under the control of the Soviet armies, the Communist Parties or the revolutionary masses.

In an equally brief period, all of Asia can experience a similar fate.

Consequently, in the event of a war unleashed in the present period by imperialism, it would have to envisage a situation where in practice, American imperialism, partially seconded by British imperialism, would have to face a coalition of all of Europe and Asia which had passed under the control of the opposing forces.

The events in Korea have already partly demonstrated that a major war will, in the course of its development, provide a powerful impulse to the radicalization of the American masses by destroying their confidence in the bourgeois parties and the state and by opening the road to revolutionary developments on a gigantic scale.

With such a relationship of forces, the victory of world imperialism would become problematical in view of the universal chaos.

VI. For this reason, it is much more probable that imperialism will prolong the period of its preparation until it exhausts its ability to avert the economic crisis and to maintain its control over the American masses.

On the other hand, it will be all the more possible for imperialism to pursue this course since the Soviet bureaucracy, for its own reasons, is also anxious to avert the outbreak of a general war and will lend itself to the conclusion of limited or even more extensive partial compromises and to the policy of the division of zones of influence and of mutual concessions.

War Preparations and Effects

VII. The progress that is made in the stabilization of the economy and class relationships in Western Europe, of several key positions in Asia and in the current armaments program will decide, in part, in the years to come the degree of preparation of imperialism for unleashing and winning a general war. If imperialism succeeds in the coming years in stabilizing and seriously rearming the "Atlantic community" (by integrating Western Germany) and in establishing certain important bases in Asia (Japan, Philippines, Korea, Formosa, Indochina, Indonesia, Middle

East) and in firmly maintaining its control over the American masses, one could then conclude that there would exist a relationship of forces which would permit imperialism to envisage its victory in a world war as very probable.

VIII. However, these preparations of imperialism will inevitably run up against the resistance of the masses of Western Europe, the Asiatic countries and of the United States itself to a new deterioration of their standard of living, and to the destruction of their rights which the bourgeoisie will require to effect its armaments and war program.

IX. The orientation of capitalism toward a war and armaments economy could, for a certain period, avert a deepening of the crisis of overproduction which has already become a general threat, maintain economic activity at 1950 levels and even surpass them in some instances.

But at the same time, it will set into motion a new inflationary pressure and the debasement of the standard of living of the masses, an important part of their purchasing power being necessary to finance the armaments program of the bourgeoisie.

However, the margins of the unstable equilibrium, so painfully attained by the bourgeoisie in the capitalist countries, are so narrow as to threaten their rapid disappearance in the new conjuncture.

American imperialism itself this time runs the risk of reaching the limits of its capacity to combine, as it has done up to now, a "Welfare State" policy at home with preparations for war and with the support of other capitalist countries.

X. In reality, if the bourgeoisie persists in pursuing its colossal armaments program, which is necessary to temporarily avert the precipitation of an economic crisis, and if it confidently continues to envisage a general war, it will be forced to abandon all pretense of combining a policy of "social justice" with intense preparation for war and will be obliged to lower the standard of living of the masses everywhere, including the United States.

It will only be able to succeed in this task by smashing the inevitable resistance of the masses in the course of a series of far-reaching struggles which will definitively decide what possibilities the bourgeoisie have of conducting the war.

Despite the Stalinist and reformist leaderships of the workers' movement in the countries of Western Europe, and despite the treacherous role of the trade union bureaucracy in the U.S., no section of the bourgeoisie is yet able to envisage its success in the years immediately ahead in inflicting a series of decisive defeats upon the proletariat and in establishing "authoritarian," dictatorial or fascist regimes which would be capable of conducting the war.

That holds especially true for Western Germany, Italy, France and England. *The reactions of the American masses would of course have a special importance and could produce deepgoing changes in the world situation, in the pace and preparations for war.*

XI. For the movement of the Fourth International to fulfill its historic task, in the future as it has in the past, to successfully penetrate the mass movement and adopt

a correct attitude on the perspectives of war, it must reaffirm and refine its programmatic positions on a series of questions, among others that of the USSR and of Stalinism.

The positions taken by anti-Stalinist tendencies in the workers' movement other than the Trotskyists, and the evolution of the policy of the Yugoslav government and the Communist Party of Yugoslavia on the Korean war, have once again demonstrated that, in face of the evolution of the international situation and the perspectives of war, it is impossible to adopt a correct class attitude without a correct evaluation of the USSR and of Stalinism, of their character and of the perspectives of their development.

Evolution of the USSR

XII. Despite the extreme degeneration of the Soviet bureaucracy, the USSR has not become a capitalist country, and the structure of its statified and planned economy has been maintained. This economic structure, made possible by the October Revolution and the expropriation of the bourgeoisie, is not subject to the laws of finance capital as defined by the Leninist theory of imperialism. It is fundamentally, qualitatively different from capitalism, even in its most developed form. Tendencies toward statification and economic planning exist in the capitalist system but they are never completely realized and they remain subordinated to the interests and antagonisms of private monopoly groups. On the other hand, these tendencies are constantly undermined by a multitude of small and medium entrepreneurs who daily reproduce private capitalism and stand in the way of all real planning.

The statification of all the means of production and the planned economy which distinguish the USSR and, to a lesser degree, the "People's Democracies" where the process has begun, are not the result of an organic evolution of the former capitalist regime into state capitalism but the product of a specific class struggle — although deformed in the case of the "People's Democracies" by the militaro-bureaucratic intervention of Stalinism — which has culminated in the overthrow of the possessing classes and of imperialism.

The changes in the social and economic structure of these countries result from abrupt changes in the relations of class forces following a struggle, and not as the climax of a general evolution of capitalism toward state capitalism.

Despite the extremely parasitic character of the Soviet bureaucracy, which has become a major brake on economic development, it cannot be said that the productive forces in the USSR are stagnating or have ceased to progress.

This is a supplementary proof of the possibilities of the statified and planned economy which the bureaucracy has not yet been able to destroy completely.

XIII. The Soviet bureaucracy has not become a capitalist class nor is it a new type of class. In its major section, it remains attached to the present economic structure of the USSR, of whose advantages it is aware and from which it derives its privileges. It is subject to pressures, struggles and differentiations in its ranks, produced by the heterogeneity of its strata, the pressure of the Soviet

masses and the pressures of the international proletariat and of imperialism. It continues to embody and to express in its policy the dual and contradictory elements, in their dialectic unity, of its present position as a privileged caste raised to power in a state that is a workers' state in its origin and anti-capitalist in its structure. It cannot surrender to imperialism without disappearing as such in the USSR. On the one hand, it cannot rest on the proletariat and on the extension of the world revolution which would stimulate the struggle of the Soviet masses to overthrow it. This extension would on the other hand, by the organization and rapid development of the world productive forces, remove the objective reasons for the existence and especially for the omnipotence of any bureaucracy. The Kremlin pursues a policy of balancing itself between imperialism and the proletariat, utilizing one against the other in order above all to preserve its positions in the USSR.

Nature of the Communist Parties

XIV. The domination of the Soviet bureaucracy over the leaderships of the Communist Parties was realized through the degeneration of the Third International, whose rank and file remained profoundly attached to the October Revolution and the USSR.

Manipulating these leaderships as it wills, the Soviet bureaucracy utilizes the Communist Parties as instruments of its international policy. The leaderships of these parties lend themselves to this game because they are themselves composed of bureaucratized elements deriving their influence over the masses and their privileges above all from the fact that they appear to the masses as the chosen representatives of the October Revolution and the USSR, "the socialist fatherland."

However, wherever the Communist Parties remain mass organizations, still embracing, especially after the last war, the most revolutionary section of the working class and the poor peasants in numerous countries of Europe and of Asia; they cannot allow themselves to be reduced to being, under all conditions, mere agencies for the transmission and execution of the orders of the Soviet bureaucracy.

It will not be possible to adopt a correct policy toward them nor will it be possible to explain the case of the CPY and other analogous cases which have presented themselves and will inevitably present themselves in the future, particularly in the perspective of a war against the USSR, if the dialectic of the Communist Parties and their relations with the movement of the masses is not thoroughly understood.

XV. Neither in the leaderships bound to the Soviet bureaucracy, nor in their base, nor in their relations with the working class and the masses of the poor in general are the Communist Parties exactly reformist parties. They embody contradictory elements which have been clearly revealed since the German-Soviet Pact of 1939.

Between imperialism and the Soviet bureaucracy they invariably line up — without notable desertions — on the side of the Soviet bureaucracy, even in its sharpest zigzags.

On the other hand, insofar as they are tied to a real revolutionary movement of the masses, they are subject to its pressure and may, under certain favorable conditions,

go beyond the aims set for them by the Soviet bureaucracy and project a revolutionary orientation. This specifically means that parties placed in such favorable conditions may possibly see themselves obliged to undertake a struggle for power against the possessing classes and imperialism.

It would be anti-Marxist not to recognize this possibility, proved by the experience of the CPY and in part by that of the CP of China, and to affirm that the weight of the bureaucratic apparatus will prove more decisive under all conditions than the pressure of the movement of the masses.

