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ON THE NATURE OF THE CHINESE COMMUNIST PARTY

AND ITS REGIME --

POLITICAL REVOLUTION OR DEMOCRATIC REFORM?

By S. T. Peng

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The Distorted Permanent Revolution

By S. T. Peng

In my article "A Criticism of the Various Views Supporting the Chinese Rural People's Communes," on criticizing the assertion of Comrades Swabeck and Liang that the "communes are administered by elected councils, not by bureaucratic edict," I was led, in carrying their position to its logical end, to the following conclusion:

"If Comrades Liang and Swabeck really believe what they assert, then not only the communes comprising 500 million peasants, but also every level of government in China, is a reasonable form of democracy, since every level of the people's congress is 'elected by the People' the same way as in the communes. So what we have is not the dictatorship of the bureaucracy but proletarian or socialist democracy in China. This not only completely reverses our assessment of the nature of the CCP and its regime, but also repudiates the resolution 'The Third Chinese Revolution and Its Aftermath' (which was approved by Comrades Liang and Swabeck) passed by the SWP in 1955, since this resolution asserts that the CCP is a Stalinist party and its governmental regime a bureaucratic dictatorship necessitating political revolution." (SWP Discussion Bulletin, Vol. 21, No. 1, p. 22.)

Less than four months after I wrote the above, Comrades Liang and Swabeck came out with another article "The Third Chinese Revolution, The Communes and the Regime." In this new article, they certainly followed the logic of their position to its ultimate conclusion. They openly call on the SWP to abandon its "present basic position"; that is, the position that "the CCP is a Stalinist party and its regime a bureaucratic dictatorship necessitating political revolution" passed by the SWP in its resolution of 1955, and adopt the new line offered by them as the correct position -- the CCP is not a Stalinist party and its regime is not a bureaucratic dictatorship, therefore "the program and slogan of the political revolution is invalid for China" (SWP Discussion Bulletin, Vol. 21, No. 2, p. 29) and what is required in China today is "a program of democratic demands" (Ibid., p. 29). If this "new line" is adopted, not only must the "present basic position" of the SWP be overthrown from the bottom up, but it is inevitable that our attitude towards North Korea, North Indochina, Yugoslavia, Poland and even Russia must also be changed. This would constitute an epochal change in the strategy of the world Trotskyist movement towards the countries in the Soviet bloc, of decisive effect on the future of our movement. Hence it is incumbent on every Trotskyist to give the problem serious consideration -- and to probe the facts and the theory involved with the closest attention in order to reestablish our position.

The Nature of the CCP -- Is It Still a Stalinist Party
or Has It Departed from Stalinism?

The main grounds advanced by Comrades Swabeck and Liang in proposing that the SWP abandon its "present basic position" is "changing reality," especially "changing reality" in the agricultural sphere -- the development of mutual aid groups into "the

superior type of socio-economic organization" represented by the communes. They attempt to demonstrate that the "basic position" reached by the SWP in 1955 has become outdated and no longer corresponds entirely with this "changing reality." Actually, the "new line" they propose is not based on "changing reality," but on their reappraisal of the nature of the CCP and its regime. The so-called "changing reality" is only a pretext for overturning the "present basic position" of the SWP.

For instance, they say: "The resurgence in 1947-49 triumphed when the CCP engaged in a struggle for power by revolutionary means, disregarding Stalin's policy of coalition with Chiang Kai-shek. By this action the Chinese Communist Party departed from Stalinism in the properly accepted sense of this term and proved itself an adequate instrument for the historic task." (Ibid., p. 24. Emphasis in original.) If this judgment is correct, then the CCP, when it took power back in 1949 was not a Stalinist party, having "departed from Stalinism." Therefore, the resolution passed by the SWP in 1955, and approved by Comrades Swabek and Liang, was basically incorrect and it is not necessary to cite against it the "changing reality" since then. Why did not Comrades Swabek and Liang frankly go to the heart of the question? Apparently, under guise of appealing to the "changing reality," they want to back out of their responsibility for supporting the SWP resolution in 1955.

Let us begin by considering the question in the form in which it has been raised by Comrades Swabek and Liang -- whether or not the nature of the CCP changed.

To say that the nature of the CCP changed during its struggle for power in 1947-49 is not something new. Early in 1951 Germain offered the following opinion:

"Our movement has traditionally conceived the outstripping of Stalinism by the masses as involving profound splits inside the Communist parties. The Yugoslav and Chinese examples have demonstrated that, placed in certain exceptional conditions, entire Communist parties can modify their political line and lead the struggle of the masses up to the conquest of power, while passing beyond the objectives of the Kremlin. Under such conditions, these parties cease being Stalinist parties in the classical sense of the word." ("What Should Be Modified and What Should Be Maintained in the Theses of the Second World Congress of the Fourth International on the Question of Stalinism?" (International Information Bulletin, April, 1951, p. 5.)

In this Germain is defending "theoretically" the revisionism that Pablo had begun to display toward Stalinism. (Pablo at that time had already begun to publish his revisionist views; that is, under mass pressure Stalinist parties can take the revolutionary path that leads the masses to power, the establishment of proletarian dictatorship and socialist reconstruction.) Concerning this, I offered detailed facts and analysis in my "Report on the Chinese Situation," emphasizing the following few points:

"First, since the CCP withdrew from the cities to the countryside in 1928, it established a considerably solid power and army (the peasant army). For these twenty years, it used this army and power constantly to rule over the peasant masses (as we know, the backward and scattered peasants are the easiest to control), and hence a stubborn and self-willed bureaucracy took shape (especially in its manner of treating the masses). Even toward the workers and students in the Kuomintang areas, it employed either ultimatic or deceitful methods instead of persuasion.

"Secondly, in ideology, the CCP has further fortified and deepened the theory of Stalinism through its treatment of a series of important events -- the defeat of the Second Revolution, the peasant wars and the Resistance War against Japan, etc. -- especially through its resistance to the criticism of Trotsky and the Chinese Trotskyists in regard to its concepts and policies.

"The 'systematic' and dogmatic 'New Democracy' of Mao Tse-tung is nothing else but an ideologically and politically deepened and crystallized expression of Stalinism, that is to say, it is the expression of obstinately holding onto the 'revolution by stages' in direct challenge to the Permanent Revolution.

"Thirdly, over these two decades, the CCP has been an organization receiving special attention from the Kremlin, and it follows that its relations with the latter are particularly intimate. After the Soviet Union occupied Manchuria and rearmed the CCP with weapons taken from the Japanese captives, the Kremlin's control over the CCP became more rigorous than ever." (International Information Bulletin, February, 1952, p. 18.)

My conclusion was "that the most important turns the CCP experienced in the past were entirely the result of pressure from the Kremlin, and in violation of the will of the masses. Even the present 'turn' toward the seizure of power was not a product of its yielding to mass pressure and its violation of the objectives of the Kremlin, but on the contrary resulted from the mortal pressure of Chiang Kai-shek, in complete agreement with the Kremlin." (Ibid., p. 19.) Precisely because of the uncompromising policy of Chiang and under peril of the latter's attack, the CCP, in order to survive -- and with the consent of Stalin -- was compelled to counterattack and take the road to power. Therefore, the CCP has certainly not departed from Stalinism so that it "ceases being a Stalinist party." This opinion which I expressed has demonstrated its durability; it has not been refuted by either Germain or Pablo or anyone else.

Eight years pass (1951-1959) and Comrades Swabeck and Liang pick up the old opinion of Germain defending Pablo's revisionism which they opposed. (By approving the SWP resolution in 1955 that the CCP is a Stalinist party, Swabeck and Liang put themselves on record against Germain's and Pablo's position.) They now use this old opinion of Germain's as a major argument to challenge the SWP's "present basic position." This demonstrates that to oppose an incorrect view or to accept a correct one without deep consideration and understanding opens the door to undue susceptibility to the

influence of immediate events and even impressionism.

In order to counter such a capricious appraisal of the nature of the CCP, I feel that a reinvestigation of the nature of the CCP factually and theoretically is needed.

First, let me make a simple explanation of what is Stalinism in general or what is "the distinctive and exclusive characteristic of Stalinism" (Comrades Swabek's and Liang's words -- SWP Discussion Bulletin, January, 1960, Vol. 21, No. 2.) As we all know, Stalinism was formed in the process of degeneration of the first workers' state in a backward and isolated situation. Its social base is the petty-bourgeois bureaucratic caste. Due to the specific privileges of this caste, its ideology is conservative, compromising and opportunistic in nature. In face of disastrous defeat or rejection by an opponent, its opportunistic policy turns to the other extreme -- adventuristic or imprudent action. And when this adventuristic action proves unsuccessful, it reverts to its original position. Sometimes, a combination of adventurism and opportunism occurs. The highest expression of its opportunism is the theory of "socialism in one country" from which is derived the line of "peaceful coexistence" between socialism and capitalism as a replacement of the strategy of international world revolution. Organizationally, Stalinism substitutes bureaucratic centralism for proletarian democratic centralism -- and this is concentrated in an omniscient faultless leader. By stifling all party democracy, conditions are prepared for a dictator given to arbitrary orders and indulgence in the cult of the individual. This organizational method is applied to the masses; persuasion is replaced by commands or ultimatums and even deceitfulness; in the state apparatus, police or GPU absolutism appears; the revolutionary opposition is met with slander, smear and persecution (including murder, frame-ups, liquidation, etc.).

Here, it is not necessary for me to recall the domestic and foreign policies (opportunism and adventurism) carried out by Stalin after he usurped power, nor to recall how the Communist parties in every country were converted into diplomatic instruments of the Kremlin. In the case of the Chinese Communist party it, too, was deeply poisoned by the opportunistic policies of Stalinism and suffered a tragic defeat in the process of the Second Revolution. Then the surviving revolutionary forces were buried in adventurism. They became ideologically and organizationally Stalinized -- the image of the beloved Stalin. Before being forced to struggle for power, it was a genuine Stalinist party, as even Comrades Swabek and Liang have admitted. Now the question is: Do the facts show that it has departed from Stalinism since coming to power?

Let us consider some major facts to see what generalization can be reached:

(A.) Under the peculiarly favorable situation created by the Second World War, the CCP overthrew the landlord-bourgeois regime of the Kuomintang party. Nevertheless it still continued to practice the opportunistic policy of class collaboration or four-class bloc, hence a "coalition government" of the workers, peasants,

petty-bourgeoisie and national bourgeoisie was formed. It decreed the protection of bourgeois property, "equal consideration to state and private industry" and "equal benefit to labor and capitalist." To compromise with the landlords and rich peasants, it even postponed the acutely needed agrarian reform demanded by the peasants.

(B.) On the other hand, except in permitting the workers to join unions, it prohibited any independent organization of the workers, any strikes -- even strikes against private capitalists to improve living standards. Peasants were permitted to fight gangsters, and to fight for reduction of high rents and interest, but not the expropriation of land from the landlords or the elimination of interest on loans.

(C.) Its foreign policy not only completely followed the Stalinist "peaceful coexistence" line, it even openly declared the sanctity of alien property in China.

(D.) It arbitrarily arrested, imprisoned and even shot down revolutionists who disagreed with such policies, especially its political opposition, the Trotskyists.

