

THE
DYNAMICS
OF
WORLD
REVOLUTION
TODAY

- TEXT OF RESOLUTION ADOPTED
AT THE REUNIFICATION WORLD
CONGRESS OF THE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL
IN 1963.

pp International Marxist Group
182 Pentonville Road, London, N.1.

Dynamics of World Revolution Today

Text of Resolution Adopted by Reunification
Congress of the Fourth International, June 1963.

I. The General Background

THE classical schema of world revolution assumed that the victory of socialism would occur first in the most industrially developed countries, setting an example for the less developed. "The more advanced countries show the more backward ones their own future," wrote Marx. For the victory of socialism, Marxism generally held that a highly developed industrial base and powerful proletariat as well as a strong and politically conscious labor movement were indispensable objective and subjective preconditions which could appear only with the full development of capitalism.

It is true that after the revolution of 1848, Marx voiced some misgivings about one of the political assumptions underlying this schema, namely, the capacity of the bourgeoisie to carry out a classical bourgeois-democratic revolution in countries where capitalism is still immature but where a modern proletariat already exists. Later Engels further undermined this schema when he pointed out that the relative weakness of political consciousness among the British working class was due precisely to the fact that Britain was the most advanced capitalist country, holding a world monopoly on high productivity.

At the beginning of the twentieth century, Trotsky in 1905 in his theory of permanent revolution, which held that the working class would find itself compelled to carry out tasks historically belonging to the bourgeoisie, and Lenin in 1914 in his theory of imperialism, which included the view that the imperialist chain would break first at its weakest link, showed that they had come to understand the main consequence of the law of uneven and combined development; namely, that the proletariat might well come to power first in a backward country as a result of the contradictions of the world capitalist system as a whole. Both Lenin and Trotsky were firmly of the opinion that the victory of the revolution in such circumstances would prove to be only the prelude to the victory of the socialist revolution in the key capitalist countries and a means of facilitating the final outcome. It was in this spirit that the Bolsheviks took power in October 1917 and founded the Third International in 1919.

The revolution followed a more devious path than even its greatest theoreticians expected. We know what a heavy price mankind as a whole and the workers and peasants of the first workers' states in particular have had to pay for this detour.

The betrayals by the reformist bureaucracy led to the defeat of the German and Central European revolutions of 1918-21, isolating the first victorious revolution to backward Russia and thereby paving the way for the bureaucratic degeneration of the Soviet state and the Communist International over which the Stalinist bureaucracy established tight control. The Comintern became transformed from an instrument of world revolution into an instrument of diplomatic maneuver in the hands of the Kremlin thereby blocking, first unintentionally and then with calculated purpose, the victory of the proletarian revolution in many promising situations in many countries. At the end of World War II, Social-Democratic and Stalinist class-collaborationist policies, in combination with the efforts of Western imperialism, led to the stabilization of a capitalist economy and a bourgeois state in several imperialist countries where the victory of socialism was objectively possible and even imminent.

As a result of the successive failure of the two major revolutionary waves of 1918-23 and 1943-48 — and of the minor one of 1934-37 — the main center of world revolution shifted for a time to the colonial world. The victory of the Chinese Revolution in 1949, following the postwar revolutionary wave in Europe, opened an uninterrupted series of colonial revolutions. All the victorious revolutions after 1917, including the establishment of workers' states through revolutionary upheavals in Yugoslavia, China, Vietnam and Cuba, thus took place in relatively backward countries while the possibility of early revolutionary victory in the imperialist countries was postponed.

THE view must be vigorously rejected that this development, unforeseen in the classics of Marxism, was more or less fatally determined by objective factors or by lack of revolutionary energy or will among the workers in the imperialist countries. No one can seriously deny that since 1917 various mass upsurges and even uprisings of the working class made the overthrow of capitalism objectively possible in many imperialist countries. (Germany and the whole of Central Europe 1918-20, Italy 1919-21, Germany 1923, Britain 1926, Austria 1933-34, Spain 1931-37, Belgium 1932-36, France 1935-37, Italy 1943-48, France 1944-48, Britain 1945-50, etc.) Nor can it reasonably be denied that in innumerable general strikes, occupations of factories, mass demonstrations that have toppled governments, and even insurrections threatening the foundations of bourgeois state power, that the proletariat of the im-

perialist countries (excepting the United States) has shown again and again its understanding of the general need to reconstruct society along socialist lines, and its willingness to carry out the task. The failure of all these attempts is not due to any innate incapacity, to any political "backwardness" or to "corruption," but to the treacherous role of the official leadership which has repeatedly preferred not to utilize the objective possibility of taking power, or to deliberately destroy that possibility. The European proletariat has been hit harder by such betrayals than any other sector of the world working class as is clearly shown in the cases of Germany and Spain.