In the long run objective conditions determine the character and dynamics of the movement of the masses which, raised to a certain level, can overcome all subjective obstacles on the road to the revolution. This conception continues to be the basis of our revolutionary optimism and clarifies our attitude toward the Communist Parties.

In the event of powerful revolutionary uprisings of the masses, like those which occurred during the war in Yugoslavia, in China, and recently in Korea, and like those which will inevitably occur in the perspective described above, it is not excluded that certain Communist Parties with the bulk of their forces can be pushed out of the strict orbit of the Soviet bureaucracy and can project a revolutionary orientation.

From that moment on, they would cease to be strictly Stalinist parties, mere instruments of the policy of the Soviet bureaucracy, and would lend themselves to a differentiation and to a politically autonomous course.

In the event of new revolutionary uprisings led by the Communist Parties, the Fourth International cannot permit itself a repetition of the errors of evaluation committed in the past regarding Yugoslavia or China. On the contrary, conscious of the gigantic struggle which will unfold under conditions of a general war — so long as the relationship of forces in Europe and in Asia is not seriously altered in favor of the bourgeoisie and of imperialism — and of the struggle already going on in several colonial countries, it should give increased attention to the evolution of the Communist Parties of these countries and find the means of penetrating the mass movement and of influencing the ranks of these parties.

Stalinist "Expansionism"

XVI. If one correctly understands the character of the Soviet bureaucracy, the CPs, their interrelationships and their relations with the mass movement, one cannot conclude that Stalinism, i. e., the Soviet bureaucracy, has any historic future whatever. Those who speak of the possibility of a world expansion of Stalinism and of a possible era of the rule of "bureaucratic capitalism" or of Stalinist "bureaucratic collectivism" proceed from fundamentally erroneous theoretical considerations regarding the USSR and Stalinism. They deduce Soviet "expansion" and its so-called tendency toward world domination either from a "monopoly capitalist" structure of the USSR which, as in other countries dominated by big finance capital, impels it to an imperialist policy, or from the "totalitarian" character of this policy. On the other hand, they consider that the socio-economic premises for a bureaucracy like the one

in the USSR already exist in the movement of the Communist Parties allowing for the establishment everywhere, if these parties are victorious, of a political power similar to the one in the USSR.

In reality the Soviet bureaucracy does not at all pursue a systematic policy of "expansion," and every enlargement of "Stalinist" power in the world introduces, on the contrary, along with a transitory strengthening of Stalinist prestige, the elements of the disintegration of this power.

XVII. The extension of the influence of the Soviet bureaucracy into the East European "buffer zone" is not a proof of the systematic policy of "expansion" to which the Soviet bureaucracy, just like imperialism, found itself driven. The Soviet bureaucracy took hold of these countries only as a result of particularly favorable conditions created by the war, thanks to the agreement it was able to conclude with "democratic" imperialism and thanks to the extreme decomposition of the capitalist regimes in these countries which did not require any large-scale revolutionary struggles for their overthrow.

Even under these extremely favorable conditions, the bureaucracy proceeded prudently in these countries, still showed itself ready at the outset to make concessions to imperialism, and consolidated its absolute control over the masses by stages before deciding to hasten the integration of these countries into its economic and political orbit.

In all other capitalist countries, which it considered in the imperialist sphere of influence, and even in countries like Yugoslavia, Greece and China where the movement of the masses had already progressively destroyed the direct power of the bourgeoisie, the Soviet bureaucracy sabotaged the revolutionary development and the seizure of power.

Afterwards, the integration now being effected by the bureaucracy in the "buffer states" required in several cases, especially where the CP represented a real force connected to a real mass movement (as in Bulgaria, in Czechoslovakia and partly in Poland), the destruction of the native apparatuses of the CP and their replacement by GPU-type functionaries, directly managed from the Kremlin.

The Struggle Against Stalinism

XVIII: By its very nature, the Soviet bureaucracy is fundamentally opposed to the development of the revolutionary forces in the world, and it is excluded, even in the case of a general war against the USSR, that the bureaucracy can impel the CPs to take power in areas of the world that it will not be able to control, among others, for example, the USA, which, however, is the citadel of imperialism.

While the counter-revolutionary role of the Soviet bureaucracy remains unchanged, either as concerns the betrayal of a workers' revolution or the stifling of an independent proletarian movement, its possibility of successfully performing this role is determined not by its subjective desires and intentions but by an objectively revolutionary situation, which because of its vast scope and intensity becomes increasingly difficult to destroy or to maintain within rigid bureaucratic channels and police

controls. The developments in Yugoslavia and China are only a prefiguration of the events to come in the course of the coming international civil war.

It is only from such a profound understanding of the nature of the Soviet bureaucracy that one can get rid of the specter of "Stalinist domination," expose the world counter-revolutionary role of the Soviet bureaucracy, grasp and exploit the concrete contradictory relationships which exist between the Soviet bureaucracy, the CPs and the movement of the masses, and fundamentally support every revolutionary, anti-capitalist and anti-imperialist movement which still further restricts the base of imperialism in the world even if, in the first stages, this movement is led by a leadership of Stalinist persuasion.

It is on this basis and through this tactic that the revolutionary proletariat will overcome Stalinism.

XIX. Against the attempts of imperialism to re-establish an equilibrium and to temporarily resolve its crisis by reintroducing the markets of the USSR, the "People's Democracies" of Europe, Yugoslavia, China, the Asiatic areas in revolt into its orbit, the Fourth International will counterpose the defense of all these countries and of the colonial revolutions. (This conception of defense does not apply to Eastern Germany and the Soviet occupation zone in Austria.) The task of overthrowing the Soviet bureaucracy and of breaking its grip on the workers' movement cannot in any way be confided to imperialism.

On the other hand, the defense of these countries and of the colonial revolutions in Asia, which are no longer under the direct control of imperialism, not only signifies working to maintain and aggravate the disequilibrium and the crisis of imperialism and, therefore, to strengthen objective revolutionary possibilities. It signifies at the same time in the long run undermining the power of the Soviet bureaucracy from within the revolutionary camp, for only the broadening and the strengthening of the world revolutionary crisis will weaken the power of the bureaucracy and will open perspectives for its elimination in a progressive way.

XX. The choice for the proletarian and colonial masses is not between the mutilated and disfigured bourgeois "democracy," which still exists in several metropolitan countries, and the yoke of the Soviet bureaucracy.

In order to survive, imperialism is obliged to constantly lower the standard of living of its own masses in the metropolitan countries and to steadily destroy their rights; it condemns the proletariat and the colonial masses of the countries it controls to a starvation regime and to open police dictatorship, like that of Franco, Tsaldaris, Chiang Kai-shek, Bao-Dai, Syngman Rhee.

Under such regimes, Stalinist propaganda can find a response, and in the absence of another force and a genuinely proletarian solution, the masses of these countries will continue to be influenced by the CPs.

Strategy of Revolutionary Proletariat

XXI. To be effective and to really contribute to the march of history, the policy of the revolutionary proletariat should begin not from what ought to be but from what is;

it must know how to pass from one situation to a higher stage while preserving all the gains of past revolutionary struggles. It should be able to exploit the contradictory and transitory elements of a complex, devious development which has been made even more difficult by the degeneration of the USSR and by Stalinism.

The defense of the USSR, of the "People's Democracies" of Europe, of Yugoslavia and of China does not mean the defense of the Soviet bureaucracy or of the policy of the Stalinist leaderships of the CPs. The defense of the USSR is a *strategic* line (for the Fourth International) and not a "slogan" as such (Resolution of the 2nd World Congress on the "USSR and Stalinism") and its *tactical* applications remain subordinate to the free development of the movement of the masses against all attempts by the Soviet bureaucracy, the Russian army and the Stalinist leaders, to strangle and to smash it.

Nowhere in the Soviet orbit does the proletariat govern directly and nowhere in this orbit has the overthrow of the capitalist regime and of imperialism opened the road to a free development toward socialism and communism. The political expropriation of the proletariat principally by the Soviet bureaucracy constitutes a major brake on such a development and keeps the proletariat under conditions of growing inequality and heightened bureaucratic and police oppression, more onerous than under certain "democratic" forms of the bourgeois regime.

However, in order to overcome this situation in which the overthrow of capitalism and of imperialism was followed by the political expropriation of the proletariat, it is necessary to combine the struggle against the bureaucracy with the preservation of these achievements: the overthrow of the capitalist regime, the expropriation of the bourgeoisie, of feudalism, of imperialism, the statification and planning of the economy.

Only the revolutionary proletariat is capable of carrying on such a combined struggle imposed by the dialectic of evolution, while the victory of imperialism over the USSR, the "People's Democracies," Yugoslavia, China and the colonial revolutions would signify a defeat of the world revolution, a historic step backward for the whole revolutionary process of our epoch.

Socialism and Bureaucracy

XXII. The Fourth International has not and will not cease to work for the overthrow of the Soviet bureaucracy and its agents in the buffer zone by the revolutionary proletariat as well as to combat and unmask the myths of the Soviet bureaucracy and of Stalinism in general concerning the "victory of socialism in the USSR" and "socialism on the road to realization" in the "People's Democracies."