(E.) It not only practices absolute bureaucratic centralism in the party; it, in addition, holds up Mao as the "Eastern Sun," the Chinese Stalin. He, like Stalin, is the only interpreter and elucidator of Marxism in China and the only person who decides the policy of the state and the party. His "new democracy" ideology has been defined in the rules and regulations of the party (passed by the Seventh Congress of the CCP) as "the guiding line for all kinds of work in the CCP" and "the foundation on which members of the party strive to raise their own consciousness." (The second paragraph of the general program of the CCP reads: "The guiding line for all kinds of work in the CCP is Marxist and Leninist theory together with the ideology practiced in the Chinese revolution -- Mao's theory." In the party rules and regulations one reads: "All members have the following obligations: (1) to strive to raise one's consciousness and learn the fundamentals of Marxist, Leninist and Mao's thought. . . ") Any policy decided by Mao and any speech uttered by him are for the membership to study and obey and absolutely not for them to criticize and oppose.

These are absolutely indisputable facts showing the CCP in the period from its coming to power to the outbreak of the Korean War. Is it not enough to prove: the CCP not only did not depart from Stalinism during the struggle for power, but still remained a Stalinist party in the period after taking power (1949-1951)?

Maybe Comrades Swabeck and Liang will argue that at least after the outbreak of the Korean War, particularly after 1953 the CCP departed from Stalinism, since it not only armed itself against American imperialism, suppressed the counterattack of the domestic bourgeoisie, landlords and rich peasants (such as, the "Five Anti Movement"), but also abandoned the new democracy policy, adopted the "general line of socialist construction" (proclaimed in the beginning of 1953) and began the Five-Year Plan of industrialization, agricultural collectivization and even communalization.

Yes, after the outbreak of the Korean War, under the mortal threat of the attack of the imperialists from abroad and the counterattack of the domestic bourgeoisie and landlords, just as in face of Chiang's all-out attack, the CCP again was forced to take a big step forward by abandoning the reactionary illusion of new democracy and adopting a series of revolutionary measures. But this does not equate to departure from Stalinism. This was an empirical jump to the left within the frame of Stalinism. It started gradually expropriating bourgeois property instead of protecting it (through both state and private operation), but it still allows the capitalists to draw "fixed interest," and also allows the bourgeois and petty-bourgeois parties to exist legally and partly participate in the regime. Its foreign policy in particular still follows "peaceful coexistence" as developed in the "Five Principles" of Chou En-Lai and Nehru. On the other hand, it still limits the democratic privileges of the workers and peasant masses and still suppresses the revolutionary Trotskyists and other revolutionary elements. Bureaucratic centralism in the CCP and absolutism in the state regime are flourishing. Its practice of industrialization depends on the administrative lash; agrarian collectivization and communalization especially are carried out by administrative decree, amply manifesting its adventurism. We must not forget that Stalin practiced state industrialization and agricultural collectivization without departing from Stalinism. In carrying out these policies, Stalin used administrative decrees shot through with adventurism and intended not for the benefit of the workers and peasants but for the benefit of the bureaucracy. The CCP policy of industrialization and collectivization is a copy of Stalin's, with certain corrections but the same in nature.

Here I must specifically stress that if a party, deeply rooted in Stalinism, wishes to depart from Stalinism and return to Marxism and Leninism, this cannot conceivably be done without a serious internal struggle -- an unlimited open discussion on the basic revolutionary theory of the present epoch and on political and organizational questions within the party. The thorough elimination of the opportunism, adventurism and bureaucratic centralism characteristic of Stalinism as well as the riddance of obstinate Stalinists has to be realized in the process of discussion. But within the CCP, neither before coming to power, nor in the process of taking power, nor in its turn to the "general line of socialist construction" after it was in power, has there been any such purge of Stalinist ideology.

In fact, just the opposite. When Stalin was still alive, the CCP ordered its members, the cadres in every organization, teachers and students in school, etc., to study Stalinist ideology -- in the pattern of the "study of Stalinist ideology movement" after the Nineteenth Congress in the Soviet Union. After Stalin died, in his funeral oration, Mao said: "All the writings of Stalin are imperishable records of Marxism and Leninism. 'The Fundamentals of Leninism'; 'The History of the Communist Party in the Soviet Union' and his final extraordinary writing, 'Socialist Economic Problems in the Soviet Union' are the encyclopaedia of Marxism and Leninism and the synthesis of the experience of the communist movement in the past one hundred years." (The writings mentioned here by Mao

embody precisely the "essence" of Stalinism and the "crystallization" of his betrayal of Marxism and Leninism and his falsification of the history of the Bolshevik party.) The Central Committee of the CCP following the line of this speech, immediately mobilized on the largest scale the "Study Stalinist Ideology Movement," forcing all members of the party and youth organization, teachers and students in the schools, cadres in organizations of all levels and officials in all mass bodies to participate. This movement lasted for some months, every participant having to listen to numerous reports and discuss them.

After Khrushchev's liquidation of Stalin's cult and admission of some of his fantastic errors and crimes at the Twentieth Congress of the Soviet Union, the CCP, although compelled to admit that some errors were committed by Stalin in his old age, still did everything to defend him and praise his great contributions to fortifying the Soviet Union, building socialism and elucidating Marxist-Leninist ideology. (See "On the Lesson of Proletarian Dictatorship" put out by the CCP.) Mao said at a Central Committee meeting of the CCP: "We have to defend the dead Stalin." That is to say the "glory," the "achievements" and the ideology of Stalin have to be defended.

Finally, after the outbreak of the Hungarian revolution, the CCP, defending the interests of the Stalinist bureaucracy, not only did not show any sympathy but did all it could to smear it -- denouncing it as a counterrevolution. At the same time, they praised and gave resolute support to the merciless policy of the Kremlin in suppressing this revolution.

From the facts cited above, we have adequate reason to conclude that the assertion of Comrades Swabek and Liang that the CCP "departed from Stalinism in the properly accepted sense of this term" is baseless. Facts speak just the contrary. And judging from their extreme abhorrence of the Hungarian revolution, and the "Study Stalinist Ideology Movement" which they have undertaken, Stalinism in the CCP, or at least in its leading cadres, has become strengthened and more stereotyped.

The Contrast between the CCP Regime and the Stalin Regime in the Soviet Union

If we acknowledge that the CCP is a Stalinist party, then the nature of its regime is naturally settled. But Comrades Swabek and Liang maintain that the CCP departed from Stalinism during its struggle for power. Hence they assert that "the Peking regime is not a Stalinist-type regime. . . ." (SWP Discussion Bulletin, Vol. 21, No. 2, p. 29.) In defending this new idea, they cited a great deal of theory and material. So I am forced to follow them in the process of further investigation.

Comrades Swabek and Liang themselves raised the question in the first place: "Can the regime be defined by simple allusions to its training in the school of Stalinism, or by reference to Stalinist characteristics alien to socialism?" And they answered it themselves: "Such references are not very helpful for serious

study. . . . We should analyze carefully both the similarities and the contrasts of Chinese development with those of the Stalin regime in the Soviet Union." (Ibid., p. 22.) They think that the CCP "training in the school of Stalinism" and "Stalinist characteristics alien to socialism" are irrelevant and "not very helpful for serious study." According to their theory, then, "training in the school of social-democracy," or reference "to social-democratic characteristics alien to socialism" are "not very helpful for serious study" of a social-democratic party. Thus they completely forget Lenin's most important teaching: "Without revolutionary theory, there is no revolutionary action." Here, I leave aside temporarily the relation between revolutionary theory and action; that is, the nature of action decided by theory (including the nature of the regime). Let us take a look at "the similarities and the contrasts of Chinese development with that of the Stalin regime in the Soviet Union." On this, Comrades Swabeck and Liang tell us:

"We have always attributed the rise of the Stalinist bureaucracy, and its crystallization into a privileged caste, to the conditions of a particular historical juncture. Basically, its rise was due to the world situation and a special correlation of internal factors and forces. Mention need be made here only of such outstanding factors as the economic backwardness of the country and its isolation in a hostile capitalist world."

Right, in the Soviet Union we attributed "the rise of the Stalinist bureaucracy and its crystallization into a privileged caste to the particular conditions of a historical juncture. Basically, its rise was due to. . . the economic backwardness of the country and its isolation in a hostile capitalist world." But Comrades Swabeck and Liang are mechanical in their approach to the "similarities" and "contrasts." They say: "The Third Chinese revolution unfolds in a distinctly different historical period and under different historical conditions" (Ibid., p. 23) and so China cannot undergo "the rise of the Stalinist bureaucracy and its crystallization into a privileged caste." However, taking a dialectical approach, we must consider the following fundamental points:

(A.) If the "economic backwardness" of Russia is taken as the most basic objective condition for "the rise of the Stalinist bureaucracy, and its crystallization into a privileged caste," then the "economy" of China is more "backward" than Russia, a fact that is acknowledged by Comrades Swabeck and Liang. For instance, they say: "To be sure, the new China started out from a position even more economically backward than did the young Soviet Union." (Ibid., p. 23.) "Bureaucratism arises from the need to apportion an insufficient national product. The poorer the society that issues from the revolution, the more dangerous is bureaucratism to socialist development." (Ibid., p. 27.) This means that in China objective conditions for the formation of "Stalinist bureaucracy and its crystallization into a privileged caste" are more favorable than they were in Russia.

(B.) Only with direct aid (including military, economic, cultural and technical aid) from the victorious working class in

the advanced capitalist countries can "the rise of the Stalinist bureaucracy, and its crystallization into a privileged caste" be avoided. No such condition exists in China today just as it did not exist in Russia in its time.

Yes, Comrades Swabeck and Liang argue that "the Chinese revolution, in its development, has been able to draw assistance from the now well advanced resources of the Soviet Union, both military and economic." (Ibid., p. 23.) But they forget that despite the "now well advanced resources" Russia has today, it is still a degenerated workers state under a Stalinist bureaucratic dictatorship. Its "military and economic" assistance to China can, of course, help the latter to resist the invasion of imperialism (as in the Korean War) and build a socialist-type industry; but on the other hand, by bringing the CCP under its control and making it more dependent, the Kremlin bureaucracy facilitates the growth of the Chinese "Stalinist bureaucracy and its crystallization into a privileged caste." A concrete example of this was the influx along with the "military and economic assistance of Russia" of thousands of military, political, economic and cultural advisers and all kinds of specialists or technicians, etc. Being of the bureaucratic caste, they bring with them to China the bureaucratic method in their work and the habit of granting special privileges to the new generation of bureaucrats in China.

On the international side, the period and the conditions facing the CCP are greatly different from what they were in the Soviet Union in its time. But there is one basic similarity. That is since the second world war, the working-class movement in the advanced countries (Germany and France) just as after the first world war suffered defeats. The nationalist movement in the Far East, Near East and even North Africa is rising, but with the exception of North Korea and North Indochina, the regimes fall into the hands of the native bourgeoisie, who form so-called democratic parliamentary regimes (as in Ceylon, India, Burma, Indonesia, etc.) or military dictatorships (as in Egypt, Iraq, etc.). These bourgeois democratic regimes or military dictatorships can neither inspire the Chinese working class nor counter the growing bureaucracy; instead they strengthen the myth of "peaceful coexistence," the foreign policy of the Chinese bureaucracy, by providing the screen of neutralism. There is still another important factor; the only advanced capitalist country in the Far East -- Japan -- is entirely under the control of American imperialism. By using Japan as a base and tying South Korea, Taiwan and South Indochina together, American imperialism has set up a blockade or encirclement that threatens China.

