

TO WIN

獲得的將是整個世界 **МИР ВЫИГРАТЬ**

1990/15

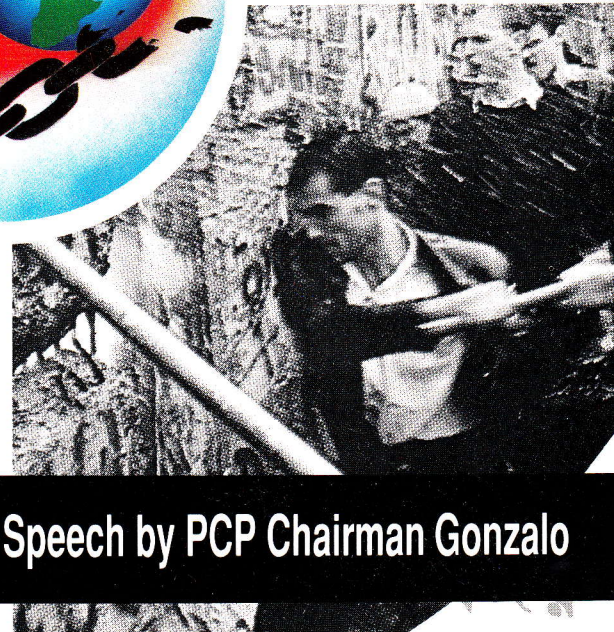
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A WORLD

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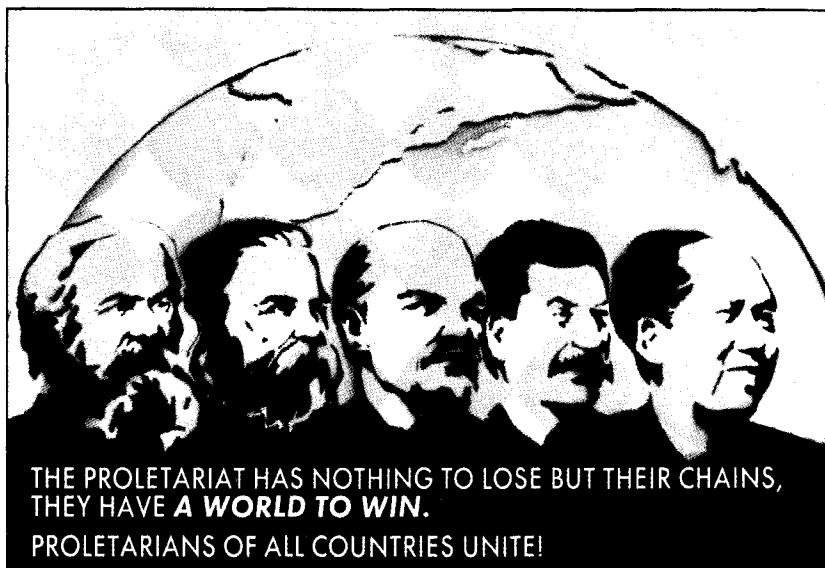
To the People of the East:

Cast Away Illusions, Revolution All the Way!



Inside: Speech by PCP Chairman Gonzalo

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1990/15

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Collapse of Revisionism in the East

An editorial analysing this extraordinary turn of events answers the West's arrogant and hasty death sentence of "communism" and the question this crisis sharpens up for all – what is socialism? It looks again at what Mao learned from both the positive and negative experience in the Soviet Union under Stalin, and from the subsequent restoration of capitalism there, as well as the lessons he drew for China's revolution, including in the sphere of socialist construction. Rid of fake Marxism-Leninism, or "real revisionism", the situation is complicated, but also favourable for making revolutionary inroads. The section also includes two important reprints from Mao and the Chinese Communists on socialism, commentaries by RIM organisations and sympathisers, a first-hand account from Romania, as well as an article on Ceausescu's downfall.

Peru

A recent speech by PCP Chairman Gonzalo on the 40th anniversary of the Chinese Revolution analyses the far-reaching consequences of the Chinese revolution for world revolution. He talks about the invincibility and vitality of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism, proven by the great advances of the people's war in Peru, and discusses the country-wide seizure of power there.

Afghanistan

A breath of fresh air comes with the formation of the Organisation of the Revolutionary Communists of Afghanistan (ORCA) through the merger of two Afghan communist organisations. An excerpt from the section on proletarian internationalism in the ORCA's founding document is reprinted in this issue.

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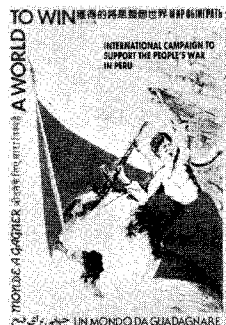


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A WORLD TO WIN

A World to Win has been inspired by the formation of the Revolutionary Internationalist Movement, announced on March 12th, 1984, which has regrouped many Marxist-Leninist parties and organisations from around the world. It is not an official organ of the RIM. Its pages are open to all those on the same side of the barricades in the fight against imperialism and reaction.

STEP FORWARD!

A World to Win cannot accomplish its tasks without the active support of its readers. Letters, articles and criticism are needed and welcome. Manuscripts should be typed double spaced. In addition we need translators, help with distribution (including through commercial channels) to make this magazine available in as many countries as possible, art work (as well as clippings and original photos), and financial contributions from those who understand the importance of the continued publication of this magazine. This includes both individual contributions and the efforts of those who undertake the responsibility for raising funds for this magazine. Send pledges and donation cheques made out to "A World to Win".

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Readers Write ■■■

I am an Azanian hoping to settle here in Namibia.... I am interested in advancing the class approach to issues... I have enclosed press cuttings from a morning daily newspaper known as *The Namibian*. I do hope that they may interest you. I am committed to supporting the international proletarian movement while exposing the inner disease of imperialist-sponsored freedoms.

I do wish that you send me your critique of Trotsky. I would be very grateful. Forward with the R.I.M.

Yours for a socialist alternative,

■■■

I received your letter. But I was not able to reply soon, the reason being that I was in hiding following an attack by Inkatha on all those who don't share their views.

I am a member of a student organisation of the PAC(A). I am a third year student at the University.... I have received the *Declaration* and Issues 4 & 7 of your publication. On the *Declaration*, there are a number of debates among (our) members, especially those who are in my area. On issue 4 pertaining to our country, i.e. occupied Azania, we are trying by all possible means to take up the issue to the national level when we have our congress.

As with regards to the developments in occupied Azania, I think there is a lot to say and to do. Since the white settler

regime's unbanning of the PAC(A), ANC and SACP, there has been a lot of confusion among the masses and the section of the liberation movements. The racist regime is talking about negotiations and the ANC is talking about negotiations. The ANC is confusing the masses. The oppressed and exploited people want revolution, they are not prepared to talk or collaborate with the regime. On the other hand the PAC(A) and BCM(A) they are prepared to talk to the regime and they are for revolution. Since the ANC announced that they are prepared to talk to the regime their members are moving to the PAC or BCM. This has led to even physical clashes in many parts of the country involving either PAC and ANC supporters or BCM and ANC supporters. The ANC is trying by all possible means to crush anyone who is not an ANC supporter. In my area as such, we are operating under very difficult conditions...

I think discussion of this sort will strengthen our understanding of each other and how to continue revolution even in difficult times. I think you can also give us advice and the manner in which we can operate in a place where we are denied the ability to work freely by the so-called liberation movements.

I think you could send me some of the important material of yours as you promised, because it is difficult for us to get revolutionary material because we don't have money. We share every

publication we get. Would you please try to get tapes with revolutionary speeches that are relevant to our struggle, if it is possible. I would also be glad if you can get for me Mao's Red book. I think Mao's Red book is very important, because we speak very much about Maoism with little knowledge of the contributions of Mao.

With revolutionary greetings,
Izwe Lethu I Afrika (Our land is Afrika)

■■■

Our lawsuit has been in front of the Supreme Military Court for six years. Our lawsuit began in 1981 and finished 1984. The Supreme Military Court stage will not finish until June 1990 and my sentence of capital punishment, too, can be upheld.

We want to contact and to correspond with all revolutionary movements all over the world. And we want to correspond with all political prisoners' families associations all over the world. What do you think about this subject?...

I believe we can find many things to discuss. And I believe we can get many lessons from yours and our experience.

With revolutionary greetings,
Struggle until liberation.
From a political prisoner in Turkey

■■■

I saw the 1987/9 issue of your journal a few days ago. I asked around but I couldn't find any other issues. In

fact, even the issue I have in my hand belongs to a comrade who is presently in prison in Istanbul.

Both me and my friends would like to follow your journal and any other publications you may have in Turkish. We would very much like to get a hold of past issues also, if they are available. Because on the second page of the issue we have in our hands, there is information about the articles that appeared in past issues. And we are very much interested in all the subjects covered in them...

I was arrested in June 1980. In 1981 I stood trial as part of our joint case at the Istanbul Martial Law Court, I was given the death sentence. Our case is now under study at a higher court called the Military Supreme Court. The Court will announce its decision in June this year. Previously, until the month of May last year, we stayed at military and civilian prisons in Istanbul. When in a period of five months they found two tunnels there, they evacuated the prison. We were all transferred to the Prison where we are at the moment. In this prison, besides myself there are 98 political prisoners, all have been arrested and judged from several organisational cases.

Hoping you will be helpful, we send you our greetings and wish you success in your work.

From a political prisoner in Turkey

Available Soon

We Only Want the World!

Rich Musical
Expressions of
Rebellion
from Many
Corners of
the Globe



Cultural diversity, emerging musical forms and classics combine in this cassette to express the felt needs of the masses to overthrow their oppressor. Singing in their native language, some of the performers on this cassette are well-known in their countries or regions; others are known internationally. Some conquered technical problems in parts of the world where electricity is not always a given in order to achieve a highly professional sound. Seventy minutes of listening impressively crisscrosses the globe, from the Peruvian Andes to Kurdistan, from Bangla Desh to Jamaica to Palestine, from Mexico to Azania and more. In the present chaotic period when the imperialists and reactionaries boast of the death of communism (phoney communism of the Soviet revisionist variety) the tape is a reflection in musical form of the continuing and developing struggles around the world which show, to paraphrase the writer Mark Twain, "the rumours of my death have been greatly exaggerated."

This collection would not have been possible without the help of many progressive and revolutionary artists and supporters of the RIM. A translation and brief comments about the songs are included. A partial list of the performers and/or country of origin are: Jayran, Iran; Jacket Potatoes, Ireland; Pablo Moses, Jamaica; Şivan Perwer, Kurdistan; Judith Reyes, Mexico; Group Ayacucho, Peru; Azania; Samih Choukaer, Syria; U.S.

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Collapse of
REVISIONISM
in the East

Unleashing
the Masses,
Unlocking the
Future

– Mao
Is the
Key!



1960s. Liberation fighters from the Congo (now Zaire).
1960s. Demonstration in New York City.

A WORLD TO WIN 1990/15



"The summation of historical experience has, itself, always been a sharp arena of class struggle. Ever since the defeat of the Paris Commune, opportunists and revisionists have seized upon the defeats and shortcomings of the proletariat to reverse right and wrong, confound the secondary with the principal, and thus conclude that the proletariat 'should not have taken to arms.' The emergence of new conditions has often been used as an excuse to negate fundamental principles of Marxism under the signboard of its 'creative development.' At the same time, it is incorrect and just as damaging to abandon the Marxist critical spirit, to fail to sum up the shortcomings as well as the successes of the proletariat, and to rest content with upholding or reclaiming positions considered correct in the past. Such an approach would make Marxism-Leninism brittle and unable to withstand the attacks of the enemy and incapable of leading new advances in the class struggle — and suffocate its revolutionary essence."

- from the *Declaration of the Revolutionary Internationalist Movement*



Mao's polemics against Soviet revisionism and the launching of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution against the capitalist roaders in the Chinese Communist Party gave hope to revolutionaries around the world who saw the rot that had developed in the Soviet Union and were searching for the way to overthrow imperialism and recast the world.

Top: The miners of Mutchengkien energetically repudiate the counter-revolutionary revisionist line of Liu Shao-chi, China's Khrushchev, that was being applied in the mines.

The decade of the 1990s has been ushered in with a series of events of earth-shaking proportions — the collapse of most of the previously constituted regimes in Eastern Europe and the almost complete abandon on the part of the Soviet and East European rulers of any pretext of Marxism-Leninism. For the Maoists, who have been the resolute opponents of these regimes for the

past three decades, this is a most welcome development. The existence of these hideous regimes masquerading as "proletarian" and "socialist" has long been a burden for the genuine revolutionaries. Better that these revisionists openly declare their true colours than that they continue to cloak their crimes in the name of our ideology.

Further, the collapse of these

regimes has opened up a very favourable situation in these countries. Although there is much confusion in the thinking of those who have lived through this travesty of "socialism," the desire for a radical destruction of the existing society, the awakening to political life, the discrediting of the former rulers and the divisions among them, all make for the most favourable objective situation for revolutionary advances in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe since Khrushchev rigged up the capitalist system there in the 1950s. And not only are the revisionist enemies of revolutionary communists weak in those countries where they have held power, the entire pro-Soviet revisionist movement the world over has been profoundly shaken and disoriented by the events of autumn and winter 1989-90.

But while one set of enemies is thrown into disorganisation, another set of enemies, the ruling classes of the Western imperialist states, is puffed up and arrogant. These reactionary gangsters are trying to use the troubles of the rival gangs in the East to claim the final victory of capitalism, the market and "democracy" over what they continue to falsify as "communism" or "Stalinism".

The collapse of these regimes also poses serious responsibilities before the genuine communists. It presents us with the task of wielding our scientific ideology and understanding of the capitalist nature of the phoney socialist regimes and waging a vigorous political and ideological counteroffensive. Without this, it will be impossible for revolutionary Marxism to get a foothold in the East bloc or, more generally, to defeat the anti-communist wave currently unfolding.

Mao Tsetung

Our greatest weapon to understand the current situation and to battle the enemy is the comprehensive teachings of Mao Tsetung concerning the nature of socialist society, the class struggle that takes place under socialism, and the danger of capitalist restoration like that which, Mao analysed, had taken place in the Soviet Union and the East European countries following the death of Stalin.

Not only did Mao understand socialism from a theoretical point of view, he was also able to lead the broad masses in constructing socialism and in waging the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, an unprecedented mass upsurge aimed at overthrowing those top officials of the Communist Party who, like their counterparts in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, were turning socialist public ownership into a mere facade hiding their own private expropriation, whose essence was the same as that of all other capitalist exploiters.

Indeed, the working class and the masses of people in the Eastern European countries have long recognised that a special stratum of privileged people concentrated in the Communist Parties have been appropriating the fruits produced by the labouring people. In Eastern Europe, communist phrases have been used to cover over real inequality and exploitation just as in the West Christian demagogues about "love thy neighbour" has accompanied vicious class exploitation and oppression. Unlike many revisionists, we should not be surprised or shocked that the masses in these countries are hoisting anti-communist banners, when the word "communism" has been used to justify all of the exploitation, inequality and reaction of those regimes. As Mao put it so forcefully when speaking of the capitalist-roaders in China, "It is right to rebel against reactionaries." It is up to us, the genuine revolutionary communists, the Maoists, to strip off the "red" mask from these reactionaries and show everyone their ugly capitalist face.

What is most important to grasp about the discredited regimes of the East is not principally their form of rule and ideology which made them different from the West, but the class essence of these regimes which makes them the same as the capitalist West.

1) A small minority of society controls (and in fact, owns) the means of production (through its control of the state apparatus).

2) This minority functions as a *class* in every way. Thousands of links, visible and invisible, secret or open, bind together top party politicians, directors of factories, schools and hospitals, leading figures in the

media and cultural arena. Furthermore, this class perpetuates itself just as surely as the bourgeoisie in the West by passing on wealth and power to its children.

3) This ruling class uses the police, army, courts and prisons to exercise a disguised dictatorship over the majority of society and to viciously clamp down on anyone who opposes them.

4) The workers are reduced to the status of wage-slaves; they have no control over the affairs of state nor even any real say in the function of their factories and enterprises. Their task is to shut up and work hard and receive their pay in return.

5) Production is determined not by what is needed to benefit the people, but by what will generate the most profit, even if this is often disguised by the state plan.

6) The education system and cultural sphere exalt the way things are and propagate the views of the ruling class. Little criticism of the existing set-up is allowed.

All of these features of the East European regimes are very familiar to our readers in the imperialist West, for they are features of all capitalist states.

Why, then, has it proved so difficult for the genuine communist movement to penetrate these countries? Why is it that even some from the communist movement who have previously opposed these regimes find themselves confused and despondent at the sudden turn of events? At the heart of this question, too, is the question of Mao Tsetung Thought.

It is interesting to note, for example, the avowal of demoralisation emanating from the leadership of the Albanian Party of Labour.¹ The PLA has long tried to portray itself as the guardians of Marxist-Leninist "orthodoxy". They distinguished themselves in the 1960s by siding with Mao Tsetung and the revolutionaries in the Communist Party of China in the struggle against Khrushchev's modern revisionism.² But they never really grasped Mao's analysis and were often puzzled and disturbed by the revolutionary torrent Mao had unleashed in the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution (despite the fact that Mao and the Chinese had gone to great lengths to inform the Albanian leadership — see specifically Mao's brilliant "Talk

to the Albania Military Delegation" reprinted in AWTW 1985/1). After Mao's death and the counter-revolutionary coup of Deng Xiao-ping and Hua Guo-feng in 1976, Enver Hoxha launched a vicious attack on Mao Tsetung Thought, an attack which did considerable harm to the international communist movement and made the task of regrouping the genuine revolutionary communists all the more difficult.

It must be said the Albanian viewpoint found quite a following in what was the international communist movement, more than can be explained simply by the narrow opportunist fear of a "stateless" international movement for the time being. Albania tried to represent itself as the champion of the heritage of the international communist movement (and especially of Stalin), while attacking its greatest accomplishment — the Cultural Revolution led by Mao Tsetung. In fact, the Albanians defended Stalin's *errors* and not his achievements of building socialism. The fact that so many were won over or disoriented by this line shows that Mao's teachings had not been thoroughly assimilated by much of what then represented the international movement.

What is Socialism?

Some of the most vulgar distortions of Marxism-Leninism have taken place exactly on the fundamental points of what socialism is. For Marxist-Leninists, socialism can only mean a *revolutionary transition period* leading from capitalism and other reactionary forms of class society to the achievement of communism throughout the world. It is the most thorough and radical revolution that has ever taken place in the history of humanity.

History has shown that the socialist revolution can only begin when the proletariat has seized political power by force of arms and has established its own revolutionary dictatorship. This is the road of the October Revolution that, as Mao said, is valid for all countries. Only with political power firmly in its hands is it possible for the proletariat to construct a socialist economic system based on state and collective ownership of the principal means of production (factories, mines, rail-

roads, land, etc.).

It is important to stand firm in the face of the critics of Marxism who would negate the accomplishments of Lenin and Stalin in building the first socialist state. We can say with confidence that the Bolshevik Revolution marked a turning point in the history of mankind. Negating the experience of Lenin and Stalin means abandoning the proletarian dictatorship, the forcible overthrow of the existing property relations and the conscious reconstruction of society in the interests of the proletariat and the masses. It means abandoning the goal of classless society, communism. It means giving up on the very idea of all-the-way revolution.

But this defence of our principles *will not be successful* unless it is coupled with a thorough and penetrating exposure of the class nature of revisionism, of its bourgeois essence. How is it that the *forms* of socialism (state ownership, leadership of the Communist Party, planned economy) have taken on an entirely different content?

Marx first pointed out that social-

But this defence of our principles will not be successful unless it is coupled with a thorough and penetrating exposure of the class nature of revisionism, of its bourgeois essence. How is it that the forms of socialism (state ownership, leadership of the Communist Party, planned economy) have taken on an entirely different content?

ist society would be born ideologically, politically and economically stamped with the birthmarks of the old society. Furthermore the history of the proletarian revolution has been that power has been seized in first one country or a group of countries surrounded by a hostile world dominated by imperialism. The weight of the past as well as of the world situation in which they found

themselves has placed a tremendous burden on the genuine socialist states that have existed.

How would it be possible to move in the direction of a society based upon "from each according to his ability, to each according to his need" when the economic base in the Soviet Union and later in China were weak and unable to meet these needs?

One of the great contributions of Mao Tsetung was always keeping the final goal of achieving communism throughout the world firmly in mind and evaluating the line and policies adopted in socialist construction from this angle and none other. It was not enough, Mao understood, to develop the productive forces of society — the productive forces certainly had to be developed, but on the *basis* of continually revolutionising the relationships between people and the thinking of people which was still largely marked by the ideologies of the exploiting classes. And the productive forces had to be developed not as an end in itself but to provide the necessary material basis for a higher form of society no longer divided into classes.

In understanding these laws of socialist construction, Mao learned much from the negative as well as positive experience of the construction of socialism in the Soviet Union under Stalin. He pointed out that economic categories ultimately reflected relationships between people, and that it was incorrect to talk only about things and not about people.

Of course, Stalin, unlike those like Khrushchev who attacked him after his death, was also thoroughly committed to the communist goal. But while Stalin waged struggle against many opponents of socialism, he had difficulty seeing how they were being engendered from within the socialist economy itself, that these opportunist elements who strove to transform those sections of the socialist state and economy which they controlled into their own private property represented a new bourgeoisie. Theoretically he had even argued that the existence of a bourgeoisie had become impossible in the Soviet Union with the construction of the socialist economic system. Stalin downplayed the need to continue making *revolution* even

after socialism had been established.

Mao, on the other hand, was able to analyse how a bourgeoisie is inevitably generated under socialism and that, therefore, it is necessary to repeatedly *arouse the masses from below* to strike down the bourgeoisie within the Communist Party itself and, step by step, dig away at the capitalist economic and ideological "soil" which was generating new bourgeois elements batch after batch.

Mao saw that the dictatorship of the proletariat had to be understood, in Marx's words, as the declaration of the permanence of the revolution, and that its strength would come from drawing the proletariat and the broad masses more and more into "affairs of state" — the fundamental questions of the society. Mao knew that the proletariat could not simply "delegate" their dictatorship to the Communist Party. The vanguard communist party is needed to lead the socialist revolution, Mao understood, but he also grasped that the *enemies* of the revolution would also be found within the communist party. Mao had to wage a sharp struggle against the theory that once socialist ownership had been established the main task was to develop the productive forces, arguing instead that further revolutionising society and continuing to battle the capitalist roaders is the decisive factor in advancing socialism.

Mao understood that socialist economic construction required a state economic plan, that this is a vital way in which the proletariat begins to consciously transform nature instead of being merely the slaves of economic laws as under capitalism. But Mao also understood the question of centralised planning in a very dialectical way, that is, he understood the unity and struggle of opposites — between balance and imbalance, agriculture and industry, heavy and light industry, and between the centre and the regions. He knew that centralised planning had to be accompanied with local initiative. On these questions, too, Mao summed up the negative as well as the positive experience of Stalin, and in particular Stalin's tendency to rely on heavy-handed, bureaucratic and overly centralised methods in socialist planning. For Mao, the proletariat must dominate the plan and never the other way around. One

famous slogan during the Cultural Revolution hung over the Shanghai waterfront: "Be Masters of the Wharf, Not Slaves to Tonnage!"

Mao realised that the struggle to achieve communism would be long, protracted and complex, involving

For genuine communists worldwide, coming to understand the true contradictory nature of socialist society was not frightening but liberating.

twists and turns and struggles with which the international communist movement was not yet familiar. This is reflected in his statement that, "The next 50 to 100 years or so, beginning from now, will be a great era of radical change in the social system throughout the world, an earth-shaking era without equal in any previous historical period. Living in such an era, we must be prepared to engage in great struggles which will have many features different in form from those of the past."³

A Long, Bitter Battle

Throughout history, the transition from one social system to another has proven to be a protracted process full of setbacks as well as advances. The Chinese party stressed how the replacement of slavery by the feudal system in ancient China took hundreds of years. Similarly, in Europe the bourgeois revolution took place over several centuries before feudalism was thoroughly supplanted by capitalism. In both Britain and France, for example, counter-revolutionary restorations took place and held sway before the rule of the bourgeoisie was firmly established.

What was true for the bourgeois revolution is all the more true for the proletarian revolution which does not seek to replace one exploiting class by another, but to carry out the most profound revolution in history, a "radical rupture", as Marx put it, with all previous exploiting societies. The seizure of political power by the proletariat is already a great

accomplishment, but this seizure of power *only opens the door* to the struggle to transform the ways in which people interact with each other in all aspects of social life.

The ideas and practices which have grown up on the basis of thousands of years of class society will not go away without a bitter struggle, and these ideas and practices will continually have a tendency to corrupt and ultimately transform even socialist society. When the factory managers believe their role is to decide and that of the workers is simply to produce, when the workers themselves believe that their lot is simply to obey orders, when engineers and technical personnel believe that their better position in society is due to their own natural talent, when teachers behave as tyrants and cultural works extol the traditional role of women, for example, we are not very far from capitalism.

Consider the vital problem of "bourgeois right". Under socialism, a wage system would still be necessary and workers would be compensated according to the principle of "to each according to his work" since the higher form of social organisation "to each according to his need" could not yet be instituted. The realisation of this principle is indeed a big victory over capitalism in that it establishes that "he who does not work, neither shall he eat", and in so doing deals a giant blow to the old capitalist class who lived off the labour of the workers. But at the same time "equal reward according to equal work" invariably brings about real inequalities because, as Marx put it, people have most unequal needs (a single man, for example, compared with a woman responsible for three children). Furthermore, the ideas associated with this principle of "to each according to his work" are most certainly *bourgeois*, such as the idea that "hard work merits reward" and "those who work harder should receive more", etc.

The continued existence of a wage system and the need for goods to be exchanged through money is a reflection that society has not yet gone beyond the barriers of commodity production and distribution according to the value of commodities. This is what Lenin was referring to when he said that "we have

created a bourgeois state without the bourgeoisie." Under revisionist rule this principle of "bourgeois right" is worshipped. In China, following Mao's death, the revisionists have even raised the slogan that "to get rich is glorious". Mao pointed out that under socialism, bourgeois right "could only be restricted" and not eliminated, but he did indeed fight to restrict it and criticise the ideology associated with it. Left unrestricted, bourgeois right would lead right back to capitalism and even the principle "to each according to his work" would, if a new bourgeoisie takes the means of production for themselves, become again the well-known capitalist principle that "he who works the least gets the most."

Mao realised that it would be no quick and easy matter to eliminate the "three great differences" between city and countryside, workers and peasants and manual and mental labour. As long as these differences existed communism would be impossible. The elimination of these relics of centuries of class society also depended upon a higher level of productive forces than existed in China as well as upon radical revolution in the organisation of society.

Mao's response to understanding the difficulties and the protracted nature of the transition to communism was not to throw up his hands and declare "human nature" unbeatable. Rather, he sought the *means* to carry through the revolution under these circumstances and he armed the workers, peasants, soldiers and revolutionary intellectuals of China and the internationalist communist movement with this correct scientific understanding of socialist revolution. For genuine communists worldwide, coming to understand the true contradictory nature of socialist society was not frightening but liberating.

It let us understand how it was that what had long been described as an "impenetrable fortress" of socialism in the Soviet Union had been captured from within and, more importantly, showed that through the revolutionary struggle of the proletariat and masses such as during the Cultural Revolution, it was possible to *defeat* those who would drag society back to the capitalist road, and, in so doing, unleash

hundreds of millions of people to make giant leaps in transforming all aspects of society. Mao restored Marx' and Engels' vision of communist society in which men and women would consciously and voluntarily change the world and themselves, untrammelled by the existence of classes, a vision which, at the hands of revisionists, had been distorted, hidden and stripped of any practical significance.

Despite the great victories won in the ten years of the Cultural Revolution, after the death of Mao Tsetung the capitalist roaders in China were able to come to power through a coup d'état aimed at Mao's staunchest followers led by his widow Chiang Ching and Chang Chun-chiao. That socialist revolution in China itself was temporarily defeated was, of course, a great blow for the proletariat worldwide. But Mao had armed us to withstand this blow, to understand it, to carry forward the battle on other fronts and in other countries and never to lose our strategic confidence in the final victory of our cause.

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All of these points are complex and are governed not only by the general laws of nature and revolution but by very specific laws particular to the socialist economy as well. In order to really thoroughly expose the capitalist nature of the Eastern European regimes, and more importantly, to be prepared to do a good job at socialist construction when we come to power, it is neces-

sary for the genuine revolutionary communists to get a deeper handle on this question and a basic mastery of the political economy of socialism. And it is also necessary for the communists to get a firm grasp on Mao's criticisms of Stalin, not to chime in on the anti-Stalin chorus, but so as to be better able to draw, for themselves and the masses, a clear line of distinction between the East European monstrosities and a genuine socialist society. The revisionist regimes inherited many of the *forms* of socialism. Furthermore, they took advantage of the mistakes that had been made by Stalin and genuine revolutionaries. In the countries of Eastern Europe this was even more complicated by the fact that, unlike the Soviet Union, little revolutionary transformation had ever been carried out. To aid this study, we have reprinted some brief extracts from two important works, Mao's *Critique of Soviet Economics* and the *Fundamentals of Political Economy* (a textbook published in Shanghai in 1974 under the leadership of Mao's line) in the hopes that these texts in their entirety and others will be studied.

As the *Declaration of the Revolutionary Internationalist Movement* puts it, "Lenin said, 'Only he is a Marxist who extends the recognition of class struggle to the recognition of the dictatorship of the proletariat'. In the light of the invaluable lessons and advances achieved through the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution led by Mao Tsetung, this criterion put forward by Lenin has been further sharpened. Now it can be stated that only he is a Marxist who extends the recognition of class struggle to the recognition of the dictatorship of the proletariat and to the recognition of the objective existence of classes, antagonistic class contradictions and of the continuation of the class struggle under the dictatorship of the proletariat throughout the whole period of socialism until communism. And as Mao so powerfully stated, 'Lack of clarity on this question will lead to revisionism.'"

Form and Content

It has often been pointed out that Mao was able to develop his penetrating understanding of socialist

revolution because of his excellent grasp of the dialectical materialist method. He was never content with the appearances of things; he always strove to find their essence. He realised that it was the unity and struggle of opposites that determined the nature of every process in nature and in human society and he relentlessly pursued this method when examining socialist society.

The Communist Party has political power? Well and good. But is the Communist Party really a party of the proletariat, is it representing their largest interests or is it becoming a private club in the hands of a minority of society which strives to protect and reproduce the interests of this minority? Mao proved that there was no such thing as the "monolithic party" (as Stalin was fond of calling it) but that the party itself would always be the arena of fierce two-line struggle between the proletarian and revisionist line, whose outcome would determine the very direction of society.

You have established the dictatorship of the proletariat? An important accomplishment. But is this state really putting power in the hands of the workers and peasants? Mao asked, "who criticises?" He cut through the economist/revisionist conception that considered "socialism" simply the improvement of the conditions of the masses and insisted on the political power of the proletariat allied with all of the revolutionary masses. He saw that the state itself was a contradictory phenomenon under socialism. It was absolutely necessary to build and strengthen the dictatorship of the proletariat, but this very state apparatus could and would be transformed into a weapon against the masses, a dictatorship of the party bigshots, factory directors and technocrats, or a new bourgeoisie, unless the most tenacious struggle by the masses was carried out.

You say that you have built a powerful socialist country? This is a great accomplishment. But Mao pointed out that to talk about the final victory in one country "runs contrary to Leninism" and that we should never lose sight of the worldwide goal of communism. If the socialist state became an end in itself, if it no longer existed to serve the advance toward worldwide com-

munist, it would cease being socialist at all and become an obstacle in the path of the world revolution — which is exactly what happened in the USSR.

Mao understood that things could, under certain circumstances, be transformed into their opposites. We too should use this method when analysing events. The revolt of the masses in Eastern Europe is objectively a revolt against the evils of imperialism, yet in the minds of most of the people in those countries it is a revolt against socialism and communism. This is not a reason to tail behind the backward sentiments of the masses in those countries. No, these people must be challenged, and boldly, with the truth of Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought. But it is also very wrong to look only at the surface appearance of things and draw erroneous conclusions as to the revolutionary possibilities in these countries. Phoney "Marxism-Leninism" — real revisionism — has been the official ideology, the state religion, in the countries of the East bloc. No real possibility of inroads for genuine Marxism existed until this state religion was thoroughly repudiated and rejected by the masses. To see only the anti-communist label and ignore the anti-capitalist content is a violation of dialectics — and it is wrong.

The International Dimension

As we mentioned above, one of the reasons for the difficulties of the socialist states that have existed was the fact that they were situated in a hostile world still dominated by imperialism and reaction. As the *Declaration of the Revolutionary Internationalist Movement* puts it, socialist countries are base areas of the world revolution and are a subordinate part of the latter. The socialist countries are locked in a life and death struggle with the world imperialist system. It is absolutely necessary for the proletariat and the revolutionary masses to take power wherever possible and begin constructing a socialist society. The victories in this process, such as those won in the USSR under Lenin and Stalin and in China under Mao, help propel the whole world revolutionary movement forward, especially by serving as living proof that

exploitation of man by man need not be the organising principle of society. They serve as a beacon to the oppressed of the possibility of a better future.

Socialist states have adopted a policy of "peaceful coexistence" with the capitalist and imperialist states. But such peaceful coexistence can only be a truce in an ongoing conflict which, in the long run, can only be resolved by the victory of one camp or the other. The imperialists have shown that while they might at times be forced to accept the existence of a socialist state, they will never give up their efforts to encircle, harass, subvert, or even invade such a socialist state.

Furthermore, apart from the military aspect, as long as the imperialist system is still dominant in the world, a great deal of the world's productive forces, and with it, important economic lifelines of the world, will be under their control, and this will be used against the socialist society. Given this and given the planetary character of human society, something which has become all the more marked with the advent of imperialism, it is inconceivable to imagine a communist society existing on only part of the earth.

Can Socialism "Deliver the Goods"?

One of Khrushchev's great boasts was that East-bloc "socialism" would "bury" the West through the process of peaceful competition. He thought he could build up an empire that would rival that of the United States and Europe in terms of the living standards it gave to many of its people living in the imperialist metropole. Of course, Khrushchev and his successors were never able to fulfil this boast, and today the relative riches in the West are being used as the ultimate proof of the so-called superiority of the Western capitalist system.

The main reason for the relatively poorer economic situation in the East than in the West is simply that the West has been *more successful* at exploiting an international empire. Not that the social-imperialists of the USSR have not also tried to construct and profit from such an empire — they have. But for a number of historical and geopolitical rea-

sons, the Soviet-led bloc was never able to secure and profitably utilise a worldwide network of countries to the degree that the Western imperialists have.

A genuine socialist country would never enter the race for neo-colonies and Third World feasting grounds. The development of the productive capacity of a genuine socialist state is never an end in itself and even raising the level of living standards of the masses in these countries is subordinate to the goal of advancing toward communism. Put bluntly, it is better to go without if the only way to obtain the desired material goods is by becoming a new exploiter state. The East bloc had no compunction against entering this reactionary competition; they taught their populations that the very goal of socialism was more "goulash" on every table (which is why Mao ridiculed Khrushchev's "goulash communism"). But in the final analysis the West proved a better source of goulash than the East.

It must be added, however, that the "scales" which the imperialist West wishes to use to measure the supposed superiority of its system are rigged. It is easy to show, for example, that revolutionary China under Mao or the Soviet Union under Lenin and Stalin were poor compared with the West. But what about the countries the West exploits? The imperialist system has two "poles" — those who live in the imperialist citadels and benefit to varying degrees from the privileged position of these countries *and* those who live in the vast reaches of Asia, Africa and Latin America where whole countries have been deformed and put at the service of ensuring the wealth of the imperialist countries. China before liberation in 1949 was exactly one of those countries which had been sucked dry by the imperialist nations, and the scars of this oppression were inherited by the proletariat when it took power. But despite these very real economic hardships, revolutionary China was able, step by step, to develop the economy in an all-round way that greatly raised the living standards of the people, especially in such key areas as nutrition, health and education, and that also provided for further advance along the socialist road. In fact, the standard of living

of the masses in China compared very favourably to the standard of living of the labouring people in the oppressed countries.

The collapse of East bloc "socialism" is also being used to say that the only path of economic development is to hitch a country's development to the "motor" of imperialism. It is true that the imperialist exploiting machine is a powerful motor for "economic development." It can chew up people by the millions and spit out tons of broken bones and, in the process, it can build modern cities usually surrounded, in the Third World at least, with equally "modern" slums. Imperialism can only develop a country by creating in miniature what it does in the world as a whole — increasing wealth at one "pole" while increasing misery and desperation at the other "pole". Like a magnet, capitalism and imperialism cannot exist without both poles, within a given country and internationally.

The Soviet Union promoted a "socialist" version of this same theory, calling on the countries of its bloc to step in line with the "international socialist division of labour." The disastrous results of this policy in Cuba are one of the subjects of the article by Rudi Mambisa in this issue.

The Situation is Excellent

The deep crisis of the East bloc regimes and the collapse of Soviet-style modern revisionism provide an excellent opportunity for the genuine communists. Although the trumpets of anti-communism are loudly blaring, the Revolutionary Internationalist Movement and other Maoist forces are equipped with the necessary tool to seize hold of this excellent situation and advance the revolutionary struggle. This tool is none other than Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought — the resolute enemy of pessimism, agnosticism and all forms of revisionism. The lessons that the proletariat have learned in making revolution and building socialism are not in vain; they will permit us to sweep aside the rubbish and construct the new. The fact that the socialist revolution has proven complex and protracted is no argument whatsoever against launching the revolution, but rather

testimony to the greatness of the task of creating a whole new world.

The masses of people in the East bloc and increasingly in the Western imperialist states as well, are being propelled into struggle against the ruling classes. This is because, as Mao put it, "Wherever there is oppression, there is resistance." And where there is resistance people inevitably seek an ideology that will teach them whom and how to fight. Right now many people are following various enemy flags, but they cannot help but be increasingly disillusioned with such false promises.

The possibility of a new wave of revolutionary struggle is certainly not lost on the imperialist enemy. One of their greatest concerns in the East is to swiftly restore some stability to the bourgeois order. The capitalists, East and West, must rapidly unveil the true meaning — the class content — of the "democracy" they have been heralding. Those who have been rising up against the social inequalities and the privileges of a few must now be taught that such privileges and inequality are the very heart of the capitalist democracies to be constructed. The aroused masses must be put back to sleep — and as quickly as possible, given the hardships that are in store for them. But history has shown that this is not always so easily done. □

Footnotes

1. In a speech to the 9th Plenum of the Albanian Party of Labour Central Committee in January 1990, Ramiz Alia, leader of the PLA, describes the recent events in E Europe as being "on the whole favourable to capitalism"; he asks, "how is it possible for the working class, for the masses, to become protagonists and supporters for the restoration of capitalism" and concludes that the communists "should live with this tragedy painfully, but of course not in despair".

2. Nikita Khrushchev was the Secretary General of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union between 1953 and 1964. In 1956, shortly after the death of Stalin, Khrushchev launched an all-out attack on Stalin and the very principles of Marxism-Leninism and the accomplishments of socialism in the USSR. He presided over the restoration of capitalism in that country until he himself was overthrown in a palace coup by Brezhnev and Kosygin in 1965.

3. Cited in "Capitalist Roaders Are the Bourgeoisie Inside the Party", *Peking Review* No. 25, 18 June 1976.

Mao Tsetung

A Critique of Soviet Economics

—Excerpts

Mao Tsetung drew up the following article based on a talk he gave in 1958 on Stalin's work, *Economic Problems of Socialism in the USSR*, which was circulating widely in China at that time. Coming just at the time of the Great Leap Forward, the talk was part of Mao's intensifying efforts to sum up the Soviet experience, including the restoration of capitalism there, to chart new paths for socialist construction in China, and to develop the theory of continuing the revolution under the dictatorship of the proletariat which paved the way for the Cultural Revolution. Following this article are Mao's notes on a Soviet political economy text book from the same period. —AWTW

Concerning *Economic Problems of Socialism in the USSR*¹

Provincial and regional committees must study this book. In the past everyone read it without gaining a deep impression. It should be studied in conjunction with China's actual circumstances. The first three chapters contain much that is worth paying attention to, much that is correct, although there are places where perhaps Stalin himself did not make things clear enough. For example, in chapter 1 he says only a few things about objective laws and how to go about planning the economy, without unfolding his ideas; or, it may be that to his mind Soviet planning of the economy already reflected objective governing principles. On the question of heavy industry, light industry, and agriculture, the Soviet Union did not lay enough emphasis on the latter two and had losses as a result. In the main they walked on one leg. Comparing the planning, which of us after all had the better adapted "planned proportionate development"? Another point: Stalin emphasised only technology, technical cadre. He wanted nothing but technology, nothing but cadre; no politics, no masses. This too is walking on one leg! And in industry they walk on one leg when they pay attention to heavy industry but not to light industry. Furthermore, they did not point out the main aspects of the contradictions in the relationships among departments of heavy industry. They exaggerated the importance of heavy industry, claiming that steel was the foundation, machinery the heart and soul. Our position is that grain is the mainstay of agriculture, steel of industry, and that if steel is taken as the mainstay, then once we have the raw material the machine

industry will follow along. Stalin raised questions in chapter 1: he suggested the objective governing principles, but he failed to provide satisfactory answers.