These myths monstrously distort the reality of the conditions of the proletariat in these countries.

The Fourth International struggles so that the proletariat can lead the fight for power and direct the revolution so that the conquest of power can take place effectively in the name of the entire class, by its direct class organs: party, trade unions and soviets, against all bureaucracy.

It declares that free socialist development is possible only on this basis.

On the other hand, the proletariat will succeed in this task and will completely avoid the bureaucratic deformation of its institutions and especially of its power, only insofar as the revolutionary camp is broadened in the world and the revolution conquers more and more of the industrially most advanced countries.

"Socialism in one country" is not only a petty-bourgeois utopia; it also implies an eventual bureaucratic and inevitable opportunist degeneration of the proletarian power.

A proletarian revolution in the USA, for example, bringing to bear the weight of the tremendous American productive apparatus in the interests of world socialist development, will greatly ease the transition period of backward countries and provide an important corrective against inevitable tendencies toward bureaucratic deformation.

Tasks of Fourth International

XXIII. In the great struggles which will inevitably be induced by the concrete preparations of imperialism for war, resulting in new sacrifices for the masses and serious blows to their liberties, the task of our movement is to penetrate much deeper into the mass movement. It must do this in order to facilitate a revolutionary outcome and to occupy the best possible positions with a view to the role it will have to play especially in the gigantic revolutionary crisis which will arise in the event of a general war — so long as the relationship of forces in Europe and in Asia is not profoundly changed in favor of the bourgeoisie and of imperialism.

In a series of countries where Stalinism and reformism do not constitute major obstacles, our movement will strive in the next years to become the principal revolutionary leadership.

In countries where the reformist parties by far outdistance all other working class formations and are the polar force for the great majority of the proletariat (England, Belgium, Australia) our movement should attempt to integrate itself in these organizations, to organize and develop a conscious left wing in their ranks.

In countries where the majority of the working class still follows the CP, our organizations, necessarily independent, should orient toward more systematic work among the ranks of these parties and the masses they influence.

In the countries of the "People's Democracies," our supporters who are not known should try to integrate themselves in the CPs and to remain there, as well as in every proletarian mass organization, in order to take advantage of the revolutionary possibilities which will develop above all in the event of war.

In China, our forces, wherever possible, should try to enter the CP and to elaborate a concrete program which can favor a proletarian and anti-bureaucratic orientation of this party, or at least the formation of a broad tendency along this line within the party and among the masses it influences.

In all other Asian countries in revolt where the CP

heads the mass movement, our movement should also be oriented toward work in the CPs and the organizations which they influence, so as not to cut ourselves off from the movement of the masses and to be able better to exploit the events of the war.

Intermediary forms, imposed by the peculiarities of the workers' movement in each country, will naturally be necessary here and there. However, the general line remains that of the penetration of the general movement of the class as it actually is.

XXIV. The inevitable aspect of civil war which a war unleashed against the USSR will acquire, at least in Europe and Asia under the conditions described above, emphasizes the special interest work among the CPs should have for us as well as the need for a clear and unequivocal position on the Soviet bureaucracy, the CPs, the defense of the USSR, of the "People's Democracies," of China and of the colonial revolutions against imperialism.

Only our movement, thanks to its position and to its entire past, is able to envisage the realization of its junction with the revolutionary forces which will arise in the CPs and with the masses they influence in this crisis, to impel them into a resolute struggle for the overthrow of capitalism and, at the same time, against the Soviet bureaucracy.

For the same reasons, only our movement will be able from now on to exploit the crisis of Stalinism in a manner favorable for the building of a new revolutionary leadership.

New Course of Trotskyism

XXV. Between the Second and the Third World Congresses, the aim set by the Second Congress of penetrating

the real movement of the masses has in large part been realized.

Because of this, the whole physiognomy of our movement has been transformed: the maturing of the leaderships, the proletarianization of the organizations, a real knowledge of and effective exploitation of the peculiarities of the workers' movement in each country.

The new course of Trotskyism is a reality and the best pledge of its future as the vanguard of the revolutionary proletariat and as the conscious expression of the communist movement of our epoch.

The problem now is to consolidate and to amplify this process with the aim of successfully participating in the decisive battles to come and of aiding to the best of our ability with maximum effect the objective revolutionary process in a crumbling world.

The question of the creation of a new revolutionary leadership resolving the present crisis of the workers' movement and of all humanity has always been envisaged by our movement as being closely linked to the existence of objectively favorable conditions for the propulsion of powerful revolutionary mass struggles. In contrast with the period of prostration of the workers' movement which we experienced in the years preceding the last war, these conditions now exist and give rise to struggles unprecedented in the past so far as their scope and globality is concerned. It is through this period and its struggles that a new revolutionary vanguard will be forged as well as the selection of a new revolutionary leadership which will make its own the ideas and the program of the Fourth International.

SECTION II: ENTRYISM "OF A SPECIAL TYPE"

[Shortly after the Third World Congress, the International Secretariat, under Pablo's leadership, ordered the French section to carry out a tactic of "deep entry" into the French Communist Party. All party work was to be oriented toward supporting this entry tactic. At the Tenth Plenum of the International Executive Committee in February 1952, Pablo presented this tactic as a universal one

applicable to all Trotskyist parties except those in countries where there were no strong Stalinist or Social-Democratic formations. "The Building of the Revolutionary Party, the published excerpts from Pablo's report to the Tenth Plenum of the IEC, is reprinted from SWP *International Information Bulletin*, June 1952.]

"The Building of the Revolutionary Party," by Michel Pablo

With the elaboration and the application of the Transition Program, our international movement should have entered the stage of mass work. This is the sense in which Trotsky conceived it. It was to crown a long period of the development and functioning of the Trotskyist movement, which, beginning with the necessary stage of strict, ideological de-

limitation from Stalinism and other tendencies in the workers' movement and of general propaganda, has attained a degree of maturity which makes possible and even imposes the need of broad activity within the class. The conception and elaboration of the Transition Program to which the collective experience of the Trotskyist mov-

ment had made its contribution, reflected already this natural maturity of our movement in the realm of ideas.

Nevertheless, the particular conditions of the war which broke out shortly after the Transition Program was adopted did not permit the International and its sections to go through the experiences of the new stage, to develop without obstacles which would enable the entire movement to be involved and educated. During the war most of the sections were plunged into strict illegality with limited forces and have been persecuted by the imperialists and the Stalinists. In certain countries where the mass movement took on particular forms for its expression, our weak sections, insufficiently experienced, as yet prisoners of a thought tainted with a certain spirit of formalism, schematicism and doctrinism, couldn't appreciate the possibilities offered by these mass movements and did not integrate themselves into them and profit by them.

The result was that following the end of the war our movement as a whole did not as yet experience real mass work and a general propagandist character continued to dominate its activity. I say its *activity* and not its *policy* because what was as yet lacking in our movement at that time was not so much a concrete as against a merely general position on this or that political question (a trade union program adapted to the conditions of each country, a concrete analysis of the national political situation and concrete political slogans). But above all a milieu for concrete work, a concrete conception of the manner in which work in such a milieu is to be carried on and all this fitting within a framework of a concrete conception of building the revolutionary party in each country.

The stage of such activity started for our movement as a whole after the last war and has been going on since, reaching all the time new levels of maturity and achievement. Some of these represent new accomplishments—in the sphere of tactics and experience—for the whole workers' Marxist movement since its beginning.

We will subdivide this stage into three phases in order to better understand the logic of development and the degree of progress accomplished: From the end of the war to the Second World Congress (April 1948); from the Second to the Third World Congress; since the latter.

In the first stage a number of our sections have exerted themselves to propagate and to apply under the concrete conditions in their countries the transition program which had become more timely than ever in the situation in which capitalism found itself following the war.

This was especially the case of most of our European sections and of the American Trotskyists, as well as our organizations in Ceylon and Bolivia. These two, for special reasons, had already acquired real mass influence.

In all these countries our organizations have progressed both in elaborating a concrete policy as well as real mass activity, participating broadly in electoral activity, in strikes, in trade union activity.

They have thus broken ideologically as well as in practical activity with their past as propaganda groups and have imperceptibly transformed themselves qualitatively into political groups more intimately tied to the life and struggles of the class.

This phase took place as a general rule under the sign of independent activity and organization of our forces.

The reasons for this orientation had their basis in our estimate at the time of the international situation, of Stalinism and of reformism. This estimate was essentially correct.

The postwar situation in Europe, Asia, Latin America and even the United States (certainly to a lesser degree) was full of revolutionary possibilities. It was the class collaboration policy which the Kremlin carried out during the war with the "democratic" imperialist camp—a policy the Kremlin intended to continue, which negated these possibilities and cynically betrayed the interests of the revolution.

The Kremlin wished to avoid a full break with its allies and was in search of a durable compromise with them. They on their part hadn't as yet regained sufficient strength to begin the "cold war."