(C.) The Russian Bolshevik party took power through an uprising in which the working class under Lenin and Trotsky led the peasants. Due to the backwardness of Russia and a series of defeats of the working-class revolution in the advanced Western countries, the revolution became isolated; this led to the degeneration of the most revolutionary party and the loss of state power to the bureaucracy. But the CCP from the very beginning was under the leadership of a Stalinist -- Mao Tse-tung, who not only did not mobilize the workers to lead the peasants through an upris-

ing in the cities to overthrow the landlord-bourgeois regime, but who instead suppressed to the utmost the activities of the working class, relying solely on the peasant armed force to attack the cities. It was only because of the exceptionally favorable conditions created by the second world war, that it was able to come to power. Therefore, the CCP from the beginning was a Stalinist regime.

Precisely because the regime in the Soviet Union was a proletarian dictatorship established after a victorious armed uprising by the working class, which was led by a genuinely revolutionary party, the usurpation of power and conversion of the regime into a bureaucratic dictatorship by the Stalinist bureaucracy was met by stormy resistance (the Left Opposition led by Trotsky). Finally, through Thermidor, the Stalinist bureaucracy, to use the words of Comrades Swabeck and Liang, "had to strangle the Leninist party and destroy physically the whole generation that led the revolution to the victory under Lenin and Trotsky." (Ibid., p. 23.) Since the CCP regime began as "a Stalinist-type regime" it develops in accordance with its own logic without the necessity of going through "degeneration" and "Thermidor."

The few points analyzed above are sufficient to prove that the attempt of Comrades Swabeck and Liang to conclude "theoretically" that there is a basic difference between the regime of the CCP and that in the Soviet Union -- or "the Peking regime is not a Stalinist-type regime" -- lacks sound basis. The cause of their error is the substitution of mechanical "contrast" for dialectical analysis.

When Trotsky explained the "conditions for omnipotence of the bureaucracy," he wrote: "The scarcity in consumer goods and the universal struggle to obtain them generate a policeman who arrogates to himself the function of distribution. Hostile pressure from without imposes on the policeman the role of 'defender' of the country, endows him with national authority, and permits him doubly to plunder the country." ("In Defense of Marxism," p. 7.) This explanation is fully applicable to China under the rule of the CCP today.

Of course, "the rise of the Stalinist bureaucracy, and its crystallization into a privileged caste," "is not likely to be reproduced elsewhere under different historical conditions." But in a certain area and under certain conditions, where the influence of the Soviet Union reaches or where a Communist party under Kremlin control comes to power, then "the rise of the Stalinist bureaucracy and its crystallization into a privileged caste" can be inevitably reproduced. Conditions in Eastern Europe demonstrate the former; China, North Korea and North Indochina testify to the latter.

The Shaping and Development of the Privileged Caste -- Their Enjoyment of Special Privileges

In my "Report on the Chinese Situation," written in 1951, I pointed out that even before the CCP took power, a stubborn and self-willed bureaucracy had taken shape in the rural area it occu-

pled. After taking power, this bureaucracy, because of the monopoly and concentration of all political, economical, military and cultural organizations and power, rapidly crystallized into a privileged caste. Along with the expansion of these organizations and aggregation of power, the newly shaped privileged caste attracted into its ranks a large number of the petty bourgeoisie, especially intellectuals, a part of the labor aristocracy (the so-called labor hero, labor model, or Stakhanovite), even a few members of the bourgeoisie (through co-operation between the bureaucracy and the bourgeoisie). In this way, a huge privileged caste formed. Its number is estimated as much greater than that of the Soviet Union under Stalin's rule. (Due to limited space I will not attempt to analyze here the component parts and approximate number in the Chinese bureaucracy. Generally speaking, it resembles the Soviet bureaucracy as analyzed by Trotsky in "The Revolution Betrayed," pp. 135-139.) This privileged caste, like its counterpart in the Soviet Union forms a pyramid of several strata. At the bottom are the vast masses of oppressed workers and peasants and all the poor people; at the pinnacle stands the chairman of the party, Mao Tse-tung. The strict division of strata in the pyramid is clearly reflected in the formation of the officers' ranks -- lieutenant, colonel, general and marshal in the Chinese army, in complete imitation of the Red Army in the Soviet Union.

The consequence of the formation and development of this privileged caste is surely the enlargement and deepening of social inequality, the deterioration of the worker and peasant masses' living conditions and the growth of prerogatives among the privileged caste.

It seems to me that nobody has ever denied the low standard of living of the Chinese worker and peasant masses (even Mr. Duncan, the Canadian reporter whom Comrades Swabek and Liang praise highly as an "objective observer," admitted as much in his book "Red China Today"). What is in dispute is whether the ruling stratum of the CCP enjoys privileges and maintains a police system which protects its privileges. In respect to these questions Comrades Swabek and Liang explain as follows:

"However, granting the existence of bureaucratic tendencies does not at all justify the characterization of the Peking regime as the rule of a privileged caste in the sense that we have always understood it -- a hardened social formation of a parasitic nature, standing above the people, consuming an inordinate share of the national income and concerned primarily with the protection of its own powers and privileges against the masses. There is no evidence for such an assumption. Nor is there any evidence of an omnipresent police system which would be required to protect such a caste.

"Townsend mentions a certain degree of social differentiation, the only example in his whole book of about 400 pages. Cadres who drew their provisions from the government would eat in 'bigger kitchens,' or 'little kitchens.' To the former came department heads, ministers and those of similar rank. Their fare contained more meat than was served in the more common 'little kitchens.' But Townsend adds: 'After searching for those riotously living

Communists of whom one sometimes hears, I came on none who qualified for the description.'

"More recent verification is contained in Gerald Clark's book. 'Mao Tse-tung, Chu Teh and Chou En-lai lead austere, almost monastic existences, dedicated to the building of a nation; and millions follow suit,' he reports." (Op.Cit., p. 27.)

The above-cited "facts" on the nonexistence of the privileged caste in China, as presented by Comrades Swabeck and Liang are specially important, so it is worthwhile to check them. If their argument is correct and the facts observed by Townsend and Clarke are reliable, then China would be entirely different from the Soviet Union in that a privileged caste exists there; China has only a group of incorruptible and honest officials who serve the country in the interests of the worker and peasant masses and for the sake of building socialism. Do the facts really testify to this? In contrast to the observations of Townsend and Clarke, let me cite, as extensively as space permits, some of the more concrete facts in a book entitled "Ten Years of Storm" written by Chow Ching-wen in Hongkong. Chow was a standing member of the Central Committee of the China Democratic League, which co-operates with the CCP, and was a member of the Committee on Political and Legal Affairs of the Government Administration Council. (Tung Pi-wu and Peng Tsen, members of the Political Bureau of the CCP, are respectively the chairman and vice-chairman of this committee.) The task of this committee is to lay out the systems and regulations in state administration and jurisprudence.) He was also a delegate to the National People's Congress. He participated in the CCP's regime for eight years (1949-56) until his departure for Hongkong in December, 1956. (It is said that his departure had the permission of Mao.) This voluminous book contains nearly 600 pages. (In the Chinese edition. The English is about half that -- translator.) The following are citations from it describing the privileges enjoyed by the CCP bureaucracy.

"The Communists boast that they themselves have heroic personalities. Stalin even said a communist is made of special material. Before seeing their ways of living and behaving, I also had the illusion for quite a time that members of a revolutionary party should 'grieve before anybody, and rejoice after everybody.' Although I did not agree with Communist ideology and methods, I did respect them. But after working together with them for nearly eight years in which I learned how they live, my respect for them evaporated." ("Ten Years of Storm," p. 112, Chinese edition.)

"As to the way of living among the Communists, I could write a book dealing exclusively with this, but since there is no space here I can only sketch it on the basis of some concrete facts. Also I should like my readers to bear in mind that today's China is neither a capitalist country like the USA with abundance of goods, nor is it a Soviet Union which claims to have reached socialism thirty years after revolution, but a poverty-stricken country emerging from the second world war and the civil war. Most people in China still live in old and decrepit houses. In densely populated Shanghai the average person occupies a living space of only

two square meters. People eat mostly rice products and wear coarse cotton clothes; in the poorer areas they even eat distiller's grains, leaves, weeds and wild fruits and wear indescribably tattered garments. . . . This is the real picture of the Chinese people. Bearing this in mind, we shall see how astonishing are the living conditions of those so-called revolutionaries who call for improvement in the people's standard of living!" (Ibid., p. 112-113.)

"The material life of a human being consists mainly of clothing, food, housing, transportation and recreation. In the following, I shall describe living conditions among the Communists along these lines.

"First is their housing. Prior to 1948 the top party leaders lived in caves in Yen-an. In 1949 they moved into imperial palaces in Peking, and the cadres (big and small) took over the best buildings in all the cities which once belonged to capitalists. Dissatisfied with the original furniture and decorations, which were in fact quite nice, they had them redecorated and bought new and better furniture. They wanted specially designed carpets, comfortable sofas, imported bathtubs and basins, splendid gardens and to be served by many servants. If you happened to visit such a mansion, you would say that it is not in poverty-stricken China, but rather the villa of a New York millionaire." (Ibid., p. 114.)

"But the original buildings were not enough for the party men. New mansions with modern decorations have been erected in all the big cities to meet the demand of the new aristocracy. As a result a newly constructed residential area in any city is where the new aristocrats live." (Ibid., p. 114.)

"Mao Tse-tung, Liu Shao-chi, Chou En-lai, Chu Teh, etc., built their new villas in the western suburbs of Peking. The provincial and municipal leaders followed suit. So socialist construction started by building beautiful residences for top leaders, then the apartments, dormitories, auditoriums, dance halls, etc., for the enjoyment of party functionaries." (Ibid., p. 300.)

"New hotels were also built in many cities with the exception of Shanghai where there are many good buildings left by the Westerners for the use of important guests and top men. All these places are exclusively reserved for foreign visitors and top cadres. No ordinary people are allowed to stay in them. This includes the Peking Restaurant, Peace House, Lu-Kuo Restaurant, Tsineman Restaurant, West Village Guest House, New Oversea Chinese Restaurant . . . in Peking, the Ching Restaurant and Broadway Building. . . in Shanghai, the original Sun Le Teh Restaurant and in Tientsien the Tai Li Restaurant." (Ibid., p. 114.)