In chapter 2 he discusses commodities, in chapter 3 the law of value. Relatively speaking, I favor many of the views expressed. To divide production into two major departments and to say that the means of production are not commodities — these points deserve study. In Chinese agriculture there are still many means of production that should be commodities. My view is that the last of the three appended letters² is entirely wrong. It expresses a deep uneasiness, a belief that the peasantry cannot be trusted to release agricultural machinery but would hang on to it. On the one hand Stalin says that the means of production belong to state ownership. On the other, he says that the peasants cannot afford them. The fact is that he is deceiving himself. The state controlled the peasantry very, very tightly, inflexibly. For the two transitions Stalin failed to find the proper ways and means, a vexing matter for him.

Capitalism leaves behind it the commodity form, which we must still retain for the time being. Commodity exchange laws governing value play no regulating role in our production. This role is played by planning, by the great leap forward under planning, by politics-in-command. Stalin speaks only of the production relations, not of the superstructure, nor of the relationship between superstructure and economic base. Chinese cadres participate in production; workers participate in management. Sending cadres down to lower levels to be tempered, discarding old rules and regulations — all these pertain to the superstructure, to ideology. Stalin mentions economics only, not politics. He may speak of selfless labour, but in reality even an extra hour's labour is begrudged. There is no selflessness at all. The role of people, the role of the labourer — these are not mentioned. If there were no communist movement it is hard to imagine making the transition to communism. "All people are for me, I for all people." This does not belong. It ends up with everything being connected to the self. Some say Marx said it. If he did let's not make propaganda out of it. "All people for me", means everybody for me, the individual. "I am for all." Well, how many can you be for?

Bourgeois right is manifested as bourgeois law and education. We want to destroy a part of the ideology of bourgeois right, the lordly pose, the three styles [the bureaucratic, the sectarian, and the subjective] and the five airs [the officious, the arrogant, the apathetic, the extravagant, and the precious]. But commodity circulation, the commodity form, the law of value, these, on the other hand, cannot be destroyed summarily, despite the fact that they are bourgeois categories. If we now carry on propaganda for the total elimination of the ideology of bourgeois right it would not be a reasonable position, bear in mind.

There are a few in socialist society — landlords, rich peasants, right-wingers — who are partial to capitalism and advocate it. But the vast majority are thinking of crossing over to communism. This, however, has to be done by steps. You cannot get to heaven in one step. Take the people's communes: on the one hand, they have to develop self-sufficient production, on the other, commodity exchange. We use commodity exchange and the law of value as tools for the benefit of developing production and facilitating the transition. We are a nation whose commodity production is very underdeveloped. Last year we produced 3.7 trillion catties of foodgrains. Of that number, commodity grains amounted to about 800 or 900 billion catties. Apart from grain, industrial crops like cotton and hemp are also underdeveloped. Therefore we have to have this [commodity] stage of development. At present there are still a good many counties where there is no charge for food but they cannot pay wages. In Hopei there are three such counties, and another that can pay wages, but not much: three or five yuan. So we still have to develop production, to develop things that can be sold other than foodgrains. At the Sian Agricultural Conference this point was insufficiently considered. In sum, we are a nation whose commerce is underdeveloped, and yet in many respects we

have entered socialism. We must eliminate a part of bourgeois right, but commodity production and exchange must still be kept. Now there is a tendency to feel that the sooner communism comes the better. Some suggest that in only three or five years we will be making the transition. In Fan county, Shantung, it was suggested that four years might be a little slow!

At present there are some economists who do not enjoy economics — Yaroshenko³ for one. For now and until some time in the future we will have to expand allocation and delivery to the communes. And we will have to expand commodity production. Otherwise we will not be able to pay wages or improve life. Some of our comrades are guilty of a misapprehension when, coming upon commodities and commodity production, they want to destroy bourgeois rule every single day, e.g., they say wages, grades, etc., are detrimental to the free supply system. In 1953 we changed the free supply system into a wage system.⁴ This approach was basically correct. We had to take one step backward. But there was a problem: we also took a step backward in the matter of grades. As a result there was a furor over this matter. After a period of rectification grades were scaled down. The grade system is a father-son relation, a cat-and-mouse relation. It has to be attacked day after day. Sending down the cadres to lower levels, running the experimental fields⁵ — there are ways of changing the grade system; otherwise, no great leaps!

In urban people's communes capitalists can enter and serve as personnel. But the capitalist label should stay on them. With respect to socialism and communism, what is meant by constructing socialism? We raise two points: (1) The concentrated manifestation of constructing socialism is making socialist, all-embracing public ownership⁶ a reality. (2) Constructing socialism means turning commune collective ownership into public ownership. Some comrades disapprove of drawing the line between these two types of ownership system, as if the communes were completely publicly owned. In reality there are two systems. One type is public ownership, as in the Anshan Iron and Steel Works, the other is commune-large collective ownership. If we do not raise this, what is the use of socialist construction? Stalin drew the line when he spoke of three conditions. These three basic conditions make sense and may be summarised as follows: increase social output; raise collective ownership to public ownership; go from exchange of commodities to exchange of products, from exchange value to use value.

On these two above-mentioned points we Chinese are (1) expanding and striving to increase output, concurrently promoting industry and agriculture with preference given to developing heavy industry; and (2) raising small collective ownership to public ownership, and then further to all-embracing public ownership. Those who would not draw these distinctions [among types of ownership] would seem to hold the view that we have already arrived at public ownership. This is wrong. Stalin was speaking of culture when he proposed the three conditions, the physical development and education of the whole people. For this he proposed four conditions: (a) six hours' work per day; (b) combining technical education with work; (c) improving residential conditions; (d) raising wages. Raising wages and lowering prices are particularly helpful here, but the political conditions are missing.

All these conditions are basically to increase production. Once output is plentiful it will be easier to solve the problem of raising collective to public ownership. To increase production we need "More! Faster! Better! More economically!" And for this we need politics-in-command, the four concurrent promotions, the rectification campaigns, the smashing of the ideology of bourgeois right. Add to this the people's communes and it becomes all the easier to achieve "More! Faster! Better! More economically!"

What are the implications of all-embracing public ownership? There are two: (1) the society's means of production are owned by the whole people; and (2) the society's output is owned by the whole people.

The characteristic of the people's commune is that it is the basic level at which industry, agriculture, the military, education and commerce are to be integrated in our social structure. At the present time it is the basic-level administrative organisation. The militia deals with foreign threats, especially from the imperialists. The commune is the best organisational form for carrying out the two transitions, from socialist (the present) to all-embracing public, and from all-embracing public to communist ownership. In the future, when the transitions have been completed, the commune will be the basic mechanism of communist society.

Excerpt from Mao's notes on the Soviet political economy textbook:

PART I: CHAPTERS 20-23

21. So-called Full Consolidation

"... fully consolidated the collective farm system", it says on page 407. "Full consolidation" — a phrase to make one uneasy. The consolidation of anything is relative. How can it be "full"? What if no one died since the beginning of mankind, and everyone got "fully consolidated"? What kind of a world would that be! In the universe, on our globe, all things come into being, develop, and pass away ceaselessly. None of them is ever "fully consolidated". Take the life of a silkworm. Not only must it pass away at the end, it must pass through four stages of development during its lifetime: egg, silkworm, pupa, moth. It must move on from one stage to the next and can never fully consolidate itself in any one stage. In the end, the moth dies, and its old essence becomes a new essence (as it leaves behind many eggs). This is a qualitative leap. Of course, from egg to worm, from worm to pupa, from pupa to moth clearly are more than quantitative changes. There is qualitative transformation too, but it is *partial* qualitative transformation....

The present socialist economy in our country is organised through two different forms of public ownership, ownership by the whole people and collective ownership. This socialist economy has had its own birth and development. Who would believe that this process of change has come to an end, and that we will say, "These two forms of ownership will continue to be fully consolidated for all time?" Who would believe that such formulas of a socialist society as "distribution according to labour", "commodity production" and "the law of value" are going to live forever? Who would believe that there is only birth and development but no dying away and transformation and that these formulas unlike all others are ahistorical?

Socialism must make the transition to communism. At that time there will be things of the socialist stage that will have to die out. And, too, in the period of communism there will still be uninterrupted development. It is quite possible that communism will have to pass through a number of different stages. How can we say that once communism has been reached nothing will change, that everything will continue "fully consolidated", that there will be quantitative change only, and no partial qualitative change going on all the time.

The way things develop, one stage leads on to another, advancing without interruption. But each and every stage has a "boundary". Every day we read from, say, four o'clock and end at seven or eight. That is the boundary. As far as socialist ideological remoulding goes, it is a long-term task. But each ideological campaign reaches its conclusion, that is to say, has a boundary. On the ideological front, when we will have come through uninterrupted quantitative changes and partial qualitative changes, the day will arrive when we will be completely free of the influence of capitalist ideology. At that time the qualitative changes of ideological remoulding will have ended, but only to be followed by the quantitative changes of a *new* quality.

The construction of socialism also has its boundary. We have to keep tabs: for example, what is to be the ratio of industrial goods to total production, how much steel is to be produced, how high can the people's living standard be raised, etc.? But to say that socialist construction has a boundary hardly means that we do not

want to take the next step, to make the transition to communism. It is possible to divide the transition from capitalism to communism into two stages: one from capitalism to socialism, which could be called underdeveloped socialism; and one from socialism to communism, that is, from comparatively underdeveloped socialism to comparatively developed socialism, namely, communism. This latter stage may take even longer than the first. But once it has been passed through, material production and spiritual prosperity will be most ample. People's communist consciousness will be greatly raised, and they will be ready to enter the highest stage of communism.

On page 409 it says that after the forms of socialist production have been firmly established, production will steadily and rapidly expand. The rate of productivity will climb steadily. The text uses the term *steadily* or *without interruption* a good many times, but only to speak of quantitative transformation. There is little mention of partial qualitative change.

PART II: CHAPTERS 24-29

29. Contradictions Between Socialist Production Relations and Productive Forces

Page 433 discusses only the "mutual function" of the production relations and the productive forces under socialism but not the contradictions between them. The production relations include ownership of the means of production, the relations among people in the course of production, and the distribution system. The revolution in the system of ownership is the base, so to speak. For example, after the entire national economy has become indivisibly owned by the whole people through the transition from collective to people's ownership, although people's ownership will certainly be in effect for a relatively long time, for all enterprises so owned important problems will remain. Should a central-local division of authority be in effect? Which enterprises should be managed by whom? In 1958 in some basic construction units a system of fixed responsibility for capital investment was put into effect. The result was a tremendous release of enthusiasm in these units. When the centre cannot depend on its own initiative it must release the enthusiasm of the enterprise or the locality. If such enthusiasm is frustrated it hurts production.

We see then that contradictions to be resolved remain in the production relations under people's ownership. As far as relations among people in the course of labour and the distribution relations go, it is all the more necessary to improve them unremittingly. For these areas it is rather difficult to say what the base is. Much remains to be written about human relations in the course of labour, e.g., concerning the leadership's adopting egalitarian attitudes, the changing of certain regulations and established practices, "the two participations" [worker participation in management and management participation in productive labour], "the three combinations" [combining efforts of cadres, workers and technicians], etc. Public ownership of primitive communes lasted a long time, but during that time people's relations to each other underwent a good many changes, all the same, in the course of labour. □

Footnotes

1. This talk was reprinted in *A Critique of Soviet Economics* (Monthly Review Press, New York, 1977), which also contains Mao's critical comments on a Soviet political economy textbook from the same period, as well as another article by Mao on Stalin's *Economic Problems of Socialism in the USSR*.
2. "Reply to Comrades A.V. Sanina and V.G. Venzher", included in *Economic Problems*.
3. Recipient of Stalin's second letter, included in *Economic Problems*.
4. The wage system established in 1953 emphasised predominantly short-term individual material incentives. It established an eight-grade wage point system ranging from 139 to 390 wage points per month. Similar work in different regions would receive an equal number of work points, but the value of work points varied according to regional costs of living. By 1956, the wage point system had been replaced by a wage system, but the eight-grade structure was retained.
5. Experimental fields sought to develop new and advanced techniques, such as close planting, early planting, deep ploughing, etc. If successful in increasing output, the techniques would be popularised throughout China. By increasing production and thus the total wage fund, the experimental field concept could help undermine the ideological base of the graded wage system by demonstrating that specialists could learn from the peasants.
6. This is identical, in Chinese, to ownership by the whole people.

Fundamentals of Political Economy

The following excerpts are taken from *Fundamentals of Political Economy*, a textbook produced in Shanghai in 1974 under the leadership of Mao's line, which was directed at youth and students going to the countryside as part of the on-going battle to prevent capitalist restoration. The first half treats the economics of capitalist society, and the second, from which the present excerpt is taken, those of socialist society. This half draws together in one place Mao's pathbreaking analysis of the road of socialist construction.—AWTW

The Serious Lesson of the Restoration of the Capitalist Ownership System in the Soviet Union

Since the Khrushchev-Brezhnev renegade clique restored bourgeois dictatorship, the socialist public ownership system established under proletarian dictatorship has been completely transformed into a new system of ownership by the bureaucratic monopolist bourgeoisie. This is a serious lesson. The event demonstrates that after the establishment of the socialist public ownership system, the two possibilities of advance in the communist direction or retreat in the capitalist direction still exist.

Marxism tells us that the nature of the ownership system of the means of production is ultimately determined by which social group possesses the means of production and which social groups they serve. How should we observe such possession and service? In *Capital*,

Marx quoted Aristotle's remark that "the status of the master rests not so much on he who purchases the slave as on he who lords over him." Marx continued, "the status of the capitalist is established not so much by his ownership of the capital — which provides him the power to purchase labour — as by his power to employ the labourer, that is, the wage earner, in the process of production."

Today, a glimpse at the way the Soviet proletariat and labouring people are employed will demonstrate the substance of Soviet revisionism, that is, that Brezhnev and his associates, wearing a cloak of socialist public ownership, have usurped the Soviet people's means of production to serve the bureaucratic monopolist bourgeoisie.

In the regulations governing the socialist state-operated production enterprises, the Soviet revisionists stipulate: "The authority over production and management shall be exercised by the manager (administrator or director) in conjunction with other responsible personnel designated in accordance with the division of their duties." The manager of the enterprise has the authority to determine the level of employment and the strength of the personnel; to recruit or dismiss employees; to grant awards or mete out penal-

ties; to fix wage scales and bonuses; to sell, rent, or lease the means of production of the enterprise; and to appropriate various "economic incentive funds" which are stipulated by the Soviet revisionist leadership as being reserved for the enterprise's own allocation.

The Soviet revisionist "Regulations Governing the Model Collective Farms" stipulate that the chairman of the collective farm possesses the authority to rent, lease, or transfer the land owned by the state; to appropriate farm funds, or even to freely buy or sell the means of production, such as agricultural machines; and to decide the labour remuneration and bonuses of the farm members, hire outside people to work at the farm, and so forth. These "managers", or "farm chairmen", have this and that power. What powers do the labouring people have? None. Their ownership rights to the means of production have all been expropriated by the bureaucratic monopolist bourgeoisie. By reducing the labouring people of the Soviet Union to wage labourers "in the production process", the bureaucratic monopolist bourgeoisie has proved that it is the bureaucratic monopolist bourgeoisie. According to Soviet revisionist magazines, the monthly piecework wages of a lathe operator in a state enterprise in the Soviet Union are as low as 50 to 60 rubles. Medium wages are 70 to 80 rubles. But what the manager, plant director, and other bureaucratic monopolist bourgeois elements get in the way of wages, bonuses, subsidies, and other "legal" means is more

than ten times, or even several tens of times, that of the worker. The net monthly income of an ordinary farmer is less than 60 rubles. But the monthly income of a farm chairman is generally about 600 rubles. Some reach more than 1,000 rubles. One old Soviet worker with more than thirty years of experience said: "We have a lot of millionaires here. They are different from us not only in standard of living but also in language." A manager of the construction trust of the Soviet revisionist Ministry of Agriculture frantically exclaimed: "The trust is my home. I am the master. I do what I like." The kind of tree determines the kind of flower, and the kind of class determines the kind of talk. From their different standpoints and different angles, the labouring people and the bureaucratic monopolist bourgeoisie demonstrate one point: The bureaucratic monopolist bourgeoisie has become the lords in production. Like the capitalists, they "do what they like". On the other hand, the broad masses of labouring people have been reduced to wage labourers in production. They are enslaved and exploited and are suffering miserably.

The fact that the socialist public ownership system of the Soviet Union has completely degenerated is shocking. This demonstrates that after the socialist public ownership system is established, it will not automatically consolidate and become perfect; there will be a long process of struggle.

The ownership system is not an object; it is a social relationship. The socialist public ownership system embodies, for the labouring people, a social relationship in which the means of production are equally possessed and everybody is a master. On the other hand, it also embodies a relationship in which the proletariat and the labouring people expropriate the expropriator and rule over and transform all members of the exploiting class. In these social relationships, the proletariat and the labouring people must consolidate their gains obtained through expropriation, strengthen the rule over, and the transformation of, members of the exploiting class in order to consolidate and perfect the socialist public ownership system by constantly sweeping away the corrosion and sabotage of the exploiting class.

On the other hand, the bourgeoisie and all exploiting classes will resist this kind of rule and transformation in order to transform the socialist public ownership system into a capitalist private ownership system through constant corrosion and sabotage. The contradictions and the struggles between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie on the question of the ownership system are multifaceted. But they are mainly manifested in the struggle for leadership over the economy which is based on a socialist public ownership system. Whoever seizes leadership becomes the de facto master of the ownership relations. Once the leadership falls into the hands of the bourgeoisie or its agents, the socialist public ownership system not only cannot be consolidated or improved, it will certainly degenerate. It is exactly because a handful of persons in power in the Soviet Union taking the capitalist road has stolen the leadership of the economy based on a socialist public ownership system that the socialist public ownership system has been transformed into an ownership system of the bureaucratic monopolist bourgeoisie and that the proletariat and the labouring people of the Soviet Union have been transformed from masters of a socialist public ownership system into slaves of an ownership system of the bureaucratic monopolist bourgeoisie. Since the Khrushchev-Brezhnev renegade clique usurped the supreme power of the Soviet Union's Party and state, capitalism has been completely restored.

Struggle for the Consolidation and Development of the Socialist Public Ownership System

After the establishment of socialist public ownership, the issue of the ownership system has still not been completely resolved. There still exist the two possibilities of advancing toward socialism or retreating back to capitalism. This reveals to the proletariat and the broad masses of labouring people an historical task: they must constantly struggle for the consolidation and development of the socialist public ownership system.

To consolidate and develop the socialist public ownership system, it is necessary first of all to ensure that the socialist economic leadership is

in the hands of the Marxists and the broad labouring masses.

The socialist public ownership system demonstrates that the proletariat and the labouring people are the masters of the means of production. But, how can one tell whether they are in fact masters of the means of production? That depends on their role in the production process. In capitalist society, the labourer is used in the production process as labour power by the capitalist. Through the use of labour power, the capitalist extracts as much surplus value from the labourer as possible. The labourer is merely a paid slave. The capitalist is the real master. This leads to acute opposition between the worker and the capitalist. In socialist society, the role of the labourers in the production process is completely different. They participate in the production process as masters. They create wealth for society through conscious labour. Then, who organises this production process? Ultimately, it should be the labourer himself. Naturally, this does not mean that all labourers directly organise and manage production. The broad labourers appoint representatives through the state and the collective, or they elect representatives to organise production. But here a problem arises: If the broad labourers delegate to their representatives the power to organise production, can these representatives represent the interests of the proletariat and the labouring people in organising production? After the labourer has delegated his power to organise production to a representative, is there any power left to the labourer himself? This problem has occurred in history. At the end of the primitive commune, public servants of society elected by commune members gradually became masters of society, and this finally led to the disintegration of the ownership system of clan communes and the emergence of private ownership. This reflected a progressive movement in history at that time. In today's Soviet Union, those who organise production do not represent the interests of the proletariat and the labouring people at all. They represent instead the interests of the bureaucratic monopolist bourgeoisie. The socialist public ownership system of the bureaucratic

monopolist bourgeoisie has become the economic basis of Soviet society. This is a big historical retrogression. Under China's proletarian dictatorship, similar conditions have appeared in certain areas. Before the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, the real leadership of some units, though nominally under the socialist public ownership system, had been usurped by a handful of renegades, special agents, and capitalist-roaders. Or it was still in the hands of former capitalists. As a result of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution launched and led by Chairman Mao personally, the leadership of these units was returned to the broad labouring masses who held high the red banner that "it is right to rebel against reactionaries", and "lessons from history are noteworthy". The Tenth National Party Congress summed up rich experience and lessons and clearly pointed out: "Leadership in the base organisation must be strengthened so that the leadership is really in the hands of the Marxists, the workers, the poor and lower-middle peasants, and other labouring masses. The task of consolidating the proletarian revolution must be put into effect in every base unit." This has decisive significance in consolidating and developing the socialist public ownership system.

To ensure that the leadership of the enterprise under the state economy and the collective economy is in the hands of the Marxists, the proletariat and the labouring people must engage in a resolute struggle with the renegades, special agents, and capitalist-roaders who have usurped the leadership and win it back. This type of struggle cannot be resolved with one Great Cultural Revolution. In their futile restoration attempt, the bourgeoisie will try everything to usurp the leadership of the state and the collective economy. At the same time, the representatives (cadres of various levels) of the proletariat and the labouring people who control the leadership of the state and the collective economy must strengthen the transformation of their world outlook and try hard to become Marxists so that they can truly represent the interests of the proletariat and the labouring people. If they do not work hard in this direction, it is possible that under the influence of

the bourgeois world outlook, they may go against the interests of the proletariat and the labouring people in the process of organising production. Some people are interested in material incentives, profit, and restrictive measures in their operation and management of the socialist economy. In other words, they do not treat the labouring people as the masters of the socialist enterprise. This will inevitably impede and weaken the socialist public ownership system. If this trend continues, the socialist public ownership system will degenerate. In the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, the broad masses and cadres criticised and repudiated this tendency. But, under certain conditions, things that have been criticised and repudiated can appear again. At the beginning of 1974, some of the workers in the No. 5 Loading and Unloading District of the Shanghai Harbor Affairs Bureau posted a big-character poster entitled, "Be the Masters of the Wharf, Not the Slaves of Tonnage." It pointed out: "The leadership does not treat the workers as masters of the wharf. Instead they are treated as the slaves of tonnage. This is a reflection of the revisionist line in running an enterprise." These words hit the crux of the consolidation and development of the socialist public ownership system and are of universal practical significance.

In order that the leadership of the state economy and the collective economy really be in the hands of the Marxists, it must also really be in the hands of the workers, poor and lower-middle peasants, and other labouring masses. These two aspects are inseparable. Since the labouring masses are the masters of the socialist economy, it does not mean that they no longer have the right to interfere once the leadership has been delegated to a few representatives. The revisionist "one-man management system" championed by the Soviet revisionists is an institutionalisation of this viewpoint. Facts have demonstrated that this is a chloroform spread by the bourgeoisie and its agents in order to usurp leadership. Engels once pointed out: "The inevitable result of individual management of industries is private ownership." If the leadership of the enterprise under the socialist ownership system is not in

the hands of the workers, poor and lower-middle peasants, and other labourers, the revisionist "one-man management system" will proliferate. Under the revisionist "one-man management system", the labouring masses are in effect separated from the means of production. They listen to the orders from the "head". Without leadership over the enterprise, they are no longer masters of the enterprise. If this develops, they will be treated as pure labour power in the production process by the "head". The labouring masses will no longer have the right to question whether this production process serves the interests of the proletariat and the labouring people. This way, socialist enterprises will gradually slide into the mudhole of capitalism. But when leadership of the enterprise is really in the hands of the Marxists and the workers, poor and lower-middle peasants, and other labouring masses, the position of the labouring masses as masters of the enterprise will surely be guaranteed. As masters, they will fully mobilise socialist activism. If some bad people usurped leadership of the enterprise, the labouring masses would take it back under the Party's leadership. This has been proven more than once by the practice of China's socialist revolution, especially since the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution. It will be proven again.

The crux of the question concerning who controls the leadership of the socialist economy lies in whether or not the line implemented by the departments in charge of the production operation or economic management represents the interests of the proletariat and the labouring people. The revisionist line always goes against the interests of the proletariat and the labouring people. It fosters material incentives, profit, and restrictive measures. On the other hand, according to socialist principles, the Marxist line always insists on having revolution guide production and strengthening operation management by relying on the masses as the masters. Therefore, firmly adhering to the Marxist line and criticising and repudiating the revisionist line is the ultimate guarantee for the consolidation and development of the socialist public ownership system. □

Collapse of
REVISIONISM
in the East

Cast Away Illusions!

Revolution - All the Way!

An Appeal to the People of Eastern Europe
from the Revolutionary Internationalist Movement

The following appeal from the RIM Committee was translated into Polish, Czechoslovakian, Romanian, Serbo-Croatian, German and several other languages and tens of thousands of copies have been distributed throughout Eastern Europe.—AWTW

Marxism consists of thousands of truths, but they all boil down to the one sentence, "It is right to rebel!"

— Mao Tsetung

The old order in Eastern Europe has been dramatically shaken. Where yesterday protest was whispered, today it explodes in fierce rebellion in the streets. The corrupt gang of E. European "communist" party bosses are now reeling, scorned and reviled. The situation is excellent!

But for the guardians of the established order East and West, things have gone far enough; they warn darkly of "mob rule" and direct people to "settle down" and "get back to business" — "the revolution is over", they declare. We Maoists in the Revolutionary Internationalist Movement reply: No! The revolution has only just begun — and it still has a long way to go.

The sight of the former bosses of E. Europe hounded and on the run has given joy to the world's oppressed. These were great criminals. In the name of communism, these "red bourgeoisie" exploited the toiling masses, they talked piously of "egalitarianism" while stuffing millions into Swiss banks, they declared their "proletarian internationalism" while enforcing Soviet social-imperialism's empire from Czechoslovakia to Afghanistan, they quoted Lenin while secretly living like the Tsar. Today their parties are tossing aside the label of "communist" and adopting new names — fine, let them call themselves what they are: the Party of Privileged Parasites or, more precisely, the Party of Bureaucrat Capitalists.

For *capitalists* is what they are. It is said that E. Europe is being rocked by the "crisis of communism" — but E. Europe is not communist! Does anyone seriously believe that Honecker, Zhivkov, Jaruzelski and their parties were struggling to advance the world revolution towards Marx's vision of classless society?! How ridiculous. The doddering corrupt old dictators who ran E. Europe were the representatives of bourgeois classes that exploit the masses in much the same way that capitalists do anywhere else. They used the forms of socialism they inherited, but the essence was the same: a small minority used their control of the means of production and the state to suck the blood of the workers and accumulate wealth and privilege. Some, like the E. German bourgeoisie, even rose to become imperial-

ists, and profit from activities abroad, in Angola, Cuba and elsewhere.

Today, the entire Soviet social-imperialist bloc is in such deep crisis that its most powerful rulers, Gorbachev and the Soviet bourgeoisie themselves, have undertaken a program of unprecedented change. This has unleashed decades of pent-up fury, resulting in an explosion of anger and protest from below. The ruling classes are divided and in disarray; the masses of people have awakened to political life. Unparalleled opportunity exists to intensify the struggle of the people, but in developed capitalist countries like E. Europe, such moments are rare and short-lived. By common consent, the ruling classes of East and West are deploying their considerable forces to establish a new stability. Either you will advance the people's struggle in the face of this, or you will be defeated by the masters old and new.

Stabilisation is now the common programme of all the ruling classes. One of the chief weapons in their arsenal is the introduction of the parliamentary democracy that so many of you look to. They say that because you now have parliamentary democracy you can cease your fight, that this democracy is the guarantee that you can solve your problems and better your lives. This is a lie. Look at Poland: why is it that despite the collapse of the vicious martial law regime, despite the introduction of multiparty elections, free press, free speech, and even the electoral victory of the pro-Western opposition, the suffering of the masses has become even worse?

Parliamentary democracy has never brought freedom to the broad masses. Everyone is free and equal, it is said, "one man, one vote"; but one class controls the wealth and power — the means of production, the mass media, the army and police — and is free to use all this to exploit, suppress and manipulate the people. Parliamentary democracy is a means by which capitalist rule is disguised as the rule of the people; the masses' hopes are pinned to illusions that one or another representative of the ruling class will bestow changes upon them, instead of relying on the only force for real change: the revolutionary struggle of the people themselves.

Parliamentary democracy is democracy for the privileged. They now have more competition in their own ranks over who will have what share of the rights to rule and exploit and live leisured lives. New sections of the elite previously out of power are being let into the privileged ranks. "Comrade" party bosses will give way to modern Western-style executives, collective farm managers will be replaced by big farm owners — but often it is the old party managers who will become the new owners, since they have the money, connections and know-how to profit from the new opportunities. But the concentration of power and wealth in the hands of a small minority, and the propertyless and powerless condition of the broad masses, will remain unaltered, for this is the essence of capitalism in both its Eastern and Western forms.

It is not democratic reforms from above but the people's struggle from below together with the disarray of the rulers that has brought forth any truly fresh and vital change. Look at the seizure and destruction of the Stasi headquarters in E. Berlin. Imagine what would happen if youth in democratic W. Germany were to try to storm the secret police headquarters there — how many would be gunned down, how many imprisoned? Look at Romania, where across the country workers have gone on strike, held mass meetings, forced out hated factory administrators and chosen new ones themselves. Such things rarely happen in the "democratic" West, and if they do they are quickly and viciously suppressed. As soon as your ruling regimes get back on their feet, then they too are sure to crush any such fruits of popular power — undoubtedly under the banner of protecting the new-born democratic power!

As for the grand promises of change to be wrought by free enterprise and Western investment: a few privileged will benefit, the basic masses won't. Look at what Western technology is bringing Poland: some get computers, others get laid off. Competition is intensifying, as is polarisation; the rich grow richer and the poor poorer. But make no mistake: all these measures chiefly serve to accelerate processes *already going on*. Profit has been the driving force of the E. European

economies for years; the gap between the rich and poor was already enormous; total debt to Western banks already stands at near \$100 billion — every year they suck billions in interest payments out of E. Europe.

The change in E. Europe is not from stagnant socialist economies to dynamic capitalist ones, but from disguised to undisguised capitalism. What is new is a desperate attempt by your rulers to replace inefficient capital with efficient capital, to streamline the mechanisms of exploitation and make the wheels of capital accumulation turn even faster, including by expanding the share of the Western imperialists in this process.

Look at what's already going on in Poland and Hungary, where Western penetration and Western-style reforms have gone farthest. How many more soup kitchens will Poland need, as hundreds of thousands are laid off because factories and mines are "not profitable"? How many more homeless will join the thousands already huddling on Budapest's streets, because new housing is "not profitable"? The regimes are now freed up from the compromises made by the state capitalists to maintain the facade of socialism; like people in the West, you are free not only to vote, but to be unemployed and homeless.

Western propagandists tell you to forget the evidence from Poland and Hungary of what more Western penetration will mean for you; look instead to Germany, Scandinavia or France — if you adopt democracy and join Europe, someday you too will live like this, they claim. What poison pours from their lips! Of course the West is richer — it has been more successful than its Soviet-bloc rivals in building a worldwide empire. Their exploitation fields stretch from Chile's copper mines to South Africa's gold mines up through the Middle East oil fields through South Asia and into the Far East, where tens of millions produce textiles and electronics for pennies an hour. Because the West is richer and has a relatively large middle class, it can allow some of its people to say what they want (some of the time) and go abroad (*if they can afford it*). The West is not rich because it is democratic, it is democratic *because it is rich* and it is democracy *for the rich*; the secret of its riches, and hence of its democracy, lies in its empire built on bloody conquest and maintained through savage wars like Vietnam, continual invasions of little countries like Panama, Grenada or the Malvinas, and perpetual misery and suffering for hundreds and hundreds of millions under apartheid regimes and military juntas and including within the borders of the imperialist countries themselves. If you want to know what Western democracy is really about, turn off Radio Free Europe and find the way to ask South Africa's blacks, or Palestinians in the Gaza strip, ask Arab dustmen in Paris or Turks in Hamburg, ask England's coal miners or Chicago's ghetto inhabitants — get them to tell you about the "marvels" of Western democracy. Or you can just wait to find out for yourselves.

The Western imperialists' promise of better lives if you tie your dreams to them amounts to an invitation to join them in their plunder of the world's people. It is a shameful invitation; it is also a lie, a lure to get you onto their hook. Do you really think they're going to allow the likes of Polish, Romanian and Bulgarian workers to pull up a chair and dine on the fruits of their worldwide plunder side by side with respectable German burghers?! Of course not. They don't want to and they can't, for the Western imperialists are also facing a worldwide crisis. There is simply no room left at the imperialists' feast for more chairs. At most a few crumbs will be tossed to your elites — if they learn to beg properly — while the majority of you will find that you are to be served up as part of the next course! It is time to cast away illusions. You Polish professors teaching your students about the Swedish social welfare system, you Romanian doctors drawing up health care plans based on the French model — Wake up before it is too late! You have drunk too much of their German schnapps and French champagne — better try some Yugoslav brandy or Portuguese madeira, for there are the models which the Western imperialists have in mind for you.

Do we exaggerate? Consider their plans for Poland. Have the German imperialists remoulded themselves, do they now generously and unselfishly want to build up a new, prosperous, strong Poland, as they claim — or are they

scheming and plotting to subordinate the Polish people as subjects of a new Reich stretching from the Baltic to the Black Sea? Just look at the new swagger in the W. German rulers' step as they goosestep around Central Europe, or listen to the strains of "Deutschland Uber Alles" belching forth from W. Germany's Parliament or the chauvinist crowds chanting "Ein Volk! Ein Vaterland!", and you know the answer.

There are those of you, particularly from E. Germany, who might be able to successfully integrate yourselves into this nightmare: you will find that living in the belly of this powerful imperialist beast exacts a severe price. The drive for a German Reich helped fuel two bloodbaths already and produced the concentration camps which shocked the entire world. But such horrors have not even given pause to the German imperialists' renewed march to Greater Germany. We say, Deutschland, never again!

We know that words like "Marxism" and "proletarian revolution" sometimes sound in your ears just like "democracy" and "freedom fighter" do to Westerners who have heard them used to justify the US war against Vietnam or CIA goons in Central America. But even as the Soviet bloc rulers buried genuine Marxism and kept only a deceptive mask to legitimise their oppressive rule, Mao Tsetung rose to oppose their betrayal of Marx and Lenin. He showed how they had restored capitalism and he called for a new revolution in the USSR and E. Europe. Mao upheld the accomplishments of the October Revolution under Lenin and Stalin, including Stalin's leadership of the Soviet people in defeating the Nazi invaders in World War 2, but he recognised that Stalin made serious errors, that he failed to understand that the revolution had to be continued so as to prevent the rise to power of a new class of bureaucrat capitalists, as indeed happened. Mao showed how socialism is a transition period, full of revolutionary leaps and struggle, to classless society, it means the proletarians and all those who have been on the bottom of society for generations rising up and seizing and wielding power themselves — not a stagnant bureaucratic system where party bigshots govern "on behalf of" the people.

Mao sought to avoid the fate of the USSR by mobilising the biggest mass movement in human history, the Cultural Revolution, to drag would-be party bigshots from their thrones and chase them from power. This sent Brezhnev and your own rulers into a frenzy; they declared Mao a "madman" and vilified, distorted and, most of all, censored his teachings. For many years the Chinese people succeeded in fighting off attempts to reverse the revolution, however, following Mao's death, Deng Xiaoping & Co seized power and restored capitalism in China; the bloody fruits of this were seen in Beijing's Tiananmen Square in June 1989. Even though capitalism was restored, the struggle waged during the Cultural Revolution gave the present generation in China a revolutionary point of reference that people in the USSR and E. Europe sorely lack. That Mao's authentically revolutionary vision is still alive could be seen on Beijing's streets as many workers carried pictures of Mao and called for a new socialist revolution, and student rebels sang "The Internationale".

In the last few years Maoist forces from around the world have gathered in the RIM and are waging revolutionary struggle against all oppressive systems, East and West. Wherever they exist, the organisations of the RIM have sought to mobilise those who have nothing to lose, the downtrodden proletarians and their allies, to rise up in revolt and to organise for the revolutionary overthrow of the ruling classes. The RIM salutes the rebellion of the peoples of Eastern Europe and calls on you to attack the old order more thoroughly, more radically and with more determination, to take up the revolutionary weapon of Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought which your rulers have hidden from you, and to establish contact with the RIM and its participating organisations so as to strengthen the ties of those from all parts of the world who are resolved to struggle until all oppression and exploitation under any name are done away with forever. □

Put Maoism on of the



*RIM supporters leafletting in
Bucharest*

**From: Romeo XXX in Bucarest,
Romania**

I am a Romanian citizen and I want to build a party with a human and social platform. Please give me your program... Also, I would like to correspond with the RIM.

**From Wojcik, in an industrial town
in Poland**

Please send me more information about your movement. I would like to have news of what you are doing as well as the general views of your movement. I would also very much like to have information on the subject of Mao Tsetung Thought.

**From: Ina XXX in E. Berlin, East
Germany**

I have read your "Appeal to the

The *Appeal to the People of Eastern Europe* from the Committee of the Revolutionary Internationalist Movement has been translated into most languages of Eastern Europe and distributed broadly in a number of those countries. The response was exciting: crowds sometimes gathered around leafletters, even forming queues; one leafletter was pressed against a wall by dozens of people rushing to get a copy before they ran out. And everywhere, among the more advanced, there was a common response: "Please give us more information about the RIM and especially about Mao Tsetung."

As the Appeal itself notes, in capitalist countries like those of Eastern Europe such a deep crisis is rare. It offers an unprecedented opportunity to spread the understanding developed by Mao of the lessons of capitalist restoration in the Soviet-led bloc, and the path of proletarian revolution which alone will end oppression and exploitation there and around the world. It is a chance to put those who want an all-the-way revolution there in contact with those from the rest of the world who share this vision.

One weapon needed urgently to meet this challenge is revolutionary literature, most of all from the 1960s to today, when the people of the Soviet bloc were cut off from the rest of the world revolutionary movement by their revisionist masters. It is a fact that, for the nearly 500 million people in the USSR and Eastern Europe, Mao's analysis of what hap-

People of the East" with great interest. For the most part I agree with you and feel myself in unity with you.

I am 27 years old, single, with one child. I am one of the so-called marginal ones in the GDR. As a woman, I feel I would be even more restricted by the capitalist system — I feel myself overrun, powerless, betrayed. (I am here talking mainly about my personal situation.)

What is coming? I think that I will lose my job as a "paper-pusher" (which I did not exactly choose, but I am forced to work a normal job, the hours are much too long, it is so routine). Like so many others, I am worried about the future — I am being forced to give up my independence, to get into a relationship without really wanting to. This depresses me.

As for the change in our country:

Lăsați iluziile!
REVOLUȚIA SA CONTINUE !

Precz z iluzjami!
REWOLUCJA NA CALEGO!

the Streets East

pened in the USSR and his great battle to prevent capitalist restoration in China simply has *never* existed in their languages. In the land which gave the world Lenin, Mao Tsetung is practically unknown. News too of the people's war being led by the Communist Party of Peru has been completely suppressed. Millions hunger for the understanding that Maoism alone can provide — yet what is being shoved down their throats are the glittering lies of the West.

A World to Win is calling on its readers and sympathisers to mobilise to meet this challenge. We need to be put in touch with anyone who can translate into these languages; we need copies of whatever relevant works already exist in these languages (the Little Red Book of Quotations from Mao, for example, was translated by the Chinese revolutionaries into many languages of E Europe and the USSR). Seize the time yourself: put the Appeal in the hands of people with contacts in the East. Above all, funds are needed to ensure that revolutionary literature can be printed and distributed.

If you can help with any of these tasks, send a cheque or international postal money order to *A World to Win* and contact either *AWTW* directly or one of the parties or organisations in the RIM. Copies of *The Appeal* are currently available in: Polish, German, Czechoslovakian, Romanian, Serbo-Croatian, French, Spanish, Farsi, Turkish and English (Russian forthcoming).