Despite the advances by the Kremlin, the logic of the situation pushed naturally toward a rupture between the two camps and to their violent opposition. But the capitalists had not as yet played their full hand and nobody could foresee exactly how much time would pass before such a rupture.

In reality it was the fall of Chiang Kai-shek, much more than the coup of Prague in February 1948, which undermined the possibility of an extended and viable compromise between the Kremlin and imperialism.

In any case, as far as the Kremlin is concerned, the period 1944-1947 proceeded under the sign of its counter-revolutionary policy of destroying the revolutionary possibilities in the situation. The masses deserting the old reformist parties flowed into the Stalinist organizations, but the policy of the latter disillusioned them and threatened to push them outside these organizations.

Under these conditions it was logical for our movement to go through the experience of essentially independent work which would permit the open denunciation without any restrictions of the clearly counter-revolutionary policy of the Kremlin and to polarize around our own organization the revolutionary elements disillusioned in this policy.

On the other hand, "entrism" or "essentially entrism" work in relation to the reformist organizations, weakened and discredited at that time in most of the European countries, opened no serious perspective for our movement.

Nevertheless the special cases of England and Austria did not fail to attract the attention of the International even then.

The second stage started with the Second World Congress at the beginning of 1948, which coincided with the coup at Prague and the beginning of the "cold war." In the field of tactics and the concrete building of revolutionary parties the Second World Congress made a special contribution concerning work toward reformist organizations. Between the Second and the Third World Congress, more specifically between the Second Congress and the Ninth Plenum of the IEC, October 1950, this work held the special attention of the International, because of the rehabilitation in the eyes of the masses of a number of reformist organizations and the parallel loss of Stalinist influence in the same countries (Belgium, Austria, the Scandinavian countries, Germany, etc.). The case of England which had been raised in advance of the World Congress was resolved shortly after the latter.

The decision to enter the Labor Party and the conception of the work to be done there was the first new experience of the International and by far the most important in the

domain of entrism work in general. It has been developing since then in a manner considerably different, I would say almost qualitatively different, from "entrism" as it was practiced by our movement in the years 1934-38.

I will return later to the new objective and subjective conditions which have determined the new meaning of this "entrism." But suffice for the moment to point out that in the entry into the Labor Party the International embarked on the course of long-term work within these movements and organizations through which flow—and most probably will flow for another period—the fundamental political current of the class.

The International thus recognized a reality and consequently the necessity of envisaging the building of a revolutionary party through a common experience with the political majority of the class, an experience lived where this class was and would remain for a period. The essential forces of the revolutionary party would appear through differentiation or explosion in these mass organizations. This tactical conception was and is based, of course, on the perspectives of the evolution of the international situation as they began to be clarified for us at the beginning of the "cold war": the relatively short period before the war breaks out; the new and decisive character of this war; the accelerated crisis of the capitalist regime which will in any case acquire a generally explosive character in the war itself. Between now and then the probable tightening of the ranks of the masses around their principal organizations—reformist or Stalinist depending on the country—and the differentiation taking place in general within the framework of these organizations. To try to shake, still more to replace, the bureaucratic leadership of the masses from the outside, by opposing to them our own independent organizations, would under these conditions threaten to isolate us from these masses and make us lose all the real possibilities of operating toward achieving this end much more effectively inside their movement.

Between the Second and the Third World Congress the evolution of the objective situation indicated has only reinforced us in these tactical conceptions.

But while after the entry in Britain this tactic appeared in general possible in relation to reformist organizations and met with ever better understanding throughout the International, the tactic of an approach to the Stalinist movement remained unchanged. We continued to count on the crisis of Stalinism and its decomposition. The principal reason for this was to be found in the actual crisis of Stalinism which in 1948-50 had reached its post-war culmination with the ripening of the Yugoslav affair. The Yugoslav explosion had its repercussion in all the buffer countries and all the Communist parties. This continued up to the Korean war. This crisis was nourished by the contradictions between the objectives of the reactionary policy of the Kremlin in the buffer countries and the Western Communist parties and the needs and aspirations of the revolutionary masses which had flocked to these parties after the war. The outbreak of the Yugoslav affair and its gradual left-centrist course which the Yugoslav Communist Party outlined up to the Korean war, militated in favor of the broadening and deepening of this crisis. But the intensification of the "cold war" had led at the same time to a left turn in the policy of the Communist parties as compared to the line they followed until approximately 1947 and placed the Stalinist movement in

objectively new conditions.

This second factor clashed with the first and in a certain measure thwarted its effect. The Yugoslav affair during its progressive phase would have had infinitely more repercussions inside the international Stalinist movement if the Communist parties had at the same time maintained their ultra-right policy of 1944-47. Nevertheless what really reversed the centrifugal process in the Stalinist crisis was the general situation created by the Korean war and especially the disastrous effect which this situation brought about in Yugoslav policy. With the Korean war the "cold war" became enormously intensified and along with it the leftward development of the Stalinist policy was accentuated. On the other hand, the Yugoslav CP caught between internal difficulties and the increasing pressure of imperialism began to give ground to the latter.

All this contributed not to a disappearance of the crisis of Stalinism (this crisis in reality is permanent because it is due to the insoluble contradictions of Stalinism), but to its transformation into a continuous crisis inside the framework of the Stalinist organizations and movement. The masses and the militants oppose instinctively menacing imperialism above all else.

The Yugoslav affair which was at first a powerful stimulant for accentuating the *centrifugal* and dismembering aspects of the Stalinist crisis became a factor tending to reinforce the *centripetal* aspects of this crisis, since the discontented elements hesitated to break away for fear that in isolation they might break the class front just as Tito had done.

As we have already noted, the increasingly leftward development of Stalinist policy had the same effect. This new international situation as well as its new pressures on the Stalinist movement resulting from the Korean war had to gain our attention and influence our tactics, especially in relation to the Stalinist movement. It was no longer possible to proceed as if nothing had changed without the certain risk of taking the wrong road, of ossifying our movement on positions which moving reality and life had passed by and stagnating as a consequence of theoretical incomprehension and sectarianism. The Ninth Plenum of the IEC outlined the reorientation of our movement, that is to say, it began to bring our political analysis and our practical activity into conformity with the new international situation and its implications in the workers' movement. This Plenum outlined especially a new approach to the Stalinist movement within the framework of the new perspective for the evolution of the international situation and the new conditions in which Stalinism finds itself, especially the Communist parties having mass influence. This beginning of a reorientation was completed at the Third World Congress.

In its reports and resolutions the Congress laid the basis of a general tactic for our movement which would enable it to work for the building of the mass world revolutionary party within the framework of a whole perspective of the evolution of the international situation. With the Congress our movement attained an understanding never before reached of its tactic of penetrating the real mass movement and there to become its revolutionary leadership.

Every mental, intellectual approach to the objective reality is in principle a limited and incomplete approach. Thought seizes some aspects of reality, splits it up, immobilizes it and deprives it of its richer more complex

content. Thought necessarily disfigures reality and, in order to be able to grasp it, breaks its unity, its movement. The thought of our movement despite its superiority over non-organized and individual thought (which consequently does not benefit from the discipline and the vigor of collective thought of an international movement having thousands of vantage points for observation and experience) is not exempt from these faults. It too falls constantly behind the objective processes and grasps them only with limitations.

Some objective fundamental things, some fundamental aspects of the objective reality, cannot be grasped, understood, except through experience and the natural maturing of thought in action.

The revolutionary movement despite the powerful arm of Marxist theory does not all at once become fused with the real movement of the class in each country. It does not grasp external reality in its particularities. It does not eliminate the doctrinal schematic barriers which separates it from reality, except through experience and the successive approximations of its thought to reality which are made possible and even imposed by experience.

With the Third World Congress we have the proof of the concrete maturing of the thought of our movement based on its entire past experience and its theoretical resources. This has made possible the elaboration of a whole tactical conception for the building of the revolutionary mass party. This is the most vital conception, that is, the most realistic in relation to the entire past of the revolutionary workers' movement, the most adapted to a real understanding of the character of the epoch and the real mass movement this epoch engenders in every country.

It is we, the international Trotskyist movement, who have achieved the greatest progress in tactical conceptions since the birth of the workers' Marxist movement. We achieved this by working for the real fusion of the revolutionary vanguard with the natural movement of the class however it is formed and expressed in each country; by eliminating all doctrinal schematic barriers separating formalist thought from revolutionary action; by eliminating sectarianism which is basically afraid to throw itself into creative revolutionary activity. This progress in understanding has been achieved by the majority of our cadres and a great part of our members. It remains naturally to impregnate the entire movement with these conceptions and to thus realize for the first time in the history of the international workers' movement the example of a vanguard which is truly *non-sectarian*, that is, a vanguard which is closer than ever to reality and whose thought and consequent action has grasped more closely than ever, with less limitations than ever, the reality, life, the natural movement of the class of which it is to become the conscious and the revolutionary leadership. I now come to the conception of the whole of our tactic the Third World Congress arrived at. Its constituent elements as well as their dialectical ties can be found explicitly and implicitly in the text of the Congress reports and resolutions.