"Next let us talk about how and what the new aristocracy eats. . . . People in other countries know only that there are three kitchens; namely, the little kitchen, the middle kitchen and the big kitchen for top, middle and low cadres respectively. The little kitchen cooks special and delicious food for high-class leaders; the middle kitchen is for the middle-rank cadres, while

the big kitchen cooks ordinary meals for lower cadres and the rank and file. (But Comrades Swabeck and Liang erroneously put them in reverse order. See SWP Discussion Bulletin, Vol. 21, No. 2 -- translator.) This distinction among kitchens has roughly told us the division of three classes. But if you enter the place behind the curtain, you will discover that the top and middle rank 'chiefs' not only live in magnificent mansions, they also enjoy delicacies from the hills and sea. At least all the ministers whom I have visited live this kind of life. Everyone has a famous cook, who in the old days, used to serve imperial officers or mandarins. I have tasted at a leader's residence both Chinese and Western dishes prepared by a cook who used to serve Fu-Yi, the last emperor of the Chin Dynasty. Well-known cooks of big restaurants are transferred to serve the top men. Whenever I dined at a chief's home, I often heard the host boasting about what a big person the cook used to serve or what big restaurants they were transferred from. Judging from the fact that cooks are called in to serve the top men at their residences, you can see that what they eat is not rice and salt vegetables, but chicken, duck, goose, fish and delicacies from the hills and sea. Doesn't a ration system for meat and edible oil prevail in China? The hierarchy enjoys exceptional rights. They have special permits to buy extra meat and oil. When the markets open, cars and jeeps are lined up, their cooks buy the best portions of meat and leave the bones and skins for the ordinary people. The chiefs are not confined to enjoying good meals at home; they give big banquets all the year around, some of them attended by over a thousand guests. Peking Restaurant, Peace House, New Oversea Chinese Hotel and Huai-Jen Hall. . . are places where big banquets are usually given. You can see over six hundred cars parked in front of Peking Restaurant at dinner time almost every evening. Those who have never been in Peking could hardly believe it; but those who have been in Peking are accustomed to seeing such scenes." (Ibid., p. 116.)

"The ruling class enjoys a lot of privileges. Fattened chickens and ducks are sent directly to their residences without passing through the market. Special farms and vegetable gardens for the top men grow special food which can never be enjoyed by the ordinary people. First-class apples grown in Manchuria are reserved for the top men. . . when the harvest season for Peking peaches arrives, the government will buy all the first-class ones for the top men and distinguished visitors. . . Watermelon which grows in Harin, Sinkiang, lichee which grows in Kwantung and all the other best fruits of the country are transported by air to Peking, giving priority to the taste of the top men." (Ibid., p. 302.)

"Let us now turn into the means of transportation. In the countryside people either walk on foot or ride donkeys or horses . . . In the city, there are street cars and buses. Only the new aristocracy is permitted to ride in automobiles. It is interesting to see that the CCP distributes automobiles according to the rank and position of the officers. First-rank personages such as Mao Tse-tung, Liu Shao-chi, Chou En-lai, Chu Teh. . . etc., ride first-class Russian cars. Ministers of the Central Government ride second-class Russian cars. Middle-rank officials ride American cars. Each governmental department has special buses for its

employees. . . . But ordinary people have no right to share these privileges. . . . As a result, there is every indication in the city that those who ride in automobiles must be top men or middle-rank functionaries.

"These cars are not confined to officers' use. Wives and children of the new aristocracy also ride in cars to the theaters or schools. A long line of cars can be seen every night in front of theaters. In the hot summer, dust flies in the street when a car of the new aristocracy passes by; while in winter a cold chilly wind blows dust in people's faces." (Ibid., p. 117-118.)

"Now I shall describe in a few lines what the Communists wear. When the Communists marched into cities in their shabby clothes, the city dwellers praised them for austerity. Therefore, everybody followed suit. . . .

"While the country earnestly copied the austerity of the Communists, the top leaders, however, changed their clothing from shabby outfits to new ones: woolen uniforms, fox or sable overcoats, seal-skin collars, and otter fur hats. Then all the high-rank and middle-rank Communists followed suit. . . . Their wives also did not want to lag behind and began to wear woolen clothing and so do their sons and daughters. As a result, those who shop in the department stores or patronize big restaurants are mostly the Communist chiefs and their families. (Ibid., pp. 118-119.)

"As for recreational institutions there were no commercial dance halls in the past few years, but movies, folk music, and local dramas. However, every organization, no matter how big or small, holds evening parties every Saturday or holiday, mostly for dancing, but sometimes for drama. Hwai Jen Hall (where the delegates of the National People's Congress meet -- translator) and the auditorium of the Political Consultative Committee give evening parties all the time. Whenever there is an evening party, thousands of cars of the top men roll into the place like flowing water. . . .

"Here is something worth mentioning. During the meetings of the Political Consultative Committee in the spring of 1958, Mao Tse-tung dropped a remark about Chou Shing-fang, a well-known Peking opera actor then performing in Shanghai. Chen Yi, the Vice Premier, guessed that the 'chairman' wanted to see the performance of Chou Shing-fang and his group; so he telephoned to Shanghai and asked Chou's group to be sent immediately to Peking. As a result we had a chance to see Chou's performance the third day after the call.

"The most lively recreational activity among the Communists is the evening party. The most colorful and enjoyable one is the dancing party held at the Violet Light Pavilion in Peking. It is exclusively for the chiefs of the Central Government. There the music is superb, furnishings splendid, service best, women extraordinarily pretty, food delicious, and atmosphere soft and fascinating. Present are high-ranking chiefs, such as Liu Shao-chi, Chou En-lai, Chu Teh and other political and military chiefs in the party." (Ibid., p. 122-123.)

"The Communist top men usually go to summer resorts such as Pei-tai Ho Summer Mountain Resort in the North, the seaside resorts in Tsing-tao and Darien and Lu Mountain Resort and Hwang Mountain Resort in the South. In the old days these places were where foreigners, politicians and capitalists went during the summer, and where they built villas and modern-style resorts. . . . Now the owners of these resorts are the Communists who in addition built many more splendid ones. But in order to show that the party is for the working class, the new aristocracy selected a few common buildings and also built a few in warehouse style as workers' sanatoriums; it is these that appear in the newspapers and not the splendid resorts of the new aristocracy.

"The top men go to the summer resorts as soon as summer comes. They and their families take chartered trains with cooks, nurses, doctors, attendants. So those enjoying themselves in the mountains and at the seashores are the top men in the party and the administration. Their lives are comfortable and they are spendthrifts. They have everything, but the ordinary people who feed the former have neither enough to eat nor enough to wear but watch with sad faces the enjoyments of the new aristocracy." (Ibid., p. 304-05.)

"This extravagant and rotten way of living started first among the top party leaders, then spread among the middle-rank party officials, and then even to some degree among its lower cadres." (Ibid., p. 299.)

How does this privileged caste of the CCP cover the cost of their extravagant way of life? Chow Ching-wen tells us: "Although the wage system has been adopted in recent years, the Communists, besides wages, can get what they want in the name of public expenses." (Ibid., p. 300.) The so-called "public expense" is an "expenditure from the state treasury." "I don't have to mention that Mao Tse-tung, Chou En-lai and the other high-ranking leaders naturally get their expenses from the state treasury, but so do the other elements of the privileged class -- the party members and officials. Therefore, there is no distinction between public and private expenses. The upper and middle-rank officials have official residences, special cars and attendants. When they travel, they have first-class transportation and their expenses -- private and public -- are paid by the state treasury. Even the lower cadres also share these privileges though to a lesser degree. Take a regimental commander for example: he has sufficient salary, an official residence, a radio, an automobile, first-class transportation when traveling and a first-class room in the hospital in case of sickness." (Ibid., p. 305-306.)

"The Communist regime is an unprecedented, huge organization containing over ten million party members, two or three million armed forces, over twenty million functionaries. . . . This parasitic class, from top to bottom, enjoys luxurious living rendered possible only by the unhampered economic system." (Ibid., p. 306.)

The luxurious life of the CCP privileged caste, described above, is sometimes referred to in official CCP publications. For instance, when the party center attacks some dissident function-

aries, it often accuses them of being extravagant and wasteful in their way of living. Especially at the peak of the blossom and contend campaign (April to June, 1957), a number of articles appeared in the People's Daily, Ta Kung Pao, and Kwang Ming Daily, listing many facts concerning the privileges and extravagant lives of the CCP bureaucracy. This testifies, from another angle, to the reliability of Chow Ching-wen's report. Chow, a petty-bourgeois democrat and a self-called socialist, favors the nationalization of big enterprises but disagrees with Marxist theory and its fundamental policies, and considers the CCP to represent Marxism and Leninism. Therefore his criticism of the CCP's policies, from the theoretical viewpoint, is always incorrect and reactionary; but the factual exposition of the arbitrariness and the privileges enjoyed by the CCP, and the low living standards and miserable conditions of the workers and peasants in China is based on reality. This is due to his participation in the CCP regime for nearly eight years, to his close relations with the top and middle bureaucrats, and to several missions to rural areas to interview peasants and investigate their conditions. This presented him with first-hand material.

Now we can say that the detailed and concrete facts mentioned by Chow Ching-wen, not only suffice to discount the "observations" made by Townsend and Clark, but also prove that Clark's claim that "Mao Tse-tung, Chu Teh and Chou En-lai lead austere, almost monastic existences, dedicated to building of a nation; and millions follow suit" is an entirely false myth. Chow's report fully confirms the accuracy of the "characterization of the Peking regime as the rule of a privileged caste in the sense that we have always understood it -- a hardened social formation of a parasitic nature, standing above the people, consuming inordinate share of the national income. . . ." Now the remaining question is whether or not there exists any "evidence of an omnipresent police system which would be required to protect such a caste."

The "Evidence of an Omnipresent Police System"

After the defeat of the revolution in 1927, the CCP started to organize a secret police. Its main purpose was to protect the party cells from destruction by Kuomintang agents. Later, when Mao Tse-tung set up "the Chinese Soviet Government" in Kiangsu, this secret police organization was moved there also and became the local secret police. After Mao and Co. moved to Yen-an in 1935, this secret police system continued to exist and develop with the participation of the GPU of the Soviet Union. As soon as the People's Government was established in Peking during 1949, the secret police network spread immediately all over the country as the official public-security organization. Russian GPU experts were invited in as advisers to help set up plans and train new agents to complete this public-security police system. Now let us turn to Chow's description of the CCP "police system." "The most general and penetrating machine of suppression utilized by the Communists for control of people is the police. The chief policeman is Lo Jui-ching, the Minister for Public Security (Marshal Lo became Chief of Staff of the Army in January, 1960 -- translator). His men are sent out to every province, city, county and district to suppress the people. . . . The Communist agents have excellent

capacities in their work. They live among the people and as a result constantly watch and control every activity of the latter." ("Ten Years of Storm," p. 98, Chinese edition.) "As for the police system of the Communists, at the top level, there is the Ministry for Public Security; at the provincial level, the Department for Public Security; at the municipal level, the Bureau for Public Security; in the districts, the branches of the Public Security Bureau; and at the bottom, the basic police station which directly governs and controls the people. Police stations are scattered among the residential areas. Each station controls a certain number of families and, of course, their activities. For instance, each police station is in charge of the population records in its governing area. Any person who wants to go to another place, even temporarily, has to report to the police station about his destination, the purpose of his trip and the date of return. Likewise if a family has a visitor, within three days he has to be reported to the police station in that area as to his personal history, the purpose of his trip, etc. Under guise of population survey, a policeman can enter any home at any time (day or night) to ask any question about something he suspects. If one buys things for private use he has to register them at the police station. If he receives money from a source other than his job, he should also put the amount he received in the 'family register record' for the inspection of the police." (Ibid., p. 98-99.)