It is too bad that the masses are so short-sighted. People don't look around the world — only "what's in it for me" counts.... In my opinion, the "round table" that we had here is the only way that true democracy can be made. Citizen for citizen, that's it. Parties never do govern democratically — there is no party that I feel represents me! I feel myself oppressed and unfree, to be so tied down in these times or to have to

make so many compromises just to keep from going under.

If I wasn't tied down then maybe I too would try to get myself "a piece of the pie". Humans are so corrupt. They aren't ready for classless society — it is against human nature. There are a lot of idealists. I ask myself, for instance, why all the left-ist groups in this country don't unite to try to prevent us from becoming

the last province of W. Germany? But I don't know the way forward either. How could our economy have improved? Do you have an idea what we here should have done — with all these different types of people? What about the Wall — should it have remained until we could have stabilized ourselves, etc?

I would really like to know about the Revolutionary Internationalist Movement, how big it is, how it is organized, etc. — who are the founders and what do you do concretely?

Also, what do you think of Bahro's *Alternative*? [trans. note: a book by Rudolf Bahro, a former E Germany ruling party functionary who was jailed for criticizing the ruling party, then expelled to W. Germany where he became a leading figure in the Greens. He has reappeared lately with a new book and speaks against reunification.]

In addition, I would like to know everything about Mao Tsetung.

From Jneusz, in a working class suburb of Warsaw

I was able to get a copy of your Appeal to the People of Eastern Europe from a friend who visited West Berlin. I am very interested in the problems it discusses — can you please send me any other publications of your Movement.

From Doina, in Brasov, Romania:

I read your leaflet with interest. I will write you more after the elections. Please send more information, especially about your Movement.

Odvrhnete iluze!
REVOLUCI - AŽ DO SAMEHO KONCE

Fort mit den Illusionen!
REVOLUTION AUF DER GANZEN LINIE!

Collapse of REVISIONISM in the East

By Frank O'Malley
(Late winter 1990)

The West has been saturated with stories of how millions of Romanians are awakening from the Ceausescu nightmare and going through a difficult period of apprenticeship as they learn to build a Western-style democracy. This twisted view of what the revolt there was all about and what the people hope for has been greatly

pondering from afar. One man asked whether television scenes he had watched of homeless in New York City might have been staged-managed by the Ceausescu regime - America is so rich, such poverty could not possibly be permitted to exist there, he reasoned. Such naivety might draw a knowing smile, but more

order. That's something the ruling classes East and West are trying to understand - and so should the revolutionaries.

One of the dividing lines pitting people against each other all over Romania is the stand one takes towards the old ruling elite. The National Salvation Front (NSF) is trying to protect as much as it can of the old order, giving in a little when some especially exposed tyrant is targetted by the masses or opposition forces, but using its grip on state power and the media to wear resistance down and steadily reinforce its power.

* Gabriel Nicolas, along with his pal Petru, the sons of workers who had gone to technical college for a year or so and were now

serving the 21 months military service compulsory for all Romanian males, agreed to do an interview on the situation in the army. But it seemed that the opportunity to speak to a larger audience burst a dam holding everything back inside Gabriel, and a flood of bitterness, rage and repressed hopes came pouring out:

"We are two soldiers who want to make a statement to our brothers in the Romanian army, and in memory of those who fell in battle in Bucharest, Timisoara and Sibiu. We should mention that we

facilitated by journalists who latch onto Westernised urban intellectuals in Romania and present them as the sole voice of the people.

The people who speak through these pages are not government bureaucrats, military officers, university professors or anyone else from the Romanian elite. They are common people, who look westward not only with curiosity but often with dread. Sometimes they are wildly ignorant of elemental facts about the West; sometimes their comments reflect a lifetime of looking on and

importantly it should refreshen a sense of the need to do even more to bring an end to a system that does indeed permit this and many other horrors, in New York and in Bucharest.

As for the people of Eastern Europe in general, one Western editor reflected the general tone of the media when he reported that they were "finally learning to smile again". How sweet and smug! Some East Europeans also learned to pick up AK-47s and blow holes in the elite guardians of the reactionary established

Unheard Voices from Romania



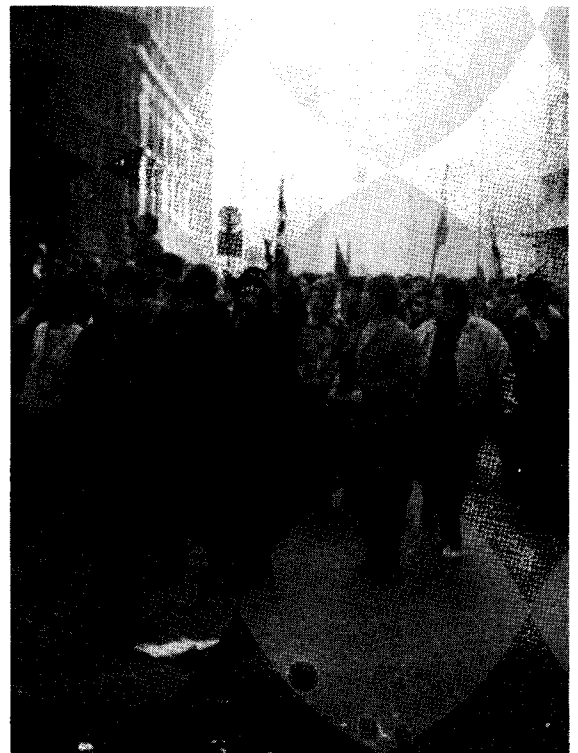




Top: Women with rifle celebrating the fall of Ceausescu.

Bottom: University building on left, site of initial armed struggle against Securitate.

On the left: 21 December 1989. Debate rages everywhere.



"RCP (Romanian Communist Party) Activists, Securitate Agents - The Mines Are Waiting for You!"

- Graffiti in
Bucharest

are members of unit xxxx, who fought during the uprising around the Military Hospital in Sibiu. We Romanian soldiers continue to lead a hard life, a life persecuted by the officers and the elite, who still cling to their Ceausescu principles, their old exploiting principles; they drive us continually and mercilessly. A Romanian soldier has no rights, not even the right to speak - the only rights we have are to be mistreated and beaten.

"During the revolution, the officers should have set an example - and they know it - of courage in front of the soldiers who fought and died. And many of us died, but very few of them. Instead of leading us into battle, they sat behind and ordered us to the front. They should be ashamed. The soldiers were brave because they were with the people, because the soldiers represent our brothers and sisters, our parents and friends, the children and the old people, all the people of the country. We risked much for the revolution; since then, we have listened to the reforms announced by Ion Iliescu and Petru Roman, but what have we received? Nothing but

pretty melodies from a few radios installed in the barracks.

"The officers and the old bosses have kept their positions and have burrowed into the new government, they go on television and make excuses for themselves and say they didn't know what was happening. They lie, you know they are lying; it was they who benefitted from the Ceausescu system, they had big salaries, privileges, advantages; the Romanian worker never had any of this.

"Look at what has happened with all the aid from abroad. People from Europe and all over the world sent aid to the people and to the soldiers of Romania, yet the Romanian soldier has received nothing. Where has it gone? Ask the officers, those who know only how to steal right out of the mouths of others. While they drank their bottles of French champagne, they gave us a chocolate bar and a glass of port wine. As if this is what the Romanian soldiers need! Even so, with all our heart we thank everyone abroad who sent aid.

"I want to say, with all my heart, that I am not anybody's pawn - I am an individual soldier who took part in the difficult battle for Sibiu. I saw with my own eyes most of my unit wounded or killed. How can it be that after the revolution nothing has changed?

"Dear Romanian soldiers, let us be heard - you know we speak the truth, you know that under Ceausescu we were nothing, less than dogs, beaten, downtrodden, famished, cold and sick. It wasn't just the Ceausescu clan, as it is now claimed by many, especially those petty, banal, hideous personali-

ties who knew only to lock others up so as to take what they had for their own. Romanian soldiers - cease following dangerous, impossible orders. Refuse! There has to be change in the army, from the bottom of my soul, things have got to change. We must stop being afraid, too much blood has been shed to be afraid now - organise yourselves into soldiers' fronts, make your demands known, confront the commanders, go to the Minister of Defence himself.

"We, a group of young Romanian soldiers, are prepared for a new revolution, though we have seen too many die and too much death in our country, and this is not what we want. The revolution must be completed. We want Romania to be a country worthy of pride - it once was, in 1944 we fought heroically, and even helped liberate other countries, before the country was taken over by the Ceausescu clan and the Communist Party. So much blood has been spilt, the miners in Petrosani in 1977, the workers in Brasov in 1987, the uprising now. Never again should such a party be allowed to exist, anywhere in the world. What we want is a better life. We want to cooperate and to be friends with the people of Europe and the people of the whole world. This is what we Romanian soldiers want, in the name of our children, our families, our dead and all those who have shed their blood for freedom."

I asked them how many soldiers thought like this. "All of us", Petru answered.

We discussed the trials going on then in Sibiu of Securitate agents. Petru said that the government was going to put 150 on

trial in Sibiu, but large numbers of Securitate, some said 350, had been released because the government said there was no proof they had committed any crimes. Didn't this show that the National Salvation Front (NSF) was conspiring to carry on "Ceausescu policies" without Ceausescu? How long would it be before the Securitate were in action again, with only a name change?

These two soldiers were straining to carry forward the struggle, yet they often substituted their own outrage for any clear idea of who could lead such a struggle, how, against whom and, finally, for what. Despite their hatred of the officers, they harboured illusions about what the army was. However much the soldiers' hearts might be with the people, their marching orders came from the Romanian High Command. Though the army had finally come out against Ceausescu, it fought for the interests of the Romanian officers and the elite, not for the people. Many Romanians talked of how it had been the army who carried out much of the actual killing in Timisoara and other cities. The army is a thoroughly reactionary institution that must be smashed, not made more "responsive" to the rank and file, and today it is being used to impose order and stability and keep the masses of people down throughout the country.

Nonetheless, these soldiers' statement stirred the heart - at a time when the Army chiefs were strutting everywhere proclaiming themselves the saviours of the revolution, this statement vividly exposed their hypocrisy. Nor was theirs

one of those voices which set Western journalists drooling by its whining for the petty comforts of Western life; it was a roar of rage from below, and one which anyone who had served in any reactionary army anywhere could identify with.

The "Passage de Jos", the "underground passage", near the University of Bucharest: from early morning till late night, hundreds of people gather to discuss

"RCP bosses - haven't you heard of hari-kiri?"

- Graffiti in the Passage de Jos

politics. On one side an improvised funeral bier, adorned with flowers and dozens of candles, marks the spot where two of the first victims fell to the sniperscopes of the Securitate. Each night, a few youth huddle in their meager cloth coats near the candles' warmth, telling and retelling the story of the two victims to passers-by.

Glued to the wall are posters and leaflets which people strain to read in the dim light; the favourites are the handwritten statements: poetry eulogising dead martyrs, satires of the Front, letters denouncing one or another local tyrant who has somehow managed to hold onto his post.

The groups that form to debate politics invariably polarise around the Front. Tonight, the largest group formed around a young representative of the National Peasant Party (NPP), a Christian Democrat-style party which had even allied with the Romanian

fascists before World War 2. A group of three or four workers from the August 23rd factory was at the centre of the debate with him, led by another young man, tall, with a hawk face and flashing eyes.

The NPP representative was arguing that, even if it is necessary to keep a few of Romania's most critical enterprises in the hands of the government, the key to economic recovery is reliance on the mechanisms of the free market.

- Who's going to benefit from that, shot back one of the workers.
- Everyone can. It will raise the general level of the economy.
- Look,

Ceausescu was no good, but before World War 2 we had your free market and things were bad then too.
- But look at the West. The free market and democracy made them rich.
- What do they want with us though? We don't want to end up as nothing but cheap hands working to make the West rich. That's all they want from us. I say, No to the West!

- No to the Russians too, someone else cried.
- We don't need any foreign help, another threw in for good measure.

The NPP representative countered: Where are we going to get modern technology from? Who's going to set up computer factories for us? That takes experts, and the best ones are in the West. Who's going to do it if they don't help - can you?

- Why do you say they're out to help us? They're out to make money any way they can.

- So are you going to do it?, the NPP person insisted.

- We're better off starting at zero, with what we have now, than relying on capitalism.

- Then we'll never get anywhere. The problem with communism is it was utopian, people just aren't like that. They need incentives to work. That's why the West is rich. Even if you don't want the West here, we have to have the free market. Then someone that's got a good idea or works extra hard can buy what's needed to start their own business.

- If someone comes to you and says, I want to buy this fancy restaurant from the government and start up my own business, you're not going to wonder where they got their money from? Maybe it's a worker, maybe an old Securitate or party boss - you don't know and you don't care?!

- If he's not a criminal, it's a free world. If he's a criminal, that's different, and you have to find out.

- Then just answer this one question: who has that kind of money? Where can anyone get such money in Romania today?

- Maybe you just sold your house to start a business....

- And where'd I get such a nice house?

- You can borrow money from the bank - that's what they do in England.

- And what bank is going to give so much money to a worker who makes 2500 lei [150\$ official rate, \$30 on the black market] a month? You're just going to reward speculators who sit around and trade, buying from one person and selling to another. There's nothing honest in that. There's nothing in this for the workers.

- But this is the way you can get something, not just for yourself, but for your children, so

they can have something to start their lives with. This is how they got ahead in the West.

- This is the same shit we had already, all those people who just gave orders all the time and didn't know how to work. - But they'll have to learn how to manage the work or they won't get ahead, see, that's the difference free enterprise makes. It gives incentives. Why else is someone going to spend 10 years in the university learning science, while you're out working and making money, unless there's something extra in it for them?

- Look comrade....

- Who are you calling comrade?!

- Well what do you want me to call you - Sir?

- I don't know what we should call each other. That's our problem, isn't it?

If the NPP representative was trying to hit a note of accord, it backfired. The worker turned to several other members in the crowd and sarcastically asked, Dear Gentlemen, His Lordship wants to know which of you have a few million lei to start a business and help free enterprise get going in Romania?

Several people laughed. - The only people that have that kind of money, he continued, are the same people who've already been ruling us like devils. If we go your route, it'll be just like with the old bosses, the party bigshots - them telling us what to do, us obeying like slaves, us doing all the work. He who does not work shall not eat, that's what I say.

The discussion raced on for hours. For anyone who knew how this kind of debate among the masses had been frozen for many years by the vicious

repression throughout the Soviet imperialist bloc, it was exciting to see the hunger and passion with which these workers sought to understand what had happened to their society, and where it was going next. Yet it was also painful. Though they were desperately staving off the swell of propaganda aimed at convincing them of the superiority of Western capitalism, because they failed to understand that their society was a state capitalist one they had their backs up against the wall coming up with any real alternative. Many talked of a third path, an alternative between the Soviet system and American-style capitalism (which provoked deep skepticism); they imagined Romania following the path of Sweden or social-democratic France. Many others believed that the future was bleak, and simply hoped that the opening to the West would allow a few, including themselves, to find some individual escape.

I wondered too at the way they looked at their relationship to the West. Even militant workers like these viewed opening up to the West as if it were a new question – while for years Romania had been paying off billions of dollars to Western banks and exporting the cream of its agricultural and industrial produce not only to the USSR but also to W. Germany, France, Italy and the U.S. But the people had been isolated, forbidden to travel, to have foreign currency, or even to talk to foreigners, while the country's actual economic relations were covered with the blanket of Ceausescu's nationalist demagogy. While there were indeed many new questions coming onto the people's agenda,

some of the most important ones still consisted in more thoroughly understanding and settling accounts with the country's immediate past.

"Lupul își schimbă părul dar nraul ba. Faceți atențiune."

("The wolf changes his coat but not his nature. Be careful.")

– poster, University of Bucharest

In a former classroom at the University of Bucharest, a group of students in and around the leadership of the Student League, most of whom were active in the uprising, were installing a radio transmitter provided them by FUN radio in Paris. The Romanians hotly debated one of the conditions FUN had put on use of the radio in a formal contract, that the Romanian "affiliate station" play "at least 50% music" and remain strictly "apolitical" (or else the Parisians had the right to take back their radio equipment!). While some students remained adamant that it is ridiculous to say they're "apolitical" when they just overthrew Ceausescu, others argued that being "apolitical" had been a way of fighting the regime. Sayings of the Ceausescu clan had been used to rationalise every oppressive measure. Being "apolitical" meant rejecting all government intervention in the people's affairs.

Towards midnight, I went down with a few of the students to where they slept: the Office of the University Rector. A

television had been installed along with five or six old mattresses, and the students were alternately strumming on guitars and watching a televised political

Intercontinental Hotel. A young architecture student and some of his friends were working as translators for Japanese reporters, making \$30 in a single day – equivalent, at black market rates, to a month's wages for a worker. FUN radio, though technologically simple, had driven the government's main radio off the airwaves with its non-stop Western music, which was piped into most cafes, restaurants and even in the tube stations.

The Rector had not come back. But his office was now occupied by the Assistant Rector. The students had moved their mattresses up to the radio station. One student brought me up to date on what had happened with the radio. He mentioned that they had an offer of more aid, this time from Radio Free Europe.

Did he know who they were?

Well, they'd heard that the CIA might be involved in Free Europe. But the students had a plan to handle them. FUN Bucharest was going to demand that aid from Free Europe be limited to equipment, with no personnel or taped programs.

How quickly Western penetration had turned some of the student leaders into its open hirelings. But even this kind of influence was restricted mainly to narrow circles in Bucharest and a few other big cities. Beyond those confines another story waited to be told.

Brasov, Transylvania. It was near midnight; we had left Bucharest following a rowdy demonstration of thousands against the NSF, at which the leading members of the

debate. No one knew where the Rector had gone. But, everyone was sure, he definitely would not be returning.

Suddenly the doors opened and in walked a man in uniform with a Kalashnikov ... then another, and another. A student explained to me that they had asked for protection: – We're broadcasting all night long about "Free Romania", and with the Securitate still on the loose, we were worried about being attacked, so we asked the Front to protect us.

This continuing fear of the Securitate hovered over every public activity, but no Securitate had attacked anyone in over two weeks; some more attentive Romanians were discussing whether the Front fanned or even instigated such rumours to justify the continuing presence of the Army everywhere. In any case, it seemed that the students had invited the fox to guard the henhouse.

A week passed before I saw the League students again. One was now a reporter for FUN radio Bucharest, rushing off to an interview she had lined up with some government dignitary in the

government had personally tried to appease the militant crowd, without much success. Suddenly we heard noise and shouting and saw shadows moving over the crest of the hill. We slowed down and discovered that this midnight creature was a demonstration - 50 or 100 youth marching through the street, chanting boisterously. They had heard the events in Bucharest on the radio while at a football match, and decided to head for the city's NSF headquarters. Even in

Brasov suddenly has the makings of a real confrontation.

The crowd calls for the leader of the NSF. Brasov, one of the larger cities in Romania, is only a few hours drive from Bucharest. But the distance between them is not measurable simply in miles. Brasov is an industrial city, mostly workers, with many Germans and Hungarians. There is less talk here of elections and no one asks about vacationing in the West. The main chant of the protestors tonight

Grant Nicu and the rest of the Ceausescus their last wish - the right for all the family to be together

- Bucharest graffiti

relatively backward Romania, where horse-carts outnumber cars on most roads in the countryside, protest literally leaped across the airwaves from city to city in the electrified post-uprising atmosphere.

At the city centre, I found that a line of soldiers already stood guard at the NSF headquarters entrance - the NSF too was learning quickly.

The crunching of snow and the muffled voices of the waiting workers was suddenly interrupted by the rhythmic sound of chanting. A group of 60 to 80 marchers round the corner: "Steagul Rosu - noi sintem poporul!" ("Red Star Factory, we are the people!") They move straight to the entrance of the NSF headquarters, and like a magnet pull with them all the strays milling around. There are only a few hundred people, but the fragility of power in Romania is still on everyone's mind. At 1 AM,

is simple and to the point: No more food rationing!

A silver-haired, pudgy Army officer finally comes out with a sheet of paper in his hand. It takes a few minutes before the crowd allows him to speak.

- "Comrades..." he begins.

- "No more 'comrades'!", he is interrupted at once by a scattering of voices. Laughter ripples through the crowd. "It's probably the first speech the old buzzard ever gave," someone mutters. People hiss and "hoo", but not too menacingly - the workers here, as throughout Romania, still indulge the army. It's fortunate for the elderly officer, for he's barely managed to begin anew when he is shouted down once more.

- "No hands, no hands," the crowd begins to chant. A woman explains that he was using the same exaggerated hand gestures as Ceausescu.

Tonight *everything* has got to change.

The officer finally gets going and states that the local NSF is holding an urgent meeting to discuss the events taking place in Bucharest and that the head of the NSF will meet them early the next morning. He goes back and forth with the crowd, urging them to be patient and invoking the NSF's incantation that Rome wasn't built in a day and "free Romania won't be either".

I ask some workers why they are demonstrating. A woman, Marina, points to the young girl she's holding by the hand, Look at my daughter. Does she look like she eats right to you? She doesn't even know what most fresh fruits are. This is what we're here for.

We need food. We made a revolution, yet nothing has changed.

I asked about relations between the different ethnic groups in the factory. Marina, a Romanian, responded: - The Ceausescu regime tried to pit us all against each other, Romanians, Hungarians, Germans, all of us. But it didn't work too well. We're all in the same situation here. We have some of every nationality in the factory, and we get along well enough. Ask Valentin, he's of Hungarian origin. I looked over at Valentin, who nodded agreement.

Around 2 AM, the group broke up as Marina took her daughter home and a few of the others drifted off. It was well below freezing, but Valentin planned to stay the night, and offered to show me the scene of the battle with the Securitate.

Valentin first pointed out where, back in 1987,

the workers from Steagul Rosu and 23rd August Tractory Factory staged a rebellion, seizing the centre of Brasov before they were crushed by the Securitate and the Army. -That's why we have such harsh rationing here. Ceausescu started it back in 1987 to punish us for rebelling.

We talked of the uprising, and what was happening now. He said that one of their demands that night had been the overthrow of the factory director at Steagul Rosu. He was a Ceausescu-style tyrant, but so far the NSF had let him stay on. The situation was similar at the 23rd August Tractor Factory, the largest factory in Brasov. Valentin didn't know what was happening elsewhere in Romania.

In fact, many factories, especially in the cities, were seething with rebellion. Pitesti's Dacia plant, Romania's main car factory, had witnessed repeated demonstrations and a factory occupation. The workers elected new managers from the shop floor; the old ones remained, but now worked on the line like ordinary workers.

But neither Valentin nor the workers in the Pitesti plant had a clear idea of what these changes would bring. What pushed them was deep hatred of the way they had been forced to live and work. The new managers should be "people who know us, who think like us", the workers would say. There was a sense that the overthrow of Ceausescu and the RCP, combined with changes in management at the factory level, might be enough. Or at least this was all that was possible.

At the factory level, these rebellions were spontaneous. "Alternative" trade

unions like Poland's Solidarnosc did not exist, and the new bourgeois opposition parties, if they played any role at all, opposed such "chaos". By the end of January, so many plants were idled by the "chaos" that the government decided to let workers in affected plants stay home for a month at 2/3 pay. While touting this as a reform, part of the intent seemed to be to clear the factories of rebellious workers.

Valentin also discussed the problems of the Hungarian minority in Romania. They number almost 2 million out of the total population of 23 million. Under Ceausescu, the only Hungarian university, in Cluj, had been shut down, as well as many Hungarian-language schools. Valentin and his wife were both of Hungarian origin, and spoke Hungarian together, yet their children were forbidden to speak Hungarian at school and knew only Romanian. This hurt him most of all when they visited his mother, who spoke only Hungarian, for his own children could not understand her.

Did they want to rejoin Hungary? Valentin laughed bitterly. This was what Ceausescu had claimed every time Hungarians protested - that they were really agents of the Hungarian government, who wanted to seize Transylvania and rejoin Hungary. A few thought this was the only solution, that the Romanians would never give the Hungarians the right to their own language and culture. But most Hungarians in Steagul Rosu didn't agree. Too much blood already had been shed fighting over Transylvania. Why couldn't it be run for all its inhabitants?

I thought back to the Student League leaders in Bucharest. In response to a question about the Hungarian minority, quite a few had indeed charged that the Hungarians wanted to "take Transylvania away" from Romania. Ceausescu's ghost still haunted Romania, but this was hardly surprising: his class was still in power.

The lack of any clear road forward for resolving the national question in Romania made itself sorely felt. While many were drawing lines of demarcation - between officers and soldiers, between workers and bosses - this was all taking place within the framework of the national state: What will help Romania recover its strength? What should Romania do to take its place in the "European community"? As long as the bourgeois parties were able to impose such nationalism and Eurocentrism to set the terms of discussion, it would be impossible to settle thousand-year-old historical battles.

How could this framework resolve the Transylvania question, where roughly equal numbers of Romanians and Hungarians had lived side by side for centuries, ruled now by one government, now by another, with each nationality repressed in turn as the other took power, in a seemingly endless cycle of revenge? The Hungarian Democratic Forum, the leading pro-Western Hungarian party, recently issued its policy statement on Transylvania, which concluded: "The Austro-Hungarian Monarchy was a liberal state", thus its treatment of the Romanian minority at that time "can in no way be compared to the situation of minorities living

under emergent dictatorships and totalitarian systems of the twentieth century." In another words, Hungarian rule of Transylvania had been much preferable to Romanian rule because the Hungarians had a "liberal" monarchy(!) while the Romanians had a "totalitarian" regime. No matter that under the Austro-Hungarian "liberal" monarchy Romanians often were serfs of Hungarian lords, nor that Gypsies had been chattel slaves!

National Salvation Front = "National Save-the- RCP Front"

- Bucharest graffiti

As for Romania's NSF, they were momentarily paying lip service to changing Ceausescu's policies, but in practice, like Ceausescu, devoted much more attention to raising the spectre of separatism in response to Hungarian demands for equality, a policy which paved the way for the anti-Hungarian pogrom which erupted in the Transylvanian city of Tirgu Mures in March.

Such were the "solutions" these different bourgeois forces offered to the national question.

The women of Romania suffered in some particularly difficult ways, not least because of the measures taken to implement Ceausescu's demand that every Romanian woman should produce 5 children, which would essentially turn the women into mere breeders for

Romania's workforce. Not only was abortion illegal and contraception virtually unobtainable, many factories and institutes had a gynecological police: women were subjected to monthly check-ups or surprise raids where they were rounded up and given compulsory vaginal exams to check for illegal contraceptives or abortions. One woman commented that having a boyfriend felt like playing Russian roulette.

No one knows how many women died of illegal abortions, but very many people I talked to knew someone who had died or suffered seriously. In Pitesti, site of the Dacia car factory, a male nurse recalled an incident: "I had been working in the emergency ward of my clinic when a young woman came in bleeding badly. It became obvious that she had tried to give herself an abortion and had complications. Unfortunately for her, a Securitate agent happened to see her and questioned the doctor. The doctor was afraid and so admitted the woman probably had an abortion. So the Securitate began to interrogate the woman, demanding the names of all who helped her. The woman denied everything; but the Securitate had to have it their way - they said she had to understand that she would get medical treatment only after she cooperated. They held her in another room so the other patients wouldn't hear her moan. After some time they finally let us intervene, but it was too late. She died. I couldn't get her out of my mind, she was young, healthy. I asked for a transfer from the emergency ward. I couldn't stand it any more. Now that doesn't happen. Those monsters are gone."

Unfortunately, "the wolf has only changed his coat."

**Romania Films presents:
"We Led Them to the Slaughter!"
Directed by Ion Iliescu, in
collaboration with MoscowFilm
Studios, Featuring a Cast of
Thousands!**

- Bucharest poster

Right beside the above anonymous poster was a signed, handwritten letter pasted up on the cement wall of the Passage de Jos:

"In the tradition of Ceausescu, the city has been filled with rumours that what happened was not a revolution but a coup d'Etat." The leaflet argued that this was a common view and then concluded: "We stress that we are of the point of view that these rumours are part of a psychological war which 1) we don't believe in ourselves, and 2) have the goal of introducing dissension between the people and the National Salvation Front, by sensationalizing the view that the great sacrifices of our people were manipulated by long-time members of Ceausescu's clan who sensed that the end was near and preferred to eliminate their head, using the popular hand to establish their new positions."

This public letter seemed to be an effort to expose that a coup had taken place while pretending to be against such a view - the sort of tactic long used throughout the Soviet bloc. That the author felt obliged to resort to such a ruse showed how unpopular this view still was in January. But in the weeks

that followed, revelations provided mounting evidence for the coup theory, including the faking of the mass grave in Timisoara, which

pointed to the involvement of high-ranking members of the old regime, people like Mazilu, the former Securitate boss and at that time Foreign Minister of the Front.

A few Romanians said that it had been evident to the demonstrators themselves even before Ceausescu fled that the Army had broken with him, and that this knowledge helped embolden people to rise up. They pointed to the "suicide" of the Defence Minister - it was commonly assumed that he was murdered by Ceausescu for refusing to carry out a Tiananmen-style massacre - and especially the withdrawal of Army units from Bucharest only minutes before Ceausescu's final, ill-fated speech.

According to this scenario, then, with the international stage already set by regimes in the rest of Eastern Europe falling like dominoes against Romania's borders, powerful forces domestically manoeuvred during the crisis to save the system by sacrificing Ceausescu. The bloody scenes from Timisoara were staged to inflame the populace and then, as the initial repression faltered, the coup-makers gathered strength and, at a decisive moment, had the army ostentatiously desert Ceausescu, thus

unleashing a torrent of popular revolt against him. However majestically the masses played their part, the script was already written, the cli-

max set: a new reformist Gorbachev-style government led by high-ranking officials determined not to go down with their Captain - and equally determined to rein in the masses once

again.

Does this mean that the struggle of the masses was pointless or even reactionary? No, no more so than in any of the many other rebellions and revolts where leadership is seized by other class forces who manage to replace one reactionary set-up with another. It does illustrate that, as Mao said, without state power, all is illusion. The same class retained state power throughout the revolt, and managed to use that to assure its continued rule. But, as is illustrated in this article, the masses were rebelling against genuine, deeply felt oppression and exploitation, and it was not at all decided in advance that things would remain within the control of the Romanian ruling class. This time, however, the people were not able to fight under the banner of genuine liberation.

Why did bloody suppression in Romania fail to save the Ceausescu clique, while in China it succeeded? The protests in China certainly revealed no less hatred of the regime there. One important difference was that the top forces in the Chinese government did not crack and turn on each other, as in Romania - in China, the army only

fired on the demonstrators, never on the secret police.

Why this occurred is bound up with the role of the major imperialist powers behind the two regimes and alignments within the domestic ruling classes. Gorbachev made it understood that, for their own reasons, the social imperialists backed reform and reformists; everyone knew the old regimes' days were numbered. Further, the Soviets had the strength to oversee this transition in Eastern Europe - one of the main reasons why this was more chaotic and violent in Romania was, along with the harsh conditions of the masses, the relative weakness of Soviet influence there, including that it is the only Warsaw Pact country where the Soviet army was not present.

Behind Deng and Co. stood the U.S. imperialists - and they did not want to shake up the Chinese regime. Hence only a few months after the students' blood dried on the stones in Tiananmen Square, President Bush sent his personal envoy to tell Deng that "President Bush still regards you as his friend, a friend forever", while in Romania Ceausescu is nothing but worm food and the only message he was likely to get from Gorbachev was "good riddance". It is ironic and fitting testimony to what Western "democracy" is all about that, amidst all the celebration of its triumph over "communism", it was in Romania and China, two of the formerly socialist countries where Western "democracy" had the most influence, that the popular rebellions were the most savagely repressed. □

Collapse of REVISIONISM in the East

The following article by the TKP/ML, Maoist Party Centre was shortened by the authors from a brochure published in Turkish in January 1990.—AWTW

"...No war is any longer possible for Prussia-Germany except a world war and a world war indeed of an extent and violence hitherto undreamt of. Eight to ten millions of soldiers will massacre one another and in doing so devour the whole of Europe until they have stripped it barer than any swarm of locusts has ever done. The devastations of the Thirty Years' War compressed into three or four years, and spread over the whole continent; famine, pestilence, general demoralisation both of the armies and of the mass of the people produced by acute distress; hopeless confusion of our artificial machinery in trade, industry and credit, ending in general bankruptcy; collapse of the old states and their traditional state wisdom to such an extent that crowns will roll by dozens on the pavement and there will be nobody to pick them up; absolute impossibility of foreseeing how it will all end and who will come out of the struggle as victor; only one result is absolutely certain: general exhaustion and the establishment of the conditions for the ultimate victory of the working class." (F. Engels)!

Yet another crown has hit the pavement. Its echoes are still reverberating from one end of the world to the other.

Within a week of his visit to Teheran on December 18 as the honour-guest of the mullah chieftains of the comprador-feudal state of the so-called Islamic republic, Nicolae Ceausescu was already lying dead next to his wife, unceremoniously dumped at the foot of an ordinary wall in an otherwise undistinguished courtyard at a Romanian Army garrison not far from Bucharest.

The speed with which the reactionary bourgeois state and social

order, with its supposedly unquestionable "wisdom" and power, can lose its legitimacy and its loyalty-inducing "sacredness" in the eyes of the broad masses, was displayed before the oppressed the world over.

With astonished eyes, the whole

world witnessed once again how suddenly the question of political power could slip away from being a monopoly behind the closed doors of the state and be taken into the streets and among the masses, and what terror and panic this strikes within the ruling class. All this was there for the benefit of the oppressed who everywhere live just waiting to seize the opportunity offered by such moments.

In this old rotten imperialist world system that is coming apart at the seams, where exploiting classes are so desperate as to lacerate the hide of some within their own clan with bullets in order to save their own hide, and where, due to the same logic and despair, they have already pointed the barrels of their guns towards their rivals, if anyone still has any doubts about whether revolutionary opportunities are indeed fermenting or not, then they should ask Ceausescu how the hell he failed to hold onto his hide.

The Verified Analysis of Maoists

In the *Declaration of the Revolutionary Internationalist Movement* (1984), which our party participated in the formation of, the developments we are witnessing today are analysed in a farsighted and scientific manner:

"...The rivalry between the two blocs of imperialist powers led by the US and the USSR respectively is

bound to lead to war unless revolution prevents it and this rivalry is greatly affecting world events.

"The post World War II world is rapidly coming apart at the seams. The international economic and political relations — the 'division of the world' — established through and in the aftermath of World War II no longer correspond to 'peacefully' extend and expand their profit empires. While the post World War II world has under-

The Final Demise of

gone important changes as a result of conflicts between the imperialists and, especially, as a result of revolutionary struggle, today it is this entire network of economic, political and military relations that is being called into question." (emphasis added)

And in the light of this analysis, our Movement particularly emphasised that the world would witness dramatic events:

"The heightening of contradictions is now drawing, and will do so even more dramatically in the future, all countries and regions of the world and sections of the masses previously lulled to sleep or oblivious to political life into the vortex of world history." (emphasis added)

Furthermore, our Movement called attention to the fact that East bloc countries would not be immune to this world scale crisis:

"In the capitalist and imperialist countries of the Eastern bloc important cracks and fissures in the relative stability of the rule by the state-capitalist bourgeoisie are more and more apparent... In these countries also, possibilities for proletarian revolution are developing and will be heightened by the development and intensification of world contradictions."

(emphasis added)

The rivalry between the US-led Western bloc and the USSR-led Eastern bloc for world hegemony and repartition — which is lurching towards an imperialist third world war — is already wreaking havoc in the political and military positions of the “Cold War” period.

In this tense situation, the imperialists and social-imperialists are doing their best to repair and/or substitute any structural weaknesses in their existing military and economic alliances that can be exploited by their rival’s strategy for carrying out a third world war, according to a war strategy that they consider more advantageous and flexible — even at the cost of extremely dangerous political disorders. On this increasingly slippery ground, both blocs are now considering new, untried scenarios in

bloc. The anarchy/ organisation contradiction innate to imperialist capital — which pits imperialists and the international blocs of capital against one another and pose each as an obstacle to the other — is aggravated even more sharply under these circumstances; and this inevitably both intensifies the oppression and exploitation of proletarians, toilers, peoples, and oppressed nations, enslaved to the gears of these value-producing mechanisms which operate on a world scale and, at the same time, enflames their revolutionary struggles.

Each of the imperialist capital dynasties is faced with a double threat: on the one hand, that their rival, with whom they are breathing nose to nose, might suddenly seize the upper hand in war preparations — and, on the other hand, that world proletarian revolution will gain momentum and gather its forces and strength once again.

The explosion that ripped open holes in Ceausescu’s hide and knocked his crown onto the pavement is the product of these contradictions interpenetrating and intensifying on a world scale; it definitely cannot be explained by the political and economic crisis merely within the national borders of Romanian state capitalism.

In a situation where imperialist warlords are throwing their weight around and making a show of force with their

nuclear arsenals, colliding with and trying to grab positions from each other, one question suddenly struck the European continent and the vortex of world public opinion like a thunderbolt: dear bourgeois gentlemen, is it only an illusion, a “miraculous prophesy”, that masses of people will want to take up arms against the existing order even in Europe, and that some such forces already

exist on the Black Sea front of the continent?!

No matter who says what, the thunderbolt has scorched its mark where it struck. And nobody will be capable of covering it up!

Both the international situation and Moscow’s undertakings in relation to it turned what was once the West’s fir-trees in Romania into cracked wooden mugs (an expression meaning things are not what they used to be — trans.), and furthermore created grounds where the cost of all this could well be thrown on Western shoulders. That’s why articles in the Western imperialist press that used to praise Ceausescu’s “anti-Stalinism” and the “defiant and courageous” attitude of this “daring maverick” toward Moscow were being replaced as early as the summer of 1989 by exposures about the “last Stalinist” dictator. Moscow for its part had no intention of allowing others to enjoy the ripe fruits of all the “tolerance and patience” it had shown Romania in the past.

However, there were *others* in this world who had nothing in common with either them or their Western imperialist counterparts.

As the pulse of history beats more and more rapidly and intensely, what Engels once said about those *others* points to a danger which horrifies the once-friends-turned-fake-prosecutors of the Ceausescu regime in East and West: “history is the judge, the proletariat its executioner”!

At a time when Eastern European countries are passing through a tumultuous period instigated by imperialist rivalry and Gorbachev’s reforms, and millions of people are righteously standing up in fierce revolt against bourgeois dictatorships — regardless of their lack of experience, and despite all the bourgeois democratic prejudices and illusions they might have — it was no little threat that masses of people in Romania took to action to get rid of this bourgeois dictatorship — whose parasitic nature that had reached monarchist proportions was disgustingly showing from under its makeshift “socialist” mask — without asking for or expecting any help from the former friends of the Ceausescu regime in East or West.

(Continued on page 84)

Ceausescu

order to increase the possibility that these efforts to consolidate war strategies and to heighten their flexibility will lead to a loss in their rival’s political and military positions.

The attempts by both alliances to keep their respective imperialist competition and war strategies at the maximum level of yield and reliability lead both to the intensification of position-grabbing between the two blocs as well as to the fueling up of contradictions within each

The crisis of the world imperialist system exists

“...to such an extent that crowns will roll by the dozens on the pavement and there will be nobody to pick them up...”

...The recent events in Eastern Europe have been viewed differently in different quarters. The entire Western media shouted about the crisis of "socialism" and "communism" and about how this proves the superiority of Western democracy. The Eastern media joined this chorus, but meekly, interpreting these events as steps towards "revitalising socialism". *New Times*, a Soviet magazine, declared that the year 1989 was "as symbolic as 1848". In addition, all the enemies of revolutionary Marxism leaped out of their holes like rats and began screaming abuse against it.

Whatever their lies and slanders, the truth is that the crisis behind the present turmoil is not a crisis of socialism and communism but a crisis of state capitalism, which is, moreover, rooted in the deep crisis of world imperialism. Both the Eastern and Western imperialists do their best to obscure this important truth.

Insofar as the moves of the Soviet rulers are concerned, they want to resolve this crisis by transforming one form of capitalism into another, while simultaneously trying to integrate their bloc on a much greater scale with the U.S.-led imperialist bloc. It is not a case of capitalism replacing socialism, nor of introducing more capitalism. It is simply the snake "throwing away the old skin", as *New Times* itself puts it — one form of capitalism replacing another. Changing its skin does not change the nature of the snake. Though the masses of people may be misled for a while, they will not be satisfied with such a change. What they really need is not "changing the skin" but real revolution and communism to strike right at the head of the snake and finish it off for once and for all....

Gorbachev wants to reshape the crisis-ridden Soviet-led bloc and broaden its global power base. He wants to restructure the bureaucratic system of privilege with openly market-oriented privilege, and to use market-oriented measures to tighten financial control. At this point their tattered socialist mask has lost all its usefulness. Furthermore, the capital needed to revamp, retool and stabilise the stagnant, debt-ridden econ-

Crisis in the Soviet-led Bloc: It is Fine! Revolution is Finest, and Urgently Needed!