In the present report I propose to unfold this conception even more and to develop it more fully and more analytically. I say that the Third World Congress has elaborated an entire tactic for our work in the real mass movement toward the end of building the revolutionary mass party in each country. In this sense it has taken up all the

past conquests of our movement and has carried them to a higher level by fusing the apparently dissimilar elements into a tactical conception of the whole, more developed and more integral. This tactical concept of the whole is subordinated to the general political perspective worked out by the Third World Congress and flows from it. The unity and the sense of this tactic cannot be seized except by those who approach it in the light of the general perspective.

This perspective is defined as that of the final crisis of capitalism and the extension of the world revolution, both precipitated by the upsets provoked by the last war, accentuated since the "cold war," and which is now on the road to a decisive solution through decisive conflict, that is to say, which will in any case mark an entire historic epoch. In this development we say: the revolutionary forces start favorably situated and we do not foresee the possibility, that this relationship of forces will change in the years to come in a decisive fashion to the detriment of the revolution.

The counter-revolutionary war which united imperialism is preparing and toward which it is inexorably driven (if one excludes the hypothesis that a revolution will gain throughout the world including above all the United States before the war breaks out, or that imperialism including that of the United States will be so frightened as to yield without a struggle) in a relatively short time, this war far from arresting the destructive processes of capitalism will on the contrary carry them to a higher level—the international civil war, the war-revolution.

In this period, *the most revolutionary in history* (not of capitalism alone), which is already before us, when the final outcome of capitalism is at stake in a relatively short time, *will also be decided the fate of Stalinism, that is, of the Soviet bureaucracy and its reactionary hold on parts of the revolutionary workers' movement which it continues to influence.*

We start with the conviction that *the extension of the revolution will signify at the same time the certain death of Stalinism*, that the final outcome of the struggle which has begun, independent of one or another initial temporary or episodic phase between now and then, will lead also to the destruction of Stalinism. This conviction holds nothing in the nature of a sentimental consolation or of a pious wish, but is founded on a profound comprehension of the objective forces engaged in struggle, on the nature and the contradictions of Stalinism, as well as on the results of the experiences in Yugoslavia, China, in the buffer countries, with other Communist parties during and after the last war. *The new objective conditions* under which the struggle for socialism is proceeding is determining a new dynamism for the spontaneous mass movement. These objective conditions have placed and are moreover constantly placing the organized political movement of the proletariat, in the different currents and organizations in which it manifests itself, in objective conditions which are equally *new*, that is to say, which *determine new reactions on their part independent of one or another desire or plan of their leaders.*

It is by starting with this kind of understanding of the character of the period, of the direction of its evolution and of the reactions which this situation imposes and determines on the plane of the spontaneous mass move-

ment as well as on the plane of their organized formations that we elaborate our tactic as a whole. It is in this manner that we proceeded at the time of the Third World Congress.

The tactical conceptions which this Congress elaborated are *all based on the analysis of the character of the period and its perspective*. It is in that context that they find their meaning and unity of content. *For under various forms our tactic is directed everywhere toward our integration into the real mass movement, taking into account its special characteristics* in each country, in order to create the revolutionary leadership and the revolutionary party.

II. Three Sectors of Our Activity

With the Third World Congress our movement succeeded in unifying two elements in its tactical conception: *A concrete milieu for work, a concrete manner of working within it*.

It is incorrect to say, as some have, that the Third World Congress has shown some kind of preference for work among the Stalinist workers and organizations to the detriment of other sectors of work. If it specially stressed the necessity for such work it was because, as we have already noted, this sphere has been the most neglected up to now, the one in which the lag behind the reorientation imposed by the new objective conditions was incontestably the greatest. As a matter of fact the tactical conception defined by the Third World Congress *simultaneously trains its sights in three distinct directions according to the special characteristic of the mass movement in each country*: essentially independent work; work directed toward the reformist workers and organizations; work directed toward the Stalinist workers and organizations.

A. The Essentially Independent Work

The texts of the Third World Congress have clearly indicated that for a whole category of very important countries where the obstacle of a strong reformist or Stalinist movement does not exist, *the immediate central task* of the Trotskyists is to act from now on as the revolutionary leadership of the masses. This category of countries includes above all Latin America and Ceylon. The United States, India, the countries of the Middle East, the African colonies, can be considered a part of this category with the following reservation: In all these countries the Trotskyists must from now on act as the revolutionary leadership of the masses even though it may be necessary in some of these countries to go through an experience with certain reformist, centrist or simply national currents and formations.

For example, the activity of the American Trotskyists is at the present stage essentially independent even though it calls for the necessity of a Labor Party in the USA, an eventuality which if realized would involve their entry into the Labor Party.

The activity of the Trotskyists in the Middle East and the African colonies may develop for a period inside the national movement which is rocking these countries, but it would from the beginning have to shoulder the tasks of a revolutionary leadership of the masses. The activity of the German Trotskyists might just as well be concentrated exclusively inside the Socialist Party, but it is also

possible that it will still develop independently for a period, for example, if the Socialist Party should abandon its opposition to rearmament and thus isolate itself from the mass current.

Our activity must be considered essentially independent in all those countries where the existence of another leadership, reformist or Stalinist, has not been solidly established among the masses and consequently does not impose a long-term entrism such as we now envisage in all other cases.

This essentially independent activity means as we have said *to act from now on as the revolutionary leadership of the masses*.

This character of the activity flows from our evaluation of the situation and the perspectives of its evolution. The situation is *prerevolutionary all over in various degrees and evolving toward the revolution in a relatively brief period. And this process from now on is in general irreversible*.

The revolution even breaks out unexpectedly, as in Iran, Egypt, and Tunisia.

The small nuclei of revolutionary Marxists can and must play the role assigned them by history, that of the revolutionary leadership. These nuclei can discharge this task and by so doing develop in a relatively short time into *powerful currents*, provided they are from now on prepared ideologically and politically, that is to say, if they have from now on a clear and profound understanding of the explosive revolutionary character of the period and if they elaborate a concrete policy and concrete tactic adapted to the particular conditions of their country. In a world, if they act from now on not as a general propaganda group but as the nucleus of the revolutionary leadership conscious of the needs and aspirations of the masses of their country and a concrete political answer to their problems.

It is this bold, aggressive, broad, flexible spirit that the Third World Congress wanted to instill in the Trotskyists of all these countries.

What the Congress documents said about the countries of the Middle East and the tactic to be adopted there for penetration of the national movements which are now convulsing these countries so profoundly, even prior to the expansion of the Iranian crisis, the Egyptian and Tunisian events, is a brilliant confirmation of the correctness of the evaluation and of the recommended tactic.

The resolution on Latin America also constitutes an example of such an understanding of the situation and of the tasks of the vanguard. This resolution warns the Trotskyists of these countries that the explosive revolutionary crisis of the Far East, extended to the Middle East, is their own inevitable future of a tomorrow which is very close, that they must consequently prepare themselves right away, quickly, to play their role as leadership, that this must express itself in the structure and spirit of their program, the boldness and flexibility of their activity. The resolution gives precise directions on all these points. Its spirit, conceptions, are even more important than the letter.

The Third World Congress tried to make a final break with all doctrinaire, formalistic, schematic petty-bourgeois barriers which interfere with a comprehension of the objectively revolutionary processes of our epoch and with their utilization at an opportune time.

Objectively the revolution may commence in unpredictable ways which appear contrary to the letter of books and documents and outside established schemas.

One must be prepared first of all to enter the struggle, confident that the logic of its development is infallibly that of the permanent revolution and grasping at the first handle offered by the situation (peasant movements, workers' strikes, or national demonstrations) to go with the masses, demonstrate with them and be the first ones against imperialism. Even though they cry at the same time, "Long live King Farouk"; "Longlive Mossadeg"; "Long live Bourguiba" their second cry will inevitably be against the traitor king, the traitor paschas, the feudal-capitalist traitors, the cry of the Cairo demonstrators: "War and revolution!"

It is necessary to start where the masses themselves start: with the anti-imperialist struggle, for example; to organize it ourselves, seize the initiative, deepen it. It is necessary to have confidence in the masses, to avoid an over-estimation of their apparent apathy during any period, their inevitable temporary retreats, and it is necessary not to under-estimate the constant molecular processes taking place in its depths and operating in the direction of the revolution and which explain the abrupt qualitative transformations, the revolutionary explosions. It is necessary not to be late. It is necessary to act quickly, to be always ready, full of the spirit of revolutionary initiative and boldness. It is the character of the period which imposes this conception. It is necessary to understand it and to demonstrate it by acting adequately.

To the comrades of Bolivia and Ceylon the International now says: Power is within your reach, not ten years from now but immediately, within the few years ahead if not this very year. (This more particularly for Ceylon.) It depends largely on you, on your policy from now on, on your boldness, on your daily activity at the head of the masses in defense of their daily demands, on your fearless program for tomorrow, to gain the majority, even a parliamentary majority, and to constitute a workers' government, the first step toward the real seizure of power in Ceylon, based upon the revolutionary mobilization and organization of the masses.

Naturally, the comrades of Bolivia and Ceylon must not stand alone in this struggle. The whole International, its leadership above all, must give them assistance and aid. We will be in solidarity with them and equally responsible for their success or failure.