"Besides the police station, there is a street committee under the direction of the police. Its responsibilities are to know every family's status and to mobilize the people for contributions, campaigns, and demonstrations. To carry out its functions it either calls a meeting or visits the family in which it is interested. Like a policeman, the member of the street committee has to report in time to the police station on the general situation. The main task of the street committee is to uncover secret agents of the Kuomintang and suspicious elements. . . . In addition to the police station and the street committee, everyone, every family, especially those considered by the police station as activists, have special assignments. That is, for an individual to watch other members of his family; for a family to watch its neighbors and relatives. If one finds anything suspicious, he or she should immediately report to the police station. Consequently, everyone and every family is under constant watch and has the possibility of being the target of investigation. Under Communist police rule, people can't trust each other, not even husband and wife, father and son, brother and sister, relatives and neighbors. Amid the black cloud created by the Communists, everybody lives in the terror of uncertainty and everybody suspects the others as being his or her enemy or a police agent. As a result to avoid getting into any trouble, one has to be very discreet in words and deeds. (Ibid., p. 99-100.)

"In calling the Communist regime a police state we not only mean its police organization, but also include its entire police network. Living amid this network, who would not be horrified, terrified and compliant? Those who are in government administration, factories, enterprises, schools, etc., are handled by the Communists with the same method mentioned above. Many visible or

invisible shadows are behind everybody's back; every word and action are under constant watch and an unsuitable sentence is often the target for report and criticism; everybody is a watcher in the eyes of the others. Disturbed, everybody either keeps his mouth shut or cautiously utters Marxist terminology and the political line endorsed by the top leadership. Thus, every organization is a prison, and its members the prisoners." (Ibid., p. 100.)

We can cite many specific instances that testify to the truthfulness of Chow's description of the "police system." On account of limited space, I will mention only two examples experienced by our Trotskyists:

(A.) Within a year of taking power, the CCP through the surreptitious activities of its secret agents had thoroughly investigated all the leaders, members, sympathizers and friends of our organization. In the autumn of 1950 all the leading comrades in Shanghai, Wenchow, and Kwangtung were arrested simultaneously and some of them murdered afterward. On December 22, 1952, and January 10, 1953, all our comrades, sympathizers, their relatives and friends in Shanghai and elsewhere were imprisoned.

(B.) In the spring of 1955 our Comrade Chiu visited a friend of his while touring Canton. Within five minutes after his arrival, a special agent from the street committee walked in and stayed to listen to their conversation until he left.

The above two facts sufficiently prove the existence of "the omnipresent police system of the Peking regime." Therefore we can say that the police system of the Peking regime is, if not more severe, at least equivalent to the GPU under Stalin's rule. If Comrades Swabeck and Liang deny both Chow's reports and our judgment, they should submit concrete facts by way of refutation.

Is the Election of the National People's Congress
"Remarkably Similar to the Elections to the All-Russian
Congress of Soviets at the Time of the Bolshevik Revolution"?

In order to glorify the democratic system of the Peking regime, Comrades Swabeck and Liang not only deny the existence of a privileged caste and police system, but also beautify as much as possible the National People's Congress which sets up the People's Government. Under the subtitle "How About Popularly Elected Government?" the following lines appear.

"This body ('The People's Political Consultative Conference' --Peng) was later superseded by the National People's Congress. Says Townsend: '. . . by 1953 the votes cast by electors in villages, city lanes and other "cells" had replaced the hitherto supreme organ of the United Front. . . with a government elected in accordance with "democratic centralism" whereby the lower electoral bodies elected representatives to those a step higher, which in turn elected representatives to those immediately above.'

"Describing the first such regular election in Peking, Townsend points out that representatives were elected directly from

large factories, from universities and from city wards; smaller units could combine to elect joint representatives. 'All were subject to recall at the elector's demand.' This is remarkably similar to the elections to the All-Russian Congress of Soviets at the time of the Bolshevik Revolution." (SWP Discussion Bulletin, Vol. 21, No. 2, p. 22.)

Basing themselves merely on Townsend's sketchy report of the election of the National People's Congress in Peking and completely neglecting the necessary conditions and concrete steps in carrying out a socialist democratic election, Comrades Swabeck and Liang assert that "This is remarkably similar to the elections to the All-Russian Congress of Soviets at the time of the Bolshevik Revolution." This is even more light-minded and incoherent than the assertion they made that "the communes are self-governing" when they heard about "elected councils" in the communes. In criticizing their misjudgment on the "elected councils" of the communes, I pointed out:

"Certain definite conditions are required to realize socialist democracy. First of all, the worker and peasant masses must enjoy complete freedom of speech, press, assembly, association and belief; the secret ballot must exist at every level during elections; finally, and most important of all, the legality of every worker's party that accepts socialism must be guaranteed. But in China today, as well as in the East European countries, these conditions are absent." (SWP Discussion Bulletin, Vol. 21, No. 1, p. 22.)

In China today the necessary conditions for realizing socialist democracy are not only absent; but, since it is under the severe control of the police system, it is just as impossible to hold a democratic election for the People's Congress as it is in the communes. However, "the fiction of universal electoral rights -- in the style of Hitler-Goebbels" (see the "Transitional Program"), is maintained in elections at all levels in the People's Congress and commune committees. A list of candidates appointed by the CCP is given to every electoral unit for the people, or representatives of the people, to vote for or circle. It is a familiar fact known to everyone in China. Now let us bring Chow Ching-wen forward as our witness, since he personally participated in the election of the National People's Congress in 1953, particularly the election in the Peking District People's Congress. The following is his description of the elections at all levels of the People's Congress and in the government administration:

"The lists of representatives at all levels of the People's Congress are handpicked by the CCP. Likewise with the lists of candidates in all the governmental committees. That is, the representatives of the village People's Congress are appointed by the Communist party; the village administrative officials elected in the village People's Congress are also selected and appointed by the Communist party. The so-called election is the Party appointing someone for the masses or representatives of the masses to be approved by the raising of hands or voting. This also holds true in the Hsien People's Congress and Hsien Governmental Committee and even the provincial and central government People's Congress and its Committee."

"The list of candidates decided on by the party beforehand is given to each electoral unit for election. For example, in the election of the more than one thousand delegates to the National People's Congress, about half of the candidates are chosen by the Central Committee of the CCP from the officials and personnel of CCP headquarters, the Central People's Government and other organizations in Peking; the remainder are chosen by provincial party committees and submitted for approval to the Central Committee of the CCP. The candidates are then 'elected' in the provinces as delegates. The same procedure is followed in electing delegates to the People's Congress on all levels. One part of the delegates to the provincial People's Congress is chosen by the Provincial Party Committee, the other part by the Hsien Party Committee with the approval of the Provincial Party Committee, then the list is submitted for election by the Hsien People's Congress. The candidates for the Hsien People's Congress are decided on by the Hsien Party Committee for election in the villages. Administrative officials at all levels in the government are all named by the party and passed by the People's Congress. These candidates for office at all levels of the People's Congress are always passed. The number of candidates always equals the number of delegates to be elected, so that voting is only a question of whether or not to put a circle around the names of the candidates. In brief, the names on the list given to you are all to be elected; if you disapprove of certain persons, all you can do is not circle their names, but they will be elected just the same because the majority of the electors put circles around every name on the ballot. And also before the election the Communist party mobilizes persuasion in order to pass unanimously the names it has appointed. In fact, this kind of list is always passed by a big majority vote if not unanimously at all levels of the People's Congress." (Ibid., p. 415-16.)

The above description of the elections at all levels of the People's Congress and governmental Administrative Committee fully proves that Townsend's report of "a government in accordance with democratic centralism" is completely false. In fact it is precisely what Trotsky called "the fiction of universal electoral rights -- in the style of Hitler-Goebbels." I have said before: "The Chinese 'people's councils' are patterned after those in the East European countries. And the 'people's councils' in the East European countries are a variation of Stalin's 'soviets.'" (SWP Discussion Bulletin, Vol. 21, No. 1, p. 22.) To say, as Comrades Swabek and Liang do, that the election of the National People's Congress in China is "remarkably similar to the election to the All-Russian Congress of Soviets at the time of the Bolshevik Revolution" is the same as saying that "the election to Stalin's Soviets" is "remarkably similar to the election to the All-Russian Congress of Soviets at the time of the Bolshevik Revolution"!

Since we all know the democratic conditions and election procedures in "the All-Russian Congress of Soviets at the time of the Bolshevik Revolution," I need not repeat them here. However, it is necessary particularly to point out that the "Soviets at the time of the Bolshevik Revolution" absolutely excluded electoral rights to all exploiters. But the Chinese People's Congress has granted by law the participation of bourgeois elements and their

political representatives (such as the Democratic League, the Revolutionary Committee of the Kuomintang, etc.) in the elections with full right to run and to be elected. Therefore, in the past two National People's Congresses and at all levels of the People's Congress, political representatives of the bourgeoisie and capitalists were elected and even designated as committeemen in all levels of the government administration. This reveals that the class content of the Chinese People's Congress is different in essence from that of the Soviets at that time. It is astonishing to read the assertion of Comrades Swabeck and Liang that the Chinese People's Congress, which includes bourgeois elements, is remarkably similar to that of the Soviets which excluded all exploiters!

The Distorted Permanent Revolution and the Distortion of the Theory of Permanent Revolution

After asserting that the CCP has departed from Stalinism, has no privileged caste and no police system for the protection of the privileged caste, and after praising the election to the National People's Congress which forms the national government as "remarkably similar to the elections to the All-Russian Congress of Soviets at the time of the Bolshevik Revolution," Comrades Swabeck and Liang proceed to describe the whole process of the Third Chinese Revolution, concluding as follows:

"Subsequently (that is after the outbreak of the Korean War -- Peng) the CCP leaders put forward their general line of the transition to socialism. Where private capitalist enterprise had previously been encouraged to develop under government control, it was now to be restricted and gradually transformed in order to attain 'the step by step abolition of systems of exploitation and the building of a socialist society.' At the end of 1952 the first Five Year Plan was launched. Industrialization now became a prime objective.

"In agriculture the march of events proceeded from the early mutual aid groups to producers co-operatives and collectives, culminating in the socialist type of socio-economic organization -- the Communes. Unfolding side by side with industrialization, this powerful combination constitutes the motive force for the whole newer culture, while providing a material foundation for the socialist transformation of society.

"Thus, regardless of the misconceptions, empirical improvisation and opportunism of the CCP leaders, the uninterrupted development of the Chinese revolution stands out clearly and conclusively. Each new stage has been firmly anchored in the preceding one, each stage elevated society to qualitatively higher levels in which the socialist direction is unmistakable. What this signifies is a striking confirmation of the theory of permanent or continuous revolution." (SWP Discussion Bulletin, Vol. 21, No. 2, p. 25.)

To picture the Third Chinese Revolution as "a striking confirmation of the theory of permanent or continuous revolution" constitutes the highest praise. It almost equals saying that the

Third Chinese Revolution is a model example of the democratic revolution proceeding successfully into socialism. If this is the fact, then we cannot criticize but only unconditionally support the CCP policy. But the "facts" singled out above by Comrades Swabek and Liang do not correspond either with the theory of the permanent revolution or the historical experience of the October Revolution. What they noted belongs to the sphere of socialist economic reconstruction and they completely overlooked the most decisively significant political factor of the theory of permanent revolution. The great adventurism of the CCP in carrying out economic reconstruction -- industrialization and collectivization -- directly violates the theory of permanent revolution.

Since the beginning of the Third Chinese Revolution, great confusion, involving all kinds of misunderstandings and distortion of the theory of permanent revolution has been evident in the Trotskyist movement. Therefore, I consider it a special need to investigate the development of the Third Chinese Revolution in the light of Trotsky's own explanation of the theory of the permanent revolution as well as the historical experience of the October Revolution.