The crisis of revolutionary leadership exists, of course, in the colonial and semicolonial countries as well as in the advanced countries. Many defeated or aborted revolutions bear witness to this crisis — from the Chinese Revolution of 1925-27 to the more recent defeats in Guatemala and Iraq. But in possible outcome of the struggle, a big difference is evident between inadequate leadership in a backward country and similar leadership in an imperialist country: *the enemy facing the working population is immeasurably stronger in the latter.*

Confronted with the powerful and well-experienced bourgeoisie of the imperialist countries, the working class can achieve victory only under a genuine revolutionary Marxist leadership which is able: (1) to establish unity of action inside the ranks of the proletariat; (2) to mobilize to the fullest extent the latent and often hidden revolutionary potentialities of the working class; (3) to outmaneuver a very astute and supple capitalist class leadership which has learned how to transform reforms into a powerful brake upon revolutions; (4) to win over a part and neutralize another part of the petty bourgeoisie (the mass basis of capitalism in the imperialist countries) without surrendering its own class objectives. The absence of an explosive agrarian problem is an important element in strengthening and stabilizing capitalism in most imperialist countries.

The situation is different in the backward countries. Confronted by ruling classes, rotten to the core and lacking mass support, the revolution draws into struggle the mass of the working population, including the poorest peasants and pauperized petty bourgeoisie, bringing about collapse of the traditional order and its state, and exerting such pressure on centrist working-class parties and similar formations as to bring them to power.

Under anywhere near normal capitalist conditions, it should be remembered, "These do not," as Lenin said, "exist situations without a way out from an economic point of view." The failure of a revolutionary wave in an imperialist country gives way eventually to some form of temporary relative economic stabilization and even to fresh expansion. This inevitably postpones new revolutionary uprisings for a time, the combination of political setback (or even demoralization) of the working class and a rising standard of living being unfavorable for any immediate revolutionary undertaking.

In the colonial and semicolonial countries, on the other hand, the very weakness of capitalism, the whole peculiar socio-economic structure produced by imperialism, the permanent misery of the big majority of the population in the absence of a radical agrarian revolution, the stagnation and even reduction of living

standards while industrialization nevertheless proceeds relatively rapidly, create situations in which the failure of one revolutionary wave does not lead automatically to relative or even temporary social or economic stabilization. A seemingly inexhaustible succession of mass struggles continues, such as Bolivia has experienced for ten years. The weakness of the enemy offers the revolution fuller means of recovery from temporary defeats than is the case in imperialist countries.

To sum up: the victories and defeats since 1917 express the relationship of forces between the old ruling class and the toiling masses on a world scale. The fact that the revolution won first in backward countries and not in the advanced is not proof that the workers in the advanced countries have shown insufficient revolutionary combativity. It is evidence of the fact that the opposition which they have to overcome in these countries is immeasurably stronger than in the colonial and semicolonial world. The weakness of the enemy in the backward countries has opened the possibility of coming to power even with a blunted instrument. The strength of the enemy in the imperialist countries demands a tool of much greater perfection.

At the same time, it is important to recognize that the three main forces of world revolution — the colonial revolution, the political revolution in the degenerated or deformed workers' states, and the proletarian revolution in the imperialist countries — form a dialectical unity. Each force influences the others and receives in return powerful impulses or brakes on its own development. The delay of the proletarian revolution in the imperialist countries has in general undoubtedly prevented the colonial revolution from taking the socialist road as quickly and as consciously as would have been possible under the influence of a powerful revolutionary upsurge or victory of the proletariat in an advanced country. This same delay also retards the maturing of the political revolution in the USSR, especially inasmuch as it does not place before the Soviet workers a convincing example of an alternative way to build socialism. Finally, the upsurge of the colonial and political revolutions, hampered by the delay of the proletarian revolution in the West, nevertheless contributes in helping the proletariat in the imperialist countries to overcome this delay.