B. The Work in the Direction of the Reformist Workers and Organizations

In countries where the reformist movement embraces the political majority of the class, where solidly established Socialist parties exist and still retain great influence over the masses, outclassing by far all other political formations, as in England, Austria, Belgium, Australia, Canada, Holland, the Scandanavian countries, Switzerland, Germany and with certain reservations India. It is the duty of the Trotskyists to work first of all in the direction of these organizations and the masses which they influence. The question of entry, even total entry, has to be faced if it hasn't as yet been realized, because for all these countries it is infinitely probable that except for new and at present unforeseeable developments, the movement

of mass radicalization and the first stages of the revolution, of the objective revolutionary situation, will manifest themselves within the framework of these organizations.

The principle forces of the revolutionary parties in these countries will arise from a differentiation or a blowing up of these organizations. These organizations cannot be smashed and replaced by others in the relatively short time between now and the decisive conflict. The workers who haven't abandoned these organizations up to the present will not quit them so soon in the absence of another powerful pole of attraction. All the more so since these organizations, to the extent that they are really mass organizations subject to the new objective conditions of the sharpening capitalist crisis, of the war preparations and the consequent inevitable deterioration in the living standards of the masses, will be obliged, whether they wish it or not, to give a leftward turn to the policy of the whole or of at least a part of their leadership.

Bevanism, varying in scale from one country to another, is an inevitable phenomenon of the present conjuncture for all these Socialist parties. Bevanism polarizes the discontent of the masses in these countries and will retain it within the framework of these organizations. Bevanism is at one and the same time an expression of the mass pressure in these parties and of the hope the masses cherish (and which it fosters) that a change is still possible from the rightist policy of these parties.

Just when and how Bevanism will be by-passed and a genuinely revolutionary tendency and leadership having a mass base will be created we cannot say at present with exactitude. What is certain is that it will first be necessary to go through the experience by penetrating it and helping it from the inside to develop to its last resources and consequences.

From this springs the conception of an entrism tactic in all these parties, but of a different kind from the entrism practiced before the war. Before the war, more precisely between 1934 and 1938, after Hitler's victory and the threat which fascism exercised over bourgeois democracy and the workers' movement, the Social-Democracy included, Trotsky conceived the tactic of entry into the Socialist parties which under these new conditions were obliged to struggle. But this tactic had a rather ephemeral character, of short duration, and with limited objectives. What was involved in general was to enter into these parties, to profit from their temporary left turn, to recruit members or to court certain thin leftist currents which were developing there, and to get out. It was not a question of facing the tasks of the war and revolution by remaining inside these parties. The entire conception of carrying out the entry and the work inside these parties was determined by this perspective.

Today it is not exactly the same kind of entrism which concerns us. We are not entering these parties in order to come out of them soon. *We are entering them in order to remain there for a long time banking on the great possibility which exists of seeing these parties, placed under new conditions, develop centrist tendencies which will lead a whole stage of the radicalization of the masses and of the objective revolutionary processes in their respective countries.* We wish in reality from the inside of these tendencies to amplify and accelerate their left centrist ripening and to contest even with the centrist leaders for the entire

leadership of these tendencies.

Such developments are now possible in contrast with the prewar situation because the crisis of capitalism is vastly more profound and the mass movement vastly more powerful.

Does all this mean to say that the reformist parties will become revolutionary parties and that we are entering them not to destroy but in order to strengthen them? No, the reformist parties in their entirety such as they are will never be transformed into revolutionary parties but under exceptional pressure of the masses they can be transformed into centrist parties either in their entirety or in part.

We are not entering consequently with the illusion of transforming them into revolutionary parties but to help in the development of their centrist tendencies and to give it leadership. This whole process will not necessarily be a short one but neither will it extend over decades. We start always from the consideration that the development and decisive reckoning are a matter of several years to come and not in an indefinite or very distant future.

On the other hand, it is not excluded that reality, life, will place us before special conditions now unforeseeable which will modify our tactic. But to act from now on as we recommend inside these powerful reformist organizations is no handicap in such a case. On the contrary this is a guarantee that we will in such cases be the better prepared by the present work to adapt ourselves to them and to exploit them to our profit.

Every maneuver and every policy which runs the risk of prematurely cutting us off from the great mass of these parties must be considered false. The big danger threatening us is not as it was in the case of the *small* organizations we had entered (Young Socialists) to remain there too long when the situation became rotten; the great danger is to advance too fast, to mistake the movements of a limited vanguard for the radicalization and revolt of the great mass, which will in practice coincide with the outbreak of a real revolutionary crisis in the country.

Our objective is a dialogue with tens and hundreds of thousands of workers whose revolt against rearmament and war is inevitable. This is the objective for which our instruments of work must be fashioned. This is the objective for which our political platform inside the Socialist parties must be adapted.

As to the internal policy, this platform can be summarized in the formula: THE SP ALONE TO POWER IN ORDER TO APPLY A SOCIALIST POLICY. Starting from the demands formulated by the reformist leaders for "a more equitable division of the rearmament costs," our organizations in the SP must elaborate a platform of concrete measures (confiscation of all the profits of rearmament and of war; nationalization without compensation of the war industries; sliding scale of wages; workers' control of production; price control through housewives' committees; nationalization of the banks and basic industries; a plan for the welfare of the people (and no plan for war preparations, etc.) which corresponds with the preoccupation of the large masses; struggle against the rising cost of living, against the profiteers, against rearmament as such, struggle for the realization of socialism, etc. It is clear that this platform must start with the concrete conditions of each country and must include, for example, in Great Britain or in Norway (if the SP

lost power there) defense of the progressive reforms introduced by the homogeneous labor governments or those under Social-Democratic leadership (social security, nationalizations, housing policy, etc.).

Our Platform On International Policy

This is the most difficult and at the same time the most important part of our action inside the Socialist parties. It is here that our organizations must act from now on with the idea of becoming the effective leadership of the masses from the moment they reach a given point of discontent and revolt. This signifies: That our platform must be such that it can be understood by great masses, can push them forward on the road of resistance to imperialism and war, can offer them a way out and a perspective which can be understood not only by a small vanguard but by all.

The general opposition to the war, the general sentiment that this war is wanted and is being prepared only by imperialism, principally by American imperialism, in instinctive suspicion of all "defense" talk by its own bourgeoisie, the will to defend the emancipating movement of the colonial people against the imperialist exploiters—these are *right now* factors which are present among tens of thousands of conscious socialist workers (as is demonstrated for example by Bevan's platform which is a reflection of the rear guard rather than of the vanguard of the workers discontented with the leadership of the Labor Party). All these acquisitions combine at times into a vague sentiment that "After all the USSR must defend itself." But we would disarm ourselves if we wanted to close the eyes of the *great masses* of the Western European countries to past and present Stalinist policy. Its disrepute—linked in Germany and Austria to the fear produced by the direct experiences of the masses—is a *real* factor in the political situation and if we wish to pursue a policy really capable of influencing and even of leading the masses, we must proceed from what is and not from what should be.

The masses correctly have no confidence in Stalin. In all these countries with a long social-democratic tradition and tradition of workers' democracy, they sense instinctively the conservative and oppressive character of the Soviet bureaucracy. It is not our task to combat or to weaken this thoroughly healthy sentiment, as healthy as the sentiment of instinctive opposition to imperialism and war. It is not our task to sow illusions about the Stalinist bureaucracy in countries where its influence is declining or small.

This is why our platform on international political matters must be summarized as follows: LET US STRUGGLE FOR A SOCIALIST ENGLAND, FOR A SOCIALIST GERMANY, etc., the only means of avoiding imperialist war, of combatting the influence of the Soviet bureaucracy, of taking away from the Stalinists the leadership of the colonial revolution, and of liberating the people of the whole world from the fake alternative: imperialism or Stalinism, by confronting them with the real alternative: *victory of imperialism or victory of the socialist revolution (of socialism)*.

On such a platform (break with the Atlantic Pact, unlimited aid to the emancipating movement of the colonies; withdrawal of all imperialist troops from Korea, Egypt,

Vietnam, Malaya, etc.; the conclusion of treaties of peace and economic aid with China and the liberated colonial countries; the conclusion of agreements of economic cooperation with the USSR and the peoples' democracies; elaboration of an economic plan of world development for the whole non-capitalist zone of the world, etc.) we can combine the healthy anti-imperialist, and anti-Stalinist sentiments of the socialist workers and open a perspective which is truly the only way out for the international proletariat: The shifting of the center of gravity of the world revolutionary movement toward the industrially advanced countries.

By developing such a platform, we will be able in practice to mobilize the masses far more readily against the war preparations and against the imperialist war itself, that is to say, lead the masses to defend the USSR and the peoples' democracies in *practice* rather than by centering our agitation directly on the slogan, "defend the USSR," or on: "we should be in the anti-imperialist camp even though it is led by Russia." These slogans are only adequate on the level of individual propaganda, they can convince some hundreds or even some thousands of advanced workers; but they cannot on this level and by themselves surmount the obstacles which a past of 30 years has created in the consciousness of the masses. This does not mean naturally that within the framework of our general propaganda, in our publications, etc., we should deal shiftily with the problem of the defense of the USSR. It only means that on this plane, as on the totality of questions, our work in the Socialist parties is no longer in the first instance a work of propaganda but is a work for the purpose of making the masses take a practical step forward. This is the task to which the general propaganda work must be subordinated.