(Excerpt)

By the Leading Committee, Revolutionary Communist
Centre of India (Marxist-Leninist)

omy is not there.

These political and economic developments require opening up and luring in Western and Japanese capital, especially for East Europe. Gorbachev thus has many birds to kill with his two stones, perestroika and glasnost — the first to reshape the economy, the second to cover his ugly face. Further, Lenin noted that even for the imperialists nothing in this era can be accomplished without the masses; and so Gorbachev tries to remotivate and reactivate the Soviet people.

Throughout all this, Gorbachev is doing his best to cash in on the situation. Old tyrants are replaced with new ones — old wine in new bottles — and the rigging up of multiparty elections, a "free press", etc., is also hailed as new. But this is nothing but the very old mask of bourgeois democracy being brought out to replace the socialist mask over the same bourgeois dictatorship.

Even so, everything is not going as the Soviet rulers wish. They are losing their grip on events, and new problems are arising. In the USSR, the nationality question is developing in a direction they don't want. Problems continue to mount in the Baltic Republics, and they have even used armed force to suppress the Azerbaijani people — a fact which shows how much this problem terrifies them. With mounting difficulty, Gorbachev races to keep ahead of events, manipulating the tide of revolt with political pluralism, the time-tested instrument of all bourgeoisie, which serves as a safety valve and means of channeling discontent.

In Eastern Europe, while Gorbachev carries out his moves, the Western imperialists counter with their own designs. From the point of view of

economics and politics, the USSR no longer is able to maintain its tight grip on these countries; the new setups there mean that these countries will have a freer hand in dealing with the other side, while overall they remain in the Soviet-led bloc. Here too Gorbachev wants to make gains by giving up things that are outmoded and useless to him. And, while strengthening ties with the West, he also wants to widen the cracks

among them. Thus on the unification of Germany, Gorbachev has his own solution: unification is acceptable within a Soviet-dominated "common European home". For the U.S., unification is acceptable within a U.S.-dominated "Free Europe". This question is assuming bigger dimensions with more serious implications.

It is correct to note that the contention between the two blocs has in part become less sharp or is taking a less intense form in the present situation, but it would be altogether another matter to conclude that contention has already taken a back seat. On the surface, the two blocs are manoeuvring with some degree of compromise, but underneath, the contention has assumed a much more profound shape. If both imperialist blocs and their bosses appear to be united, it is the unity of devils with daggers in their underwear. Mao's words about compromise are true: that such compromises are bound to give rise to more intense contention....

The high tide of revolution is surging forward like the force of a thunderbolt during the last few years. Many once calm countries which seemed to be hard nuts to crack have been stormed by millions of rebellious masses. The RIM should certainly take note of this, for it is due to the lack of proletarian leadership that the masses are being led astray and/or manipulated by imperialists in one way or another. This deception must be shattered by mobilising all the forces at our disposal. Genuine communists may or may not be able to capture centre stage for a long time in leading the rebellious masses in picking up the fallen crowns, but "work in this direction" must be provided added attention. □

...The state capitalist character of these countries and the people's antagonistic contradiction with it were pinpointed by Mao Tsetung back in the 1960s. He had also predicted that the people in these countries will rise up against the neocapitalists. Mao had also equipped the masses and the Marxist-Leninists with the necessary theory and practice to recognise and defeat the danger of capitalist restoration in socialist countries. This is why the Marxist-Leninists who have remained consistent to Mao Tsetung Thought could immediately take up the challenge of bourgeois propaganda on the "collapse of communism". Unlike the CPM-CPI revisionists, who are still groping in the dark, the Marxist-Leninists have waged a determined struggle to clear up the web of lies of the bourgeoisie and propagate Mao Tsetung's teachings which point to the vibrant future of communism.

In this entire activity they have repeatedly stressed the point that the crisis, be it in China, the Soviet Union, Eastern Europe or elsewhere, is a "crisis of capitalism". They have pointed out that the upheaval witnessed in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union will erupt in China, Albania, North Korea, Vietnam and Cuba also, even though the social fascists are dominating there today. All this is completely correct. At a time when bourgeois propaganda against Marxism is raging, repeated propagation of the truth and reaffirmation of Marxism is absolutely necessary. Yet the question remains: Is this sufficient? Can the Marxist-Leninists remain satisfied with clearing up misconceptions? Or educating the masses with Mao Tsetung Thought both through propaganda and revolutionary practice?

The Marxist-Leninists need not worry about the unpredictable turn taken by world events. They are not fortune tellers. But they should certainly worry over the fact that a number of aspects of the new world situation were ruled out as *impossible* by most of them just a couple of years back. For example, any talk on an easing of the contradiction between the U.S. and Soviet-led

Beyond the Crisis of Capitalism

(Excerpt)

From *Mass Line**

imperialist blocs (let alone talk of the virtual collapse of any bloc without world war) was treated as Kautskian "ultra-imperialism". Strategies and tactics were built up on the bedrock of denying such "impossibilities". Line struggle was waged within parties and between them on such issues. Today, the danger of world war has clearly receded and the dissolution/reconstitution of blocs has come on the agenda. Yet analysis often follows the categories set up in the past. An instance of this is the continued presence of U.S. troops under NATO in Europe. (The Soviet troops of the Warsaw Pact are in the process of getting out.) Can this still be seen as an expression of inter-bloc contradiction? Evidently what we have here is a case of new wine in old bottles. The U.S. troops remain in Europe to protect U.S. interests in Europe. Not against the Soviet Union. But against the rising German power. Similarly, U.S. relations with China should also be viewed in relation to its need to contain Japan.

Recognising new world conditions and reorienting strategies and tactics in accordance to it is one thing. But more important is a deep analysis of the ideological factors which blinded the Marxist-Leninists to such a possibility itself. Marxism has remained fresh and developed to the height of Mao Tsetung Thought precisely because of its capacity to absorb the new and break out of beaten tracks. Its revolutionary dialectics based on its class standpoint has made this possible. But the history of the communist movement

is also full of examples of a dead, sterile Marxism. Here materialist dialectics is transformed into a mumbo-jumbo which is used to explain away and tidy up the "mess" stirred up by new developments. It is high time to bury the dead and earnestly promote live, revolutionary Marxism. To take up this task, the upheaval in the former socialist countries must be seen also as an exposure of the as yet unresolved crisis in the international communist movement touching ideological, political and organisational aspects. It is

so because these events have shown that the Marxist-Leninists were only partially equipped to grasp the dynamics of the world situation and the crisis in these countries. This is equally true in their efforts to put forward a revolutionary alternative before the peoples of these countries. The structures against which the people of Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union have struggled took root even before Khrushchev and others came to power. A simple going back to pre-Khrushchev positions can never be a revolutionary alternative. In China the situation is qualitatively different because Mao and the Cultural Revolution stand out as revolutionary reference points. But even there Mao's teachings and the Cultural Revolution were only a beginning. Like all beginnings they are not complete and more has to be done to firmly implant the banner of communism once again.

It is completely necessary to expose the "crisis of capitalism" and the solution of bourgeois democracy put forward by the imperialists. But if things are left at that, the defence of Marxism will rapidly turn into a stifling of Marxist thought. It is time to go beyond the "crisis of capitalism" theses and take up the problems of the international communist movement. World developments have posed this on the agenda. □

*Editorial by *Mass Line* (April 1990), a revolutionary Marxist-Leninist monthly in India

... What is happening in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union and China? Most people are confused and the confusion is even more confounded by political commentators who do not know what they are writing about except that they cannot hide their glee at what is happening.

Some commentators even invent new theories (they call it new(?) thinking) to blame the whole thing on socialism. But what they do not do is to explore whether socialism still prevails in these countries or whether capitalism has been restored and state power removed from the hands of the working class. So great is people's faith in socialism that many people find it difficult to believe that capitalism could have been restored and state power removed from the hands of the working class....

Marx and Engels pointed out in the *Communist Manifesto*: "The proletariat will use its political supremacy to wrest, by degrees, all capital from the bourgeoisie, to centralise all instruments of production in the hands of the state." Engels said in *Anti-Dühring* that the proletariat seizes political power and turns the means of production into state property.

Of course a centralised economy and collectives suffer from distortions of bureaucratic inefficiency and bungling. But one does not throw the baby out with the dirty bath water.

Shortcomings and the inefficiency of the state bureaucracy are now being used to discredit central planning and restore individual ownership.

Private ownership has a history of several centuries. All the same, let us remember that originally, in the world, there was no private ownership. Everything was owned in common. But today man has an inherited feeling for private property. It is this that is being used by the reactionary forces to lure the people of the former socialist countries to capitalism. Nobody defends inefficiency. It is found under both capitalism and socialism.

But to say that socialism is not creative is to fly in the face of facts. Both socialist Russia and China, before their descent into revision-

Socialism with a Human Face or Capitalism with a New Face?

(Excerpt)

By N. Sanmugathan,
General Secretary of the Ceylon Communist Party

ism, were responsible for some of the best creations in art, music and technology. One doesn't easily forget the Sputnik or the artistry of the Bolshoi Ballet troupes or the revolutionary Chinese opera. Can you think of anything more creative than the defence of Stalingrad, where Soviet soldiers died with the name of Stalin on their lips, but never retreated and then turned difficulty into victory.

Even in the cultural field, the restoration of capitalism has led to the degeneration of moral values and all that is worst in Western culture. Mannequin parades and beauty queen competitions where lascivious men drool at semi-nude females are common. Prostitution has re-emerged in all these countries — a sure sign of capitalism....

Some commentators seem to suggest that Lenin's New Economic Policy (NEP) was the basis for the building of socialism in the Soviet Union. Lenin proposed NEP only as a temporary retreat from socialism. It lasted only one year. To see any similarity between Lenin's NEP and present Soviet policy is meaningless except that both are retreats from socialism. The earlier one was a temporary retreat. Now it is a permanent one. All that Gorbachev is doing is bringing about changes in the political superstructure of the state so that they will conform to the economic changes that have already taken place due to the restoration of capitalism. Thus the point that is being made in this article is not to deny the sorry state of affairs in the once-socialist countries, but to point out that this sorry state of affairs is due to these countries abandoning the revolutionary socialist path and restoring capitalism under revisionist leadership. Why does the Pope bless Lech Walesa? Why do the imperialist banks jump over one

another to offer loans to Poland and Hungary? Why does West Germany put such effort into luring East Germans across the border? Why is the West so frightened that Gorbachev could fall and why do they want to give him a hand? Even the UNP¹ President Premadasa

is an admirer of Gorbachev's perestroika. Why?

Could such praise, encouragement and help have been forthcoming if these former socialist countries were building better or more socialism?

Then there is the question of state power. All these countries have abandoned the dictatorship of the proletariat. In his time, Khrushchev abandoned it and transformed it into the dictatorship of the entire people which was another name for the dictatorship of the new bourgeois ruling class.

Lenin said, "The transition from capitalism to communism certainly cannot but yield a tremendous advance and variety of political forms, but the essence will be the same: the dictatorship of the proletariat."

The dictatorship of the proletariat, as Lenin explained it, is democracy for the people, and suppression by force, ie, exclusion from democracy, of the exploiters and oppressors of the people.

Today there is again talk of pluralist democracy which is nothing but bourgeois democracy or the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie. Democracy always has a class base. It is because proletarian state power was overthrown in the former socialist countries and the dictatorship of the proletariat abandoned that it became possible for the bourgeois forces to raise their heads and restore capitalism.

Some of these former socialist countries have committed aggression against their neighbours. The Soviet Union carried out aggression against Czechoslovakia and Afghanistan. Vietnam occupied Cambodia. China attacked Vietnam. These are actions which no socialist country could have been guilty of — another proof that they are not socialist. □

Footnote

1. The reactionary ruling party in Sri Lanka.

... More than a few of the militant petite bourgeoisie who lacked the courage and sincerity to see the imperialist nature of the Soviet Union are now stunned. When Mao explained the oppressive nature of Soviet relations with its Central Asian republics and with Eastern Europe, these people covered their ears, and now they are being slapped by the waves of mass uprisings in the USSR and Eastern Europe. Those among them who are least sincere are blaming Marxism-Leninism instead of themselves. These opportunists should be bluntly told: "Gentlemen, the problem is not the socialist theories but your own deep-rooted historical opportunism...."

The internationalist proletariat confronts a problem in the social base of proletarian revolution in the countries of Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union itself. Objectively the masses in the East have risen against the capitalist system, but they do not realise that it is a capitalist system that has ruled over and exploited them under the signboard of socialism. They do not realise that the Soviet superpower and the governments of Eastern Europe constitute a social-imperialist bloc. There has never been a Maoist party to awaken the working class and the revolutionary intellectuals in various ways to this truth and to the tremendous international struggle that was waged precisely to clarify this issue under the leadership of Mao, nor that could organise them to prepare for another socialist revolution. There has been no Maoist movement to serve as a reference point for the rising masses. So the spontaneous movement of the masses in these countries takes on an "anti-communist" appearance. This is not a good thing, even though it is hardly surprising. The governments that have been grinding down the masses of these countries and smashing them under their boots have been doing this hypocritically and crimi-

Revisionism Is Dead, Long Live Communism!

(Excerpt)

From *Haghighat* *

nally under the guise of "socialism" and "communism".

But this particularity of the mass movements in Eastern Europe is no reason for underestimating the revolutionary potential of these revolts! It is right to rebel against reactionaries! This is a universal truth of Marxism. It is up to the class-conscious forces to solve this problem. In Eastern Europe there are important differences with last year's mass movement in China. In Eastern Europe the masses angrily turned against the communist symbol of the hammer and sickle, whereas in China mass demonstrations would sing the communist anthem "The Internationale". In Poland, the workers form Catholic trade unions and crave a Western-style capitalist system, in China the workers form trade unions which write, as in one of their leaflets, "... Chairman Mao has said that whoever oppresses the students will meet a bad end. Dust will remain where the broom does not reach. We have to struggle to overthrow them (the dictatorship of a handful of bureaucrats that wave the banner of socialism but in practice exercise the policy of suppressing the people and oppressing the intellectuals). We want to be masters of the world."¹

The mass movement in China had the shortcomings of any spontaneous movement, but there exists a rich tradition of struggle to establish and defend socialism, waged under Mao's leadership and involving mil-

lions of workers and peasants, and socialism was built on a deeper and broader scale than in the Soviet Union; many working masses became conscious of the possibility of a bourgeoisie emerging from inside the communist party and socialist state to snatch power from the working class, and they learned from the Soviet Union's bitter experience that the road to communism is marked by repeated advances and setbacks for the revolutionary inter-

national proletariat. All this marks a significant point of reference for the masses of workers, peasants and revolutionary intellectuals in China and will assist them in their struggle.

In the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe some of the aroused masses held up photos of Gorbachev as a "saviour", and some others pinned their hopes on the developments fostered by the West European imperialists. Unaware of the real character of Gorbachev's "democratic development", the masses believe in peaceful economic and political struggle and in elections. This is not strange. In the absence of a truly revolutionary tradition of struggle and a genuinely revolutionary party, when they first enter the scene the masses grab whatever means are immediately accessible (which is usually whatever is dominant in bourgeois society) in order to advance their struggle, and usually it is after sacrifices and spending some of their revolutionary energy that they see the shabbiness of these "accessible" means. But the rapid pace of developments will help them understand the incorrectness of many of these illusions and prejudices sooner than might be imagined....

It is a fact that a revolutionary spirit is taking hold among sections of the masses in the East bloc countries. The internationalist proletariat

*This article appeared in No. 6 of *Haghighat*, the organ of the Union of Iranian Communists (Sarbedaran).

must rely on this spirit and seize precious opportunities. For the first time the doors stand wide open for introducing revolutionary communism (ie, Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought) to the masses of the USSR and the other countries of the East bloc....

With the changes in relations between the U.S. and Soviet imperialists, it is possible that there will be more collusion and cooperation against revolutionary and liberation movements around the world. This may make the situation more difficult for these movements in some ways. But it also has a strategic benefit: it will strengthen the revolutionary conception of self-reliance in these movements; moreover, it will limit the freedom of both imperialist blocs in influencing and penetrating the liberation movements. All this is good for revolution!

Events in the world today are amazing and moving rapidly, and a deep understanding of them is essential for communist activists. In such a situation, there is a danger of becoming "confused" by the uproar of events and losing the vigilance needed to see opportunities and to act rapidly to organise and carry out revolutionary work in the midst of complex, rapid developments. Revolutionary communists should grasp the urgency of the situation and not lose a second to mount the political assault needed for the revolutionary mobilisation and organisation of the masses and the build-up of revolutionary forces. The most important point in the present situation is that all the threads of the old order are unravelling, and the masses are grasping that "all-powerful" governments are in fact disgusting and low-life creatures, and this will only increase their contempt for the enemy. This is important for revolution, and provides a great opening for the advance of the revolutionary proletariat. □

Footnote

1. From the leaflet of the independent confederation of Peking workers, 29 May 1989, Tiananmen Square, reprinted in the *Revolutionary Worker* (Voice of the RCP,USA) 29 January 1990.

Collapse of REVISIONISM in the East



Top: With Poland's crisis still unresolved, many militants are slipping out of the grip of established organisations, pro-West and pro-East.

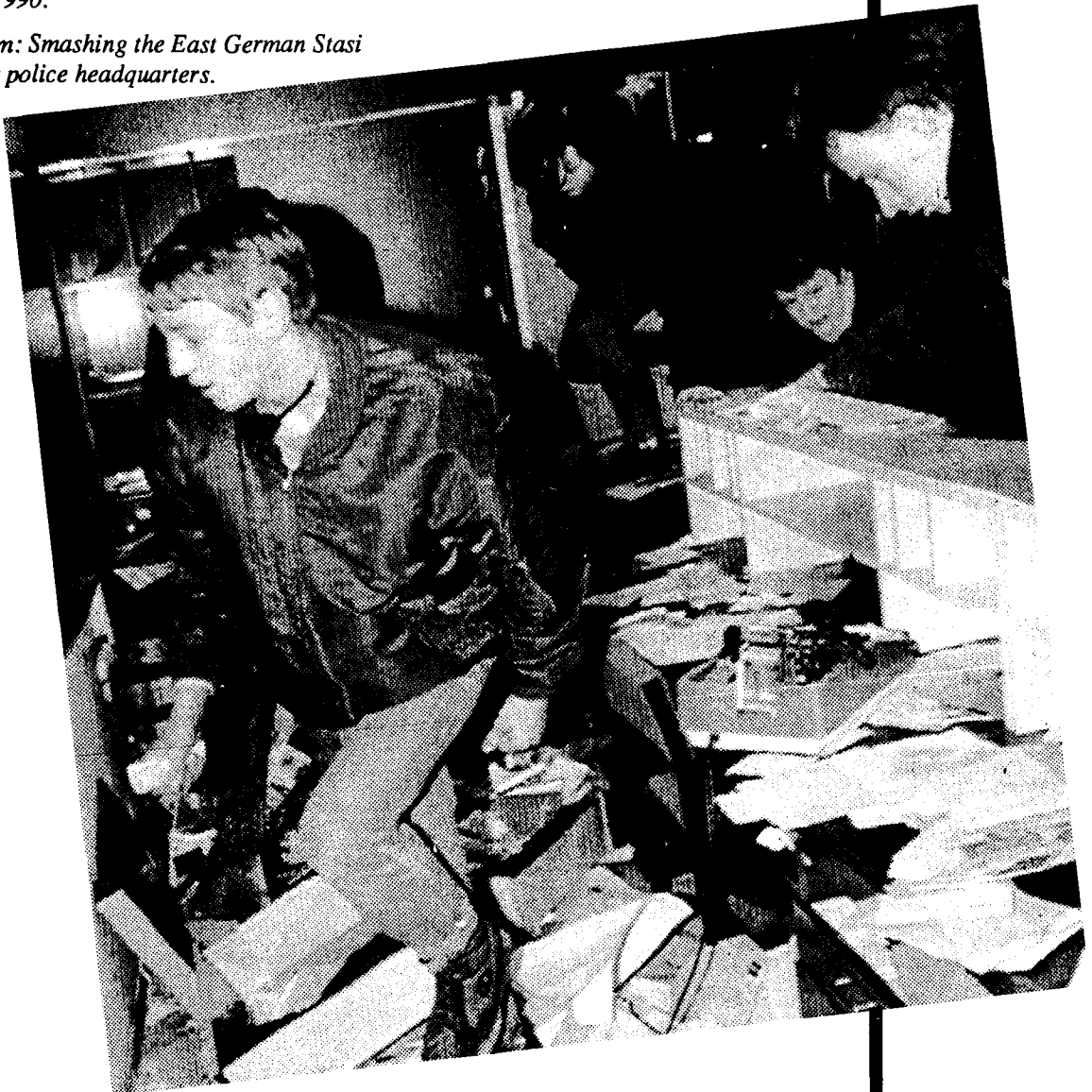
Right: A Czechoslovakian at a mass rally exposes the invasion by the Soviet Union in 1968.





Top: Demonstration against Romania's National Salvation Front government, May 1990.

Bottom: Smashing the East German Stasi secret police headquarters.



May Day 1990 Revolution: All the Way!

By the Committee of the Revolutionary
Internationalist Movement

On May 1st, 1990, the Revolutionary Internationalist Movement proudly affirms anew its dedication to an "old" idea: that the proletarians of the world must undertake "the forcible overthrow of all existing social conditions", as Marx declared in the *Communist Manifesto*; they must carry out revolution until exploitation and oppression and their roots in class-divided society are abolished from the face of the earth. An "old" idea, certainly, but one which has lost none of its vitality or urgent necessity and corresponds to the reality of the contemporary world more than ever.

Today, in the East, one of the two major imperialist blocs is shaking with unprecedented crisis. One after another ruling regime collapsed like a house of cards and oppressed masses the world over saw that nothing of the old order is sacred and viable, despite all the efforts of the Soviet rulers to pass their exploitative and rotten state capitalism, their oppressive political system and stagnant social life, as "progressive" and "communist". As the rulers of the East imperialist bloc try to repair their system, the cracks open even wider and bring to the surface the just rebellion of the masses. The struggles of the people in East Europe against the ruling revisionist parties and their remnants is just and shows the revolutionary potential of the masses there, despite their confusion about the capitalist nature of the system they are fighting.

Soviet-style false communism is dead. The Soviet social-imperialists and pro-Soviet revisionists finally have dropped their claim to be against imperialism and for revolution and communism. This offers a significant opening for genuine



Kreuzberg district in West Berlin, W. Germany. May First, 1990. 10,000 protested German unification, battling tear gas and nightstick-wielding police.

communism. False communism spread reformist illusions and confusion, it distorted the vision of the oppressed of what they could achieve, giving a brutally twisted view of what communism is really about. Now the turn of world history is ripping the disguise off these monsters and helping the masses to sort out truth from lies.

The Soviet rulers virtually have announced that they are **now** abandoning communism. They are lying. They completely abandoned it long ago — when after the death of Stalin the new bourgeoisie, headed by Khrushchev and other top members of the Soviet party and state, seized state power and full control of the lifelines of society. They carried out a thorough restoration of capitalism in the USSR but continued to use revisionism, ie, the mask of communism, as an ideological weapon in order to consolidate their power and compete with the U.S. imperialist bloc for world hegemony. What they are doing now is merely abandoning communism officially. The Soviet social-imperialists and all the so-called communist parties in East Europe have not opposed capitalism, for they are capitalists themselves. They have not been for abolishing all kinds of exploitation of man by man and all oppression, including that based on race, sex or nationality, for their system has been the source of all these. They were not for destroying war by destroying imperialism; for they have been one of the biggest warmongers in history. All this is why their own society has been so hideous and ugly and their actions around the world so full of naked imperialist aggression and exploitation.



Translation in Turkish and German: It's Right to Rebel!

Mao Tse-tung exposed the capitalist nature of the USSR and called upon the proletarians and oppressed of the world not to be fooled by its socialist name; the Chinese revolutionaries called the Soviet rulers social-imperialists: socialists in words, imperialists in deeds. Ever since then, Maoists have called upon the proletarians and oppressed in the USSR and all of the East European countries to rise up and make a fresh socialist revolution. Today, the Maoist critique of East bloc capitalism has been fully vindicated.

Though it is changing its disguise, the Soviet Union is still pursuing its imperialist interests as before. Most recently, it has been collaborating with U.S. reactionary schemes in Palestine and South Africa. After years of betraying the struggles there behind the scenes, the USSR and its clients are now doing so in the open. The Soviet Union never looked at liberation movements as anything other than instruments for their imperialist interests — one day they use the Sandinistas and the next day they turn them over to Yankee imperialism, all for their self-serving interests. Soviet clients — reformist and revisionist parties and/or armies — in these countries were never for a new arrangement of society based on the abolition of all exploitation and oppression. Instead they were only for an accommodation with the enemy. Now they are openly embracing the sworn enemies of the masses. Maoists always have said that nobody should be surprised by these activities of the social-imperialists and their clients — they are reflections of their class nature.

The Western imperialist powers are trying to make the best out of the social-imperialists' troubles and further their own objectives; they are rushing to support the newly formed phoney "revolutionary" regimes in the East European countries and prevent the weakening of the bourgeois order there. They have accompanied all of this with rabid anti-communist propaganda. They tell the oppressed that the

exploitation of the people by a handful of bloodsuckers is "liberation" and this is what the people in the East and all the world should want. The U.S. went so far as to boast that its act of naked aggression in Panama is fanning the winds of "liberation" across Central America.

The U.S. and its Western imperialist allies are up to their necks in crisis, and they are trying to ride roughshod over the masses in the countries they dominate and in those countries themselves. Under the cover of the "war on drugs", the U.S. imperialists are intensifying their intervention in Peru and even preparing open aggression against the People's War being led by the Communist Party of Peru, a participant in the Revolutionary Internationalist Movement (RIM). Revolutionaries around the world must be prepared to defend the People's War in Peru in the face of such a crime.

The imperialists East and West have stepped up their collusion against revolutions around the world. Though this poses new difficulties, it also can be useful, because it will help dissipate illusions about relying on one bloc to fight the other. It will help teach the revolutionary masses to rely on their own forces to score victories. Imperialism can never stop giving birth to armies of its own gravediggers.

Today the world has entered a period of great unpredictability and extreme volatility. The imperialists have not been able to cure their crisis-ridden system even a bit and, despite all their talk of peace, the volatility of world affairs brings with it the danger of world war. Yet fundamentally the great disorder is favourable for revolution. The more the imperialists try to bring different forces in the world under their control, the more their grip on the world is loosened. All this is bad for reformists and "part-way revolutionaries", who detest disorder, even disorder in the old order. But it is fine for thorough-going revolutionaries.

Many so-called communists have joined the reactionary chorus of those who call communism a futile dream; today it is clearer than ever that the parties and organisations that make up the RIM are the most resolute fighters *because they are armed with Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought*, the most correct, resolute and uncompromising view of the future of mankind and what is required to achieve it. Unlike the revisionists and reformists and other opportunists, they do not use the struggle and sacrifices of the masses to come to some kind of agreement with the reactionary rulers, nor do they preach to the masses some kind of accommodation with the system and acceptance of half-baked "solutions" that would only clog the windpipes of the revolutionary masses.

The death of Soviet-style "modern revisionism" — as this brand of false communism was called — is a welcome development and must be used to spread genuine communism amongst the masses, who urgently need revolution, including in the East itself. It must be seized upon to strengthen Maoist parties where they do exist and form them where they don't — parties that should command their own revolutionary armies to carry out the armed revolution of the masses to wrest the world out of the hands of the imperialists and reactionaries and lay the basis for a new world.

Soviet-style False Communism is Dead, Long Live Revolutionary Communism!

Make Revolution! Build and Strengthen Maoist Parties United in the RIM!

Support People's War in Peru!

Break the Chains! Unleash the Fury of Women as a Mighty Force for Revolution!

Forward Along the Path Charted by Mao Tsetung!

Prevent World War, Step up the Struggle for Revolution throughout the World!

On the Invasion of Panama

– Statement by the Committee of the RIM

The Committee of the Revolutionary Internationalist Movement strongly condemns the U.S. imperialist aggression against Panama, and supports all the forms of resistance being carried out against the invaders.

The U.S. government sent its 24,000 troops swarming out of the Canal Zone in a manner meant to be as brutal and bloody as possible. Panama is vital to the U.S., because of the Canal, and because the huge military facilities of the U.S. Army Southern Command headquartered in Panama is the nerve centre for U.S. military activities in the region and the springboard for future aggression and wars. But Noriega and his 10,000-man forces had long been on the U.S. payroll, and did not represent a real threat to U.S. domination. The main point of this invasion was to serve as a demonstration of American military might, to intimidate the peoples of the region which the U.S. has long called its “backyard”, and to prepare political-ly and militarily for even greater crimes.

The U.S. imperialists seek to reinforce their authority in Central America and South America, in the face of an increasingly unstable situation, including the mood and revolutionary potential of the masses of people brought about by U.S. exploitation and domination. In the last few years the crisis of the imperialist system as well as the continuing manoeuvres by their Soviet imperialist rivals have made this situation all the more explosive.

The U.S. is inciting its murderous puppets in El Salvador, stepping up threats against Nicaragua (despite Sandinista efforts to appease them), and intervening in Colombia. Under the guise of the same “war on drugs” that has served as a pretext in Panama, the U.S. has already installed a military base in Peru, escalating its attempts to stop the revolutionary war led by the Maoist Communist Party of Peru, which alone in Latin America is unleashing and relying upon the armed strength of the masses. Positive and negative experience in Latin America and the rest of the world shows that only such a people’s war can really defeat the imperialists, and nothing less than total defeat will do.

In Panama, after the initial thrust in which U.S. helicopter gun-ships firing rockets destroyed a good part of the capital, the fighting took on the character of a war by imperialist troops against the masses of downtrodden people who rose up, in poorly-armed crowds and in some cases with rifles, against all the armoured might of the invaders. They robbed the U.S. of the quick and cheap victory it sought in a country created by the U.S. army in 1903 (when the U.S. stole Panama from Colombia to have a place to put the canal it needed to widen its empire) and which the U.S. has invaded nine times since then.

Drugs were an excuse for the invasion, but it was the world’s biggest drug traffickers themselves who attacked Panama. First as CIA head and then as Vice-President, Bush himself was Noriega’s boss. Another former CIA Director, Admiral Stansfield Turner, asked, “Do we really want Noriega on trial and talking about his past secret relationships?”

The invasion and the continuing U.S. occupation of Panama must not go unopposed. Further, the RIM Committee calls on people to be on their guard against further imperialist aggression in the wake of this invasion.

December 1989

Message of the Committee of the RIM to the Nepal Communist Party, (Mashal)

Dear Comrades,

The Revolutionary Internationalist Movement (RIM) hails the Nepalese masses for their current heroic upsurge and wholeheartedly supports the genuine revolutionary democratic aspirations of the Nepalese people. The Revolutionary Internationalist Movement also recognises the decades-long untiring efforts of, and important role played by, the genuine communist revolutionaries of Nepal to develop an uncompromising mass movement against the monarchist regime. But more importantly our movement supports the efforts by our Nepali revolutionary comrades to prepare and launch revolutionary people's war which alone can bring about the new democratic revolution. The NCP (Mashal) has been correct to point out that the aim of the people's struggle must not be limited to achieving some concessions of democratic rights from the monarchy, or so-called multiparty democracy or even the overthrow of the monarchy itself. Rather, the movement must have as its aim the total revolutionary overthrow of semi-feudal and imperialist exploitation and domination and the building of new democratic Nepal worker-peasants' rule under the leadership of the proletariat, guided by Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought. Our Nepali comrades were and are correct to explain to the masses during this mass movement that only by waging a protracted people's war, along the path charted by Mao Tsetung, can the people achieve liberation.

The tragic betrayal and shameful compromise by the Nepali Congress and also by the 7-party left alliance led by the pro-Chinese and pro-Soviet revisionists once again proved that the Nepalese people need revolutionary proletarian leadership. This betrayal has shown once again that as in all oppressed countries, mass movements and mass upsurges, however widespread, mili-

tant, even revolutionary they may be, and even if they lead to a change of regime, cannot spontaneously develop into revolutionary war, let alone transform the socio-economic system. Launching a revolutionary people's war and leading it to victory requires conscious and planned efforts by the party of the proletariat armed with a correct line guided by Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought. This was proved by victories of China under Mao Tsetung and the CPC and today is again being proven in life by the experience of the advancing people's war in Peru under the leadership of the Peruvian Communist Party.

In Nepal, as in other semi-feudal, semi(neo)-colonial countries, as the *Declaration* points out, "the situation is generally revolutionary" and Mao's line is the starting point for the elaboration of strategy and tactics: unleashing peasant guerrilla warfare under proletarian leadership; establishing base areas in the backward countryside, encircling cities from the countryside, carrying out agrarian revolution, i.e. revolutionary land reform on the basis of the principle of "land to the tiller", and establishing worker-peasant political power in the base areas and countryside. Mao argued that armed struggle must be the main form of struggle, the army the main form of organisation and that all other forms of struggle and organisation must serve the waging of people's war. The current, revolutionary upsurge in Nepal underscores the need to apply Mao's line to the concrete situation in your country.

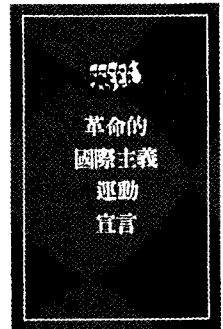
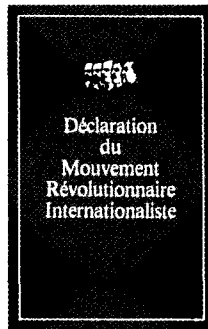
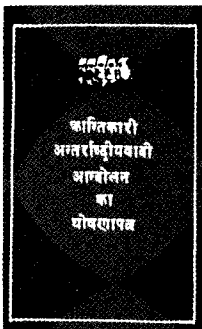
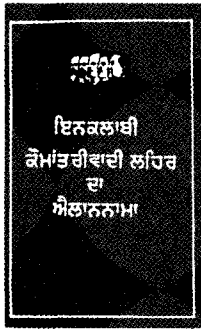
These pressing tasks are all the more important given Nepal's geopolitical position in the region. Nepal's neighbouring areas in north-eastern India are becoming more and more volatile with increasingly growing and strengthening struggles of the oppressed masses and nationalities, although still lacking correct revolutionary proletarian leadership. The launching of a powerful peo-

ple's war along Mao's path under the leadership of revolutionary communists in Nepal can, as Mao argued in summing up the experience in China, definitely exercise a serious and positive influence upon these ongoing and upcoming revolutionary upsurges in neighbouring India.

Indian expansionism is a great and direct threat against the development and advance of revolutionary struggle under the leadership of genuine revolutionary communists in Nepal. The presence of a counter-revolutionary revisionist Chinese regime to the north of the country also adds difficulties. Nevertheless, the recent movement in Nepal has shown that despite its apparent mighty strength, Indian expansionism is a paper tiger, which is increasingly in serious trouble from the various growing mass upheavals in different parts of India. If India dares to intervene directly, it can only help to deepen its own internal crises and troubles on the one hand, and on the other ignite an eventual united national awakening and national resistance in Nepal and bring another shameful defeat for the Indian expansionists like what the IPKF ("Indian Peace-Keeping Force") experienced in Sri Lanka by the "small" "inferior" Tamil people. In this way Nepal's strategic disadvantage — being surrounded by big reactionary states — can be turned to strategic advantage. Hills, mountains and plains awash with revolutionary struggle will serve as a source of strength and inspiration in the region and win the support of the masses in all these neighbouring countries.

Comrades, please convey to the militants of your party and to the workers, peasants and revolutionary masses of Nepal our congratulations for the advances already made and our full support in the up-coming battles for which comrades are preparing.

Committee of the RIM
May 1990



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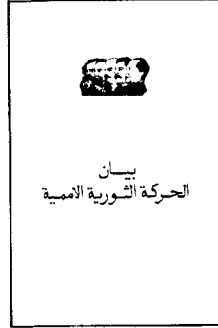
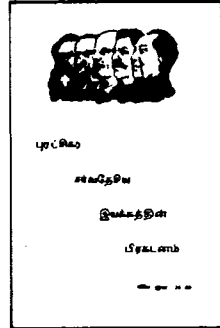
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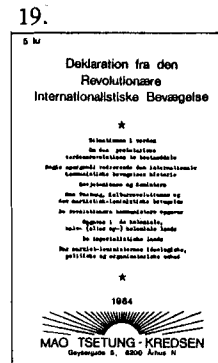
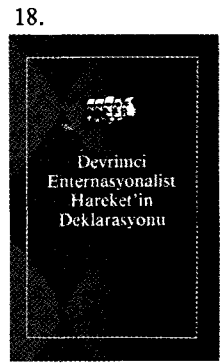


Signatories of the Declaration of the Revolutionary Internationalist Movement and Participating Organisations in the RIM

- Central Reorganisation Committee,
- Communist Party of India (Marxist-Leninist)
- Ceylon Communist Party
- Communist Collective of Agit/Prop [Italy]
- Communist Party of Bangladesh (Marxist-Leninist) [BSD-(M-L)]
- Communist Party of Peru
- Communist Party of Turkey/Marxist-Leninist (TKP/ML)
- Haitian Revolutionary Internationalist Group
- Nepal Communist Party [Mashal]
- New Zealand Red Flag Group
- Organisation of Marxist-Leninists of Tunisia
- Organisation of the Revolutionary Communists of Afghanistan*
- Proletarian Party of Purba Bangla (PBSP) [Bangladesh]
- Revolutionary Communist Group of Colombia
- Revolutionary Communist Party, USA
- Revolutionary Communist Union [Dominican Republic]
- Union of Iranian Communists (Sarbedaran)



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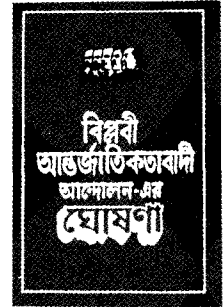


* The Information Bureau of the RIM has announced that the Organisation of the Revolutionary Communists of Afghanistan has been accepted as a signatory of the Declaration of the Revolutionary Internationalist Movement and as a participating organisation of the RIM.

In addition to the above list of those whose participation in the Movement has been publicly announced by the Committee, a number of other organisations work closely with the Movement to advance its cause and build and strengthen vanguard communist organisation.

The Declaration of the Revolutionary Internationalist Movement has been printed in over 20 languages. Not shown here: Gujarati, Nepalese, Japanese and Kannada.

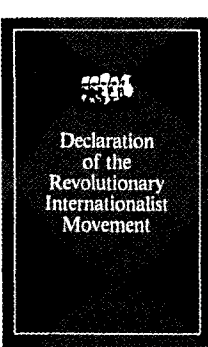
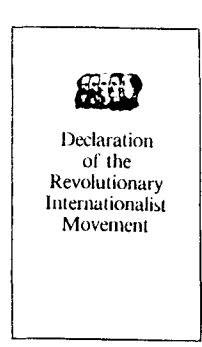
1. Punjabi, 2. Italian; 3. Farsi, 4. Hindi, 5. French, 6. Chinese, 7. Malayalam, 8. Bengali, 9. Créole, 10. German, 11. English (U.S.), 12. English (Indian), 13. Spanish (Spain), 14. Spanish (U.S.), 15. Spanish (Peru); 16. Spanish (Colombia), 17. Turkish, 18. Tamil; 19. Arabic, 20. Danish, 21. Kurdish.



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In Celebration of the Fortieth Chinese

By Communist Party of Peru Chairman Gonzalo

A recent speech by the Chairman of the Communist Party of Peru on the 40th anniversary of the 1949 victory of the Chinese revolutionary war analyses the importance of Maoism for the people's war being led by his party in Peru.

POINTS FOR REFLECTION AND FOR SPURRING US ON TO MORE DEEPLY FULFILL OUR DUTY AS COMMUNISTS.

I. The Chinese Revolution

Clearly the Chinese revolution has had far-reaching consequences for humanity, and this is true for several reasons. One is the sheer *immense number* of people who took part: 400 million at first, and 800 million by the time of the Cultural Revolution. It was a region of *earth-shaking struggles*, with a vast tradition of conflicts involving the masses of people, the peasants, whose struggles went back to the most ancient times, and wars such as the 1840 Opium War, for example. During the Cultural Revolution, in summing up China's long history, it was said that a hallmark of the country's history was the way its development was *marked by many different armed struggles*. This is the context that gave birth to the CPC and Chairman Mao, Marxism's third leading light and highest peak. All this served to create very special conditions in China, and what happened there shook the world.