Trotsky wrote in the preface to the Russian edition of the "Permanent Revolution," published on November 30, 1929:

"To dispel the chaos that has been created around the theory of the permanent revolution, it is necessary to distinguish three lines of thought that are united in this theory.

"First, it embraces the problem of the transition of the democratic revolution into the socialist. This is really the historical origin of the theory. (Introduction to the "Permanent Revolution," First Indian Edition, March 1947, p. 22.)

"These ideas and moods declared war upon the theory of the permanent revolution, risen anew in 1905. It pointed out that democratic tasks of the backward bourgeois nations in our epoch led to the dictatorship of the proletariat and that the dictatorship of the proletariat puts the socialist tasks on the order of the day. In that lay the central idea of the theory. If the traditional view was that the road to the dictatorship of the proletariat led through a long period of democracy, the theory of the permanent revolution established the fact that for backward countries the road to democracy passed through the dictatorship of the proletariat. By that alone, democracy does not become a regime anchored within itself for decades, but rather a direct introduction to the socialist revolution. Each is bound to the other by an unbroken chain. In this way, there arises between the democratic revolution and the socialist transformation of society a permanency of revolutionary development." (Ibid., p. 24 -- My emphasis.)

This "central idea" of the theory of the permanent revolution, stated by Trotsky in 1905, was fully confirmed by the October Revolution. That is: in the midst of the democratic revolutionary tide flowing from the February Revolution, the Bolshevik party established the proletarian dictatorship by overthrowing the bour-

geois power through an uprising in which the working class led the peasants (armed peasants in uniforms). Immediately after announcing the transfer of the land to the peasants and the right of internal nations to self-determination (these were the democratic tasks of Russia at the time), the socialist task of expropriating private property was put on the agenda by the Bolshevik party. This is precisely the model example of the democratic revolution developing uninterruptedly toward socialism.

What was the attitude of the CCP towards this "central idea" of the theory of permanent revolution? It took the cities with armed peasant forces (not through an uprising with the proletariat leading the peasants). After the overthrow of Chiang's regime, instead of establishing a proletarian dictatorship, it did just the contrary; "co-operating" with the democratic or national bourgeois, it set up a "coalition government," the "People's Democratic Dictatorship"; instead of placing the socialist task of expropriating the bourgeois on the agenda, it declared that "private capitalist enterprise has been encouraged to develop under government control" and it promoted "equal consideration of private and state industry" and "equal benefits to workers and capitalists"; it even postponed the burning land problem and protected foreign property (the land problem and the expropriation of foreign property were the democratic tasks in China). All this was the new democracy policy of Mao. Mao's policy was formally passed by the "Political Consultative Conference" in which the CCP, bourgeoisie and petty bourgeoisie participated, and it became a "common program of building the state." The period for realizing this program was the so-called "new democracy stage." Though the CCP did not formally pronounce how long this stage would endure, it was understood to be for a long time. Chow reports that in one meeting it was said that the new democracy period would last twenty years. In other words the passing over from the democratic or "new democratic" revolution to socialist tasks would take a "very long period" and the "new democracy" was able to become a "self-sufficient regime" (Mao called it a "new democracy regime") for several decades (or, as Chow reported, twenty years), before proceeding to the socialist revolution. Does it not sound like practice of the typical Menshevik theory of "revolution in stages"?

But the class struggle has its own logic which is precisely the dynamics of the permanent revolution. Even before the Korean War, but especially after its outbreak, the peasants in many areas displayed great resentment and unrest due to postponement of agrarian reform, oppression by the landlords, exploitation by rich peasants and all kinds of excessive taxes levied by the new regime. On the other hand, the landlords, rich peasants and commercial-industrial capitalists in the cities took advantage of the advance of the imperialists to mobilize a counterattack. (For instance, cheating in both labor and material in filling government orders, upsetting the market through black market manipulations, corroding the CCP cadres with bribes, etc.) In addition the remnants of Chiang's regime were very active. So under the twofold menace -- the advance led by American imperialism and the domestic counter-attack of the united forces of landlords and bourgeoisie, the CCP was forced to revise its new democracy policy empirically, once

again undertaking agrarian reform against the landlords and rich peasants, pushing forward the "Five Anti Movement" against the bourgeoisie, severely suppressing counterrevolution elements, etc., in order to satisfy the land hunger of the peasantry and to gain the workers' support by allaying their dissatisfaction. Following this, at the beginning of 1953, the CCP also announced the "general line of the transitional period" of building socialism and it began the First Five Year Plan of industrialization. All this demonstrates that the CCP under the irresistible pressure of the class struggle was forced to relinquish its completely reactionary new democracy policy of "revolution in stages" and adopt some progressive measures corresponding to the development of the permanent revolution.

But in adopting these progressive measures the CCP put great limitations on them. They did not announce the expropriation of bourgeois property and were not ready for collectivization of agriculture. This is apparent in the resolution passed by the CCP in March, 1955, that the "general line of the transitional period" was to be fulfilled in several decades or a half century. According to this resolution, socialist reconstruction will be accomplished in several decades or a half century through the establishment within the national boundaries of a self-sufficient socialist economic system. This, once again, is in evident violation of another basic concept of the theory of the permanent revolution -- internationalism.

Trotsky wrote in the above-cited preface of the Russian edition of the "Permanent Revolution":

"The international character of the socialist revolution, which constitutes the third aspect of the theory of the permanent revolution, results from the present state of economy and the social structure of humanity. Internationalism is no abstract principle, but a theoretical and political reflection of the character of world economy, of the world development of productive forces, and the world scale of the class struggle. The socialist revolution begins on national grounds. But it cannot be completed on these grounds. The maintenance of the proletarian revolution within a national framework can only be a provisional state of affairs, even though, as the experience of the Soviet Union shows, one of long duration. In an isolated proletarian dictatorship, the internal and external contradictions grow inevitably together with the growing successes. Remaining isolated, the proletarian state must finally become a victim of these contradictions. The way out for it lies only in the victory of the proletariat of the advanced countries. Viewed from this standpoint, a national revolution is not a self-sufficient whole: it is only a link in the international chain. The international revolution presents a permanent process, in spite of all fleeting rises and falls." ("Permanent Revolution," Indian Edition, March 1947, pp. 24-25. My emphasis.)

Precisely because of the decisive significance of "International socialism," Lenin, right after the victory of the October Revolution, proclaimed that this revolution was only the "prelude of

the world revolution." He even said in March, 1918: "Our backwardness has pushed us forward, and we shall perish if we cannot hold out until we meet a mighty support on the part of the insurrectionary workers of other countries." ("The History of the Russian Revolution," by Leon Trotsky, English Edition, Vol. III, Appendix Two, p. 394.) A resolution of the Seventh Congress of the party in March 1918 therefore declares: "The Congress sees the most reliable guarantee of the consolidation of the socialist revolution which has won the victory in Russia only in its conversion into an international workers' revolution." (Ibid., pp. 393-394.)

In order to "convert the revolution into an international workers' revolution," or to convert the "prelude of the world revolution" into world revolution, the Bolshevik party led by Lenin and Trotsky sought with all its might to establish the leading organ of the world revolution -- the International. At that time all the foreign policies and activities of the Bolshevik party centered in pushing forward the world revolution. Precisely this is the concrete expression of the internationalism of the theory of permanent revolution.

After the death of Lenin, Stalin on usurping Bolshevik leadership, published his "theory" of "socialism in one country," a thorough betrayal of internationalism, and a development in a new situation of the Menshevik theory of "revolution in stages." On the basis of this "theory," Stalin converted the Bolshevik policy of pushing forward the world revolution into the line of "peaceful coexistence," a line contrived for compromise with world capitalism so as to help build socialism in one country.

Under the theory of "socialism in one country," Stalin at first compromised with the rich peasants to the utmost and postponed industrialization and collectivization. Later, threatened by the rich peasants, he turned to the opposite extreme, disregarding the interests of the workers and peasants, accelerating industrialization and collectivization with the administrative lash. Concerning this, Trotsky wrote in the preface of the American Edition of "The Permanent Revolution," March 29, 1930:

"To gain economic 'independence' speedily with the aid of the fastest possible tempos of industrialization and collectivization! -- this is the transformation that has taken place in the economic policy of national socialism in the past two years. Crawling was replaced all along the line by adventurism. The theoretical base under both is the same: a national socialist conception." ("Permanent Revolution," First Indian Edition, March 1947, p. 13.)

After "crawling" for two years (1953-55), the CCP "general line of the transitional period" came to a turn at the end of 1955. The collectivization of agriculture was proposed and the transformation of all private industry into "state and private" was also announced almost at the same time. This turn was facilitated under pressure of the rapid differentiation of the peasants in the mutual aid groups toward opposing poles and the obstruction of economic planning by private industry. The turn represented, certainly,

great progress, and it corresponds in a way to the law of uninterrupted development of the revolution. But in carrying out collectivization, the CCP forced the peasants to join the producers' co-operatives regardless of their willingness. And so all the peasants were forcibly collectivized in less than a year. On the other hand, under the name of "state and private operation," the property rights of the private capitalists were retained through payment of "fixed interest" and they have been allowed to participate continuously in the administration of production. At the same time, the workers are given the whip to speed up production in order to overfulfill the plan. Under the slogan of a "great leap forward" in 1958, this kind of speed-up in pushing industrialization and collectivization almost reached a maniac pitch. The most concrete expressions were the "steel production by the whole nation" movement (producing steel in backyard furnaces) and the commune movement. This was nothing else than replacing "crawling" all along the line by adventurism. The theoretical base under both is the same: a national socialist (Mao further develops it into a national communist) conception." Utilizing a "national socialist or communist conception" to accelerate industrialization and collectivization is far from "a striking confirmation of the theory of permanent revolution"; in fact, it is the exact opposite of this theory.

Trotsky in the above-cited preface to the American edition of the "Permanent Revolution" stated the difference between the Left Opposition and the Stalinists in basic standpoints on industrialization and collectivization as follows:

"Industrialization is the motive force of the whole newer culture and, by that, the only conceivable basis of socialism. In the conditions of the Soviet Union, industrialization means first of all the strengthening of the base of the proletariat as a ruling class. Simultaneously, it creates the material and technical premises for the collectivization of agriculture. The tempos of both these processes are interdependent. The proletariat is interested in the highest tempos for these processes, insofar as the new society that is to be created is thus best protected from external danger, and at the same time creates a source for systematically improving the material level of the toiling masses.

"However, the tempo that can be accomplished is limited by the whole material and cultural position of the country, by the mutual relationship between the city and village and by the most urgent needs of the masses, who can sacrifice their today for the sake of tomorrow only up to a certain point. The best and most advantageous tempos are those which not only produce the most rapid development of industry and collectivization at the given moment, but secure the necessary resistance of the social regime, that is, first of all the strengthening of the alliance of the workers and peasants, which alone prepares the possibility of further successes.

"From this point of view, the general historical criterion by which the party and state leadership directs the development of industry as planned economy assumes decisive significance. Here two principal variants are possible: (a) the course described

above towards the economic entrenchment of the proletarian dictatorship in one country until further victories of the international proletariat revolution (the viewpoint of the Left Opposition); (b) the course towards the construction of an isolated national socialist society and at that 'in the shortest historical time' (the present official viewpoint).