Such an international platform permits of an equal utilization of the European question, which is important in several Socialist parties, to promote a revolutionary mobilization. The Europe of Franco, Churchill, Adenauer, Gasperi, Paul Reynaud or de Gaulle is a Europe for which no worker would move a finger. Socialist Europe, a Europe in which the Socialist parties will have taken power, can become the first world base for socialism, etc. In the same way we can counter on the Schumann plan question with such excellent slogans as: "First nationalize, then internationalize! First a Socialist government in each country, then an international Socialist authority, etc."

III. Work in the Direction of Stalinist Workers and Organizations

All the preceding considerations in this report and more particularly those concerning work directed at the reformist workers and organizations should clarify and facilitate an understanding of the work in the direction of the Stalinist workers and organizations advocated by the Third World Congress.

It is explicitly indicated in the "Theses" as well as in the resolution on the international situation—and implied even more by the meaning and the line of these documents—that "in countries where the majority of the working class still follows the CP," our organizations "should orient toward more systematic work among the ranks of these parties and the masses they influence." (Theses,

p. 188, *Fourth International*, Nov.-Dec. 1951.)

"In all other countries where the revolutionary mass movement still remains mainly in the channel of Stalinist or Stalinist-influenced organization, our essential preoccupation should be to keep from being cut off from these masses, to seek to intermingle with them and to profit from the common struggle against capitalism and imperialism in order through this struggle to set them against the Soviet bureaucracy and Stalinism. (Resolution on the International Situation, *Fourth International*, Nov.-Dec. 1951, p. 195) —(Our emphasis).

In the countries where the mass movement has already taken on an open revolutionary character, directed by the CP, such as in the "Asian countries in revolt," the World Congress has further clarified its line and indicated that in these countries "our movement should also be oriented toward work in the CPs and the organizations which they influence, so as not to cut ourselves off from the movement of the masses and to be able better to exploit the events of the war." (*Fourth International*, Nov.-Dec. 1951, p. 189).

The question of entrism work in the mass Communist parties and the organizations which they influence has been posed by the Third World Congress itself, which, furthermore, emphasized the "essential" character of such activity by our organization.

But why then did the Congress specify at the same time the "necessarily independent" character of the latter? Because the super-bureaucratic character of the Stalinist movement and of the CPs above all does not permit a total entry of the kind we can effect, and which we are effecting in the reformist organizations. The essential activity of our organizations in the countries where the CP influences the majority of the working class or already leads its revolutionary movement must be directed towards these parties while remaining necessarily independent from the organizational point of view, that is to say, under the compulsion of maintaining independent outside organized forces.

It follows from this that in regard to the CPs—and at least for a period—we cannot practice total entry but entrism of a specific kind, *sui generis*, as we have indicated in the letter of the IS addressed to the Central Committee of January 1952 of the French PCI. We shall see that the very nature of the work which we have to carry on in the present stage in relation to Stalinist workers and organizations imposes such a division, such a unique fashion of operating. The political considerations which are the basis of such tactical orientations have been amply given in the documents of the World Congress, in the later documents of the International (Resolution on the Trade Union Question in France; letter of the IS to the January Central Committee of the PCI) as well as in this report itself.

I shall, however, emphasize several supplementary aspects of the question. Those who understand or say they understand the logic of the necessity at the present time of an entrism tactic in relation to the reformist mass organizations should normally understand more easily that the same considerations, to a greater and weightier degree, demand an analogous tactic toward the Stalinist movement now subject to the new objective conditions of the "cold war" and the perspective of the Third World War.

If the reformist mass organizations are capable under

the pressure of the revolutionary development of their ranks—a development which we consider inevitable and which is determined in its turn by the inevitable objective evolution toward a revolutionary situation, toward revolutionary explosions, toward the final crisis—of an inevitable development of *centrist tendencies*, in the Stalinist movement where it has a mass base, there will inevitably develop *much greater and more important centrist tendencies*. Furthermore this is already in part started.

The evolution of the objective situation now reacts on every mass workers' organization *against the right opportunist tendency* and for its transformation into *centrism*. This process will continue on an expanding scale with the evolution toward war and with the war itself. This process does not follow a straight line, repeat itself everywhere, etc., but is in general *inevitable* and proceeds in this *general direction*.

It is the extraordinary depth of the crisis of the capitalist regime, a crisis without a way out, whose course cannot be reversed which provokes all these phenomena. This must be understood once again.

Since the "cold war" Stalinism, the Soviet bureaucracy included, has been placed under totally new conditions as compared to the former situation. The right opportunist tendencies inherent in its nature are constantly thwarted, checkmated by the evolution of the situation, both by the attitude of the capitalists and by the reactions of the masses. The conditions which permitted it to play its game from 1934 to the end of the war will never again be renewed. In that period inter-imperialist antagonisms were still sufficiently virulent to provoke a break between two blocs of powers and a mortal conflict between them. A united imperialist struggle against the USSR was subordinated to the struggle between the two blocs of powers, and the policy of the Soviet bureaucracy of relying exclusively on this antagonism and on an alliance with one section of the bourgeoisie against the other, had some meaning. Today the breach produced in the capitalist world as a consequence of the emergence of China, the European "peoples democracies," the colonial revolutionary movement and that of the masses in the advanced countries on the side of the USSR, makes any stable and viable compromise impossible and has brought to the fore the inevitable conflict between united imperialism and these varied forms and forces of the revolution.

The Soviet bureaucracy is being driven into the final and decisive conflict; the Stalinist movement everywhere is pinned between this reality and the reactions of the masses in the face of the endlessly aggravated crisis of capitalism.

Under these *new conditions* which the Soviet bureaucracy did not set up on its own accord but to which it is forced to submit, Stalinism again brings forth *centrist tendencies* which will gain the upper hand over *right opportunism*.

How far will these tendencies go? Can they transform the nature of Stalinism, make the Communist parties into real revolutionary parties?

Absolutely not so long as these dependent parties will be controlled by the Soviet bureaucracy which even though it is itself compelled—under the new conditions—to pursue a more leftward policy, to appeal to the masses, to seek to support itself on them, will do all this only on the condition of subordinating all of its own actions to the

question of its bureaucratic control of the masses, a control which must not be endangered.

The zig-zags of the Soviet bureaucracy do not change its reactionary nature which is determined by *its social nature as an omnipotent privileged caste in the USSR*. But zigzags always exist in its policy and are determined in turn by the pressure brought to bear on it by imperialism and by the masses.

We have learned in the light of the experiences of the war and since then, of Yugoslavia and China in particular, to distinguish between the Soviet bureaucracy and the mass Communist parties, and to take into account what can happen to this party when they find themselves under exceptional conditions and are swept along by a powerful revolutionary mass movement.

Under such conditions these parties inevitably develop more and more pronounced *centrist tendencies* and begin to outline a revolutionary orientation. Such a development, which we have already experienced, is destined under the new conditions created by the sharpening of the "cold war," the drive towards war and the war itself to take on even more considerable proportions, and it is on this *centrist development* that we must base ourselves in our tactic. This means, as in the case of the reformist organizations that the future of the revolution and of the revolutionary party in the countries involved will depend in the coming years on the fate of these *centrist tendencies*.

To intermingle henceforth with the forces which constitute their base, to follow them and help them in their dynamic development and fight for their leadership—that is the concrete realistic fashion for our organizations to work for the building of the revolutionary party. Will these *centrist tendencies* conquer and transform one or another mass Communist party in its entirety?

We do not know, we cannot know. That is not decisive. What we know, what we should know is that the essential forces of the revolutionary party of tomorrow will emerge from these tendencies and that this will in any case be produced through a break with the Soviet bureaucracy.

In what exact form we cannot as yet predict. But these considerations already determine the kind of work we must carry on in relation to the Stalinist workers and organizations, the perspectives and the goals of this work.

I return here to a series of points included in the IS letter to the Central Committee of the French PCI and which in my view concretizes the conception of this work through the example of one country, namely, France.

"What is involved in a country like France is carrying through, further and further, a special kind of entrism policy in relation to the organizations and workers under Stalinist influence. This means that the nearer the war approaches, the larger and larger part of our forces must be established in the various political and trade union organizations led or influenced by the Stalinists, including the French CP, and must remain and work there, with tactics adapted to the character of each of these organizations and governed by the principles of a long-term task. The independent part of our organization will have as its main task to facilitate an understanding by the Stalinist workers of our revolutionary line and our work within their movement.

"The entire internal and external work of the Trotskyist organization will thus have as its aim to speed up the

radicalization of the Stalinist workers and their development of a revolutionary leadership emerging basically from within their own movement through the experiences of the struggles to come and the tasks which these struggles will impose on the mass of Stalinist militants.