Consider the *democratic revolution*: It is essentially a revolution, the overthrow of one class by another by means of people's war, of violence. This is a universal law, especially important today when some people seek to discard it as outdated. The democratic revolution in China is a model, a prototype of a revolution against imperialism, feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism. The democratic revolution inevitably leads to a

second revolution, and thus the Chinese revolution requires us to consider not only the democratic revolution, but also how it went over without pause to *socialist revolution*. In a country such as ours socialist revolution is not possible without first carrying out the democratic revolution. Chairman Mao showed that the socialist revolution is a continuation of the democratic revolution, and furthermore, that in the form of the cultural revolution it is a continuation of the revolution under the dictatorship of the proletariat based on the people's army which can defend the new State founded on the broad masses. He made it clear that the task of socialist construction arises with the revolution itself, and that this process is extremely complex and protracted; furthermore, Chairman Mao said that we communists still lacked a thorough and complete understanding of the laws of socialism and that such an understanding would take a long time to achieve. There would be sharp and violent class struggle, he said, and the confrontation between two different roads: the capitalist road and the socialist road; the question of which would win out was not settled. Of course he never doubted that in the long run socialism would triumph, but he specifically emphasized the sharp class struggle for the dictatorship of the proletariat.

He taught that socialism required relying on the broad masses, the peasants, proletariat and people, in order to develop new things and avoid the old capitalist roads that had been defeated by the revolution and that would lead away from the socialist road. Socialism would have to give rise to new forms. He made



One of the first people's militias formed during

it clear that the class struggle would continue to be acute, that the centre of the battle is for the dictatorship of the proletariat, which relies on the broad masses.

But furthermore, the Chinese revolution has shown the necessity for *cultural revolution*, a fierce but necessary struggle to continue the revolution under the dictatorship of the proletariat. Clearly the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution represents a world-historical epic of revolution, a victorious high point for the world's communists and revolutionaries, an imperishable achievement. Although we have a whole process ahead of us, that revolution left us great lessons we are already applying, such as, for example, the point that ideological trans-

Anniversary of the Revolution



the people's war in China.

formation is fundamental in order for our class to seize power, which today means bringing about an ideological leap in order to seize state power.

In addition to these two points, the Chinese revolution has shown how revolution takes place within the context of a process of *restoration and counter-restoration* (a contradiction with two aspects). No class has ever seized power at one go; rather, each has faced the restoration of the old power and had to fight fiercely for a counter-restoration until finally that class seized power for good. The proletariat has already travelled the greater part of this road.

Thus the Chinese revolution bids us to reflect upon the democratic rev-

olution, the socialist revolution, the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, and restorations and counter-restorations, or in essence, the permanent revolution, as Marx called our class's stormy march forward to achieve communism through the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Today more than ever, we proclaim that our goal is to make communism a reality, and nothing can stop our march towards that future. This ineluctable march must go through difficult stages and processes, each stage involving new and more difficult problems, but we communists possess the necessary strength to overcome them because we possess the most powerful ideology. We reaffirm that as communists, this must be our final goal, no matter how great the difficulties that our class, the proletariat, must vanquish. The problems we see today, *the restorations in China and the USSR, do not negate this goal, but rather underline the length and complexity of the process of the march towards communism.* Today, when some people proclaim that communism is finished, let us grasp the Chinese revolution, and let our Party, as part of the world revolution, serve its goal: communism.

This is what we draw from the Chinese revolution and the role of Chairman Mao.

II. Maoism

This is the decisive question. Chairman Mao teaches that the ideological and political line decides everything, and we have but one ideology: Marxism-Leninism-Maoism, principally Maoism. This is not the place to outline Marxism overall, nor is it necessary; our point here is to see the proletariat's ideology as a great reality that develops by leaps and through stages. Its first stage was Marxism, its second, Leninism, and its third stage, its highest and

greatest expression, is Maoism. Thus, for us communists Marxism is an irresistible force, living, always pushing forward, developing. Just when fools declare it dead it develops further and refutes them resoundingly. Even in Marx's day such nonsense abounded, and the same was true in Lenin's time and today as well. It should be no surprise when these would-be buriers of Marxism trot out their lies. They aim cunning and sinister attacks at Maoism because Maoism is humanity's most advanced outlook.

It is exactly when the ideology of our communist parties reaches greater heights that it is attacked, negated and declared outmoded. But — and this is very important — all this gibberish about the so-called death of Marxism *is only the prelude to a new development of Marxism*, as it was in Marx's and Lenin's times. Maoism is the most advanced scientific ideology, and therefore the most transforming reality. It arose from matter and is a material expression, because the spirit is simply a form of matter. We have been given humanity's most advanced ideology: Maoism.

We must reaffirm our great slogan of 1979: *Uphold, defend and apply Marxism-Leninism-Maoism, principally Maoism!* (This slogan has been updated, because at that time we said Mao Tsetung Thought). Those who think they can negate it are dreaming!

Maoism is something *new*, and new-born things have never been easily accepted. Its authority has been established through fierce struggle, by the proletariat's leadership in the revolution, the communist parties. Lenin called Marxism the tree of life and idealism a mere parasite; today, the idealism being propagated is simply a rotten parasite of Maoism, which is the living tree of life. We are convinced of the greatness of Maoism, and we owe it everything, for with-

out it we would not even be together here. Without Maoism there could be no people's war, nor could this people's war be a bright flame prevailing against wind and waves.

Maoism has the most far-reaching importance for the international proletariat and the world's peoples. *Therefore it remains a necessary task to struggle to make it the commander and guide of the world revolution.* Consider the immense power contained in Maoism, all the power with which it can arm the proletariat and the people. Chairman Mao said that in difficult times we should consider our all-powerful ideology; we have Maoism. He was right to say that the proletariat had the most powerful atomic bomb: Mao Tsetung Thought, as was said in those days.

Thus, let us reaffirm our Maoism, the most glorious peak.

III. The New Counter-Revolutionary Offensive Being Carried Out by Gorbachev and Deng World-Wide

Clearly they are carrying out this offensive in collusion with the blackest world reaction, imperialism, because it suits their convergent interests.

The sinister and perverse nature of Gorbachev and Deng's new offensive becomes clearer every day. They negate the most basic points. Thus Chinese revisionist followers of Deng put forward the idea that capitalism goes through four stages — the embryonic, primary, secondary and highest stages — and that since World War II capitalism has reached its highest stage. They negate Lenin's central thesis of imperialism; furthermore, they say that capitalism is far from being outmoded, that it enjoys sufficient strength to overcome its difficulties. Articles in the international press argue that the world capitalist system, the U.S. system, gives the lie to Marx's ideas, that essentially Marx was wrong in holding that under capitalism overproduction gives rise to crisis, since today such crises can be managed and therefore do not mean that the system is outmoded. At the same time they admit that a crisis of overproduction could arise, and therefore contradict themselves.

The point here is that the Chinese revisionists and the imperialists are in collusion against Marxism.

Regarding the role of the Church: A Peruvian entrepreneur, a member of the big bourgeoisie tied to imperialism, especially Yankee imperialism, says that the country's economy is heading inevitably towards an explosion, and that therefore, together with the Church, they are carrying out schemes designed to contain that explosion. The Community in Action charity scheme administered by Caritas is a part of these efforts to stop the revolution and to traffic in the masses' hunger. In China today they are calling for recognition of the Church's new role; they are saying that under socialism religion is not the opium of the people. This is an open negation of Marx, which they justify with the false claim that Marx's judgement was made before Marxism had come up with a scientific analysis of the role of religion. This, too, is an example of how revisionism coincides with reaction. We are very clear on the role of the Church. We have put forward our views before, distinguishing between the class interests of the Church hierarchy and the religious feelings of the people; furthermore, who could ever forget the Pope's furious threats, when he warned us to "change your attitude" while he blessed the reactionary armed forces? Wherever there are problems the Pope always shows up to play his counter-revolutionary role. Poland is another example of this.

Thus revisionism's negation of Marxism is taking specific forms and this is leading to its own death and disintegration.

Our Party said that there would come a time to wage a great battle to defend Marxism in every sphere. This time has come; it is time to defend Marxism-Leninism-Maoism, principally Maoism. This means we should study revisionism thoroughly, as one studies the enemy, because we are locked in a war to the death with it. We should study it and rip out its guts so as to expose its hideous features for the world to see. We have to show how revisionism, imperialism and world reaction collude to put Marxism into question and refute it.

In the economic sphere they proclaim that capitalism has come up

with a solution to its problems and therefore is not headed for collapse. They want us, the peoples of the earth, the proletariat, to believe that capitalism is eternal. They want to pull the wool over our eyes in the political sphere as well, when these fools try and make us believe that the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie is not a system heading for ruin, that the bourgeoisie is not outworn but has received a new lease on life, that the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie is also eternal. Ideologically, they preach an idealism shot through with most reactionary religion, especially Catholicism, loaded with more superstition and fraud.

Armed with Maoism, which is the peak of Marxism, with people's war, with the Party, mobilizing the masses, we must expose and smash all these schemes, and above all, serve the advance of the world revolution.

IV. The PCP

The PCP is Marxist-Leninist-Maoist, Gonzalo Thought. The Communist Party and the people's war it leads are proof of the invincibility and vitality of Marxism, of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism, principally Maoism, and this entails the greatest responsibility. Therefore we should develop the people's war in order to show the validity and power of Maoism and seize power.

The seizure of power will have far-reaching consequences because we are in a key part of Latin America at a time when this continent, in comparison with Asia and Africa, is undergoing the most severe economic, political and ideological crisis, a general crisis with no solution in sight in the coming years. This can be seen in the fact that while countries are growing at a rate of over 9 percent a year in Asia, at 3 percent in Africa, and 2.5 percent in the backward European countries, North Africa and the Middle East, the growth rate for Latin America is 1 percent, and this in turn should be measured against the continent's high population growth rate.

Consider the role of the PCP and what the country-wide seizure of power would mean. It would change history. Facts are confirming our Party's analysis in this regard: for example, that the 1990s will be even

worse for the reaction than the 1980s, as they themselves admit. Let's seriously analyse U.S. imperialism's campaign which Bush claims is aimed at drugs. Peru is the main producer, Bolivia the second and Colombia the third. This much is true. But what is the U.S.'s aim? To escalate their counter-revolutionary war in the Andean countries which are the backbone of Latin America, especially South America. Where, along this backbone, is people's war raging? In Peru, under the leadership of the Party and through the actions of the masses. Therefore their campaign is aimed at us. What does this mean? It is leading to the development of the contradiction nation/imperialism, principally U.S. imperialism, without forgetting the other superpower and the other powers. It means a change in the contradiction. Let's not forget that other countries could be used in this; serious complications could arise, especially for the southern part of Peru, from Brazil's demand for an outlet to the Pacific through the port cities of Matarani and Ilo, or the widely-exposed policy of the Peruvian state to move away from Bolivia and closer to Chile. Yankee aggression, whether it be direct or indirect by way of puppet governments, is bringing about a war of national liberation, and despite the sacrifice and the efforts this would require, there will be a magnificent opportunity to unite 90 percent of the Peruvian people, at a time when the Party is calling for the country-wide seizure of power, and this will mean more favourable, though more difficult, conditions for the Peruvian revolution. Imperialism is dreaming if it thinks it can snuff out the revolution, and while this period will be extremely difficult, complex and bloody, it will lead to the people's triumph and serve the emancipation of the class and the world proletarian revolution, and, the decisive point, it will make Marxism-Leninism-Maoism, principally Maoism, the commander and guide of the world revolution.

Only through great storms, Chairman Mao said, can the world be changed. Let the Chinese Revolution spur us on to fulfill the Party's tasks here where it is our responsibility to do so! □

Message of the Committee of the RIM to the Communist Party of Peru (PCP)

Dear comrades,

The Committee of the Revolutionary Internationalist Movement sends you its greetings and congratulations this May 17th as we celebrate with you the tenth anniversary of the day when a handful of fighters of the PCP seized and burned the ballot boxes in the Andes mountain village of Chuschi and launched the people's war.

On that day the downtrodden of Peru began to stand up. Today, thousands and thousands of sons and daughters of the people are marching in great armed battalions behind the Party's streaming banners, developing people's war in the service of world revolution, while the system of domination and oppression in Peru is sliding into a chasm of disaster. This lifts the hearts of revolutionaries and oppressed people everywhere and fills them with confidence. The Revolutionary Internationalist Movement is proud to count you amongst its ranks. We know that Maoist revolutionaries in other countries are learning important lessons from the experiences for which our Peruvian comrades are paying in blood, in the service of the revolutionary war they themselves must lead.

Your Party was founded in 1928 as part of the Third International by Jose Carlos Mariategui. After his death the Party fell into the clutches of revisionism, from which it reemerged through a long series of struggles inspired by Mao's international polemics with revisionism and

the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution. In a period when many other so-called revolutionary forces in Latin America and elsewhere were negating the necessity of a communist party, and communist party leaders were negating the necessity of violent and thoroughgoing revolution, the comrades led by Comrade Gonzalo fought for a party that would be ideologically, politically, organisationally and militarily capable of leading the armed seizure of political power in Peru and advancing towards socialism and communism.

Your Party studied the concrete conditions of Peru today from the point of view of seeking to apply Mao Tsetung's teachings on New Democracy and people's war. As the *Declaration* of our Movement says, this is "the point of reference for elaborating revolutionary strategy and tactics" in the countries oppressed by imperialism, where in general the revolution must follow the path of arousing the peasants under the leadership of the proletarian party, seizing political power piece by piece, carrying out agrarian revolution and establishing revolutionary base areas, surrounding the cities from the countryside in a protracted war so as to build up the strength to take political power country-wide and complete the New Democratic Revolution, and thus open the door to socialism. The *Declaration* also affirms that "in the oppressed countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America a continuous rev-

olutionary situation generally exists." Your Party thoroughly grasped this responsibility to actually launch the armed struggle and acted accordingly.

In the course of the war itself, your Party has been further forging its ability to carry out its tasks, especially by drawing in and training a great many poor peasants as well as proletarians from the shantytowns and factories. You are building a strong People's Guerrilla Army as the main form of organisation under the Party's leadership, because, as Mao said, "without the people's army the people have nothing". In the countryside you have established hundreds of people's committees where the oppressed along with their allies wield the political power that is the embryo of the New Democratic state. You are developing the revolutionary base areas that nourish your people's war.

These accomplishments are inseparably bound up with the overall stand, viewpoint and method developed by Marx and Lenin and taken to a qualitatively higher stage by Mao. Other armed struggles led by non-proletarian forces in Latin America and the world have either failed to hold out over a protracted period of time or lack any real perspective of countrywide political power and at best hope to enter into some kind of arrangement with one or another oppressor, even when carrying out some sort of guerrilla warfare. In contrast, the PCP is known to friend and foe alike for its most uncompromising stance: it is determined to seize all power for the proletariat and the oppressed masses and to continue to shoulder its duties as a detachment of the international proletariat until classes and oppression are eliminated the world over. Further, guided by Mao's line of fighting in a way that mobilises and relies upon the masses in every aspect of warfare, from the very start your Party unfolded the war as a war of the masses themselves and has entirely and wholeheartedly based itself upon the masses and struggled to unleash their boundless potential. The way in which you fight is determined by your aims and outlook. Only Maoists, the representatives of a class that aspires to communism, can fight a people's war.

"Without upholding and building

on Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought it is not possible to defeat revisionism, imperialism and reaction in general", the RIM *Declaration* states. The truth of this assessment, confirmed through so many tragic negative experiences, is also being borne out today in a positive way by your victories.

Because yours is a genuine people's war, in ten years it has advanced far beyond any other recent revolutionary attempt in Latin America. You have spread it through 22 of the country's 24 departments. The ambit of your military action extends through the country's central mountain ranges from north to south and through the valleys leading to the jungle in the east and the coastal cities in the west. The cities themselves, especially the capital, have been shaken again and again by the armed actions of the organised urban poor. From the initial period, when the first detachments lacked even arms, through the extremely difficult years of 1983-1984 when the people's war first found itself locked in battle with Peru's 300,000-strong regular armed forces and up to today, the reactionaries have exacted a price of 14,000 lives. Now the U.S., backed by all the imperialist powers East and West, is pouring the concrete for new military bases and preparing for the possibility of a major intervention which could demand even more immense sacrifice by the people and have enormous, far-reaching consequences for both sides. Momentous battles can be seen on the horizon.

The victories of the people's war in Peru under the line and leadership of its Chairman, Comrade Gonzalo, are victories for the world proletarian revolution, which took an important step forward on May 17th 1980 due to the single-minded determination of your Party, its leadership and its members, to overcome all obstacles, throw everything into the breach and defy death itself to initiate, sustain and carry through a people's war. We pledge to the revolutionary workers, peasants and comrades of Peru that we will continue to support them and to play our own part for the sake of our common goal.

May 17th 1990

The Committee of the RIM

Statement by the Communist Party of Peru

On this the tenth anniversary of the people's war, we salute with revolutionary reverence the proletariat and people of Peru, especially the peasants, principally the poor peasants. We salute the masses of people because the masses make history and they are carrying out the people's war, because with the fighting steel forged from their poverty and their inextinguishable shining struggle they have given rise to and developed the people's war, and we also salute the leadership, cadres and members of the Party, the fighters of the People's Guerrilla Army, the thousands upon thousands of sons and daughters of the people who are shaking and transforming the old Peruvian society to the very core, and with the devastating language of arms are building a new society for all the oppressed and exploited.

We salute the proletariat and the people, the masses, because in the heat of the people's war their hunger and their blood have become ennobled and have been transfigured into the ardent, unquenchable flames of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism, the true and all-powerful ideology of the international proletariat; because their actions sustain and advance the struggle against the new counter-revolutionary worldwide revisionist offensive being led by Gorbachev and Deng, and also make it possible to confront the all-out, evil cam-

*Drawing by revolutionary prisoners of Peru.
"We are shock troops of
the world revolution."
PCP"*



Honour and Glory to the Proletariat and People of Peru

paign against Marxism being led by the imperialists, in collusion and contention with the revisionists; in sum, because their actions serve the unceasing and implacable combat against imperialism, revisionism and reaction around the world, making Marxism-Leninism-Maoism the commander and guide of the proletariat and peoples of the world by developing the world proletarian revolution.

We salute the proletariat and the people, the masses, because with their tireless, strong hands of creativity and combat they have given rise to the three tools of the revolution; because their unbending rebel spirit and their inexhaustible wisdom nourish the Communist Party of Peru, the organised vanguard of the proletariat, the leadership and guarantee of the Peruvian revolution, the axis and centre of all revolutionary organisation, based on Marxism-Leninism-Maoism, Gonzalo Thought; because their unyielding heroism reaffirmed daily beats in the hearts of the People's Guerrilla Army, an army of a new type, the complete opposite of the reactionary armed forces, which under the leadership of the Party carries out the political tasks of the revolution, acts as the basis of the New State and serves the people; because their tremendous ability to transform and their powerful ability to build are what underlies, sustains

and builds the New Political Power, the joint dictatorship based on the worker-peasant alliance led by the proletariat through its Party, the New State which for several years now has been blossoming and growing stronger every day in the People's Committees and Base Areas which shine defiantly in the bright sunlight in the countryside, in the very bosom of the people.

We salute the proletariat and the people, the masses, on this tenth anniversary of the people's war, because without their unparalleled support in Peru there would be no people's war; because without the bread that they share, without their indefatigable, constant efforts and without their precious blood, the people's war would not be what it is, the Peruvian people's greatest and most far-reaching epic of transformation; because without their support it would not be, as it is, irrefutable testament to the invincibility of people's war, worthy proof of the vitality of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism, principally Maoism; because without their growing contribution to the people's war in Peru it would not be, as it is, a hearth of hope far beyond our borders, and its future triumph a key for the development of the world proletarian revolution; because without the proletariat, the people, especially the peasants, principally the poor peasants, without fully carrying out a

great leap in the involvement of the masses in the people's war, country-wide political power will not be seized.

For all these reasons, and because our starting point is always that the masses make history, that the masses wage the people's war, that this war is and has been a continuation of the class struggle with arms in hand, we salute the proletariat, the people and the masses for the great victories they have won in ten years of people's war, and call on them to increasingly take their destiny into their own hands through the people's war led by the Party, and to Seize Power Countrywide!, Organise the Seizure of Political Power!, Forge the People's Democratic Republic of Peru!

Long Live the Tenth Anniversary of the People's War!

Long Live the Communist Party of Peru!

Long Live Chairman Gonzalo!

Glory to Marxism-Leninism-Maoism!

Honour and Glory to the Proletariat and People of Peru!

Central Committee,
Communist Party of Peru
Peru, May 1990

Afghanistan Maoists on World Revolution

The following are excerpts of the founding document of the Organisation of the Revolutionary Communists of Afghanistan (ORCA) which formed recently through the merger of the Revolutionary Cell of Afghan Communists (RCAC) and the Union of Marxist-Leninists of Afghanistan — (Mao Tsetung Thought) (UMLA-MTT). The Information Bureau of the RIM has announced that the ORCA has been accepted as a member of the RIM. —AWTW.

The formation of the Organisation of Revolutionary Communists of Afghanistan (ORCA) marks a qualitative step in the work of the Committee of Coordination and Unity [see AWTW 1989/13]. We hope that publication of this document will advance the work and struggle of different sections of the New Communist Movement (MLM) of Afghanistan and bring about more favourable ground for a qualitative advance of the CCU's efforts, so that soon we can draw up the programme of the Communist Party of Afghanistan (MLM) on a principled basis and form the proletarian vanguard party in this country.

Provisional Centre of the ORCA
(1990)

THE WORLD SITUATION AND THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNIST MOVEMENT

...The reconstruction of the international communist movement on the basis of a correct ideological-political line is essential for providing leadership to the world revolution. In our view, the formation of the Revolutionary Internationalist Movement at the Second International Conference of Marxist-Leninist-Mao Tsetung Thought (Maoist) parties and organisations has international significance because it is a qualitative advance in this direction.

The *Declaration* of the RIM is based on the clear ideological-political view that Mao Tsetung Thought (Maoism) is the next stage of devel-

opment in the science of our class. The *Declaration* clearly states that: "Without upholding and building on Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought [Maoism - ORCA] it is not possible to defeat revisionism, imperialism, and reaction in general."

The *Declaration* correctly considers that Mao Tsetung Thought (Maoism) and its main principle, the continuation of revolution under the dictatorship of the proletariat, is the demarcation line between Marxism and revisionism: "Lenin said, 'Only he is a Marxist who *extends* the recognition of class struggle to the recognition of the *dictatorship of the proletariat*'. In the light of the invaluable lessons and advances achieved through the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution led by Mao Tsetung, this criterion put forward by Lenin has been further sharpened. Now it can be stated that only he is a Marxist who extends the recognition of class struggle to the recognition of the dictatorship of the proletariat and to the recognition of the objective existence of classes, antagonistic class contradictions and of the continuation of the class struggle under the dictatorship of the proletariat throughout the whole period of socialism until communism. And as Mao so powerfully stated, 'Lack of clarity on this question will lead to revisionism.'"

It is on the basis of this clear ideological view that the *Declaration* has taken correct and principled positions on a series of fundamental questions in the international communist movement. They are the following:

— In analysing the present world situation it points out the three major contradictions and stresses their continued intensification as well as the further disintegration of the imperialist world order.

— It describes the two component parts of the world proletarian revolution and, based on their unity, explains the international strategy of the international proletariat.

— In relation to proletarian internationalism, the *Declaration* correctly stresses the point that the con-

tent and nature of the struggle of communists all over the world in the main is determined by the interests of world revolution.

— It correctly discusses the questions relating to the international communist movement and upholds Mao Tsetung Thought (Maoism) as a new stage in the development of the proletarian science of revolution.

— In relation to the Soviet Union and the Comintern, based on the principal aspects of socialist construction in the Soviet Union and the role of the Comintern in advancing the world proletarian revolution, it points to the defects of socialist construction there and to the Comintern's mistakes and shortcomings.

— In regard to Mao Tsetung, the Cultural Revolution and the Marxist-Leninist-Mao Tsetung Thought (Maoist) movement, the *Declaration* explains the fundamental points and correctly indicates highly important and interesting points.

— It correctly defines the tasks of revolutionary communists in the present situation and distinguishes different features of these tasks in the oppressed and in the imperialist countries.

— It firmly clarifies the world orientation for the ideological, political and organisational unity of communists, that is, the formation of a new communist international and, with this orientation, it lays out important tasks for the RIM and the world's communists.

On the basis of these points one can certainly state that the ideological-political line expressed in the *Declaration* of the RIM is a solid basis for achieving unity in the international communist movement and for leading the process of regrouping the genuine communist forces and advancing towards the formation of a new Communist International. Furthermore, in order to rupture with all ideological-political confusion, form communist parties and advance the process of revolution in different countries of the world, including ours, it is crucial to rely on this line.

Today the detachments of the world proletarian revolution, gathered in the RIM, are advancing the revolutionary struggle against imperialism and reaction worldwide.

For several years now, the Communist Party of Peru has been leading people's war in that country with revolutionary and principled effectiveness, so that it has become an inspiration for communists and revolutionaries around the world....

MARXISM-LENINISM-MAOISM

Maoism —

A New Stage in the Development of the Proletariat's Science of Revolution

The science of revolution of the international proletariat has been applied, strengthened and developed during more than one and a half centuries of class struggle, since the publication of the *Communist Manifesto*. Marx discovered this science and established its basic foundations. Lenin raised it to a new level, and then Mao developed it to a still higher level. Thus the science of revolution of the international proletariat has developed through three qualitative stages and become more complete: 1) Marxism, 2) Leninism, and 3) Maoism.

In today's situation it is vitally important to stress Mao Tsetung's contributions to this science and his qualitative development of it. This emphasis separates the ranks of proletarian revolutionaries from those of various revisionists who have betrayed proletarian revolution and revised the basic foundations of the science of revolution of the international proletariat. As the *Declaration* of the RIM states:

"Upholding Mao Tsetung's qualitative development of the science of Marxism-Leninism represents a particularly important and pressing question in the international movement and among the class conscious workers and other revolutionary minded people in the world today. The principle involved is nothing less than whether or not to uphold and build upon the decisive contributions to the proletarian revolution and the science of Marxism-Leninism made by Mao Tsetung. It is therefore nothing less than a question of whether or not to uphold Marxism-Leninism itself....

"...We affirm that Mao Tsetung

Thought is a new stage in the development of Marxism-Leninism. Without upholding and building on Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought it is not possible to defeat revisionism, imperialism and reaction in general."

PROLETARIAN INTERNATIONALISM

...On proletarian internationalism one can state the following:

Proletarian Internationalism Ideologically

Marxism-Leninism-Maoism is basically the ideology of the international proletariat and not that of this or that country's working class. This is, above all, because the proletariat is an international class...

...The third stage of development of the proletarian science of revolution, i.e. Maoism, is not the particular product of Chinese society. First of all, its principles are the development of the basic principles of Marxism-Leninism, which were not the product of Chinese society. Although the main principle of Maoism, continuing the revolution under the dictatorship of proletariat, was applied in the form of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution in China, it was, however, based on summing up the negative experience of the restoration of capitalism in the Soviet Union.

Today, the RIM has made important summations of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism and the experience of the international communist movement. These summations are the product of the international communist movement, even if they are marked by names of individuals or parties in this or that country.

Marxism-Leninism-Maoism is the ideology of the international proletariat. Precisely for this reason, its basic principles hold for the struggle of the proletariat in every country, by applying these universal truths to the concrete conditions of a specific revolution, and it in turn grows richer in the course of applying it. This is the meaning of proletarian internationalism from an ideological point of view.

Proletarian Internationalism Politically

Four points should be focused on

in this case:

1) The final political goal of communists is to reach a classless communist society. This task can only be accomplished on a world scale. The first condition for this is eliminating the world system of imperialist exploitation. Talk of building communism in one country when there is a world imperialist system is empty talk. Thus the final goal of communists is a global one and not one limited to a nation or country. The political struggles of communists must be oriented towards this goal, a goal that should not be forgotten even for a second. Diverging from this, our struggles will be at best national socialist and not communist...

2) ...Paying attention to the internal situation of a country has fundamental importance for the victory of revolution there. But imperialism is a world system and today, with the worldwide domination of imperialism, the internal situation of each country is mainly conditioned by the international situation; different countries should not be looked at as independent phenomena outside the world imperialist system....

3) Considering the final goal and the decisiveness of the international situation, it should be emphasised that for communists the overall interests of the world revolution are higher and more important than the interests of revolution in any particular country....

Revolution in one country is a link in the chain of world revolution and should serve it. Socialism in one country is a base for world revolution and should be looked at as such. Socialism in one country which is based on the interests and well-being of one nation is nationalism, not communism. The question is not whether the interests of any particular revolution should be taken into account, since this too is fundamental for the interests of world revolution. The point is that in periods when the interests of a particular revolution seem to be in contradiction to world revolution, world revolution is primary....

This is proletarian internationalism from the point of view of the relationship between the interests of world revolution and revolutions in different countries. Keeping this point constantly in mind has not been easy for communists in the past, it is not now, and it will not be

in the future. Continual effort to be conscious of this is unavoidable and imperative.

4) In any given country, the communists' share of their internationalist tasks is, first, to analyse correctly the political and social situation in their respective countries on the basis of a correct class analysis and advance the proletarian revolutionary struggle by relying on the universal principles of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism. The communists in every country should turn their countries into strong bases for world revolution by carrying new democratic and socialist revolutions to victory. This is the only way they can avoid falling into nationalism or dropping the task of advancing the struggle for revolution in their own country.

Proletarian Internationalism Organisationally

Forming and strengthening communist parties in all countries should be looked at as a fundamental task of communists. On the basis of proletarian internationalism, these parties must shoulder the task of leading revolutions to victory in their respective countries. To advance and lead revolution on a world scale is a responsibility much more complex than that of any single country. Since the world revolution is not merely the sum total of the revolutions in each different country, its principled advance is impossible without an international organisation. There have been three international organisations for the advance of the world revolution in the history of the international communist movement: the First, Second and Third Internationals. Since the liquidation of the Third International in 1943, the international communist movement has lacked an international headquarters, and now the struggle for the formation of a new Communist International is a fundamental task. The formation of the RIM is of fundamental importance because it has been a qualitative step in that direction. In this period, taking part in the struggle of the RIM to advance the cause of world revolution, including by forming a new Communist International, is the realisation of proletarian internationalism organisationally. □

Pick Up the Weapon of MLM

The Future of



Sharpeville, 26 March 1990

Azania is not Negotiable!



The struggle of the Azanian masses has again blasted a hole in the big lie of the world's bourgeois media that "peace fever" is breaking out all over South Africa in response to the white minority regime's current acrobatics of negotiations and reforms. Ever since the announcement by South African President F.W. DeKlerk in early February that Nelson Mandela would be released after 27 years in their jails and some thirty political organisations would be unbanned, the black masses have turned up the heat on the apartheid rulers. From Sebokeng township southeast of Johannesburg to Sharpeville, to the Maritzburg townships and all through the Natal

region, as well as the "independent" bantustans of Bophuthatswana, the Transkei and Ciskei, rebellions have reached a height comparable to the last major upsurge of 1984-86, in some places pushing even beyond. In the rural areas (where 50% of Azanians live in impoverished, overpopulated reserves), the people demanded their puppet leaders resign and that this bantustan system built to keep blacks out of white areas be done away with. Coupled with widespread protests against increases in rent and basic necessities was renewed fury against vicious police violence and the collaboration of black authorities with the white state.

After police opened fire on 30,000 Azanians in Sebokeng in March, for example, killing 14 and wounding nearly 500 others, the youth righteously threw up barricades in the streets and fought running battles with police, attacking government cars and offices and stoning the homes of town councilors. White people were pulled from their cars and beaten after white vigilantes had cruised the streets randomly shooting at blacks.

In fact the resurgence of struggle began long before — particularly gaining momentum in the latter part of 1989 as the white government appointed itself a new president and declared that a new era was dawning in their racist slumyard of apartheid: “justice and equality are on the horizon, if you just believe in us”. The people launched mass boycotts, rent strikes, stay-aways, demonstrations and mass funerals of police victims, as a widespread atmosphere of defiance spread once again throughout the country, as it had five years earlier. This is the context in which the apartheid rulers are trying to assume their new posture of political concessions to “the black community” in the form of proposing reforms and negotiations, and a truly difficult position it is.

No, the fascists running the 20th-century plantation in South Africa for Western imperialism have not laid down their swastikas for peace symbols. Quite the contrary. They are drowning the struggle in blood — more than nine hundred people have been gunned down by state bullets since the beginning of the year. Over the past three years they have detained more than 30,000 people, more than a third of whom were children. And if Mandela got the world spotlight and royal treatment when he was set free, several Pan African Congress leaders mysteriously ended up dead in a car crash several months later, at least one of whom was released from prison with ANC (African National Congress) leaders last fall. The four-year-old state of emergency was partially lifted only in June 1990, two months after the first talks between DeKlerk and the ANC. Their law is still the law of repression and armed might. But they have a big problem, because this hasn't worked either. Their order is continually thrown

into the most combative disorder and the rebellious youth especially hold nothing but contempt for the future of oppression, discrimination and life at gunpoint being “negotiated” for them in high places.

To the extent they have leaked these incidents, the government and Western press have tried to reduce them to fighting between organisations and “black on black” violence. One Azanian revolutionary described the contradictory situation: “Much of the violence is between the masses themselves, some between old people opposing the youth, and there are some interethnic clashes, too, because the situation is so bad in there, the people react. They were also disappointed by the reforms — they heard people were getting some things in some places, but haven't themselves seen any changes. Especially in Natal [where Zulu puppetstan Chief Buthezezi's armed Inkatha vigilantes have been attacking political opponents and rebellious youth — AWTW], the state comes into the UDF-Inkatha violence and takes one side or the other, fanning the flames. But mostly it is the youth against the establishment, trying to destroy every symbol of the establishment.”

A Strategy for a Weak Ruling Class

The white ruling class is in serious crisis — economically and politically — and is cornered by the struggle of the masses that continually resurges to pound away at the regime's untenable position; it seems to face literally no other alternative than to scrap some of the ugliest features of its apartheid laws and try to find a way to soothe the political situation. It is true they have gone through this routine before (combining small carrots with heavy repression after every major round of mass upsurge since 1976), but this time the reforms must have some substance. Desegregation of public amenities such as buses, beaches and hospitals, talk of narrowing the gap in education, even of abandoning the homelands policy and township councils so hated by the masses: all these along with the promise of some political and civil rights being accorded to blacks are aimed at showing their “good intentions” to evolve towards “a new

South Africa”.

There are several different components to the present apartheid government strategy. First, a tiny political opening that allows some black bourgeois political leaders to participate in schemes for constitutional reform and establishes some political channels that have not previously existed. While a few minimal rights may be granted formally to the black majority as a whole (which includes Africans, Indians and so-called Coloureds that make up nearly 31 million people, or 85% of the population), these channels seek mainly to appease the black middle classes through some freedom of expression and sampling a few of the wisps of bourgeois democracy they have been denied. The whole strategy depends, in a sense, on the regime's success at building up these black bourgeois strata that will be more closely linked to the ruling class itself.

This buffer class of blacks will be key for many reasons: not only will they be called upon to debate the terms of “integration” and constitutional procedures such as voting and national representation for years to come, but they will fill some important posts in government, management, education and international diplomacy. Most of all, however, they will be expected to help rein in the struggle of the masses where the regime's bullets have failed. They must develop the needed literature and organisations to derail or snuff out the masses' struggle and persuade them that a long process of “democratisation” is unfolding and that “patience” and “education” are the “modern” way to express grievances. They will speak and write volumes trying to soften the racial lines and combat nationalism. And significantly, as the regime's spokesmen have put it in some more candid moments, they will be expected to help to single out, expose and crush the revolutionary elements that refuse to go along with the “post-apartheid” program and insist on opposing the oppressor state.

Many forces refer to this process as “power-sharing”, in the anticipation that soon black candidates will be on the ballot. While the capitalist state may “darken” itself a little with a small number of privileged blacks, its goal is precisely to reinforce its own bourgeois political rule by con-

solidating power *against* the masses of black people, who fundamentally have no political voice and never will until they seize the reins of society in their own interests by force of arms. As is generally the case in the dominated countries, imperialism cannot bring about even bourgeois democracy for the oppressed in South Africa.

Armed terror will remain the foundation of white-centred reactionary rule, despite the necessary raising of a neo-apartheid black "peace" corps, just described. The regime has already reorganised its central repressive apparatus under government rather than military command, which includes shifting security forces from other areas to the police, an immediate doubling of the police force, followed by an increase of more than *tenfold* over the next several years, with special emphasis on riot units, "terrorist" investigative units and security at key communications and transport points. Since the withdrawal of South African troops from Angola, there has been a 20 percent increase in defence spending that is earmarked for weapons modernisation and strategic arms development.

Their attempt to appease the internal political climate through some formal "legal" changes forms part of a broader effort to upgrade the regime's all-round image, particularly by creating new legitimacy internationally and breaking through the political and diplomatic isolation that has somewhat hindered the apartheid rulers. The goal here is to encourage friends and trading partners to operate more freely to help bolster the sagging economy and the position of distress of the regime in general. It is also linked to some bigger strategic plans of the imperialists to fortify South Africa as the economic powerhouse and regional gendarme of the subcontinent. (For example, yet another "secret" nuclear project to build a middle-range missile with Israel has been recently revealed.)

In alliance with their imperialist partners, the apartheid rulers hope to even more rapaciously dominate the continent of Africa and try to stem their own economic crisis through new openings to low-quality manufactured goods markets in the Third World in general and in Eastern

Europe. Their principal export, however, remains armaments, and this is double-barreled "development aid" to its neighbours of the most obvious kind.

The white settler state has long followed a policy of virtually *no* investment in social services for the black majority. Now they will most likely set up some vehicles to ease some aspects of the double standard they have built their prison camp on, although how exactly is not yet clear, perhaps through integrating some schools and housing for a minority.

The regime's strategy is a strategy for a weak and desperate ruling class looking to keep its system afloat by any means it can. The trouble is, their crisis is deep. They are not able to and do not intend to improve the lives of the masses to any real extent, or to alter the basic nature of their system which has always depended on the most vicious national oppression and superexploitation of the black population. If a few blacks are able to benefit from the minor concessions tossed their way, conditions for the broad masses may well worsen.

Still they must continue to squeeze the Azanian people at a rate that attracts and manages to stabilise foreign investment, while in their own words, they must change the climate at home to one of "reform" instead of "revolution", while establishing control, somehow, over a hostile, subjugated people. Otherwise, their rule over the plantation as a whole may unravel and blow up in their faces, as it already is beginning to do.

Azania's Future is Not Negotiable

People the world over were elated at Nelson Mandela's release from prison. But it would be naive not to see this as a coldly calculated move to begin to win over and mould the black social base the white regime needs for its strategy as well as to widely influence public opinion in general. Unfortunately, Mandela, along with the liberal businessmen, church officials, professionals and other bourgeois and petit bourgeois strata that form the social base of his ANC, has played his capitulationist role with the skill of a true bourgeois politician. He has repeatedly extolled the ruling class leaders'

integrity, their honest aims, with reassurances that whites have "nothing to fear from us". And he immediately agreed in principle to give up the "armed struggle" (which the ANC has always seen as a pressure tactic to spur negotiations and never as a revolutionary means of destroying the enemy state and seizing power). Of course, challenging the state's armed right to rule the masses is not on the white government's negotiations agenda.

Mandela's "peace" talk has also begun to backfire, dispelling the myth that he possesses some magical power to heal the deep divisions of brutal colonial society. At a public speech in Durban shortly after his release, he was loudly booed when he called on people to "bury the past and extend your hand", and to "throw your arms into the sea". Hearing this programme, some of the rebellious youth in the townships have said they will take up arms against the ANC "and all shortcuts and sellouts" if necessary. Others oppose the "one man, one vote" slogan with the old PAC saying, "one settler, one bullet". How useful Mandela will remain for the rulers is not yet clear, although ANC leaders, along with other black collaborationist forces, will certainly be in the thick of the coming debate over what "share" privileged blacks are to be awarded in the reforms. In many ways the government has already outstripped the ANC's pitiful "pre-negotiations" demands and has shown it will go further in dismantling some apartheid structures. Also, with the collapse of imitation communism in the East bloc — which formerly propped up revisionist movements like the ANC and a certain pro-Soviet model of phoney African socialism as part of their contention with the Western imperialists — these forces are more than ever driven straight into the arms and jaws of the West. They have lost some of their clout for negotiated settlements with the disappearance of their former social-imperialist muscle. Will these reformists also hail the arrival of their East European "brothers" now being recruited by the South African regime to beef up its white reactionary social base?