"These are two distinct, and in the final analysis, directly opposed theoretical conceptions of socialism. Out of these flow basically different strategy and tactics." ("Permanent Revolution," First Indian Edition, March 1947, pp. 2-3.)

The two antithetic basic positions on industrialization and collectivization in the Soviet Union pointed out by Trotsky are not only of profound theoretical value and great historical significance, but also bear the most realistic political significance, particularly for China today. The starting point of the position represented by the Left Opposition, led by Trotsky at that time, was internationalism as expressed in the theory of permanent revolution, and that represented by Stalin was national socialism expressed in the theory of revolution in stages.

Stalin's domestic and foreign strategy and tactics, flowing from this "theory and ideology of national socialism," brought unprecedented damage in human and material resources by ruthlessly forcing the peasants into collectivization; brought an imbalance between heavy and light industry, shortages in daily necessities, intensification of labor and the decline of working-class living standards as industrialization was speeded up under the administrative goad; the destruction with rare ferocity of the whole generation of old Bolsheviks and revolutionary youth; the undermining of the revolutions in China, Germany, Spain, etc., which had big chances of success. What terrible sacrifices were placed on the workers' state when the internationalism of the theory of permanent revolution was violated!

The "general line" in the industrialization and collectivization of China, which is highly praised by Comrades Swabek and Liang today, is in its nature a copy of Stalin's national socialism as practiced and developed on Chinese soil. The "strategy and tactics" flowing from this "general line" there, is unavoidably a mixture of opportunism and adventurism. It has been proved beyond reasonable dispute that the acceleration in production and communalization (the so-called "great leap forward") represented adventurism, matching the opportunism of the "Five Principles" and "peaceful coexistence" in foreign policy. The damage caused by such domestic and foreign "strategy and tactics" is beginning to appear (as can be seen in the great shortages in daily necessities, the extreme intensity of mass labor, the decline in living standards, and the semi-hunger of the peasant masses, the breakdown of the alliance of peasants and workers, etc.) and more ominous consequences still lie ahead!

In general, the basic policy practiced by the CCP in the process of the Third Chinese Revolution is not "a striking confirmation of the theory of the permanent or continuous revolution," but

the distortion of this theory. When the dynamics of the continuous revolution become objectively irresistible under the pressure of internal and external contradictions, the CCP is empirically forced to make a "turn" and proceed a step forward. This certainly reflects objectively the correctness of the theory of permanent revolution. But the step forward taken by the CCP becomes either a half step (as in the turn in the general line to a "transitional period" in 1953) through suppression of the natural tendency for the revolution to continue uninterruptedly, or scrambles blindly under the impulse of adventurism (as in the collectivization in 1956 and the "great leap forward" in industrialization and communalization in 1958). We are able to say, therefore, that the power of the theory of permanent revolution is surely revealed in the process of the Third Chinese Revolution which forces the CCP through a series of "turns" to compromise with it for self-survival. But due to the deep-rooted Stalinism (the opportunism and adventurism inherent in the theory of revolution in stages), the uninterrupted development of the revolution is distorted at every "turn," resulting in the deformation of the whole process of revolution. Hence the creation of great confusion in the uninterrupted development of the revolution, which in turn leads to distortion and confusion involving the theory of permanent revolution.

Early in 1951, Pablo reached the opinion that "Mao practices permanent revolution in China." (I heard this from people close to him.) In 1952, the draft resolution of the "Third Chinese Revolution" written by Germain under the influence of Pablo read: ". . . it is not through the alliance with Chiang Kai-shek but by the rupture of this alliance that the Third Chinese Revolution has begun. The Trotskyist theory of the permanent revolution, defended with tenacity by the Chinese Trotskyists and the international Trotskyist movement for 25 years, is thus confirmed in one of its fundamental theses." I wrote several critical comments on the draft resolution regarding its distortion of the theory of permanent revolution, but these were not published due to Pablo's suppressing them.

Liu Shao Chi reported at the Second Plenary Session of the CCP Central Committee during its Eighth Congress, May, 1958: "The Chinese Revolution has been led by the CCP Central Committee and Mao in the spirit of permanent revolution." Inspired by Liu's revelation, Jean Paul Martin, an author whose thought always parallels that of Pablo, wrote an article, "Uninterrupted Revolution in China" in which he proclaimed: "China is currently in a state of uninterrupted revolution." (See Quatrieme Internationale, November, 1958.) Actually the CCP Central Committee and Mao have practiced the theory of "revolution in stages" in opposition to the theory of "permanent revolution" for the past thirty years. The sudden proclamation by Liu Shao Chi in May 1958 that the CCP practices permanent revolution aimed at no more than defending the adventurism in the "great leap forward" which Mao was pushing forward full speed at the time in order to accelerate industrialization and prepare for communalization. Similarly Lominadse, Stalin's representative in China, suddenly proclaimed in November 1927, after the defeat of the revolution, "China is in a situation of permanent revolution." He did this to defend his adventurous

policy of uninterrupted uprisings. In praising the CCP's practice of permanent revolution, Pablo was only echoing Liu Shao Chi.

Comrades Swabeck and Liang, in praising the development of the Chinese revolution as "a striking confirmation of the theory of permanent revolution," only follow Pablo in distorting Trotsky's theory of permanent revolution to defend CCP adventurism in industrialization and collectivization.

In criticizing the draft resolution on the "Third Chinese Revolution," I said:

"It goes without saying that we should never proceed from the programmatic norms of the permanent revolution to deny the important significance of the Third revolution begun by Mao's party; on the other hand we should not permit the objective significance of Mao's victory to draw us into depreciating the theory of the permanent revolution, nor into accommodating to the victory by misinterpreting it in the name of the permanent revolution. Our attitude should be on the one hand, to understand the objective facts and diverse causes of Mao's victory, and on the other, to analyze from the standpoint of the permanent revolution how this victory suffered distortion through the 'theory of revolution by stages,' resulting in the present deformed shape, the obstacles arising from this deformation and the perspectives of its possible development. Our fundamental task is to stand on the program of the permanent revolution to defend, to push forward and complete the revolution, bringing it to final victory."

This opinion, written eight years ago, I still consider to be correct and effective. Here I only add: "It is still necessary for us Trotskyists, basing ourselves on the theory of permanent revolution, to criticize the CCP in its turn from the new democracy policy toward a socialist policy, especially their practice of industrialization and collectivization. Our basic position towards industrialization and collectivization in China today is at bottom the same as that of the Left Opposition in the Soviet Union as I have sought to indicate above."

Political Revolution or Democratic Reform?

In light of the above analysis of the CCP regime and its Stalinist characteristics and in view of the existence of a privileged class, protected by a police system under CCP rule, as proved by the facts, the need for political revolution follows logically. I can say, therefore, that no matter how "reality" has "changed," the basic position of "The Third Chinese Revolution and Its Aftermath," the resolution passed by the SWP in 1955 -- political revolution -- is still correct and effective. Its correctness is reflected not only by its theoretical analysis and prognosis, but also by the facts and the tendency that came to light in the "blossom and contend movement" of 1957.

After the liquidation of the cult of Stalin at the Twentieth Congress of the Soviet Communist party and the outbreak of the Hungarian Revolution, the CCP, under pressure of deep mass dissat-

isfaction and the threatening sympathy felt by revolutionary elements both inside and outside the party* toward the Hungarian Revolution, was compelled to launch the "blossom and contend movement," inviting every party, every faction and the people as a whole to express their opinions, to criticize the "three harms" within the CCP -- "bureaucratism, commanderism and subjectivism," and to help in "rectifying" and reforming the party, thus preventing the outbreak of a Hungarian-type revolution on Chinese soil. At the high tide of "blossom and contend movement" (April to June, 1957), facts about the arbitrariness and special privileges enjoyed by the CCP bureaucracy poured in from all corners among the masses, especially young students and revolutionary intellectuals (including members of the CCP and its youth organization).** The revolutionary tendency of this movement was reflected in the opinions expressed by Lin Hsi Ling, student-movement leader and member of the CCP youth organization, and Tai Haung, reporter for Hsinhua and member of the CCP. The former declared that "the present upper strata of China does not correspond with the property system of common ownership" because "the party and state apparatus has become a set of bureaucratic organs ruling people without democracy." Therefore she proclaimed "not reform but a thoroughgoing change." The latter proposed to build a new party and "to realize democracy, freedom and the eradication of a privileged class." Doesn't this revolutionary tendency, reflected in the "blossom and contend movement" -- "not reform but a thoroughgoing change" and "to realize democracy, freedom and the eradication of a privileged class" -- mean the junking of the bureaucratic dictatorship of the privileged caste and the realization of a socialist democratic political revolution?

Precisely because of the threat to CCP rule from the revolutionary tendency opposing bureaucratic dictatorship, which was revealed in the "blossom and contend movement," the CCP immediately discontinued this movement (in the middle of June, 1957) and vigorously counterattacked all the criticizers. Under the label of "antirightists," all the left revolutionary elements were ruthlessly suppressed! Thousands upon thousands were forced to recant, were suspended from their posts, placed under surveillance and even arrested and sent to the labor camps. Thousands upon thousands of party and youth organization members, besides suffering expulsion,

*Before launching the "blossom and contend movement," Mao said: "Certain people in our country were delighted when the Hungarian events took place. They hoped that something similar would happen in China, that thousands upon thousands of people would demonstrate in the streets against the People's Government." ("On the Correct Handling of Contradictions among the People," speech made by Mao on February 27, 1957, at the Eleventh Session (Enlarged) of the Supreme State Conference.) This proves that the CCP felt threatened by the sympathy of revolutionary elements in the country for the Hungarian Revolution.

**During the rise of the "blossom and contend movement," Liu Shao Chiu, the second leader of the CCP, openly admitted: "There is serious bureaucracy. . . mass criticism is spreading to every corner of China, including factories, farms, schools and other organizations. The target of criticism is the leadership." (Speech at the reception party given to representatives of the LSSP of Ceylon visiting China. People's Daily, May 19, 1957.)

were fired from their jobs, dismissed from school, placed under surveillance or arrested, etc. Accordingly, those who had been invited to criticize the CCP now became sacrificial goats because of their "criticism." Once again it was proved that a Stalinist party and its dictatorial regime cannot be self-reformed. Their nature is to represent the interests of the privileged bureaucracy.

But Comrades Swabek and Liang insist:

"The answer to bureaucratism is not a call for the overthrow of the present Peking regime -- which would be regarded by the masses as counterrevolutionary -- but a program of democratic demands designed to curb and break down bureaucratic arbitrariness through ever greater popular participation in, and control over, all phases of the national life." (SWP Discussion Bulletin, Vol. 21, No. 2, p. 29. My emphasis.)

"Our support of these revolutionary developments must of necessity be critical of all bureaucratic manifestations and emphasize demands for specific democratic measures without which the road to socialism cannot be assured. These should include democracy in the party with free opportunity for all members to criticize and to control policies and leadership. Similarly, democracy in all the organs of government, through the various levels from the local to the national, requires full powers of control in the hands of the people. In the economic domain democratic control by the masses of working people of state planning in production and distribution at all levels is essential to enable timely review of results in the light of actual experience, and to reduce inequalities to the minimum. Implicitly and explicitly our position should include the idea that in China such measures can be attained by means of reform." (Ibid., p. 30. Emphasis in original.)