"Let us now examine the various special aspects of this orientation, though we do not pretend to exhaust the subject in this one letter.

"The experience which the International is opening up in this field is up to now unique in its history, and to carry it out will require time as well as the full and loyal collaboration of the leadership of the sections involved in this work."

To be able to reintegrate himself in the CGT unions after having been expelled or to enter any trade union unity-group, one will not hesitate, for example, to give up if necessary the sale of Unite or even Verite, to conceal his Trotskyism if the bureaucratic leadership makes this necessary and if we ourselves decide that this is a condition for facilitating our integration.

We had believed that all these questions had been entirely clear for a long time to all the members of our movement.

Let us continue.

If we have defined the policy which the International intends to follow in France as a special kind of entrism policy, it was because of the special character of the Stalinist movement, the extremely bureaucratic leadership of which prevents us from proceeding exactly as we would in a reformist movement of the same importance. Otherwise we would be—and would have been for a long time already—for a policy of total entry. *The nature of the Stalinist movement imposes on us in reality a combination of independent work along with the task of entry, with the following special characteristics:*

— our independent work must be understood as having as its chief aim to assist the work of entry, and similarly sets its face primarily toward the Stalinist workers.

— the work of entry will become broader and broader as the war comes nearer.

The independent sector will assist the "entrism" work by supplying the forces, directing them from the outside, developing the themes of our policy and our concrete criticisms of the Stalinist policy, etc. . . . in simple, clear fashion, with no restrictions other than those of wording and formulation, which must be studied so as to find increasing response from the Stalinist militants.

The independent sector will continue all of its present essential activities, in the plants, the trade unions, among the youth; and will continue the work of recruiting, especially among the best elements within the Stalinist movement who have been pointed out by our comrades who have made the entry.

Although our steady purpose will be to maintain and increase our forces within the Stalinist movement (and for a long period), it may well be that in the case of certain Stalinists who have been pointed out to us from within their movement, it may be preferable to accomplish the job of making them into Trotskyists by bringing them into the independent sector.

The independent sector will be composed of all those who are strictly necessary for conducting the work as a whole; plus those who for one reason or another, and despite all our efforts, are not able to integrate themselves

into the Stalinist movement; plus those for whom we consider it preferable and even necessary that they should carry on the work of Trotskyist indoctrination in the independent sector. The members of our independent sector will abandon none of their activities in the plants and the unions, in conformity with our ideas on joint action, unity, strategy of the struggles, etc.; they will not cease to take the initiative in pushing and leading the organizations and the struggles wherever conditions permit; but they will always see to it that such activities are carried on in relation to the whole of our work in France and the attention we are giving above all to the Stalinist militants, to our experiences above all with them, and understood above all by them.

If our French organization involves itself in this policy which we have briefly sketched in some of its broad outlines, the result would be, in a certain length of time, a genuine integration of dozens and dozens of our members in real mass work, within the Stalinist movement itself.

In this way we will be able to follow the whole dynamic evolution of the Stalinist movement, itself determined by the evolution of the international situation, and we will be situated in the best position to profit from the developments.

Such a policy will have the immediate result of giving a number of our members a field of work; it will create among the Stalinist militants an atmosphere for understanding our fundamental political positions and our criticisms of the contradictions and the fundamental errors of Stalinist policy; it will even strengthen numerically our organization as a whole through the support of Stalinist elements.

I will complete this point with an examination of several special problems posed by the work oriented toward the Stalinist workers and organizations.

First of all, concerning our independent press, its content, its form. Our press, we have stated, must be written above all to help the entrism work, to give political directives to our forces operating inside, to find the maximum response among the Stalinist workers and members, to facilitate their political development.

Since we are here concerned with openly Trotskyist organs and in view of the fact that they are directed not at reformist but at revolutionary workers, who take a stand on generally communist ground, on revolutionary ground, who have the same preoccupations and the same goals as we, the task of our organs is to develop fully our entire policy, all of its themes, to criticize Stalinist policy clearly, unequivocally, concretely, etc. "with no restrictions other than those of wording and formulation, which must be studied so as to find increasing response from the Stalinist workers and members."

At the present stage, we will center our compact pedagogic, but unequivocal and clear argumentation on the reactionary utopian character, so incompatible with an effective mobilization of the class and a real struggle against war, of the two themes of Stalinist policy: peaceful co-existence; national unity and independence.

We are naturally not lacking in arguments which would sharpen the doubts already existing on these two themes among the most advanced Stalinist workers and members, and to show them in a simple, concrete fashion the *impasse, nationally and internationally, to which Stalinist policy (which is above all the policy of the Kremlin) is*

leading and the obstacles it raises to an effective and efficacious mobilization of the class, the only class capable of really struggling against the war.

Adequate but more prudent discussions on these themes must be conducted inside the Stalinist organizations themselves by our entrust elements, but they will have to use caution so as to avoid isolation from their milieu or expulsion. Our press will in reality have as its task to present in a comprehensible fashion to the Stalinist workers and members the necessity of a class orientation in order to effectively oppose the war preparations of the imperialists as well as the war itself. The logic of a class orientation makes itself felt more and more because of the absurdity, continual failure in the face of reality, the impasse to which present Stalinist policy leads. The Stalinist leadership itself feels the pressure of the situation, of its logic, and seeks a way out from the impasse of its own policy. But naturally, since it is a prisoner of its past policy, of the pressure of the Kremlin and of its own bureaucratic nature, it only succeeds partially, confusedly and bureaucratically, in a jerky and contradictory fashion.

An example of this is the fashion in which it wishes to resolve the question of united action and united front on the trade union and political levels between the reformists and its own forces.

In France for example it occupies a position on this question half way between a correct united front policy from top to bottom and a "third period" policy of the united front from below.

The Trotskyists now have an opportunity they have *never had before* to speak to the Stalinist workers and members and to facilitate their understanding, their evolution.

In concluding this report which is already very long, I find it necessary to repeat that I am far from considering that I have exhausted this subject. But the spirit of our tactic is clear; the general line and more precise directives are there already. For the rest, let us have confidence in collective elaboration by our movement, in the initiative and flexibility of our national leaders and cadres.

All of us here, I believe, are firmly convinced that the Third World Congress has freed our movement of the last of its residual sectarian obstacles to a far greater degree than any other international assembly and discussion in our movement and that its directive "to achieve our penetration in the real mass movement" will not meet with failure.

Our movement is on the road to fusion, and will effectively and completely, fuse with its class, will follow it in its natural march, will live its experiences and will do all to help it attain its historical goals, which are now so close.

Naturally the orientation which we demand now of our whole movement does not proceed without encountering resistance resulting from the inertia, past habits, inevitable lack of comprehension by a series of elements confronted by the fundamental changes which have come about during and after the war and the tumultuous, rapid character of the objective revolutionary processes of this epoch.

Some people are surprised, astonished; and flounder about in a vain effort to fit the new rich explosive reality into narrow and circumscribed mental schemas. They then revolt not against the schemas but against those whom they call iconoclasts and visionaries. They react, they sulk, they cry scandal, they hang on to their schemas, they no longer understand.

Naturally it is the duty of the International to have patience with slower comrades, to explain its line again and again. This it has done, it does and it will do. But within certain limits. It cannot consent to postponing activity on this line with the object of first persuading everybody of the correctness of its line. There is always a remnant in the movement consisting of worn-out elements or those subject to enemy pressures and forces, who will never understand. There is always a sectarian sediment, especially in a movement such as ours which has been isolated from the great masses for so long, which cannot be reeducated by arguments.

We must pass over to action and let action persuade those who are lagging behind.

The Third World Congress has overthrown the last sectarian barriers to our activity. The question now is one of going ahead and occupying everywhere and in good time our positions for the final struggle. We do not have a very long period ahead of us to accomplish this task. Events are developing rapidly. Even if two or three years, and even a little more are left us before the decisive struggle, that is not a great deal of time in which to prepare ourselves. On the contrary it is necessary to act fast, to deploy our forces, to proceed immediately to integrate ourselves all over in the real mass movement. This is why discussions on the tactical applications of the line of the Third World Congress cannot be protracted. *For a year now we have lost extremely important, precious time in certain countries and are aggravating our lag behind the real situation in these countries.*

Our movement, just like the working class movement as a whole, suffers from the contradiction between the needs of the objective situation, which is more extraordinary than ever, and subjectively inadequate. But unlike other currents in the workers' movement which enjoy mass support, we at the present stage have no support, no main strength outside of the clarity and breadth of our thought, the speed and flexibility of our action.

The epoch, the period demand of the revolutionary party that its revolutionary leaders and members must be more capable, more complete than ever before. They demand, in reality, Cadre Parties, that is, parties which have an ever larger number of cadres with a vision of great depth and breadth. Our movement should in its entirety, in its overwhelming majority, have attained such a level in order to confront this period and to accomplish its tasks. Otherwise it runs the risk of being crushed under the enormous pressure of an unprecedented situation which it did not learn to understand and by tasks which it did not succeed in fulfilling, mainly for lack of understanding.

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