Political compromise was no surprise coming from the ANC and the

political organisations it influences — this has always been the cornerstone of their political line. How fast this allies with outright reaction, however, became apparent with the lightning capitulation of the Umkhonto we Sizwe (ANC armed wing) chief of staff who went from vowing to “never lay down our arms” to arguing that the regime “needs a chance”. His approval of the continuation of “normal policing”, while they must “refrain from unnecessary brutality” was as outrageous as his call for an end to “political” executions, tacitly approving the fate of those the terrorist apartheid ruling class wants to hang as “common criminals”! Just how far will these capitulationist forces wearing national liberation movement costumes dance to the tune of their own oppressors, sharpening their knives in the masses’ backs?!

Negotiations are a strategic part of the terms the white ruling class wishes to impose for stabilising its rule, and the very process aims at dividing the opposition into “loyal” and hostile camps, while shifting struggle away from the real issue of national liberation. This has created some confusion among people who hate the system, including some revolutionary nationalist forces, as it is meant to. Just as these forces have correctly always attacked the ANC’s reformist strategy of “opposing apartheid” instead of doing away with the whole rotten colonial system backed by imperialism, the negotiations trap must be exposed as an extension of the same. The oppressed share *no* common ground with the oppressor and must not be lured into his multiple schemes for prolonging his domination over them. The highly polarised atmosphere in South Africa today, the high tide of rebellion and the rapidity with which the masses are further awakening to political life are all favourable factors for a revolutionary line to take root. While these negotiations and the phoney reform process must be exposed so that people better understand the strategy of the enemy, along with his allies, the real task is the *liberation* of Azania, now more than ever, when the enemy is weak and clutching at compromise solutions. A whole different solution is required.

Some black nationalist forces

have been tempted by the idea, for example, that the enemy is now in a position of “giving up some territory”, so better try to make it on “our” terms than his, and better “our” terms than the revisionist capitulationist ones of the ANC. Others perhaps are clear that nothing will come of these negotiations, but think they help establish the diversity of the national liberation movement opposition, give recognition to forces up until now overshadowed by the worldwide promotion of the ANC (well-financed from abroad and armed with a host of publications) and build a broad legal opposition movement to apartheid. Unfortunately, this logic leads to getting sucked in by the enemy’s many tentacles. A veritable maze of potential speculation and refinement of these terms becomes possible: who has the right to represent and speak for black people, what demands are winnable from the enemy, what can be yielded, what “united front” of the leftist forces is possible (which is in reality a coalition of various middle-class forces) and so on.

The basic problem is that no amount of “left-wing” politicking with the enemy is going to weaken him further. All this playing in his court only strengthens his hand; it in no way advances the revolutionary struggle and in fact betrays the revolutionary masses who are rising up and eagerly looking around for leadership that will take their combat against the enemy higher and *not* lead them back into his treacherous arms.

From the point of view of the international proletariat, which seeks a radical rupture with all the existing social relations shackling the oppressed masses not only in Azania, but throughout the world, only a thoroughgoing revolution, a new democratic revolution, can smash the white minority colonial state and truly bring forward a revolutionary society under the rule of the Azanian labouring masses and its proletarian vanguard, clearing the way for socialist revolution. This must be done by waging a genuine war of the masses, a people’s war, led by a party based on Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought (MLM), the only type of party that will share no ground with the oppressor. As was pointed out in the Call to Azanian revolutionaries to

Link up with the RIM, “Only a party guided by MLM can lead the uncompromising, protracted struggle necessary to smash white rule and carry out a national and democratic revolution to free Azania of imperialism and its local props as part of the international proletariat’s advance on a world scale.”

There is no shortcut from Mao’s difficult but uplifting path of relying on the masses of oppressed peasants and workers to fight, arms in hand, for their own liberation. Naturally there will be particularities to how this is applied in South Africa, there will be specific problems to resolve in building the people’s army there, in handling the contradictions between the countryside and urban areas, in approaching the class differences among the oppressed themselves, and in figuring out how to begin to wage war against a modern, well-armed state backed by imperialism. People’s war is a harder path, but it is the only path that can win total liberation.

The revolutionary situation today sharply poses the challenge to revolutionaries to rise to the heights that Mao’s path demands in order to lead the masses. The oppressed are learning very quickly about who is selling out whom, about whom “negotiated settlements” really aim to please, and especially that the “new South Africa” looks and smells just like the old one, even if the chains have been loosened a little for a few blacks. It is up to those in occupied Azania who refuse to share one centimetre of turf with the enemy and who will fight to lead the masses towards a different future to change the terms of the whole battle. A revolutionary pole must be planted in the soil of great upsurge that is rocking the white regime to its foundations; it must however be done by taking up the science of Mao Tsetung Thought in a thoroughgoing way to study the enemy and his methods and allies, to analyse who are the friends and allies of the people, and to forge the necessary political and ideological leadership to prepare for and carry through to the end a genuine war of liberation, without being thwarted or dislodged by the enemy. Political power must be seized from below and the oppressed of Azania deserve no less than the chance to go for *that*. □

On the International Situation

New Twist in the Imperialist Knot

By the Revolutionary Communist Party, USA

The dramatic and sudden collapse of long-existing state structures in Eastern Europe in late 1989 and early 1990 underlines the basic truth of the observation in the *Declaration of the Revolutionary Internationalist Movement*, adopted in 1984:

“The post World War 2 world is rapidly coming apart at the seams. The international economic and political relations, the ‘division of the world’ — established through and in the aftermath of World War 2 — no longer corresponds to the needs of various imperialist powers to ‘peacefully’ extend and expand their profit empires.... The very logic of the imperialist system and the revolutionaries is preparing a new situation. The contradiction between the rival bands of imperialists, between the imperialists and the oppressed nations, between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie in the imperialist countries, are all likely in the coming period to express themselves by the force of arms on an unprecedented scale.”

Many of the elements that appeared most permanent and unshakable in the post World War 2 world, including the boundaries of the different European countries themselves, stand revealed as merely provisional, temporary and (from a world historic point of view) transitory phenomena. Even the most unthinkable modification of frontiers, the reunification of an imperialist Germany hitherto divided into two antagonistic war blocs, is no longer simply a matter for conjecture, nor even the hidden agenda of West German revanchists or a battle-cry of die-hard reactionaries: it is a

question posed for resolution, a new factor with immense implications for world affairs.

If Marxism-Leninism-Maoism enabled the revolutionary communists, as expressed in the aforementioned *Declaration*, to see most clearly the impermanence of the existing world order and the underlying stresses and strains that were threatening to tear it asunder, it is also true that Marxism-Leninism-Maoism never claimed a capacity to foretell the future. The actual march of events will always prove richer, more complex, variegated and surprising than the predictions of any theory. Nevertheless, it is against the actual course of events that any theory which claims to be scientific must be tested, and the revolutionary communists do not shy away from such a critical evaluation.

At the turn of the decade of the 1980s, the Revolutionary Communist Party, USA (RCP,USA), as is well known, put forward its belief that world war would most likely break out in the course of the decade unless prevented by revolution in large and/or strategic parts of the world. And, if not prevented, world war would, in turn, give rise to revolutionary struggle throughout the world. This analysis was made on the basis of our understanding of the dynamics of imperialism and our observations of the contemporary world situation: (1) that the network of international relations established through World War 2 (the “division of the world”) was no longer favourable to the continuing expanded reproduction of capital. This network had increasingly stood as a limit in the way of the different

imperialist powers’ inexorable compulsion to further expand, and all of these powers needed to break up the existing framework and establish a new one more favourable to them; (2) two imperialist blocs (one led by U.S. imperialism, the other by Soviet social-imperialism) were increasingly in conflict with each other — each one standing as the immediate and direct obstacle to the other’s expansion efforts. History had shown that such conflicts would ultimately be resolved by world war between rival blocs, unless revolution imposed its own resolution of these contradictions, and that each world war had also led to revolutionary advances. Mao Tsetung and the revolutionary comrades of the Chinese Communist Party had been clearly stressing this point with increasing urgency in the years immediately preceding the reactionary coup d’etat following Mao’s death in 1976; (3) finally, the actual course of events followed by the imperialist states through much of the 1980s and the period immediately preceding indicated that the two blocs were on such a collision course towards world war. This was reflected in the political, military, ideological and cultural realms as well — in particular with the rise of “Reaganism” in the United States and the aggressive pursuit of the Soviet imperialists’ project as well, most notably the invasion of Afghanistan in 1979 and the subsequent war there. It was in this context that the RCP,USA analysed that the principal contradiction in the world was between the two imperialist blocs.

World war had ceased to be

"unthinkable" and became a practical plan of the imperialist ruling classes to which, to a large degree, other domestic and foreign policy goals were subordinated. Under these conditions, our Party sought to "sound the alarm" to the proletariat as to the danger of such a conflagration and to call on the proletariat and the peoples to strive to avert such a catastrophe through stepping up revolutionary struggle.

In retrospect, events have not worked out in the way we had foreseen. And like others throughout the world, we are overjoyed that such a war has not taken place. The break-neck drive to war of the mid-1980s (the implantation of the Euro-missiles in Germany, the shooting down of the jet airliner KAL 007 over Soviet airspace, the ever increasing decibel level of sabre-rattling) has given way to the situation today which in many ways appears as the mirror opposite: the climate of dangerous rivalry between the two superpowers has been replaced, on the surface at least, by a new era of "mutual understanding" between the U.S. and the USSR. The "cold war" has been officially declared over.

Certainly public perception reflects important elements of today's reality. At the same time it is wrong and dangerous to mistake the appearance for the essence of things. The world most definitely has not entered into a new era of peace and tranquility. Instead we are seeing an overall intensification of the basic contradictions in the world and a deepening of the crisis of imperialism. In our opinion, the orientation of the *Declaration*, that these contradictions are moving to a point where they will be resolved by the force of arms, also remains true. *The most important factor to recognise and seize hold of in the new international framework is the more favourable conditions for revolution in the world as a whole.*

Bob Avakian, Chairman of the Central Committee of the RCP,USA, summed up the party's past views this way:

"First of all, we were correct in stressing the real and heightening danger of world war. Second, it is true that things did not work out the way we had anticipated, and there have been shifts in world contradictions — and in particular the contra-

dition between the U.S. and the Soviet blocs — that have resulted in a temporary and partial mitigation of this contradiction and put off for a certain time a direct, all-out confrontation between these imperialist blocs. But we should not lower our guard and flip to the other side, ignoring or underestimating the very real, deep-going, and still intense contradictions between these imperialist blocs and the continuing danger of world war."¹

The current situation is a result both of the overall intensification of contradictions and a shift, however temporary and partial it may prove, in the relative weight of the major contradictions in the world (the contradiction between the imperialist powers, the contradiction between the imperialists and the oppressed nations and the contradiction between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie in the imperialist and capitalist countries. The other major contradiction of the era of imperialism, between socialist states and imperialism, is currently inoperative as a result of the restoration of capitalism in the previously existing socialist states.)

In Eastern Europe it is easy to see the results of many different contradictions at work. First, while the cold war has been declared over and the U.S. and the USSR are indeed negotiating, collaborating and coniving over how to best exploit some of the countries of the region, it is also true that the previous rivalry that existed between these imperialist powers has not disappeared and is taking new forms. U.S. imperialism has been able to introduce powerful forces closely linked to it into the government structures of several of these states. The Western bloc, for the time being, has made use of the discontent of the masses with the old regimes, but it is also acutely aware of the need to prevent such turmoil from developing into a genuine revolutionary movement. This aspect bears resemblance to the role played by the revisionist parties in the West, who were used to bolster Soviet interests while striving to contain and suppress genuine revolutionary struggle.

Furthermore, the very fact that the contradiction between the U.S. and the Soviet Union has been partially mitigated opens the door to a coun-

tervailing phenomenon: the intensification of imperialist conflicts *within* each of these blocs. This is most clear — in the East and the West — in relation to the spectre of a reunited imperialist Germany.

The West German ruling class had never renounced, even formally, its claim to represent all of what was prewar Germany (which includes not only East Germany but large chunks of other countries as well, especially Poland). But until Gorbachev began to send out "feelers" about the possibility of German reunification as early as 1987, such a goal seemed impossible except as a direct result of victory in another world war.

For geographical and historical reasons, Germany's natural "sphere of influence", the region where it invariably seeks to establish its hegemony and shore up its base for broader world conquest, is in Eastern Europe. A reunified Germany means not only the merging of East Germany into the West German imperialist machine, it means providing much of the fuel for this machine (the most vital being the labour of the proletariat) from the more backward countries of Eastern Europe. This includes especially Poland and other areas in and outside the present borders of the USSR — countries that today form part of the Soviet imperialist empire. Ultimately, this reality hardly augers for peace between a voracious Germany and the Soviet Union. Quite the contrary, it was the desire for Germany to seek its natural "living space" in the East that was one of the decisive features pushing Hitler's Germany toward war with the then socialist Soviet Union. But at present the Soviets seem to feel that their interests are best served by allowing the German jackals to feed on East European meat in the hopes that, in return, this German machine will be so mighty that it can pull even the Soviet economy out of its morass and, furthermore, that Germany's eastward links will loosen it from the Western alliance.

For the moment, most of Germany's Western allies have officially expressed support for the reunification of Germany, and it is true that the entire Western bloc benefits from the weakening of the Soviet bloc. But as reunification becomes

less of a propaganda ploy and more of a program for action, Germany's friends and allies in the West become more and more openly frightened. The essential condition Gorbachev has posed for the reunification of Germany is the elimination of Western troops from within its borders. Although it is unclear to what extent Gorbachev will be able to impose his conditions for reunification, a short-term compromise would not change his medium-range goal of a Germany decoupled militarily from the U.S. And a reunited Germany without U.S. or Soviet troops is a different Germany than that of today, and would be a major actor on a substantially different stage than that of today.

Can the World be Peacefully Redivided?

The prospect for a reunified Germany with all which that entails vis-a-vis the two existing imperialist blocs would represent a significant shift in imperialist power relations. The problem remains whether such a realignment would represent a peaceful redivision of the world, that is, a decisive redrawing of the spheres of influence of the different imperialist powers and of the network of links between them, without the violent conflict between rival imperialist blocs.

What we understand about the workings of imperialism and Lenin's basic teachings on the subject argues strongly against the possibility of peaceful division. While it is true that the objective *need* for a new redivision affects *all* the imperialist powers, this same need presents itself to each imperialist power in differing and often opposite ways. What is a favourable redivision for one power is generally a very unfavourable division for its rivals.

It is certainly true that the Soviet rulers have a number of short and even intermediate-range interests which, as pointed out earlier, overlap especially with those of West German imperialism. But fundamentally the opposite is the case: each of these powers needs *its own* hegemony over Central and Eastern Europe. Furthermore, both West Germany and the USSR have their own already existing relationships with other states (blocs) which constitute

real barriers to their capacity to dramatically depart from the existing order without calling these vital relationships into question as well. For example, West Germany's growth has come on the basis of its partnership within the *Western* imperialist empire. Thus it is difficult to see how any durable and viable redivision of the world could take place without the violent recasting of *all* imperialist relationships and a new order being brought about on the only basis possible for imperialists, that of the relative strength of the different powers.

By "durable" or "viable" redivision of the world, we mean one which could allow a whole new spiral of imperialist growth and development, such as that which has marked most of the post-World War 2 period. And it is nothing less than a protracted and sustained period of capitalist development which could accomplish the miracles that are being called for: modernisation of the backward economies of Central and Eastern Europe, the development of vast new markets for consumer goods in these countries (which would imply a radical raising of living standards for at least a major section of the people), and a corresponding intensification of imperialist exploitation in the Third World. All this is supposed to take place without disturbing the powers already seated at the imperialist banquet table — France, Britain, Japan, etc.

It is clear that at least some of the governmental and ruling class spokesmen are drunk with this delusion. In particular this is true of the German imperialist ruling class who believe they may have at last found their way out of their long-standing dilemma — how to pursue their strategy of German reunification and obtain "living space" in the East while saving their homeland from the virtual destruction that a full-scale war between the two rival blocs, fought to no small degree on German territory, would entail. According to press accounts, even the dour Chancellor Kohl is full of vigour and optimism these days...

But whatever different rulers East and West may believe, their soul, to paraphrase Marx, is the "soul of capital". That is to say, their policies and strategy must ultimately con-

form to the needs of the different national capital formations they preside over. These strategic needs and interests will continue to assert themselves and play the role of the "invisible hand" pushing governments and statesmen first in one direction and then in another.

However much individual ruling class figures might prefer to march forward on the road of peaceful redivision and joint exploitation, the underlying conflicts between different imperialist states is bound to reemerge all the more sharply. So while the possibility of further significant, even dramatic, realignments in the current world balance cannot be ruled out, it is necessary to see such shifts and realignments *not* as the beginning of a new spiral which holds within it the possibility of a new round of dynamic development but as part of the conclusion of the existing spiral, as a reflection of the fact that the current division of the world is no longer adequate for the expanded reproduction of capital, East or West. The RIM *Declaration* makes reference to Stalin's famous quote of World War 1 about "tying all of the contradictions in the world into a single knot and throwing them onto the scales for resolution". Today's situation is not the resolution or "denouement" of the imperialist knot, but rather its tightening and the further intertwining of the opposing trends of the drives toward imperialist war and proletarian revolution. Recent events do not argue for a protracted, "peaceful" expansion of the imperialist system but rather for a period of intense turmoil and conflict out of which a new alignment of world relations will be born.

More Favourable Grounds for Revolution

The fact that the collision course between the two rival imperialist blocs has been temporarily mitigated creates new conditions governing the revolutionary process in different countries and the world as a whole. There are certainly some unfavourable elements to the new situation, for example, that certain imperialist powers now feel less restricted in their aggression against the oppressed nations and countries (the Panama invasion is a recent case in

point). However, the main implication for revolutionary struggle is the opposite: the conditions are more favourable for the proletariat and the oppressed peoples.

One of the two main pillars of the imperialist system in the past period, the USSR, is undergoing tremendous internal upheaval. The only ones who can be disheartened by the difficulties of this great enemy are those who continued to believe against all evidence that the revisionist USSR has been a friend of the oppressed peoples, or at least a "lesser evil" than the U.S. whose conflict with this latter power is supposedly in the interests of the oppressed. The capacity of the USSR to intervene against revolution is, at least temporarily, dramatically reduced, and this becomes a favourable factor for challenging the existing order in all of the Soviet empire and beyond.

Furthermore, the political influence of the USSR and its ability to mislead the masses has also undergone dramatic changes. While Gorbachev is quite popular with bourgeois public opinion in the imperialist West, the political authority of the USSR has been greatly undermined elsewhere as the nature of the USSR as a capitalist power standing opposed to the interests of the oppressed peoples is all the more evident. Forces like George Habash of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) who have long served as apologists of the Soviet social-imperialists are very quiet these days, and all the more so as the USSR steps up its collaboration with Israel itself. Today, it is very difficult to justify one's own capitulation through reference to a supposedly larger interest represented by the USSR; still less is it possible to hold out the hope of Soviet "aid" as the key to advancing the liberation struggles.

Nor should we underestimate the potential for upheaval in the Soviet Union itself taking on a more revolutionary character. It is true that the ideological and political weight of Khrushchev and Brezhnev-style revisionism is heavy indeed, and this makes it very difficult for the emergence of a genuine Marxist-Leninist-Maoist line. But it is also true that the calling into question of the form of rule by the rulers them-

selves, the dramatic heightening of the contradiction between the non-Russian peoples and the central authorities, the inevitable sacrifices that are being demanded of the proletariat in the "restructuring" drive — all of these factors have awakened sleeping peoples to political life and created the circumstances in which the programs and political platforms of different classes and tendencies can be examined by the masses and tested in practice. If even the most rudimentary steps can be taken now toward the establishment of a genuine proletarian revolutionary vanguard, then the possibility for a real revolutionary opening cannot be dismissed.

In Eastern Europe, many of the same factors exist as in the USSR, but there are also many differences that stem from the existence of different states and nations as well as from the historical circumstances in which the East bloc was created (i.e., East Europe became part of the socialist camp not as a result of revolution in these countries but basically due to the victory of the Soviet Red Army against the Nazis). As the *RIM Declaration* points out, little socialist transformation was actually carried out in these countries. The collapse of these exploiting regimes offers the best opening for revolutionary advance in this region since revisionism consolidated its hold in the mid-1950s.

Gorbachev Steps Back from the Brink

The current turn in world affairs is essentially due to the policies adopted by Mikhail Gorbachev within the Soviet Union and internationally. Upon coming to power, Gorbachev inherited a Soviet imperialist system marked by a colossal military machine. Estimates are that war preparations consumed 20% of the Soviet gross national product, which represents much more (in relative terms) than the resources consumed by the Western imperialist war machine. This massive military buildup is an essential reason for what Gorbachev called the economic "stagnation" in the USSR during the Brezhnev period (that is, the period following the fall of Khrushchev up to Gorbachev's ascension to power). The short inter-

vening reigns of Andropov and Chernenko did not break in any decisive way with "Brezhnevism".

The Brezhnev period of "stagnation" was, of course, not only an economic phenomenon. It was also marked by important advances on the part of the Soviet imperialists in their conflict with the U.S. And it had repercussions in all other spheres as well. The notorious lack of political and intellectual liberties under the Brezhnev form of bourgeois dictatorship, the trampling on the national rights of the non-Russian nations making up the USSR, even the Russo-centric political and ideological atmosphere engendered by Brezhnev & Co, were all part of a package whose core was preparations for an all-out military confrontation with the West bloc.

When Khrushchev came to power through a reactionary coup d'état in 1956 he declared his intention to "peacefully compete" with the West and made many grandiose boasts of how he would "bury" the West through victory in this peaceful competition. The building of the Berlin Wall was perhaps the most dramatic illustration of this view. The East bloc would be "walled off" economically and politically from the West even though it would continue to interpenetrate in a single world economy, in the Third World for example. The "socialist" system would triumph not by destroying the West but by beating the West at "its own game" — the construction of modern imperialist states with a standard of living for broad sections of the masses that only the privileges of imperialism could guarantee.

But such a competition was bound to fail. The division of the world that existed in the post-war world was highly unfavourable to the new rulers of the Soviet Union, despite their hegemony over a number of not-insignificant countries of Eastern Europe, especially East Germany. More importantly, the Soviet bloc did not have the same kind of neocolonial empire that the U.S. had established in the wake of World War 2. Even in countries where it was able to gain a foothold, for example, in the state sector in India, the weaknesses in its own capital formation prevented the social-

imperialists from being able to invest on the scale necessary to profit fully from these opportunities and, in turn, use the superprofits that could be garnered in a place like India to fuel new dynamism in the home market. In other words, piecemeal advances by the Soviet imperialists were not enough to enable it to compete on a world scale with its rivals.

Indeed, the "peaceful competition" became more and more one-sided throughout the decades of the 1970s and 1980s, especially in economic terms. Even so, Brezhnev's challenges to the West bloc made considerable headway, for example, in Angola, Ethiopia, etc. And U.S. imperialism had been significantly shaken by its humiliating and costly defeat in Vietnam.

The whole imperialist system, East and West, was increasingly confronted with the built-in limits to its profit-engendering capacities; both blocs continued to lurch ahead, but at rates and from a starting point determined by what had gone before (especially the division of the world they had inherited). Furthermore, the massive war build-up carried out by the U.S. and the USSR in particular would have very different (and temporarily, at least, opposite) effects on the home economies. The U.S. "perverse recovery" of the Reagan era was fueled in large part by a massive military buildup while the Soviet economy was already burdened down by military expenditures even before the decibel level jumped at the beginning of the decade (taking the Afghanistan invasion as a starting point).

The problem for the Soviet leaders was never one of "guns or butter". Then, as now, the Soviet ruling class could only make their political, economic and military decisions within parameters determined by the workings of the imperialist system itself. Once the decisive step of transforming the formerly socialist state into a capitalist one had been taken, the leaders of such a system were not and could not be free to choose whatever path of development and whatever form of competition with the West they might desire. In other words, their imperialist nature itself pushed them into a course of challenging the hegemony of the U.S. imperialist bloc.

Soviet expansionary pressures would inevitably meet with resistance from other powers. Similarly, the Western powers themselves could not be permanently bound by the existing division of the world. First, the "cards" had been dealt out unevenly to the Western players. Although some, like West Germany, have done well acting within a new set of connections and linkages within the U.S. empire, ultimately these powers, too, must seek to increase and consolidate their own spheres of influence. These pressures, however, took place and acted through a bipolar framework which pitted the whole Western imperialist bloc against the Soviet Union and its allies. In other words, France and W. Germany, while ultimately competitors of U.S. imperialism, sought to advance their own independent imperialist interests *through alliance* with the U.S. (just as the U.S. had carried out its takeover of the British Empire not by going to war against Britain but in great measure while it was Britain's ally in World War 2). Furthermore, in the very important case of West Germany, the "natural" sphere of influence (including a large part of the historic "home base" itself, East Germany) was solidly (or so it seemed!) anchored in the Soviet orbit.

Qualitative Nature of the Division of the World

Furthermore, it is not correct to see the division of the world only as a quantitative parcelling out of different spheres of influence. It also has a *qualitative* element as well, in that only a redivision of the world provides the necessary impetus to a whole new round (or spiral) of imperialist development through the further centralisation of capital and the destruction of inefficient capitals and their reintegration into others. This need, also, would make itself felt in the West as well as the East. War, and the process of going into and coming out of it, plays a decisive role in all of this. This is not only because large amounts of productive capacity are destroyed but also because war enables the imperialist state, to a large degree, to directly organise production along the most rational lines. Also, very importantly, the political and ideo-

logical mobilisation of the masses that accompanies war may (if things go well for them) enable the imperialists to intensify exploitation and clamp down on the proletariat. All this is part of the wrenching process of reorganisation of capital.

At the same time, the altered capital base of the imperialist countries interacts with new modes of control over and penetration of the colonies and neocolonies. The integration of colonies into a new global framework enables imperialist capital to both more profitably expand and restructure internationally and to further transform production relations in the oppressed countries to meet its requirements.²

The Brezhnev program was not based on the hypothesis of long-term peaceful competition with the West. His massive military expenditures were a reflection of the fact that the defence of Soviet "real socialism" (ie, social-imperialism) would rely on force and ultimately offered the only real prospect for their triumph over the West. These expenditures were a type of "investment" which mortgaged the present against hopes for the future.

But such investments could not endure indefinitely. By putting ever increasing tension on the contradictions of Soviet society the Brezhnev policies threatened to blow up in the face of the ruling class. The explosion of contradictions seen in the *perestroika* years of Gorbachev did not come out of the blue; the pressure had long been building. When Gorbachev came to power he was confronted with the choice between continuing Brezhnev's policies — with the very real likelihood of the outbreak of war in the immediate period ahead — or making a radical departure from the basic course the country had been on for some time.

It is also necessary to recall the international situation when Gorbachev came to power in 1985. By all accounts, relations between the USSR and the U.S. were, as Shevardnadze put it at the time, at their worst point since World War 2 — quite a statement considering all the extreme moments of conflict between the two powers in that period (the Berlin airlift, Korean War, Cuban missile crisis, etc.). The U.S. ruling class, through the adoption of "Reaganism", had made it clear that

it intended to pursue its own program of militarisation and confrontation with the Soviets at whatever cost.

In fact, Reagan presided over the biggest military buildup in world history. And it was not a question of the production of war materiel alone — the U.S. had been pursuing the Soviets across the board: its efforts to destabilise Nicaragua's Sandinist regime, the introduction of a new generation of nuclear-tipped missiles in Europe in 1983, the invasion of Grenada to depose a pro-Soviet regime, and so on.

It is never completely clear to what extent various representatives of the ruling class are conscious of the direction in which their policies are heading. Some historians, for example, claim that Hitler was surprised at the British declaration of war following his invasion of Poland. Did Brezhnev and Reagan both believe nuclear war was inevitable? Late in his term, when "Reaganism" had taken a severe beating by the Iran/Contra scandal, Reagan himself professed his supposed concern (without naming names) that some of his inner circle believed in the "inevitability of nuclear war". Yet several years before his "conversion" Reagan had declared before a group of Christian fundamentalists that he expected to see "Armageddon" (the biblical prediction of massive fire and the destruction of the Earth) "in his lifetime" — at age 70! Certainly, Reagan had made his "firmness", his ability "to push the button" if necessary, one of the main images he presented to the public. Both Reagan and his inner circle were clear that their policies brought with them a real risk of the outbreak of war, and they accepted such a risk.

In the final analysis, however, the subjective understanding of state leaders is of far less importance than the momentum their policies give rise to. The point is that both the U.S. and the USSR were clearly anchored on a war course in the period from 1979 to 1986. Indeed, the fact that a war did not take place in that period is, to some degree, a matter of chance, for any one of a number of "incidents" could well have started the chain of actions and reactions leading to all-out conflict. Chance *does* play an important role

in history, but chance itself is not "blind": underlying laws of motion are expressed *through* chance events. While any one "incident" need not have started a third world war, these two collision paths would inevitably give rise to one such "incident" after another until a war did break out. This is one reason why it is not correct to treat the whole post World War 2 period as an indistinguishable block in which a more or less constant and unchanging danger of war exists simply because of the general tendencies of imperialism.

While the *possibility* of the outbreak of world war cannot be ruled out at any time, this possibility can become either relatively remote or acutely imminent at a given time. To deny this, to act as though there is no particularity to the development of contradictions or that they can only all intensify in a one-dimensional way, is bound to lead to errors in assessing the situation and in developing a policy in relation to it. This can take the form of the error mentioned earlier of denigrating the very real danger of war that *did* exist in the period in question by reducing it to the permanent, if residual, danger of conflict that exists under imperialism. Or such an argument can take an opposite form — considering the danger of the outbreak of war always imminent, always occupying the same relative importance compared to the other contradictions in any given period. Such a view would turn the danger of the outbreak of world war into a "holy ghost", always present but never tangible. In reality, the two views are not as different from each other as it appears.

But if it is true that it is ultimately underlying laws, and not the decisions of statesmen, that determine questions of war and peace, it is true too that history is made by human beings, even if they do not make it according to their will alone. And it is clear that at a number of key junctures the state leaders *did* make decisions which backed away from the precipice of world war. Our Party has already raised some points of self-criticism in relation to this point. Specifically, we underestimated the degree to which the massive destruction caused by nuclear weapons would influence the actions

of the ruling classes when they were confronted with the questions of initiating a war they could win. Furthermore, the imperialists had more freedom of action, more manoeuvring room, than we had previously believed.

History has proven that imperialists will shrink before no crime if they feel that the existence of their class and its "vital interests" are at stake. At the same time, they are also acutely aware of the Pyrrhic nature of any victory that would come at the expense of the complete or virtual destruction of their home base. Indeed, one of the most alarming features of the 1980s was the imperialists' continual efforts to solve this dilemma, to find a way of surviving, winning and reconstructing on the basis of nuclear holocaust. (Militarily this took different forms, such as the U.S.' stepped-up search for the miracle weapon, "star wars", that would free it to obliterate its enemy without suffering the consequences, or the "miniaturisation" of nuclear weapons, developing smaller, more accurate missiles and warheads that could be more sharply focused on military targets in the hopes of making such weapons more "usable". Of course, no one could be sure how "survivable" such a nuclear war could be, but even the most optimistic commentators wrote of hundreds of millions of deaths.)

The rulers of the USSR and the U.S. were confronted with the stark reality of where their path was heading. And, indeed, this sober reckoning played a major role in influencing the choices to proceed along a different path. This was particularly the case when Gorbachev came to power, but once he showed a desire to slow down the immediate drive towards war, the U.S. imperialists also were quick to take up his offer, for the U.S. too confronted the problem of the difficulties of surviving and winning a nuclear war.

Reserves

As already pointed out, the fact that the imperialists were *able* to choose a different path is also a question for analysis. In other words, both blocs of imperialists seemed to have more capacity to adapt, more "reserves", than we had previously thought. An analysis of

the "reserves" of the U.S. and Soviet blocs is outside the scope of this article and must be the subject of further study. Still, a few points can be noted. First, it is important to stress that "reserves" is a relative question. For an imperialist ruling class, "reserves" are those economic, political, diplomatic and military factors which they can mobilise to enable them to meet exceptional requirements and weather extraordinary difficulties. It is most definitely not like a "reserve tank" of gasoline that can be turned on when the other fuel is used up and, in turn, will continue to function for a clearly predictable period of time. For example, the lack of revolutionary struggle of the proletariat and oppressed peoples or their errors can also become a "reserve" for the ruling class in times of crisis, and a most important one at that!

There is *no time* when the imperialists are completely "without reserves". This is another way of saying that imperialism, however shaken and battered, will not fall of its own weight; nor will the outbreak of war ever be "automatic" — it would come about as a result of underlying tendencies and compulsions expressing themselves in connection with and through international events and concrete actions taken by the principal states involved.

The corollary point must also be made: there is no specific level of "reserves" which will guarantee that the imperialists will survive any particular period of crisis or *not* go to war. Our Party has analysed that an important factor enabling the U.S. ruling class to weather the storm provoked by the Vietnam war and the rise of a powerful revolutionary movement within the borders of the U.S., most especially the Black liberation movement, was its remaining economic, political and military reserves, connected with its position at the head of a global empire. This is certainly the major factor, for example, in the U.S. imperialists' ability, for a time, to pursue the Vietnam war while enabling the living standards of broad strata in the U.S. to rise. But it would be a serious mistake to conclude from this that a full-scale revolutionary situation could not have emerged in that period or that it is inconceivable that

U.S. imperialism could have been overthrown.

One can anticipate the objection that with such qualifications the very concept of "reserves" has become so nebulous as to lose all value. No, this is not the case. It is possible to understand the basic laws governing the functioning of imperialism, and it is possible on the basis of this understanding to concretely analyse the motion and development of the imperialist states, the underlying weaknesses they face, as well as "the reserves" they are able to draw upon, and on this basis to develop revolutionary strategy and policies aimed at hastening the overthrow of these beasts. That such analysis can never be made with the same precision as a mathematical axiom does not make it any less scientific — like all science it can only reflect reality partially and like all science it must continue to advance through practice and the struggle between the correct and the incorrect so as to reflect reality more fully and completely. Furthermore, while all of nature and society are in a constant state of change, human society (and thus the world situation) are more dynamic, changing and complex; thus perception and analysis of people cannot help but lag behind, to a greater or lesser degree, the actual transformations taking place.

Collusion and Contention

Collusion and contention are opposites in the dialectical sense; that is, like all opposites, they interpenetrate with each other and can, under certain circumstances, transform themselves into their opposites.

Collusion and contention always exist between imperialist powers; this contradiction is itself an expression of the inherent tendency in capitalism of competing capitals to both attract and repel each other, and whose very conditions of existence demand the existence of other capitals even though these capitals are inevitably locked in a battle to destroy each other. Capital stands as one pole of a contradiction opposite labour (the proletariat), but it also has contradiction *within* it. Marx captured this dual nature well when he referred to the capitalist class as "an operating fraternity of thieves".

At no time can only contention or

only collusion exist. For example, even in the midst of war itself both tendencies can be clearly seen. In World War 2 the U.S. and Britain were allied against the German bloc, but it is clear that this alliance was full of contention, as these two rivals each pursued different and highly conflicting goals *through the course* of their collaboration (or collusion) against the other bloc. Similarly, even while the Allied and the Axis bloc were in a life and death battle for world supremacy, the two sides colluded at important junctures against the interests of proletarian revolution and the Soviet Union. Britain and Germany worked jointly against the interests of the revolution in Greece. Similarly, the policies of the U.S. and Britain toward a "second front" were also governed, to no small degree, by their desire both to see the then socialist Soviet Union bled and weakened by Germany (in the early years of the war) and (especially after the Red Army had dealt Hitler a decisive blow) to minimise revolutionary advances sure to accompany Hitler's defeat by rushing the Allied imperialist armies to Berlin.

Ultimately, the relationship between imperialist powers, and all the more so between imperialist blocs, is determined principally by contention and only secondarily by collusion. This, too, is rooted in the fact that capital can only exist as many, conflicting capitals. But what is principal in a general sense does not determine which aspect of the relationship between imperialist states is dominant, or principal, at any moment in international affairs. Opposites can and are transformed into each other and this can take place more rapidly, violently and repeatedly as the contradiction itself is heightened. The principal aspect determines the nature of a contradiction at any given time and in this sense it can be said that the current international situation is marked more by collusion between the U.S. and the USSR than by their contention. But it is also true that *both* contention *and* collusion can increase, even if the relationship between these two opposites undergoes change.

In today's situation collusion has become a more important factor in world affairs, and even the con-

tion between the imperialist powers is taking place to no small extent through and as part of their collusion. Even so, today's East-West "honeymoon" could just as quickly be transformed into a bitter and violent divorce.

The relationship between collusion and contention is, of course, no stranger to the question of the principal contradiction on a world scale. Contention and collusion are a unity of opposites; they are two opposite expressions, or forms of motion, of the interimperialist contradiction. Contention, and not collusion, is what, in an overall and long-term sense, characterises the contradiction between imperialist powers, and it is the force that propels the imperialist states to war with one another. The situation today where East-West relations are more marked by collusion is both a *reflection* of the fact that the principal contradiction has been temporarily and partially mitigated and it *contributes* to this temporary and partial mitigation. The fact that the principal contradiction has been partially and temporarily mitigated — even if a new principal contradiction were to clearly emerge and govern the unfolding of world events — does not and would not mean the elimination of the contradictions between the imperialist powers. Furthermore, these changes are taking place in a world in which the options, manoeuvring room and "reserves" of the imperialist powers are shrinking, and this is a further argument against any tendencies toward complacency. The overall intensification of the basic contradictions means that the interrelationship between these different contradictions is all the more tightly drawn and subject to rapid and dramatic reconfigurations.

The collapse of the Eastern European regimes is an illustration of the above point. While long-term rivalry between the two imperialist blocs helped set the stage for this collapse (including through the West's direct efforts to foment trouble in the opposing camp), the upheaval was made possible in a more immediate sense by the mitigation of the rivalry between the two blocs and the temporarily predominant role of collusion in the superpower relationship, for it was the sharpness of the conflict between the

two blocs which held in check, if only temporarily, the centrifugal forces within the blocs themselves. (The mutual attraction of the two Germanys toward each other existed before as well, but the marriage could not be consummated due to the sharpness of the rivalry of their respective clans.)

But it is important to note that here, too, counterbalancing tendencies exist. As East and West Germany grow closer to each other and in so doing upset many of the premises on which both of the two blocs are organised, there is also a tendency to resolidify some previously strained alliances — Poland with the USSR, France with Britain, and so forth.

It can be said that today's world situation is marked by two opposite factors. The straining of the post World War 2 structures has reached the point of, as Mao put it in referring to the law of contradiction, conspicuous change. That the previous framework is no longer viable is evident to all. But at the same time the different actors on the world arena are as yet unable to *carry through* the necessary realignment. *The redivision of the world has already begun*, but this redivision cannot be completed, it cannot be brought to fruition, by the methods that are being currently employed. The *previous* division of the world cannot help but assert itself and constantly stand in the way of the best-laid plans of the imperialists precisely because it has not been shattered. The *test of strength* of different imperialist powers, the imposing of will by one grouping over another and the sorting out of relative strength within the different groupings has yet to take place.

This is what explains the seeming paradox of the current world situation. The very real cooperation between the U.S. and the USSR is allowing a number of previously "frozen" situations — Afghanistan, Nicaragua and, of course, Germany — to witness important movement. On one level, the danger of world war no longer fills the air. Yet the rapid unravelling of yesterday's seemingly immutable features is a most *destabilising* factor in world affairs. The increase in turmoil among the ruling circles and the real possibility of revolutionary upheavals among the masses in many

countries will most definitely interpenetrate with and greatly influence the development of the contradiction between the two blocs.

Gorbachev's Ace?

One thing is crystal clear: all of the previously established strategies of the imperialists, East and West, are being restudied and revised. The *status quo* is coming unravelled and any attempt by one or another power (or group of powers) to rest their strategic interests on an effort to maintain this status quo will surely end in failure. Gorbachev, pushed by the acuteness of the crisis in the USSR, recognised this more rapidly than his American counterparts and played the more dynamic role in triggering today's situation.

By playing the "German card", that is, opening the door to German reunification, Gorbachev has taken a great gamble, but he has also thrown what might turn out to be a giant wrench into the Western alliance. The question can be posed: are Gorbachev's policies (especially regarding Germany but even more broadly) to be considered the white flag of surrender by the "loser" of the Cold War or rather a Machiavellian manoeuvre aimed at disrupting the West while Gorbachev actually proceeds with a hidden agenda?

Neither of these two views is correct, even though both contain elements of truth. As we have seen, Gorbachev *did* (or so it appears) come to the double conclusion that the status quo was no longer viable and that, at the critical moment when vital decisions had to be taken, it was not possible to reshape the world through war in a way favourable to Soviet social-imperialism at that time. In this sense, Gorbachev did "back down". But such a decision did not, of course, change the imperialist character of the Soviet Union nor did it mean that Gorbachev had simply surrendered to his enemies. It did mean that he strove to consciously adopt and apply new policies which most favoured social-imperialism *within the framework* of his decision to back away from the onward rush toward war of the mid-1980s.