The above "program of democratic demands" or "demands for specific democratic measures" raised by Comrades Swabek and Liang, is attractive and exciting and worth approving -- if it can be realized. But they completely forget or fail to take note of the facts and lessons of the "blossom and contend movement" of 1957.

(A.) At that time those who proposed the "overthrow of the present Peking regime" were not Trotskyists, but revolutionary elements, even members of the CCP and its youth organization such as Lin Hsi Ling, a member of the youth organization and Tai Haung, member of the party, etc., who represented the interests of the masses and their thinking.

(B.) At that time the CCP members who attempted "to criticize and to control policies and leadership" met with expulsion from the party and youth organization and dismissal from all posts, and even merciless punishment -- arrest and imprisonment.

(C.) Those who expressed the view that "democracy in all the organs of government, through the various levels from the local to the national, requires full powers of control in the hands of the people" met with all kinds of punishment (including forced recantation, dismissal from jobs, surveillance, and transfer to labor camps for reform).

(D.) From this it must be concluded that it is quite impossible to realize "in the economic domain democratic control by the masses of working people of state planning in production and distribution at all levels."

In the light of the lesson drawn from the historical facts, let me ask Comrades Swabeck and Liang: How do you expect to realize your "idea that in China such measures can be attained by means of reform"? Ask the CCP "leadership" to realize it? They have answered this question to the negative in the "blossom and contend movement." Propagate and inspire among CCP members and the worker-peasant masses realization of your "idea"? That is equivalent to calling on them to rise in a political revolution against the CCP. My dear comrades, in the face of reality, your "idea" of "democratic reform" ends in a blank wall.

For a time (at least before 1953), I had hoped CCP rule in China could be reformed through democratic measures, just as I entertained similar hopes about Russia under Stalin before 1933. But at present in China, as in Russia, the East European countries, North Korea and North Indochina, it is impossible to carry out democratic reforms. The right road, and the only passable one, is political revolution. The following program for political revolution should be proposed by us:

(1.) End the special privileges of the bureaucracy; down with the new aristocracy (including the "labor hero" or "labor model") and its rankings; greater equality in wages for all forms of labor; strict observance of the eight-hour day; greater efforts to raise the living standard of all laborers.

(2.) Fight for freedom of choice in union and factory committees, freedom of assembly and freedom of press.

(3.) In line with the interests and the will of the peasants, thorough reorganization of the communes. (Detailed under "Our Attitude Toward the Communes," in SWP Discussion Bulletin, Vol. 21, No. 1, pp. 32-33.)

(4.) Abolish the "fixed interest" given the capitalists, re-adjust the economic plan according to the interests of the producers and consumers. Establish the right of factory committees to supervise production. Form committees through democratic means in all the state stores, regional stores and consumers' co-operatives to check qualities and prices.

(5.) Replace the "People's Congress" with worker, peasant and soldier soviets, excluding not only bourgeois elements but the bureaucratic aristocracy, limiting the delegates in the soviets to workers, peasants and soldiers.

(6.) Ban all parties and factions of the bourgeoisie. All parties that accept socialism must be granted legal recognition and the right to conduct political activities.

(7.) Abrogate the foreign policy of "Five Principles" and "peaceful coexistence"; substitute the strategy of pushing world revolution forward.

(8.) Together with worker-peasant masses in the Soviet bloc, overthrow the system of Stalinist bureaucratic dictatorship and restore or establish socialist democracy.

In fighting for the above program of political revolution, we Trotskyists, standing with the masses, defend resolutely and unconditionally the existing socialist property and planned economy against imperialism, particularly any intervention or invasion of China engineered by American imperialism.

Long live Socialist Democracy!

Long live the World Revolution!

Where Are Comrades Swabeck and Liang Headed?

In discussing the communes, I pointed out: "But the errors of Comrades Liang and Swabeck intersect with principles, and if not recognized in time, can lead them into the swamp of revisionism." (SWP Discussion Bulletin, Vol. 21, No. 1, p. 32.) Since then, Comrades Swabeck and Liang not only failed to recognize their errors in time, but went further in their original errors, sinking deeply in the swamp of revisionism, as is clear from their recent article, "The Third Chinese Revolution. The Communes and Regime."

Their revisionism is obvious in the following items: On the issue of agricultural collectivization, they revise the principle of "nationalization and agricultural collectivization" as set down in our "Transitional Program" by departing from the traditional position of Engels and Lenin. On the nature of the CCP, disregarding "the training in the school of Stalinism" and "Stalinist characteristics alien to socialism," and singling out this or that measure which the CCP felt compelled to adopt for a time, they judge that the CCP has broken with Stalinism. On the nature of the CCP regime, overlooking entirely the essence of Stalinism implicit in its whole policy, and depending only on the electoral form of "universal electoral rights," they assert that it is a regime of socialist democracy. On the theory of permanent revolution, they distort it, neglecting the decisive significance of the internationalism at its core. Due to this series of violations of the principles of Marxism-Leninism and their revision of Trotskyism, they have reached the point on the Chinese question where as in the case "birds of a feather" they find themselves in Pablo's revisionist flock.

What is the objective force that brought Comrades Swabeck and Liang into revisionism on the Chinese question? It is mainly the influence of the "great leap forward" in production which the CCP has boasted about since 1958, particularly the "success of the communalization." Affected by the idealization of the people's communes current among petty-bourgeois intellectuals who live far

away from China, they unconsciously departed from their original position. This is clearly reflected in the change and development of their stand following the growth of the commune movement. For example, when informed that "elected councils" exist in the communes, they asserted that the communes are "self-governing political-economic units." Later, in accordance with their logic, they concluded: "The Peking regime is not a Stalinist-type regime." Also, the subtitle of their article, "The Communes and the Regime" and the attractive description of the communes under this heading, clearly show that their reappraisal of the nature of the CCP and its regime is closely connected with their appraisal of the communes. In other words, their reappraisal of the CCP and its regime is deduced from their formula -- "the communes are self-governing. . . ." If Pablo's departure from Trotskyism and arrival at revisionism came in response to the expansion of Stalinist influence after the war, especially after the surprising victory of the CCP, then the fall of Comrades Swabeck and Liang into the swamp of revisionism was due to the blinding brilliance of the "great leap forward" in Chinese industrialization, especially communalization.

Another reason for the fall of Comrades Swabeck and Liang into revisionism is their methodology in studying questions. They stress, of course: "The position taken in the 1955 resolution can be maintained only by sacrificing the materialist principle and dialectical method that constitute the heart of Marxism." (See SWP Discussion Bulletin, Vol. 21, No. 2, p. 26.) But in fact, they are "sacrificing the materialist principle and dialectical method" and applying the mechanism of formal logic and even idealism in dealing with problems and establishing and defending their new position. For example:

(A.) Disregarding the exceedingly low level of material, technical and cultural conditions in China today, as soon as the propaganda of the CCP came to their attention about a "double increase in agricultural production" and "liberation of the women from the family" after the general establishment of the communes, they responded with the belief that "China is solving its food problem," (SWP Discussion Bulletin, Vol. 20, No. 13, p. 3.) and asserted that the communes "have accelerated the liberation of women from domestic slavery, opened up new avenues of cultural development, and are narrowing the age-old cultural gulf between city and country." (Ibid., Vol. 20, No. 8, p. 40.) Such an obviously idealistic pronouncement could be made only "by sacrificing the materialist principle."

(B.) Seeing the "great leap forward" in Chinese industrialization and communalization, but completely ignoring the adventurism and the grave harm it signified to the worker-peasant masses, they gave it unconditional praise and support. In this they manifested mechanical thinking, sacrificing materialism.

(C.) Hearing about "elected councils," they did not ask how such "councils" are elected, or what their concrete content might be. They drew the conclusion of formal logic: "The communes are self-governing political-economic units." Likewise they judge the "People's Congress" by the form of the elections.

(D.) Comrade Liang declares: "The continuing drumfire of hostile comment on the Communes by capitalist propagandists places us squarely before the need to take a clear-cut position on what, essentially, is a class-struggle issue. FOR or AGAINST the Communes?" (Ibid., p. 36.) To raise a question in this way is purely "ultra-mechanical formal logic," as I pointed out in my article discussing the communes. (Ibid., Vol. 21, No. 1, p. 29.)

(E.) They emphasize that we "must become genuine partisans of the Chinese revolution and give unqualified support to its positive gains." (Ibid., Vol. 21, No. 2, p. 30.) But they denounce those who criticize CCP policy as "critical commentators with a factional axe to grind." (Ibid., p. 15.) They do not understand that it is possible for us to "become genuine partisans of the Chinese revolution" only if we stand firmly on Marxist-Leninist viewpoint and on Trotsky's program of permanent revolution, seriously criticize the Stalinist policy of the CCP and do everything possible to arouse the masses to recognize the error of this policy in order finally to bring their power to bear to change it. This is nothing else but flexible application of dialectically uniting "support" and "comment" or "criticism."

In the final analysis, Comrades Swabeck and Liang sacrifice "materialist principle and dialectical method" because of their impressionism, as is indicated by the following:

"A few fundamental questions remain to be considered, particularly the question of our own methodology. If we agree that reality is ever changing and always manifested concretely, then our thinking must reflect these same characteristics, and be likewise concrete and changeable, for only the application of this method can assure a reasonably correct position." (Ibid., p. 28.)

In appearance this declaration seems above criticism. But on deeper consideration, it is revealed as the root of impressionism. They completely left out by what principle or law we should investigate "reality" and its "change." They stress only "that reality is ever changing and always manifested concretely. . . our thinking must reflect these same characteristics. . ." All impressionists disdain principle, paying particular attention to "ever changing reality" which they "reflect" or accept as "concrete" or new phenomena. But as soon as a new "change" occurs in this "changing reality," they fall prey to other "concrete" or "new" phenomena. The impressionist, therefore, forever changes with the changing reality, lacking a consistent principle of his own. It was that way with Pablo and Shachtman. Now our Comrades Swabeck and Liang prove to be no exceptions.

On the eve of the outbreak of World War II, Shachtman saw the signing of the "Soviet-German pact," followed by the Soviet army attack on Finland, etc. He thereupon decided that the nature of the Soviet Union had changed and was not worthy of unconditional support. On seeing the expansion of Stalinist influence and the victory of the CCP, etc., after World War II, Pablo saw the possibility of the self-reform of Stalinist parties, no need for political revolution in the Soviet Union. Confronted by CCP industrializa-

tion and collectivization, especially the "changing reality" of communalization, Comrades Swabeck and Liang assert that the CCP has departed from Stalinism, "the Peking regime is not a Stalinist-type regime" and the political revolution is outdated. This series of examples demonstrates that impressionists, unable to maintain principles firmly, disdaining theory and relying only on the "concreteness of events," or "new reality," or "changing reality," depart inexorably from a principled stand and fall into revisionism.

The revisionist position of Comrades Swabeck and Liang on the Chinese question has now reached its final point. If they proceed in accordance with the logic they are following, they will inevitably arrive at revising the basic Trotskyist position toward the Soviet Union. But I hope that in the light of comradely criticism they will reconsider their position. I believe that subjectively, with their long record of faithful service, they are loyal to the Trotskyist movement. After serious self-investigation, in the light of criticism of their facts called to their attention, it should be possible for them to reestablish their original authentic Trotskyist position.

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