There is no evidence that the policies of Gorbachev will succeed, even temporarily, in pulling the

USSR out of the crisis in which it has been mired. It is, certainly, an attempt at radical restructuring of the Soviet economic system, and it is clearly seen by the Soviets as integrally connected with their efforts to "restructure" (or redivide!) international relations as a whole. But even while playing the key role in *undoing* the old order the Soviets have not been able to fundamentally recast international relations in a way favourable to them. To take one example, the German locomotive has yet to be hitched to the Soviet train. And even as Germany and the USSR each strive to bring about such a coupling, the fundamental dispute over who will be the conductor and which direction the train will roll cannot help but sharpen.

The underlying compulsion for a new, more favourable division of the world continues to exist for the Soviet Union and it will continue to assert itself in the different policies that the Soviet rulers debate and adopt. Even in the most recent period, when Soviet strategic choices were not being made mainly from the point of view of how to prepare and prosecute a successful world war, the Soviet ruling class continued to pursue its interests through various diplomatic, political, economic and most definitely military steps as well. When making such calculations, all imperialist ruling classes consider not only today but tomorrow, not only what policy they might prefer but also what policy might be forced on them by the unfolding of events — this is one meaning of "preparedness". Attempts will always be made to turn a retreat in one sphere into an advance in another — a concession on armaments, for example, into an international public opinion windfall. The possibility that Gorbachev's current strategic plan will fail and will be abandoned either by Gorbachev himself or by his successors has always been taken into account by Soviet civilian and military authorities, and by the West as well. What is a strategic retreat from confrontation today could become a strategic preparation for conflict tomorrow. This is not mainly a question of Machiavellian manoeuvring; it is, again, the underlying drives of imperialism expressing themselves through the choice of policies by

people who are but partially aware of the very forces they are responding to.

The West has certainly won some important victories over its Soviet counterparts in the recent period. But the very real difficulties being faced by the USSR also represent a source of worry in the Western ruling circles, for they realise that the crisis and turmoil in the Soviet Union becomes a major factor for instability and uncertainty in world affairs. This is one reason that the Western powers have been careful not to push Gorbachev too hard in a number of circumstances, such as in relation to the crisis provoked by Lithuania's "declaration of independence".

Furthermore, as far as the relations between the two imperialist blocs are concerned, the possibility cannot be ruled out that it will be the U.S. or further fissures within the U.S. bloc that will call an abrupt halt to the current turn in international events.

Conclusion

We have already pointed out that the most important factor to grasp is the more favourable grounds for revolution. There is no telling how long this more favourable convergence of contradictions and circumstances might last. The increasing rapidity of the unfolding of world events, which is itself a reflection of the underlying intensification of contradictions, is a strong incentive to seize the hour.

No truly revolutionary strategy can ever be built upon the assumption of a long and protracted period of peace. Even though the post-war period has been marked by the absence of world war, it has been a violent and turbulent epoch full of wars and revolutions of different types. For most countries in the world, "peace" is very relative indeed and the violent nature of reactionary rule is constantly reasserting itself. Even if, in the imperialist countries, "peace" — that is, the absence of a direct military confrontation with other major powers or some other major war — appears to be the "normal" state of affairs, this is only the *appearance* of things, it is only looking at things from their quantitative aspect (what dominates for the longest period of time) and not from their qualitative

aspect (what actually reflects the *essence* of imperialism and what plays the key role in its development). And, of course, such "peace" involves the carrying out of violent suppression and wars against oppressed nations and peoples. In the imperialist powers where long periods of "peace" can exist — and this only relatively, as noted above — still revolutionary strategy must be based upon precisely those moments of severe crisis, disorder and/or war, when the actual class relations and nature of the man-eating imperialist system are evident and the dictatorial nature of the reactionary political power revealed, and the possibility of an assault on state power becomes viable.

Waging or preparing to launch the revolutionary war of the proletariat, People's War, remains the pressing task of communist revolutionaries in all countries, even if the particular nature of this war will vary according to the conditions in different countries and especially between the two great streams of the world proletarian revolution: the new democratic revolution of the oppressed countries and the socialist revolution of the capitalist and imperialist states.

The recent turn in world events has caused some turmoil in the ranks of revolutionaries — but it has caused much greater turmoil in the ranks of the imperialists and reactionaries. Difficulties exist, but they can and must be overcome. An already favourable situation can become all the more favourable through the conscious and energetic intervention of the revolutionary communists. □

Footnotes

1. *Revolutionary Worker* No. 540 (January 22, 1990).

2. See Raymond Lotta, *America in Decline* (Banner Press, Chicago, USA, 1984) for a more complete discussion of this point regarding the redivision of the world. It is interesting to note here the difference between the reorganisation brought about by world war and the current situation in which East and West Germany are seeking to reunify. The West German imperialists, especially, are promising the benefits of citizenship in a powerful imperialist homeland to the masses East and West without suffering or hardship. In fact, they have been very careful to promise, completely unrealistically, that the whole "buy out" can take place without the tranquility of the German burgher being disturbed in the least.

Notes on the Political Economy of Cuba — Part II

Burn Down the

By Rudi Mambisa

Following is the last of a two-part series. The first, in AWTW 1989/14, focused on agriculture. It dealt with how sugar cane came to enslave Cuba and capture even Castro and his armed rebels once they seized power. This second half takes up the consequences. — AWTW

V. The Evolution of Neocolonial Planning

In 1963 Castro went to the USSR to discuss stepped-up trade; shortly after, Cuba's plans to cut back on sugar production turned to plans to increase it.

For Che Guevara, who was in charge of Cuba's economy, the words "socialism" and industrialisation were equivalent: they meant the development of the productive forces. The goal was to accumulate surplus as bountifully and quickly as possible — which meant growing sugar. As he explained, "The entire economic history of Cuba has demonstrated that no other agricultural activity would give such returns as those yielded by the cultivation of sugar cane. At the onset of the Revolution, many of us were not aware of this basic economic fact, because a fetishistic idea connected sugar with our dependence on imperialism and with the misery in the rural areas, without analysing the real causes, the relation to the unequal balance of trade."⁵³ In other words, he imagined that the decisive feature of Cuba's dependency was external — to whom and for how much its sugar was sold, rather than seeing dependency as inherent in the organisation of capital in Cuba itself. It amounted to believing that "socialism" means doing a better job of running the same old plantation.

Through the mid-1960s until

1970 the Cuban government attempted to run the economy by direct command from top government officials and to mobilise all possible resources to drastically increase sugar production, with the idea that the surplus could then be used to buy industrialisation. Because of official efforts to stir up popular enthusiasm to achieve bourgeois goals during this period, and because of Guevara's emphasis on "spiritual" rather than material rewards for labour, some scholarly critics of Cuba have erroneously labelled this Cuba's "Sino-Guevarist" or "Maoist-Guevarist" period, a confusion which, in turn, has been adopted by leading pro-Cuban scholars as well.⁵⁴ A more correct understanding was put forward by a writer who pointed out that the Cuban leadership was "coining slogans of the Chinese type while staking everything on development of the Russian type."⁵⁵ What he meant was that the Cuban government was trying to use a "Chinese" method — or a caricature of one, since the Chinese revolutionary policy of relying on the masses was not simply a matter of stirring emotions but rather based on their political consciousness and all-around initiative in politics and economics, and did not exclude paying people according to work — for "Russian" goals, i.e., for the purpose of accumulating surplus in the most profitable sectors of the economy rather than building up the economy in an all-around way, based on balanced and simultaneous development of agriculture, light industry and heavy industry.

The Cuban government had no choice but to switch to "spiritual" rather than material incentives during this period because the economy was a disaster and remained so for

well over a decade. This didn't mean that its policies became revolutionary, for as Mao himself remarked about similar developments in Poland in the 1950s, "Overemphasis on material incentives always seems to lead to the opposite. Writing lots of cheques naturally keeps the upper strata happy, but when the broad masses of workers and peasants want to cash in and find they cannot, the pressure to go 'spiritual' is no surprise."⁵⁶

From the mid-1960s on, Castro's government subordinated everything to the goal of obtaining 10 million tons of sugar in the 1969-1970 harvest. The sugar was sold through advance contracts but the harvest was a failure and the sacrifice of the rest of the economy left the island in a shambles. In the 1970s Cuba began using the methods of economic calculus introduced during the 1965 Liberman reforms in the Soviet Union. This method formulates economic plans by weighing possible profit and loss as determined by complex economic calculations — simulating a free market mathematically, and applying capitalist criteria on every level, while maintaining state ownership over most of the means of production. In fact, these techniques associated with Kosygin in the Soviet Union were not fully implemented there until the advent of Gorbachev; in this sense, Cuba can be considered a pioneer in some of the economic policies brought in with *perestroika*.

The 1975 First Congress of the Communist Party of Cuba institutionalised the logic that had implicitly set the country's general orientation since the revolution, with the change that henceforth it was to be applied nakedly, thoroughly, systematically and from top to bottom, by computers instead of guesswork.

Cane Fields!

"The peso should really control all economic activity", the Congress resolved.⁵⁷ This is tantamount to declaring the accumulation of capital as the *purpose* of Cuba's economy. However, the consequences of such economic policies for Cuba were different than for the USSR. The USSR was an imperialist superpower, while Cuba, upon joining Comecon (the Soviet bloc common market) in 1972, was consigned to the role of sugar producer in the Soviet-led division of labour — the same position it once was assigned in the U.S.-led Western bloc.

The SDPE (System of Economic Management and Planning) enthroned at the Cuban Communist Party's First Congress in 1975 set workers' wages according to bonuses (up to 30% of base rate) for meeting or surpassing production norms and allowed for awards to administrative and technical personnel of up to the equivalent of an extra month's salary per year. In 1980, the system of "free or direct labour contracting" gave management the right to hire and fire with few restrictions. In the mid-1980s, with the introduction of "permanent productivity brigades", the system was further refined so that workers were paid according to the profitability of their particular small-scale work unit.

Then in 1986, in the wake of the collapse of sugar and oil prices, the Cuban Communist Party's Third Congress called for a "return to Guevarism" and renewed emphasis on "spiritual incentives". Guevara's writings and slogans in praise of "spiritual incentives" were hauled out of the storerooms where they had mouldered since the early 1970s, and Castro, who had barely mentioned Guevara for a decade and a half, began to crank out references to Guevara at a furious rate. The

threat that Gorbachev's perestroika might mean even further belt-tightening in Cuba sent Guevara's stock soaring still higher on Castro's rhetorical market and fueled a "rectification" campaign that is still continuing. Its basic content is austerity. Castro has had no trouble in factoring this "Guevarism" into the Soviet-installed "economic calculus" that replaced Guevara's more impetuous style of management, because they share the same underlying orientation.

Today it has become undeniable that Cuba's economic prospects are as bleak as those of the rest of Latin America. But the theory of "comparative advantage" Guevara espoused is still brought out to claim that at least Cuba has used sugar cane to buy some development. To refute this claim, it must be shown that *this development itself has been a driving factor in Cuba's current disaster*, or, in other words, that what Cuba has "bought" with its sugar sales money has not been socialism, but increasing dependency.

VI. The Industrialisation of Dependency

What has been accomplished in the thirty years of Cuba's post-revolutionary development and the decade and a half since the adoption of the SDPE?

The most dramatic change has been the mechanisation of loading sugar and much of the process of cutting it, a feat unmatched anywhere else in the world. If this had not been accomplished, it would not have been possible to abolish the tiny plots on which families sustained themselves during the "dead season" between harvests.

But this degree of industrialisation of sugar has not freed Cuba

from sugar monoculture. Sugar workers and their families represent one-sixth of the total population. Sugar also takes up one-third of the country's industrial means of production. It represents 82% of the country's exports,⁵⁸ little changed as a percentage since the 1920s.⁵⁹ The only real difference from the pre-Castro situation is that now 69% of the sugar is exported to the USSR and its bloc instead of to the U.S.⁶⁰

Although the percentage of cultivated land planted to cane has risen to 75%, the total amount of land actually under cultivation has declined⁶¹. Canefields considered too isolated or hilly to be profitably farmed by machine are now simply abandoned, and for that reason, the government has not attempted to boost sugar production from its recent average level of about eight million tons, about the same as in Batista's time. Aside from a few export crops like citrus fruits (which have replaced tobacco as Cuba's second most important export), food crop production has shrunk. This is not because more food can't be grown or because it is not needed, but because it cannot be produced profitably according to imperialist criteria. Non-sugar agriculture sank from 35% of total farm production in 1962 (an historic high point) to 29% in 1976, livestock declined from 34% to 31%, while sugar production rose accordingly.⁶² Although there was some investment in rice, with production shifting from labour-intensive to capital-intensive methods (i.e., from the "Chinese" model to the "American" model), the amount of this most basic staple of the Cuban diet allotted each individual under rationing was cut in the 1970s and held down in the 1980s because demand continued to far outstrip domestic production and

imports in general had to be squeezed somewhere.⁶³ Production of yucca, malanga and beans dropped precipitously; milk production declined; production of potatoes, tomatoes and pork rose somewhat faster than population growth. Only in eggs (which are especially amenable to high-tech capital-intensive production) has there been big progress.⁶⁴ But the chickens eat Soviet grain.

According to the United Nations' Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), Cuba's agricultural performance overall, including sugar, was tied for last place in Latin America from 1962-1976.⁶⁵ Since 1976 sugar and citrus fruit production have improved considerably but not production of the items that make up the basic diet of the masses.

The individually-owned farms and co-ops which utilise 8% and 12% of agricultural land, respectively,⁶⁶ present a complicated situation, since they grow export crops (tobacco, coffee, even sugar cane) as well as producing most of the root-crops, vegetables, dairy and other domestic foodstuffs. Overall, this land increased its productivity more than state land between 1962 and 1984.⁶⁷ Nevertheless, this sector was drained by low government prices for produce (especially until 1976) and taxes (from 1982-1986, during the period when free farmers' markets were allowed).⁶⁸ After 1986, these markets were abolished and once again obligatory government prices were fixed. The 1986 move coincided with difficulties in securing chemical inputs for the cane-fields due to the shortage of foreign currency, and the Cuban government reacted predictably. This, too, shows the structured dependency of Cuban capitalism, because while from the point of view of capitalism taken in the abstract, i.e., of production efficiency, the individual and co-op sector should have received more, not less, state support, still the sugar crop is far more vital in terms of earning the foreign capital the economy is addicted to and which is of paramount importance to Cuba's comprador-bureaucrat ruling class.

In the decades after the revolution, Cuban industry grew at an average rate of 5% according to an estimate for the years 1959-1972 given by a critic of Castro,⁶⁹ and

6.5% during the years 1965-1980 according to a competing estimate by a more pro-Castro researcher.⁷⁰ This is not very impressive in itself. During the first decade and a half, manufacture as a share of overall production is said to have declined sharply.⁷¹ Since then, there has been some industrial development; Cuban industry has been more "successful" than agriculture, in terms of the increased value of its output. But in qualitative terms it has only industrialised dependence, because of the relations between industry and agriculture, because of the relations between various branches of industry itself, and because of the relations between Cuban and imperialist capital. South Korea is an example of a country that has attained the status of a major exporter of manufactured goods without ceasing to be crushed by imperialism. In other words, Cuba's most basic problem is not the level of its productive forces but its production relations. Again, the comparison with Mao's China is useful, since China was a far poorer country that accomplished much more than Cuba by travelling an entirely different road.

First, regarding agriculture, Mao established a general policy of taking "agriculture as the foundation and industry as the leading factor", as a Chinese textbook on political economy written under the leadership of Mao's line explains.⁷² This means "the support of agriculture by all trades and industries is an important characteristic of the socialist economy."⁷³ China's agricultural production rose by 1.5 times from 1949-1970 in China, and food grain production doubled during this period, while industrial production rose by 18 times.⁷⁴ Although Mao saw agriculture as an important source of accumulation, he was most emphatic that the development of the economy overall had to mean developing agriculture as rapidly as possible and not looting it to build up industry at the expense of agriculture. In Cuba, agricultural output has stagnated for the last 30 years and food production in particular has suffered. Mao regarded a proper balance between agriculture and industry as indispensable for the proletariat's ability to ally with and transform the peasants, and he contrasted this to the exploitation of agriculture by indus-

try and of the rural areas by the cities in bourgeois society.⁷⁵

Agrarian revolution as the only means to feed the people is one aspect of its importance for new democratic revolution. The other is that development of industry also depends on the development of agriculture, in terms of cheapening wage goods (the food and other goods people buy with wages), providing important raw materials necessary for self-sufficient industry (such as foods to be processed, cotton, hemp, leather, wood, etc.) and in providing a market for industrial production of both consumer and producer goods. In most imperialist countries, agriculture developed in the earliest stages of industrialisation. In Cuba, however, both before and after Castro's revolution, the linkages between agriculture and industry have been weak and industrial production has been oriented by foreign capital rather than by the needs of agriculture and overall economic development. This disarticulation between industry and agriculture in Cuba is no different from the pattern of development in other oppressed countries in Latin America and elsewhere.

The question of whether or not industrialisation serves the development of an integrated national economy also involves the mix of what is produced, that is, the relations between the various sectors of industry, including the balance between the production of the means of production (machinery and physical inputs, i.e. department I goods) and of wage items (for consumption, i.e. department II goods). The extreme imbalance and disarticulation between these two production departments is another important link in the chain that binds Cuba to foreign capital.

In the last decade Cuba has increased its ability to partially or wholly produce a few department I goods, so that today it produces about a third of the capital goods it uses. This is considerably lower than Brazil, Mexico or South Korea, to take what bourgeois economists consider "positive" examples of industrial development in the Third World, and qualitatively different from revolutionary China, which became basically self-sufficient in capital goods. Furthermore, the

advances in producing capital goods Cuba has achieved are leading away from balanced industrial development and a self-sufficient economy.

Almost 30% of Cuba's domestically-made producer goods are for machines to plant, harvest, load and mill sugar cane, without counting those items indirectly destined to serve cane, such as transportation goods, which make up the second biggest category after machines.⁷⁶ The mechanisation of the cane harvest has led the development of capital goods production, and indeed, Cuba's industrial development. But because it is rooted in the linkages of sugar cane (that is, the backward linkages, involving the process of planting and harvesting cane, principally, as well as, to some extent, the forward linkages involving processing sugar and cane products), the evolution of Cuba's capital formation has not been able to escape the general lines imposed by imperialist production relations. It has actually demanded an increase in imports. Cuba does not produce bulldozers, tractors, excavators, etc., nor the other agricultural inputs it depends on, such as pesticides, herbicides and chemical fertilisers. At the same time, light industry (essentially for consumer goods) has lagged far behind the country's needs, because of the allocation of industrial resources to the needs of sugar cane, instead of developing a light industry based on agriculture that in turn can both fulfill the consumption needs of agricultural and industrial working people, and serve as a market for producer goods and a source of accumulation.

This lack of light industry has resulted in a continuing high burden in consumer good imports that must be paid for in foreign currency, while the bleeding of resources from non-sugar agriculture has meant that a continuing high percentage of the country's basic foodstuffs must also be imported.⁷⁷ All this in turn dictates exporting more of what Cuba does best: sugar. Because of these factors, the ratio of imports to overall production had already increased substantially in the late 1970s.⁷⁸ Exports were supposed to rise in parallel, but by the mid-1980s Cuba was not able to export enough to pay for the imports without which its economy cannot run. Hence its cur-

rent economic malaise, which, taken globally, comes down to a crisis of the organisation of capital in Cuba — and capital it must be, despite its "socialist" tag, since without the imperialist world market Cuba's sugar industry is nothing but useless hunks of metal and muddy fields. It is a crisis in which the immediate triggering factor is the increasing difficulty in the realisation of the capital invested in Cuban sugar cane (the turning of commodities into money capital) in the context of an imperialist world economy which is rendering increasingly enormous amounts of sugar cane surplus.

What of Cuba's non-sugar based industries? One of Cuba's biggest industrial success stories today is the manufacture of computer parts, which make up 2% of Cuba's total production of capital goods only a few years after start-up of this line.⁷⁹ They are designed to be exported for manufacturing computers in Eastern Europe. This kind of industrial growth within the imperialist "division of labour" assigned by Comecon was to play a major role in Cuba's future industrialisation efforts⁸⁰, although upheaval in Eastern Europe could substantially alter these plans.

Among Cuba's other major industries are wheat processing (using imported wheat); cotton, yarn and textile goods (using imported cotton); steel and metal processing (using imported raw materials to make unobtainable spare parts for ancient American machines); motor vehicle assembly, tyres (using imported oil); and chemicals (also using imported materials). The production of cement is one of the few lines mainly based on domestic materials.⁸¹

In addition to sugar, Cuba also exports high-quality tobacco products (hand-rolled cigars are its *most important manufactured export*), seafood, citrus fruits, coffee and nickel. It imports oil, machinery and transportation equipment, food (including rice, wheat, vegetable oil and low-grade coffee and tobacco, to the disgust of the masses), chemicals and inedible raw materials such as wood, pulp, cotton and natural fertilisers.⁸² From this list it is clear that what prevents Cuba from developing an independent economy is not *principally* a lack of natural

resources, but the supremacy of commodity relations, since much of what is imported could be produced in Cuba or replaced by something else, and the degree of need for much of the rest is to a large extent determined by these same relations.

Cuba's apparent lack of sufficient oil is a very serious obstacle. It has been argued that Cuba's poverty in hydrocarbons (oil, gas and coal) and hydroelectric potential (damable rivers) leaves it little choice but to rely on sugar cane, which is said to be "solar-powered", if it is to avoid an even greater dependency in consequence of the development of industries that could only run on imported oil.⁸³ First of all, however, Cuba does produce some oil, and it could not be ruled out that in the future a revolutionary Cuba might repeat China's experience of a country formerly declared "oil-poor" by Western experts that became self-sufficient in oil, thanks to the massive efforts of Chinese workers and technicians to solve problems of oil exploration and production. Current Cuban government policy is to discard this possibility; recently, exploration drilling at Veredero, considered to be a promising site for oil, was abandoned when Castro decided to develop tourism at Veredero instead.⁸⁴

Second, Cuba has made great strides in using *bagasse* (the dry pulp that remains after the sugar has been ground from the stalks) as fuel. Experience in other countries shows that bagasse and bagasse-derived products (such as alcohol) can power industry and transportation. Brazil's success in this was spectacular, until the falling price of oil internationally made it cheaper than ethanol, and the law of value demanded that this measure of potential economic independence be abandoned. So far, Cuba has used bagasse mostly to power the cane industry, rather than to attack its tyranny. Thirdly, much of Cuba's imported oil is used to fuel the processing of export products, such as nickel, which is one of the biggest single industrial consumers of energy; a revolutionary Cuba would halt this policy.

A graphic way to grasp Cuba's real status is to correlate the relationship between sugar exports and Cuba's overall economic perfor-

mance. The relationship is not quite direct, but in general, the value of sugar sales in any given period (as calculated by the price paid and the amount sold) plays a determining role in the economy's overall performance in that period, both because of the central role sugar earnings play in the country's economic indices and because industry depends on the foreign inputs bought to a large extent with sugar earnings.⁸⁵ Whatever Castro says or does takes place within that context, on that stage, within those *bounds*. No less than in slave and colonial times, Cuba's is still a fettered economy.

In revolutionary China, there was also a close correlation between successful harvests and industrial growth in any given year. The difference is that China's agricultural and industrial production served each others' development, while for Cuba, sugar cane is useless without the workings of the international circuits of capital through which this commodity's value can be realised and transformed into more capital.

The overall economic growth rate achieved at the price of such drastically increased dependency has been rather mediocre, only about 4% of GSP from 1959-1989 according to figures given by Castro.⁸⁶ Cuba's average GNP growth from 1973-1982 was 4.8% according to a London firm that calculates the neighbouring Dominican Republic's average yearly GNP growth during the same period as 4.5%.⁸⁷ South Korea's average yearly GNP growth 1962-1985 was 8.5%.⁸⁸ Actually, hidden in what Castro gives as Cuba's 30-year average is its more recent trend: little or no growth throughout the entire second half of the 1980s.⁸⁹

Of course, the average annual growth rate is no indicator at all of a country's liberation, since it reveals little about its relations of production. The point is, however, that Castro chose to follow the path of dependency with the argument that in this way Cuba would achieve the economic growth rate he falsely called a necessary precondition for national liberation. Thirty years later, it has achieved neither.

China, by contrast, sustained an annual average GNP growth rate of 5.6% from 1953-1974, according to

U.S. government statistics.⁹⁰ This was done with no foreign material aid, few foreign loans before 1957 and none at all afterwards, with absolutely no accumulated debt, foreign investment or any other form of national enslavement. This growth rate was also achieved on the basis of all-around balanced economic development and not the extreme disequilibrium produced by imperialist-sponsored growth everywhere else in the Third World, where a number of countries selected for intensive imperialist capital investments have achieved spectacular growth rates for awhile, only to run up against the limits of unbalanced and disarticulated growth.

The qualitative nature of socialist China's growth is far more impressive than its quantitative growth — but even so, the Chinese experience shows that quantitative economic growth can be achieved on the basis of thoroughgoing revolution against imperialism and its domestic allies. If Cuba had burned down the cane-fields, distributed the land of the latifundia to the former peasants and slaves, allowed those for whom there was no productive employment in the capital to return to the countryside and built up industry based principally on the resources and needs of agriculture, its economy might have grown faster, not slower; and at any rate it would have won national liberation and built socialism and not dug itself deeper into captivity with every hour of toil.

What about the lives of the people? Studies made by scholars of various degrees of pro-Cuban inclinations in recent years have tended to confirm, to one degree or another, some basic facts of dependency, but a persistent argument has been that at least the standard of living of the masses in Cuba is higher than most other countries in Latin America. The literacy rate is very high, as are some indices of health. Cuba's infant mortality rate (11.9 per 1000 live births in 1988) is the lowest in Latin America, and even lower than many minority ghettos in the U.S., as Castro brags with some justice.⁹¹ Critics have pointed out that Cuba had the lowest infant mortality and general mortality statistics in Latin America before Castro's revolution as well.⁹² The average live expectancy at birth in Cuba is 73, which

compares favourably with imperialist countries.⁹³ Cuba also resembles the imperialist countries in another way: it has achieved an advanced world-level suicide rate (21.7 per 100,000 deaths), which doubled between 1970 and 1985.⁹⁴

There has been no evidence of widespread hunger in Cuba. But the average diet is nutritionally very poor. The roots and beans that are popular favourites are difficult to obtain, because the government considers them too labour-intensive to grow, although unlike most of Cuba's export crops to which labour is allocated instead, *viandas* require little foreign fertilisers, pesticides and machinery. Few fresh vegetables are available. Fruit, produced abundantly, is for export. For the same reason, a cup of coffee is a luxury in this coffee-exporting country. Cubans often complain that they can't stand the inordinately large amounts of dairy products (often imported) and eggs included in the official diet, meant as a protein source to replace the (domestic) pork they enjoy. The sugar ration is four to six pounds of sugar per person per month (depending on the region), for home consumption, without counting the endlessly available free sugar in public eating places. A joke has it that the government introduced yogurt so that people will have something else to pour sugar on.

This diet is determined by the needs of an export-plantation economy. It does not promote independent economic development. It is not healthy (the Cuban government press brags that the country's diet brings about "the diseases of an advanced country" — high incidence of heart attacks, high blood pressure and related illness, obesity, etc. — as though this were a mark of Cuba's progress). And the masses don't even like it.⁹⁵

Havana has avoided the swollen shantytowns full of peasants surrounding many other Latin American capitals mainly because Cuba's population has grown little over the past decades. It has kept its birth rate low and shipped off its "surplus" population to the U.S. About 8% of its 10 million people have leapt from the frying pan into the fire, continuing a trend which began in the 1940s when Cuba's

countryside first began pouring its inhabitants into the factories and ghettos of the United States.

The majority of Cuban families live in the same houses their families occupied before Castro.⁹⁶ This is a shocking reflection of just how little social transformation there has been. In 1984, Cuba abandoned publicly-owned housing by requiring renters to buy the government-owned houses they lived in. This was meant to reduce the cost to the government of housing maintenance (70% of total housing expenditures — an indicator of how little new housing was being built) and to promote private construction and ownership of new housing.⁹⁷ Castro seems to have been taking lessons from Thatcher.

As far as the kind of “human rights” so beloved of the U.S. and its allies, under its 1976 Constitution Cuba has elections for local, provincial and national government which are much less blood-stained than when the U.S. was running Cuba and as democratic as any in the Third World (where the basic masses have no rights anywhere). The percentage of the population in prisons is about the same as the U.S., so neither side has any right to speak on this.⁹⁸

Few serious people today, especially abroad, bother to argue that Cuba is a very revolutionary society. They can't ignore the grim political climate. They tend to limit their claims to quantitative arguments, for instance, that there is more “equality” in Cuba than Brazil, in terms of the distribution of cash income between the uppermost and lowermost percentiles of the population.⁹⁹ The same kinds of arguments could be made for Sweden versus Germany, without touching the decisive question of what kind of societies they are. Furthermore, if the Soviet Union's Cuba were to be compared to the U.S.'s Puerto Rico, one could concoct an argument that Cuba chose the wrong imperialist master. There is always some oppressed country that seems better off than another one; that is no argument in favour of imperialism and imperialist domination.

In Cuba today, the various classes play the same role as before, and if there are new faces among today's government officials and heads of

factories and plantations, that is not very important to anyone but them. The Workers Councils, once touted as a key ingredient of Cuban-style “socialism”, are largely inactive and forgotten. There are discussions about how to fulfill the plan formulated for various enterprises, but there is hardly even any pretence of much more. “We do not discuss balance of payments problems with factory workers”, a head of Cuba's economic planning board told a researcher eager to prove Cuba's “socialism”.¹⁰⁰ Under current circumstances, any kind of “workers self-management” could only be fake anyway, because without a real revolution what happens in Cuba is not basically determined there. As for what Mao called “labour's greatest right”¹⁰¹ — the right to take charge of all society and transform the world — that doesn't even enter into Cuban rhetoric.

VII. Soviet “Aid” Is the Export of Capital

Some people argue that Soviet “aid”, “grants” and payments to Cuba do not constitute capital. But when they are examined, certain unmistakable characteristics appear.

Soviet transfers to Cuba take three forms: aid for particular projects, subsidies in the form of favourable prices for import and export commodities, and balance of payments loans (to cover the difference between what Cuba exports and its voracious import needs). These forms are rather intertwined in practice, for each kind of “aid” is so devastating that it requires a further form of “aid” in its wake.

First, Soviet-bloc direct developmental “aid” is the smallest component of the total, amounting to \$883.5 million in 1986.¹⁰² At the end of the 1980s, the bulk was concentrated in the building of 11 new sugar mills and the modernisation of 23 of Cuba's 159 mills.¹⁰³ Given what has been discussed so far, the odious nature of this “aid” should be clear.

Second, the famous fact that the USSR pays Cuba far above the world market price for its sugar is misleading. Less than 20% of the world's sugar is sold at that price. The rest is purchased on a long-term contract or quota basis or on some

other preferential terms. For instance, during 1988, when the “world market price” of sugar averaged around 11 U.S. cents (\$0.11) a pound, the U.S. purchased Philippine sugar at 18.5 cents a pound.¹⁰⁴ It would be difficult to argue that the U.S. did so out of benevolence. Aside from political reasons, such long-term above-market price contract arrangements are advantageous because they secure an assured quantity and quality of sugar at an assured time, which is of great importance for the continuous operation of giant refineries and vast markets. In fact, the U.S. consistently paid Cuba at a preferential price during the period when Cuba was a U.S. dependency.

According to a somewhat pro-Cuban economist, the cumulative price the USSR paid for Cuban sugar from the early 1960s until 1976 was above the world market price but *below* the average price that the U.S. paid for imported sugar during that same period.¹⁰⁵ After that, Soviet payments were set through a series of complicated and changing arrangements that initially meant somewhat higher sugar prices, but tended to fall in conjunction with the world movement of commodity prices. Soviet prices in the early and late 1980s were above the average price actually paid by the U.S. By 1987, when the world market price for cane sugar was 7.5 U.S. cents, the U.S. was paying its preferred producers 21 cents a pound, and the USSR was paying Cuba 37 cents according to the official rate of exchange for the Cuban peso¹⁰⁶ — perhaps less than the U.S. if the peso were expressed in terms of its real market dollar value.¹⁰⁷

Further, Soviet purchases are not, for the most part, paid for in hard currency, but rather in Soviet goods. As many studies have indicated, including one by the Cuban Central Bank itself, the average price paid for goods the Soviets send their captive markets is twice as high as world market prices for goods of the same quality.¹⁰⁸ One doesn't have to go this far to see that this form of Soviet “aid” to Cuba conceals Soviet extraction of Cuban surplus value.

Thirdly, there are the USSR's loans to cover Cuba's negative balance of trade (which reached an accumulated total of \$5 billion in

1976).¹⁰⁹ They have often been considered a further form of Soviet "aid" because they are long-term (10-12 year), at relatively low interest (2-3%), and payable in sugar or other Cuban exports. But long term or short, loans are a common means by which imperialism seeks to "skin the ox twice", as Lenin put it, once by robbing a country through unequal trade terms and again by compelling it to pay interest on loans used to finance this robbery.¹¹⁰ The apparently low interest rates are meaningless because of the role these loans play in holding together the overall unequal relationship. If current economic conditions have forced the USSR to hold payments and interest on its loans in abeyance for the last several years, this is similar to the situation faced by Western European and Japanese imperialism in regard to their loans to Cuba, and no different from what the U.S. has been forced to do in its relations with Cuba's neighbors in Latin America and elsewhere.

That Cuba does not find its arrangements with the USSR advantageous can be inferred from the fact that in years when Cuba harvests more sugar than needed to fulfill long-term contracts with the Soviet bloc, it sells the excess to the West at prices that apparently defy logic, for it would seem Cuba is losing money by passing up Soviet prices.¹¹¹ To some extent this is because the Soviets cannot always supply Cuba with the quantity and quality of goods required, but it also implies that Cuba finds its real terms of trade with the West no more unfavourable than those with the East bloc.

After sugar, the most important component of Cuban-Soviet trade is oil. In the high-price years for oil in the late 1970s and early 1980s, the Soviets charged Cuba less than the world market price for oil; in the low-price years for oil in the mid-1980s Cuba found itself obliged to pay the Soviets at above the world market price.¹¹² Cuba imports more oil from the USSR than it needs, paying for this oil with up to three-quarters of its sugar exports to the USSR.¹¹³ Cuba then turns around and re-exports the oil at world market prices. (Little oil actually changes hands. The Soviets trade a certain amount of oil in their refineries

in Eastern Europe for a similar amount in Venezuelan refineries. The Soviets then supply Venezuela's customers in Europe and Venezuela supplies Cuba — which in turn sells the oil to other Latin American countries which get it directly from Venezuela.) In addition, the USSR pays Cuba what it considers a subsidised price for Cuban nickel.

This system of trade is as grotesque as anything in the West and has nothing at all to do with the barter of use-values, as some people would have it. For example, in 1983-1985, when the world market price of sugar fell extremely low, Cuba used its available dollars to buy sugar from the Dominican Republic, enabling it to cash in on the slave-like conditions for Haitian field workers that make sugar so cheap to produce there, and sold this sugar to the USSR for oil, which Cuba then sold on the international market for more dollars. In both good years and bad for sugar, it seems that Cuba considers dollars more valuable than roubles.

When world oil prices rose tenfold in the decade after 1973, the price the USSR charged Cuba merely doubled. Presumably the production price of oil in the USSR did not change so drastically, so the result is one of the Soviet's accepting a less than maximum profit for one line of trade (whether it be purchases of sugar or sales of oil) in consideration of the overall profitability of these trade arrangements. If one simply considers the relation expressed in how many tons of sugar are needed to buy a ton of Soviet oil, and ignores the question of the possible values of both commodities in other markets, the terms of Cuban-Soviet trade deteriorated by one-half from 1977 to 1982.¹¹⁴

On the strength of its present and future oil earnings, Cuba, like many Third World countries, adopted a strategy of "debt-led development" in the latter part of the 1970s. Despite what appeared on paper as massive Soviet "aid", by 1988 Cuba's debt to U.S.-bloc countries reached \$5.7 billion. This is roughly comparable, on a per-capita basis, to that of the Dominican Republic.¹¹⁵ Starting in 1986, Cuba was unable to continue making interest payments. It had proved to be extraordinarily vulnerable to exactly the same

factors that unleashed crisis in similar countries in the West bloc, especially the general collapse of most raw material prices on the international market and the rise in interest rates on loans due Western imperialism. At the same time, since Cuba's oil and West-bloc sugar sales are denominated in dollars, as the dollar sank against Western European currencies, the dollar burden of Cuba's debts to European countries became crushing. Cuba has no trade with the U.S. but still the dollar had its revenge.

Cuba publishes no statistics on trade balance and overall indebtedness. Statistics released by the CIA are the most common source of information on this subject. They claim outstanding Soviet loans to Cuba reached \$8.2 billion as of 1986. If true, this plus the \$5.7 billion in unpaid Cuban debts to the West (which continue to pile up despite the lack of new money as unpaid interest payments become capitalised) would give Cuba one of the highest ratios of foreign debt/GNP in the Third World.

The CIA's estimates for how much Cuba has "cost" the Soviet Union maliciously inflate this figure by calculating oil and sugar according to world market values and counting the difference between this and the prices actually paid as a subsidy. On this basis they claim the USSR transferred to Cuba an average of \$2.5 billion a year from 1976-1982.¹¹⁶ But in contrast to the CIA's estimates, an academic team writing for the U.S. Commerce Department concluded, "what is apparently only a subsidy to Cuba in fact also accrues benefit to the USSR. Who gains the most from this is difficult to determine."¹¹⁷

We can't expect the U.S. government to expose the workings of imperialism. But Soviet-Cuban trade and financial relations present a murky picture which has never been thoroughly illuminated in any published analysis because too many factors remain secret or difficult to determine. The question has been posed why the Soviets choose to carry out their transactions like this, and the most reasonable guess is precisely because it conceals things so well. The Soviets and their Cuban compradors have deliberately chosen accounting methods which

obscure the real content of their relationship.

We should not imagine that imperialism consists simply in rich countries extracting value from poor countries, through unequal terms of trade or other means, as did Guevara and the "dependency theory" writers who follow him. More than a few people who call themselves Marxists can see no imperialism in the relations between the USSR and Cuba because they presuppose that imperialist domination can only lead to the "development of underdevelopment" and not a certain degree of growth and industrialisation. But imperialist domination does not at all preclude economic growth in a dominated country. An essential feature of imperialism, as Lenin pointed out, is the export of capital.¹¹⁸ This does not mean that the enterprises and industries, etc., developed in the countries dominated by imperialism must belong to the imperialists juridically, in name. What is developed through the export of capital is a production relation, in which increasingly vast sectors of the oppressed country's economy are integrated into the international circuits of imperialist capital and respond primarily to its needs. The more economic growth occurs under conditions of imperialist domination, the more the country's economy is disarticulated and distorted. The Soviets export their capital to Cuba in the form of petroleum, machinery and chemicals, but it is no less capital just the same. What results is the extended reproduction of dependent relations. Capital accumulates in Cuba only insofar as it is subordinate to imperialist capital and can function only within the bounds of the international circuits of capital, which is to say, only insofar as it is imperialist capital in Cuba and not really Cuban capital.

VIII. Can There be Such a Thing as "Dependent Socialism"?

"Cuba could have avoided dependency only on pain of having renounced the revolution" — this is a common argument by Cuba's defenders. A French author, referring to what he considers the "considerable accomplishments of Cuba", asks rhetorically, "At what

price? The alignment with the USSR, despite often tumultuous relations. But what could Havana do in the face of U.S. aggression and its economic blockade? No country can live in economic autarky, especially when its economic exchanges rest on a single crop — sugar — to which all doors were suddenly closed. The only alternative was to renounce the revolution. That Castro and the Cubans would never do. The people of the Third World want to lift themselves out of poverty and national humiliation."¹¹⁹

The assumption in this argument is that "the revolution" exhausted its tasks when Cuba broke with the U.S. (or when the U.S. broke with Cuba). It was indeed a great step, and a revolution, when Batista and the pro-U.S. latifundistas and compradors were overthrown and the U.S. kicked in the nose. But imperialism, comprador-bureaucrat capitalism and the remnants of slave society and feudalism had not been kicked out. They remain the basis on which Cuban economic life is organised (and hence ultimately its political life as well). Therefore the revolution failed to accomplish any lasting radical change and its leaders became a new counter-revolutionary ruling class.

"The ownership system", the Chinese textbook previously cited emphasises, "is a social relationship.... Marx once quoted Aristotle's remark that 'the status of the master rests not so much on he who purchases the slave as on he who lords over him'. Marx continued, 'the status of the capitalist is established not so much by his ownership of the capital — which provides him the power to purchase labour — as by his power to employ the labourer, that is, the wage earner, in the process of production.'"¹²⁰ In other words, our criticism is not that Cuba entered into relations with imperialists who own capital, but rather that Cuba's labouring people remain imprisoned in a social relationship in which they can work only so long as it profits the accumulation of (foreign) capital and in which all the fruits of their labour go to build up a structure of capital which stands over them and against them. The Cuban working people cannot be masters in their own house as long as the house belongs

to somebody else.

As if he were determined to find ever more vivid proof of just how little Cuba's people count in Cuba, Castro has announced plans for tourism to bring in \$400 million a year, amounting to 40% of its present export earnings.¹²¹ How can a socialist society be built on such a basis, even in terms of what it implies for the material organisation of resources and society, not to speak of the presence of two million relatively privileged tourists from the imperialist countries, with all the social relations they carry as baggage and all the dollars at their disposal? How can a country that lives off imperialism's tourists support world revolution? And if it doesn't support the advance of the world revolution, how can the unequal development imposed on the world by imperialism be overcome and how can the world become communist?

It is not that communism is harder to build in a tourist colony than on a sugar cane plantation, only that the absurdity of the whole thing is more obvious. No socialist country can be built on the basis of any kind of monoculture, but the problem is deeper than that. As the Chinese political economy textbook explains, under socialism "the nature of social production has changed. The goal of social production and the means to achieve that goal have also changed.... [T]he purpose of socialist production is to raise the level of the material and cultural life of the proletariat and the labouring people, consolidate proletarian dictatorship, strengthen national defence, and support the revolutionary struggles of the peoples of the world. Ultimately, it must serve to eliminate classes and realise communism."¹²²

The "purpose of production" means the political line leading the economy and society. Under Mao's leadership, China's economic construction followed the strategy of "be prepared for war, be prepared for natural disasters, and do everything for the people".¹²³ Mao also said that "According to the viewpoint of Leninism, the final victory in one socialist country requires not only the efforts of its own proletariat and its broad masses of people, but must also wait for the victory of world revolution...."¹²⁴ This meant a whole series of strategic decisions in

terms of how to develop China's economy.

What does it mean not to "renounce the revolution", to truly hold out and continue the fight against imperialism? Internally, it has to include carrying out the greatest possible revolutionary transformation of all production relations, while also carrying out the ceaseless transformation of the superstructure (the realm of politics, ideology, culture, etc.) to clear the way for the further transformation of the relations of production and the development of the productive forces which ultimately define the limits of the revolution in a given country in a given period. Dependent development would go against the development of the material conditions for the elimination of classes and class distinctions, of the contradictions between manual and mental labour, between town and country and between industry and agriculture, and of the subordination of women by men that arose in association with the various successive modes of exploitation. It is impossible to transform the consciousness of the labouring people and turn society upside down under their dictatorship without relying on the abilities and initiative of the working people themselves in all spheres.

Further, since no country in today's world is "autarkic", in the sense of being isolated from the imperialist system economically, politically or militarily, only by doing everything possible for the advance of the world revolution is it possible to break out of the confines imposed by imperialism's division of the world into oppressor and oppressed nations, and this too must be taken into account in a socialist country's economic construction. The revolutionary proletariat must recognise the continuing existence of the law of value — the exchange of commodities according to the socially necessary labour-time they embody — and its economic planning must take it into account. But if this law determines what gets produced and how, then this means the expanded reproduction of all capitalism's relations of exploitation. Social inequalities, including between oppressor and oppressed nations, will be considered too costly to overcome and not be targets of

revolution. The advanced forces of production in the imperialist countries and the cheapness of manufacture and other advantages that come with it are not a reason for revolutionaries in the dependent countries to capitulate to imperialism, but rather part of the reason why they must do everything for the advance of the world revolution until it triumphs everywhere.

There can be no such thing as "socialist dependency", a concept put forward by those whose research has brought to light some powerful facts about Cuba's economic reality but who want to find something good about it anyway.¹²⁵ The contradiction Cuba faced was not self-reliance or internationalism, but rather *dependency* or internationalism, for the more a Third World country builds up its economy in a way that allows it to resist imperialist threats and aggression the more it can do to serve the world revolution. "Dependent socialism" is impossible because a dependent country cannot fulfill socialism's tasks.

Castro's flight of rhetoric about Cuba becoming "the last socialist country in the world" was not a solemn recognition of those tasks but a blatant expression of the country's most narrowly conceived self-interest, or rather the pathetic self-interest of a comprador clique. After all the crimes committed by Soviet social-imperialism over the last 30 years, including using Cuba as a pawn in the 1962 "Cuban missile crises" and ranging from the invasion of Czechoslovakia to the invasion of Afghanistan — all of which Castro loudly praised; after all the Soviet reactionary ventures in which Cuba took part, including those in Africa for which Castro first supplied troops and then dutifully brought them home when the Soviets were done with them — now, when it seems that the USSR might more strictly reconsider its accounts with Cuba, suddenly Castro begins to doubt Soviet "socialism"!

Castro welcomed the arms the Soviets offered free of charge with the idea of defending Cuba. In thirty years, Cubans have never used them except in pursuit of Soviet foreign policy objectives. With the exception of a very recent automatic rifle production facility, Cuba does not

and cannot manufacture its own weapons. Both in terms of who really controls the arms and even in the literal sense, Cuba still has no arms of its own but is only holding Soviet weapons.

Speaking of the difficulties making themselves felt in Cuba lately, Castro complained of the burdens of making a revolution "ninety miles from the most powerful empire in history and 10,000 kilometres from the socialist camp".¹²⁶ But the USSR was not too far away to enforce a dependent development on Cuba that in turn has magnified its geographic vulnerability to the U.S. Castro's economic and military policies have led to a situation where its one and only real line of defence is the Soviet Union. He can hardly complain now if it seems that the cheque for which he sold out to the USSR might bounce.

It may be true, as some have argued, that if Cuba had not had Soviet backing initially, the U.S. would have invaded Cuba long ago. But there is evidence that the U.S. was not prepared to accept the consequences of a full-scale invasion and prolonged war in Cuba in the 1960s. Khrushchev's placement of Soviet missiles in Cuba in 1962 had more to do with jostling for advantage vis-a-vis the U.S. than with protecting the island. The subsequent U.S. invasion of Vietnam leaves no room for doubt of the U.S. imperialists' bloodthirstiness, and the 1965 U.S. invasion of the Dominican Republic demonstrates that the U.S. was determined to secure its "back yard", but one can wonder just how many wars the U.S. was capable of fighting at once, and with what consequences for U.S. imperialism. After all, the U.S. lost the war it did fight in Vietnam.

It is not written in any Marxist book that if Cuba had followed a more revolutionary path its regime would have been assured of survival. Since socialism was overthrown in huge Soviet Russia and China, there is no certainty that it could have prevailed in this small Caribbean island right under the U.S.'s nose. Cuba's people have many links to the U.S., and it is possible that some strata would not have stood for the loss of the relatively high standard of living they enjoyed through their association

with U.S. imperialism or that even broader strata would not have been able to resist the threats and lures held out by the U.S. But even this has two aspects, for if the U.S. certainly had its people in Cuba, Cuba had (or could have had) "its people" abroad too, including the many millions of people in the Caribbean and Latin America and others who looked to Cuba, even in the U.S. Thousands of people gathered to greet Castro at his hotel in New York's Harlem after he spoke at the UN in 1960, amidst mounting official U.S. hostility. It may be that Cuba would have faced and perhaps lost a war against the U.S. It also may be that if Cuba had embarked on a real revolution, and if it had fought for Marxism instead of revisionism, the consequences would have been enormous.

The "dependent socialism" idea holds that the Castro regime's often admittedly unsavory relationship with the USSR was the price for saving and developing "the first liberated territory of the Americas". A recent attempt to praise Castro quotes his speech in favour of the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia, "Will [the Soviets] send in Warsaw Pact divisions to Cuba if the Yankee imperialists attack our country, or even threaten to attack it?" You see, the author concludes, Castro really didn't like the USSR: "Rather than simply subordinating Cuba to Soviet policy, Castro was clearly attempting to parlay Cuban support for the Czechoslovakian invasion into stauncher Soviet protection for Cuba against U.S. imperialism."¹²⁷

Such may very well have been Castro's intentions, but the Cuban experience shows that while revisionism and nationalism may go together ideologically, in practice the same outlook that led Castro to sell out the world's peoples for the sake of "Cuba" led him to sell out the broader interests of the Cuban people as well. The views of Castro and his circle may have included some nationalist inclinations, but they were not able and really did not seek to carry out the thoroughgoing transformation of Cuban society in conjunction with the world revolution.

As Mao insisted, in today's world, the tasks of the democratic revolution (against feudalism and imperialism) cannot be accom-

plished by any bourgeoisie in the oppressed countries; the new democratic revolution is a part of the overall proletarian-socialist world revolution.¹²⁸ Although bourgeois forces in such countries will repeatedly clash with the production relations imposed by imperialism and semi-feudalism, their interests and outlook will bring the revolution to defeat if they are allowed to lead it, and they will repeatedly seek to do so. A nationalist outlook which sees the quantitative "development" of an oppressed country's economy as the supreme good in and of itself cannot guide that country to free itself of imperialist domination. Mao's statement that "only socialism can save China" holds for Cuba as well.

In 1966, at the Tricontinental Congress, Castro gave a notorious speech attacking Mao, saying that "When by biological law we start to become incapable of running this country, may we know how to leave our place to other men capable of doing it better."¹²⁹ It was no coincidence that this came at the time that Mao, not much older than Castro is today, was waging a life- and-death battle with revisionist leaders in the Chinese party who would take China on the road Cuba had followed, and arousing Chinese youth and in turn the broadest millions of the Chinese masses in the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, the furthest point yet reached by the world proletarian revolution. The two roads could not stand more starkly opposed. In 1989, the Cuban Party press was to rigorously defend the Tiananmen Square Massacre carried out by Deng Xiaoping, who had led the overthrow of Mao's successors.¹³⁰

The relations of production and all social relations in Cuba will continue to cry out for revolution until another generation of Cubans, armed with the outlook and method of Marx, Lenin and Mao and basing themselves on the most exploited and oppressed in Cuban society, as part of the international communist movement, lead the future authentically communist revolution that is the only solution to the country's humiliation and oppression. Until then Cuba must serve the proletariat and the oppressed of the world as a teacher by negative example. Its lessons, because they concern the revolutionary process from beginning to end,

particularly in other oppressed countries but even in the imperialist countries, are of both far-reaching and immediate importance. □

Footnotes

53. Cited by Brian H. Pollitt, "Sugar, Dependency and the Cuban Revolution", *Development and Change* (The Hague), 2 April 1986.

54. The term "Sino-Guevarism" was introduced in the 1970s by Carmelo Mesa-Lago, and repeated most recently in a book dedicated in large part to refuting Mesa-Lago and other anti-Castro "Cubanologists": Andrew Zimbalist, ed., *Cuban Political Economy* (Boulder and London: Westview Press, 1988). Although Mesa-Lago and Zimbalist have represented two poles of a debate about Cuba's economic performance, the former generally negative and the latter generally positive, their basic analytical models have much in common.

55. K.S. Karol, *Guerrillas in Power* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1970), p. 542.

56. Mao Tsetung, *A Critique of Soviet Economics* (New York and London: Monthly Review Press, 1977), pp. 98-99.

57. Cited by Kay, 1247. Kay gives a useful summary of the evolution of Cuban economic planning.

58. For the year 1983. Carl Henry Feuer, "The Performance of the Cuban Sugar Industry, 1981-1985", in Zimbalist (1987), p. 69.

59. Estimates of sugar as a percentage of Cuba's exports in recent years run higher, generally in the upper 80% range. See *Economist Intelligence Unit Country Profile: Cuba, 1988-1989* (London: 1988), p. 23.

60. Mesa-Lago, p. 82.

61. In 1986 and 1987. Calculated from Banco Nacional de Cuba figures cited in *EIU Country Profile*, p. 13.

62. *Ibid.*, p. 12.

63. Mesa-Lago, p. 203.

64. *Ibid.*, pp. 66, 158. Also see Benjamin et al., chapter V. In the late 1980s the rice ration was five pounds (2.3 kilos)/month, which these authors say usually lasted less than three weeks.

65. Mesa-Lago, p. 37.

66. Cited in Mesa-Lago, p. 38.

67. *Granma Resumen Semanal* (Havana), 22 January 1989.

68. Jose Luiz Rodriguez, "Agricultural Policy and Development in Cuba", in Zimbalist, ed. (1987), p. 32.

69. Andrew Zimbalist and Susan Eckstein, "Patterns of Cuban Development: The First Twenty-Five Years", in Zimbalist, ed. (1987), p. 7.

70. Mesa-Lago, p. 39.

71. Andrew Zimbalist, "Cuban Industrial Growth 1965-84", in Zimbalist, ed. (1987), p. 88.

72. Mesa-Lago, p. 72.

73. *Fundamentals of Political Economy* (Shanghai: 1974, published in English by M.E. Sharpe, White Plains, New York), p. 378.

74. *Ibid.*, p. 377.

75. *Ibid.*, p. 338.

76. Feuer, p. 378.

77. Feuer, p. 106.

78. Food and tobacco amounted to an average of 17% of Cuba's imports from 1982-1984. *EIU Country Profile*, p. 24. This compares to

an average 23% from 1959-1975. Mesa-Lago, p. 86.

78. Imports amounted to 35% in 1978, as compared to an average of 25.7% from 1946-1958. The share of the economy devoted to exports in 1978 (33.8%) was higher than the 1946-1958 average (30.6%). Figures before Castro's revolution are given in terms of Gross National Product and afterwards of Gross Material Product, and the changeover in accounting systems produces some distortions, though trend lines remain the same. Mesa-Lago, p. 79.
79. Claes Brundenius, "Development and Prospects of Capital Goods Production in Revolutionary Cuba", in Zimbalist, ed. (1987), p. 106.
80. *EIU Country Profile*, p. 18.
81. *Ibid.*, pp. 18-19.
82. *Ibid.*, p. 24.
83. Pollitt, "Sugar, Dependency and the Cuba Revolution", op. cit.
84. *Economist Intelligence Unit Country Report: Cuba No. 1 1989* (London), p. 17.
85. Mesa-Lago, p. 84.
86. *Granma Resumen Semanal*, 22 January 1989. GSP (Global Social Product) is a peculiarly Cuban measurement that roughly approximates the value of the Gross Domestic Product minus all services not directly related to production.
87. *Caribbean Economic Handbook* (London: Euromonitor Publications Ltd., 1985), pp. 82-83.
88. *Economist* (London), 4 March 1989, "South Korea's Miracle", p. 93.
89. *EIU Country Report*, p. 2.
90. Joint Economic Committee, *China: A Reassessment of the Economy* (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1975).
91. *Granma Resumen Semanal*, 22 January 1989.
92. Mesa-Lago, 166.
93. *EIU Country Report*, p. 12.
94. Sarah M. Santana, "The Cuban Health Care System: Responsiveness to Changing Needs and Demands", in Zimbalist, ed. (1987), p. 117.
95. See Benjamin et al., chapter XI.
96. Mesa-Lago, p. 174.
97. Susan Eckstein, "Restratification After the Revolution: The Cuban Experience", in Richard Tardanico, ed., *Crisis in the Caribbean Basin* (Newbury Park, Beverly Hills, London, Delhi: Sage Publications, 1987), pp. 224-225.
98. In Cuba, 30,000 out of 10.36 million. (*Latin American Regional Reports: Caribbean* (London)), 12 May 1988) In the U.S., 674,000 out of a population of about 240 million (*New York Times*, 11 September 1989).
99. For instance, see Tom Alberts and Claes Brundenius, *Growth with Equity: The Brazilian Case in Light of the Peruvian and Cuban Experiences* (Lund Research Policy Institute, Sweden: 1979), or any one of Brundenius' similar studies.
100. Linda Fuller, "Power at the Workplace: The Resolution of Worker-Management Conflict in Cuba", in Zimbalist, ed. (1987), p. 152.
101. Mao Tsetung, *A Critique of Soviet Economics*, p. 61.
102. *EIU Country Profile*, p. 27.
103. Wilhelm Jampel, "Cuba: Pays-Membre du CAEM", *Le courrier des pays de l'Est* (Paris), November 1987, p. 15. Another form

of "free" Soviet aid is the current construction of four nuclear power plants, presumably to allow the USSR to put its oil to other uses. A new island Chernobyl would be bad enough, but this is a particularly perilous project for a country sitting under the sights of American bombers.

104. *Far Eastern Economic Review* (London), 1 December 1988.

105. Study by Willard Radell, cited by Richard Turits, "Trade, Debt and the Cuban Economy", in Zimbalist, ed. (1987), p. 175.

106. Andrew Zimbalist and Claes Brundenius, "Cubanology and Cuban Economic Performance", in Zimbalist, ed. (1988), p. 61.

107. Turits on peso/dollar exchange, p. 176.

108. Cuban Central Bank study cited by Zimbalist and Eckstein, p. 20. Similar figure cited by Mesa-Lago, p. 87.

109. Jampel, p. 16.

110. V.I. Lenin, "Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism", Vol. 22, p. 293.

111. Mesa-Lago, 184. Also Turits, p. 171.

112. Jampel, p. 22. Also Susan Eckstein, "Why Cuban Internationalism", in Zimbalist, ed. (1988), p. 171.

113. Turits, p. 176.

114. *Ibid.*, p. 175.

115. Figures for Cuba from *Latin American Regional Reports: Caribbean*, 21 July 1988.

The Dominican Republic, with about six million population, had \$3.8 billion in outstanding foreign debt that year. (*Latin American Weekly Report* [London], 9 February 1989)

116. Turits, pp. 176, 178. He points out that this figure would have to be compared with the \$4.8 billion the U.S. government transferred to various agencies and individuals in Puerto Rico in 1985.

117. Theriot and Matheson, cited by Turits, p. 175.

118. Lenin, *Imperialism*, p. 240. See p. 300 for discussion of imperialism and the growth of the productive forces.

119. Maurice Lemoine, "Quelques mots avant l'atterrissage", in Lemoine, ed., *Cuba: 30 Ans de Revolution* (Paris: Autrement, 1989) p. 8.

120. *Fundamentals*, pp. 272-273.

121. *EIU Country Report: Cuba No. 4, 1988*, p. 12.

122. *Fundamentals*, p. 311-324.

123. *Ibid.*, p. 324.

124. *Ibid.*, p. 502.

125. A term used by Turits, p. 178-180.

126. *Granma Resumen Semanal*, 7 August 1988.

127. Frank Fitzgerald, "The Sovietization of Cuba Thesis Revisited", in Zimbalist, ed. (1988), p. 148.

128. Mao Tsetung, "On New Democracy", Vol. 2, p. 346.

129. Castro speech of 17 March 1966. Cited in Thomas, pp. 1477-78. Also in *The Guardian*, "A Fading Star in His Own Theatre", 15 April 1989.

130. *The Independent* (London), 17 August 1989.

The Final Demise...

(Continued from page 39)

Just Who Is Afraid of Civil War?

The sporadic confrontations with supporters of the old regime in the days following December 22 have displayed the dead-end situation the coup makers were in, as well as their true fears. Although anxiously claiming to represent not only the "will" but alas the "revolutionary will" of the Romanian people, the National Salvation Front (NSF) and its Executive Committee were nonetheless terror-stricken — for some reason — that the armed confrontations against the old regime's existing militia would be carried out by anyone — particularly the masses themselves — other than the regular units of the official army.

Those who claimed to represent "the will and provisional government of the popular uprising" refused to be defended by the masses of people, but they easily and trustfully delivered themselves to the protection of Ceausescu's army. Moreover, addressing themselves to masses and youth who confiscated guns during the turmoil and local battles, and who burned with the desire to use these guns against the old regime, spokespersons of the NSF issued one threat after another on television, announcing that "civilians carrying arms will be considered Securitate members or provocateurs." There were immediate orders to collect civilians' guns.

The news about the armed revolt of the masses against the existing order in Romania, and the images of civil war distributed by television to all five continents were definitely of a kind that would upset all the crowned imperialist bandits and their lackeys. Stopping the insurgents from crushing the state's armed forces, and the masses of people from engaging in armed struggle against supporters of the existing system, was in the interest not only of those who made the coup but of the imperialists as well. Slaves possessing guns, and, moreover, seizing the opportunity and acquiring the experience to use these guns, is a phenomenon that has always terrified slave-owners.

One of the reasons why the number of those killed during the fighting

with Ceausescu loyalists was deliberately exaggerated to 60-70,000 was to create pessimism among the masses about their military strength and combat potential. If the experience gained by the masses in such a short time and their innate tendency and capacity towards even more merciless battles were not reined in fast, this would have far worse consequences for the Romanian bourgeoisie as well as their imperialist friends East and West. For the rulers themselves were well aware that it was impossible for the trumped up coup d'etat to bring about a solution to the underlying crisis. It would be nothing but a complete disaster from their point of view if the masses were to enter future confrontations brought about by the crisis — which was sure to persist and carried the possibility of further polarisation — with more comprehensive and richer experience of civil war gained in this battle.

In spite of this, their propaganda was extremely contradictory: they told the masses "to give up their arms and trust the army for their security", yet this was the same army which shot down most of those killed during the confrontations. And had the masses in revolt not waged heroic battles, had they not achieved important gains, which led to serious defeats and signs of hesitation in the ranks of the army, by demonstrating their willingness to fight all the way to the end, there is no guarantee that the massacre in Tiananmen Square would not have been repeated in Bucharest and other cities.

It should still be pointed out that the fact that the masses of people were deprived of leadership, particularly of the guidance of the proletariat and Marxist-Leninist-Maoist ideology, prevented them from summing up the gains and weaknesses on this issue, as in all urgent issues on the agenda. One of the most instructive manifestations of this is that, when the masses gained positions against the armed forces of the regime with their own determined fighting, and the Army immediately evaluated the situation announcing that "it passed to the side of the popular uprising", this encouraged the ideology of spontaneity that inevitably and naturally exists among the masses; this in turn gave way within the ranks of the insurgents to a certain dizziness with success and an

exaggeration of their gains — to such an extent that it served the maneuvers of the ruling class, its army and state. It strengthened illusions like "the unity and liberation of the whole nation" which cast a shadow on the issue of classes and class distinctions. However, as can be observed in the flurried propaganda and stabilising attempts of the ruling class, the economic and political dimensions and structure of the crisis, intensified by imperialist contradictions on the international level, are of a nature capable of turning these illusions into their opposite.

Grand Viziers Who Give Up the Crown to Hold onto the Throne

The claims and declarations of the NSF, especially its Executive Committee which holds the reins, that it "represents the successful (!) Romanian revolution" and "the popular uprising and its revolutionary will" are nothing but sophistry and a mirror to the dead-end situation of the owners of the existing system.

Likewise, the claim that, "as the Provisional Government of this revolution which was accomplished through a popular uprising", they "have dissolved all the organs of power of the Ceausescu regime", is also a sophistry. And they will face, in fact have already begun facing, immense problems in their attempts to push these sophistries down the throats of the people. They might be compelled to waste away as "scapegoats" a few more veterans of the regime like Ceausescu and his wife, in order to preserve the existing state and social order as well as their ruling class position. But everyone is aware that except for his majesty Ceausescu and his crown, the entire state and class relations remains untouched.

With the decision of this provisional government, the word "socialist" has been dropped from the official name, the "Socialist" Republic of Romania — it had long since been just a tag-on. There were too few who believed that Romania was socialist for such a change to suffice in deceiving the masses. Only some bourgeois elements — like Perincek, Yorukoglu, the journal Cozum² etc.— who plan to deceive the masses of people in Turkey with their own Ceausescu-type "socialism" can

be offended by this long overdue change in protocol.

The masses and especially the toiling masses in Romania have risen up to throw off the yoke of exploitation and oppression — and not just against the phoney "socialist" label attached to it — and it is still their real demand and need. The masses, who refuse to leave the streets of Romania and head back home, are at least clear about the records of those who (continue to) exercise political power. Newly declared President Ion Iliescu was among the most promising senior members of the Ceausescu regime. In the name of the Party, he had been the leader and ideologue of the so-called Romanian Young "Communists", an organisation in charge of training elite bureaucrats. He had served as a secretary of the Central Committee under Ceausescu and — until his dispute with Elena Ceausescu — he was the most favoured from among the bright prospects of the Party bureaucracy. Nicolae Militaru, Defence Minister of the new government and one of the main coup plotters, is the most senior and politically experienced topgun of the Romanian Army. Mihai Glutac, the highly respected general of the Ceausescu regime, now heads the police forces. General Stanculescu has been made Minister of the Economy. Andrei Plesu, former foreign diplomat under the Ceausescu regime, has been named the Minister of Culture. Veteran bureaucrat Dimitriu Mazilu is now a member of the new government.

The army, the fundamental pillar of all bourgeois states, including the Ceausescu regime, continues to be at the heart of the new government, because it was not the state that changed. Nowhere has it ever been seen that one state can be replaced by another through a coup d'etat; through coup d'etats, persons and governments come and go, while states are preserved.

The crisis that came to the surface with the popular uprising is not a crisis of this or that clique or one that can be taken care of with a coup d'etat. First and foremost, this crisis is the structural crisis of *the entire State of Romania as part of the network of imperialist relations of production*. Even if spokesmen from East and West talk about a

“Romanian revolution”, they are knowledgeable enough of the essence of the situation to realise that they cannot console themselves with the demagogy they use to spread confusion among the masses.

The masses of people in Turkey know through their own experience that whenever imperialists side with a “revolution”, there definitely must be something foul in this, or a vicious trap is being set for someone. But then there are also our social-compradors, our comprador-“Marxists”, who run to the rescue of the imperialists in order to muddle the revolutionary feelings, however spontaneous, of the masses; the poison they spread is far more dangerous than all this imperialist propaganda. The political trap that the imperialists want to set in talking about “a revolution” is being defended and strengthened by these comprador-“Marxists” who claim that, no, “it was a counter-revolutionary military coup overthrowing the anti-imperialist, socialist regime”. In case the imperialists fail to make the masses fall into their trap by tripping them up from the right, our “revolutionary” compradors like Perincek assign themselves the duty of tripping them up from the “left” — just in case, you never know. The Dec. 31 issue of Perincek’s *2000’e Dogru* (Towards 2000) has been devoted to this duty.

The reader can see that the imperialists find it to their advantage to vituperate against the past situation of the Romanian state-capitalist bourgeoisie, which is still in place, by presenting it as “changed” and “reformed”, accompanied by demagogy about the “Christmas Revolution in Bucharest”. This is because Romania was the state that offered some of the best possibilities in the Eastern bloc for Western imperialist finance capital and banks to exploit the masses of people. And one of the fundamental reasons underlying the economic and political crisis this state finds itself in today is this unbridled imperialist pillage. The Perincek/Kilic/“S”P circle, however, is jumping up and down to defend the functioning of this same state before the December developments. In order to help the Western imperialists’ disgusting, hypocritical claims that “this state was in the service of Stalinism, not us”, they are

trying to make believe that the capitalist past of the existing state, which operated in full cooperation with Western capital-owners, was “anti-imperialist/ socialist”. Listen to this: “In the past 25 years, few countries pursued as consistent an anti-imperialist politics as Romania. That’s why Ceausescu was levelling the debts to zero.” They hail as “anti-imperialist” the International Monetary Fund and the imperialist states and banks, as well as the politics which they enforced in order to exploit the masses to the bone. They say that this situation will now “change” after the coup. All this is simply to speak from the mouth of the imperialists once again. It is the product of a conscientious lackey logic that even imperialists in both East and West would have a hard time finding. Anybody who opposes our qualification of these people as *comprador-“Marxist”*, including those who still try to wiggle around it, should better think again!

The way imperialists define “revolution” and the way comprador-“Marxists” define “revolution”, “anti-imperialism” and a “socialist regime” are one and the same. Both lead to the same door — the existing imperialist order and the existing counter-revolutionary state. But that’s not where it all ends. Once again, Perincek and gang run to assist the imperialists to support the Romanian bourgeoisie and army whole-heartedly in repressing the rising masses and preventing the state from slipping out of their hands; the imperialists even considered mobilising their armies so that the revolutionary crisis could be brought under control before it deepened further. Perincek’s crew attacks the masses of people rising up against exploitation and oppression by villifying them as “Maradona youth”, in the lumpen manner of Caliskan.

One of the benefits of a revolutionary situation is that it places those impostors who once pretended to be “revolutionaries, workerists, defenders of students’ and womens’ rights” squarely on the side of the exploiters and against people who revolt because they need revolution! It makes the likes of Perincek and his friends scream with fear at the top of their lungs about “Maradona youth”, in the service of the ruling

class — through Hurriyet Holding’s³ distribution network. It rips their masks apart!

Perincek & Co., who opened up a comprador-“feminism” shop (not even feminism) under the pretence of “defending women’s rights”, translating some Juliet Mitchell and the like and participating with a big appetite in the Chinese revisionists’ attacks on Chiang Ching and her comrades, are naturally supporting the Ceausescu regime’s policy of “forced pregnancy or prison”, where women are used as incubators under police supervision, against the young “Maradona youth” women. (See AWTW, No.1985/1, “Babies or Prison”)

Perincek & Co. publish the DEMKAD⁴ statement and join the chorus chanting “Elena Ceausescu will never die”. The fact that Romanian state capitalism, imperialist finance capital in East and West and the IMF use the bodies of Romanian women as incubators is not an issue that their comprador mentality will oppose. Their slogan is: “Long Live the Gynecological Cops, Down with Maradona young women who don’t like them!”...Well, Elena Ceausescu “may not die”, but look how she and her husband are turned into sieves in front of firing squads by their own blood-sucking class brothers when the masses rise up, because Elena’s class and imperialist friends are terrified by the wrath of the oppressed — and, apparently, so is Perincek & Co.!

The Truth as Expressed in the Language of the Plebs

Those who once fulfilled every obligation of the counter-revolutionary three worlds theory and praised all the reactionaries in the world except for the Soviet social imperialists and their lackeys, in order to support the racist fascist state of the Republic of Turkey from the “left” against the rising tide of popular struggle, and who assumed the role of defending the state and army of the bailiffs looking after Turkey for their Western imperialist masters, particularly the Amerikkkan imperialists, are today marketing their same talents once again. The pretended disputes among them over the accounting books of the TIKP⁵ are disgusting. They compete with

each other in protecting the imperialist order and the states run by it from the masses of people.

If Halil Berktaş⁶ has the nerve to discover Marxism in the person of his majesty the “dynamic” social imperialist Gorbachev, how can Dogu Perincek, his ideological brother, not see in the revisionist Ceausescu a “consistent anti-imperialist” and “a socialist” — if of lower gradation — jewel, “whom he respected previously and still respects him today after he has been executed”. The TIKP pot rolls around and joins up with its lid once again, because this pot and lid were cast so that together they form a secure place where world reaction can take refuge (against those who want revolution).

Let’s pose a question to Perincek, who insists he is not “an ambassador” — apparently he aspires for higher and more respectable comprador positions: since all those who hold the ropes within the NSF are “honourable” and competent senior members of the “anti-imperialist” even “socialist” Ceausescu regime that you so “deeply respected”, could it be that perhaps what they have accomplished is a “socialist revolution” after all!? Or consider just the opposite: if they are the dancers of “the USA-USSR conspiracy” doing “Lambada in Malta” — contrary to your claims, the ability of these revisionists to dance to the tune of the dollar is nothing new — then how did they ever implement the “anti-imperialism and socialism” of Ceausescu and his politics “that had the great support of the people” and “honoured national (hear hear!) pride”?! Wasn’t it through the same “Lambada” state wisdom they are displaying these days?...

Those who write the following do not even hesitate to express openly whose interests they are out to protect: “Look at the hole that has been opened in the middle of the Romanian flag! The Balkanisation that approaches from that hole is an immense threat to the people of Turkey. Even for Turkey’s sensible rulers!” Breh-hey you great fascist Turkish state, why would you ever hesitate to appoint this faithful bag of comprador wisdom as your president! Don’t you see with what devotion the chauvinist blood that your state needs is surging in the veins of

this valuable son of yours, pumping his brain so that he can be vigilant in the face of possible “threats” that may be directed against you?!

Above all, this is the cry of carrying the imperialists’ and their lackeys’ Turkes-type seeds of strife between the proletariat and toiling masses of Romania and Turkey. It is a counter-revolutionary cry whose sole purpose is to oppose the Romanian masses in their uprising against the existing system, and prevent the desire and responsibility of the oppressed in Turkey and the world to support this popular uprising and protect it against the “coupist” Romanian ruling classes and their imperialist friends (that they lean against together with the Republic of Turkey)! It is an old and familiar TIKP-Graywolf⁷ howling, pointing to the “sorry” predicament of the Romanian state which was shaken and threatened with the righteous rebellion of the masses, and calling the “sensible rulers of Turkey” to take rapid precautions.

They are doing all this in order to cover up the class nature of the existing fascist state of the Turkish Republic, to hide the fact that it is a state that should see a much worse end than what the Romanian masses accomplished in their country so far, a state which should be cut to pieces and burned to the ground, and to make it seem that the oppressed masses and the ruling class have something in common.

As for the hole in the Romanian flag, you grandson of fascist Kemal⁸: it is not a bad beginning for the Romanian masses — once a hole is made, it can be enlarged. But come and see what that flag of the fascist Turkish state will look like with a similar hole, with the star and the crescent gone... Now, isn’t this exactly what terrifies you?!

Whether or not there is a fake-“socialist” emblem in the middle of the Romanian flag, that flag is the flag of the Romanian bourgeoisie. There is no need to be upset about ripping off that fake emblem which was kept there by force so as to befuddle the minds of the working class into carrying it; on the contrary, there is a need for revolutionary proletarians to use these holes and cracks against the Romanian ruling class and the organisers of the coup, in order to encourage and raise

the consciousness of the workers and the masses so that the whole damned bourgeois flag is thrown into the sewer. But of course, it is not surprising that comprador souls who held their own Party Congress in the 1970s under the fascist flag of the Turkish state, accompanied by the singing of the National Anthem, and who corresponded with Turkes’s Gray Wolves in newspaper columns to discuss how they were “planning to unite the whole 45 million under the Turkish flag” are naturally quite disturbed by the hole in the flag of the Romanian bourgeoisie.

As opposed to this, the evaluation of the developments by the Romanian people, who desire an all-around and radical change and who have risen up with the accumulated fury of objective need for a revolution, is far more valuable and on the mark than these false sophistries of comprador-“Marxists” and all the revisionists in Turkey. With their own experience and expression they are saying: “the hat has changed, but it is the same husband.” That the plebs who objectively need a proletarian socialist revolution, under conditions of crisis which has no other solution, are searching in Romania’s streets is underscored by the spontaneous grumbling in this assessment.

The masses are groping for ways to express that the nature of the Romanian state has not changed. But their enemies, by saying the opposite in various forms, are hoping and trying to make them believe that “the nature of the state has changed.”

In order especially to expose the theoretical debt of our comprador-“Marxists” and revisionists to the imperialist bourgeoisie, it would be very helpful for the proletariat to recall the Marxist-Leninist-Maoist theory on the state and review it in the light of developments in Romania. On the question of the state Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought states:

Throughout the historical development of human society, the state, wherever it is a necessity and exists and will exist, can, without exception, only be an instrument of class dictatorship; it can never and nowhere be “independent”, it cannot represent or apply the nonsense of “democracy for all”. In any case, the

state cannot be anything other than the class dictatorship by one or another class; it is a means of dictatorship by one of the classes that takes shape on the basis of class relationships embedded in the economic base of society, it does not represent persons, groups or sections, or any trend and movement. Furthermore, the state, besides not being independent or neutral, is not a simple instrument, a tool (a toy) that can be transferred from one class to another, used by now this and now that class, or put to service in the interest of one or the other class through politics (and by the threat of arms). The state represents the embodiment of the society's objective organisation, and what determines the character and nature of this objective social structure is the existing historically particular division of labour which the state is an integral part of, and the existing objective production relations which the state regulates the reproduction of and actively serves.

The crisis which hit the surface in Romania with a social explosion and rebellion by the masses is the structural crisis of the Romanian state as a whole. There has not been any revolutionary change within this structure, nor could a coup d'état by the army transform the nature of this structure. Moreover, the fact that the Romanian state was also used by Western imperialist capital for reproduction in the conditions of Romania has played a particular role in the explosion of this crisis and exhausted all hopes of solving it through intervention today by the Western imperialists.

Only proletarian revolution could have put an end to their misery: by sending the state-capitalist bourgeois class to hell! Unfortunately, this time history caught the proletariat and the oppressed masses unprepared: they were deprived of a leadership that could analyse the root causes of their suffering, organise their ranks for civil war, show the path to their own political power through the cracks opened up by the winter cold, and guide them through a serious dress rehearsal for power. But let no one fall into thinking that the masses, who are now speaking out in the streets of Romania about how they have been manipulated, are years away from realising that it is not

enough to oppose the bourgeoisie simply in relation to the "socialist" tag which these bourgeois at one time found convenient to wear or with the weapons of bourgeois ideology cleared of its phony "socialist" veneer.

Support the RIM, Strengthen and Build Up the Maoist Parties

The lessons of all this are concentrated in a single point: Waters are once again rising in the riverbeds of proletarian world revolution! The crisis of the imperialist world system is dragging the imperialists towards war, towards intensifying exploitation and oppression, but these same contradictions are also accelerating the revolutionary struggle of the proletarians and masses.

This can no longer be disputed.

If all around us we are already witnessing what Engels had predicted for the time of the war and its aftermath, this indicates that opportunities are increasingly present and beginning to cry out for us to prevent imperialist world war with proletarian revolutions. Today's developments especially underscore how correct was our Party's following criticism of opportunist and revisionist trends:

"The essential point they completely miss is that the current spiral of imperialist dynamics between the 2nd and the looming 3rd World Wars, which has taken so many red bases away from the proletariat in the period following World War II, objectively embodies the material conditions and opportunities which will surrender to the proletariat more, perhaps qualitatively more, than it has taken away!" (*Iktidara*, p.16, January 1988)

As Lenin said in a similar situation, let the dead bury their dead — proletarians have their Marxist-Leninist-Maoist ideology analysing the opportunities shaping up for proletarian world revolution, and great tasks to be fulfilled with the guidance of this ideology.

To proletarian revolution, there is no alternative in this world!

10 January 1990
Communist Party of
Turkey/Marxist Leninist
(TKP/ML),
Maoist Party Centre

Footnotes

1. Cited by Lenin in "Prophetic Words, June 29, 1918, CW vol. 27, pp. 494-495.
2. Dogu Perincek distinguished himself for his devout services to counter-revolution by boot-licking dedication to the reactionary Three Worlds Theory, to the Chinese revisionists before and after the 1976 coup in China, and by his singularly grotesque distortions of Mao's teachings in order to peddle his defence of legalism, non-violence, and the existing order, including support for the 1980 military coup's re-establishment of "law and order", under the pretext of "the social-imperialist threat". He and his cohorts, including Berktaç, planned but failed in 1971 to assassinate Ibrahim Kaypakkaya, the founder of our Party the TKP/ML, because of his crippling exposure and critique of their revisionism.
- Yorukoglu is the leader of a splinter group from the revisionist pro-Moscow party.
- Cozum* is a legal monthly journal of a formerly focoist current now seeking to moderate its positions and render Gorbachev reforms "more profound" and "socialist".
3. Hurriyet Holding is a major comprador-feudal newspaper and publication network.
4. DEMKAD is the abbreviation for the so-called women's association led by revisionists.
5. TIKP, Workers and Peasants Party of Turkey, was a legal reactionary party led by the D. Perincek clique before the September 12, 1980 coup, and later used by the same gang to fashion their current Socialist Party which tries to be a legal and legitimate opposition party.
6. Halil Berktaç, together with Perincek, is an infamous ideologue of the former TIKP counter-revolutionaries; very recently he seemingly parted ways with Perincek to cast his lot with the mainly pro-Moscow array of revisionist groups and circles to form another Stolypin-type socialist workers' party similar to Perincek's.
7. "Gray Wolves" is the self-proclaimed name of the para-military gangs organized by pre-1980 coup Nationalist Action Party led by the fanatic fascist Alpaslan Turkes clique and secretly funded and backed by the regime to carry out death-squad attacks against the masses and revolutionaries.
8. Mustafa Kemal, otherwise known as Atatürk, was the founder of the existing comprador-feudal state in 1923; Kemalism has been a fascist ideology used by the state and the ruling class, and was a major propaganda drum of the 1980 coup.