II. The Colonial Revolution

FROM the close of World War II, and most noticeably after the victory of the Chinese Revolution, continual mass movements have drawn one backward country after another into the process of permanent revolution. The general causes of this wave are to be found in the weakening of the old colonial powers during and after World War II; the attraction exercised by the advances of the Soviet Union and especially the new China; the dawning mass awareness of the wretched material and moral conditions throughout these countries; the power displayed by the movement for national independence and its identification in the eyes of the masses with the possibility of overcoming misery, low living standards, low cultural levels, and exploitation and oppression of all kinds; the worsening of the international terms of trade for the countries exporting raw materials, especially since the end of the "Korean war boom"; the contrast between the enormous economic expansion of all the industrialized countries and the near stagnation (or lowering) of the

standard of living of the masses in most of the colonial and semicolonial countries in the past decade — these are some of the main causes of the general upheaval in the colonial world.

As a development in world history, the colonial revolution signifies above all that two billion human beings — men, women and children in areas where the tradition for centuries has been to live as passive subjects, condemned to super oppression and to super exploitation, utter humiliation and destruction of their national traditions and even their national identity when they have not been made the target of mass slaughter and extermination — suddenly acquire a voice, a language and a personality of their own. Basically, the colonial revolution is the irrepressible tendency of these two billion human beings to become at least the masters and builders of their own destiny. The fact that this is socially possible only through a workers' state provides the objective basis for the tendency of the colonial revolution to move into the tracks of permanent revolution.

In the process of world revolution, the colonial revolution — first the Chinese Revolution and then the whole chain of upheavals — has prevented any temporary stabilization of the imperialist system on a world scale such as occurred after 1921. It has turned the international relationship of forces against capitalism, forced imperialism to fight — and in most cases lose — a series of defensive battles and wars which it has launched in its efforts to halt the advance of revolution in the colonial world. It has thereby given tremendous impetus to anticapitalist forces everywhere in the world. It has provided the Soviet Union and the other workers' states the necessary breathing spell needed to overcome the qualitative advance in the military field which came into the hands of imperialism as World War II reached its climax.

THE colonial revolution could not by its own forces bring about the downfall of imperialism. Paradoxically, it has not even been able to undermine the relative economic stability of the imperialist countries. Contrary to the general revolutionary Marxist assumption following 1919, the collapse of the colonial system did not lead to an immediate economic crisis or breakdown in the imperialist countries; it coincided with the biggest relative expansion of capitalist production and foreign trade they have experienced in half a century.

Among the multiple causes of this apparent paradox, one is of outstanding importance. So long as the newly independent states, emerging through the colonial revolution, are held by bourgeois or petty-bourgeois leaderships within the limits of the capitalist mode of production and the capitalist world market, the real power of imperialism is not broken in these countries. Its rule merely shifts from a direct to an indirect form. As foreseen long ago by revolutionary Marxists, the basic strategy of imperialism, confronted with the colonial revolution, has been to modify its form of rule while seeking to maintain its essential content. In some cases, of course, this transformation has cost imperialism real losses and it has sought to avoid the dangerous shift in the form of its rule, sometimes by desperate and bloody colonial wars.

The transition from direct to indirect imperialist rule involves a redistribution of the surplus value produced by the colonial masses in favor of the colonial bourgeoisie and petty bourgeoisie at the expense of the im-

perialist power. Inasmuch as it also entails acceleration of the process of industrializing the colonial countries, it even signifies modification of the international division of labor, granting an increased share of the world market to the colonial bourgeoisie in the production of certain industrial consumer goods (especially textiles) and narrowing the imperialist countries in an increasing degree to the export of investment goods.

This aspect of neocolonialism corresponds to certain inherent needs of the imperialist bourgeoisie itself, the changing industrial structure forcing it to seek new markets for means of production rather than for consumption goods. So-called "aid to the underdeveloped countries" boils down to underwriting financially the effort to secure provisions for these needs, the expected political and social consequences being but by-products of successfully meeting the main economic necessity. But the limited nature of this industrialization process under bourgeois auspices as well as the picayune amount of imperialist "aid" leave the real needs of economic development in the colonial countries scarcely touched. Basically their socio-economic structure thus remains as it was under direct imperialist rule. They continue substantially as producers and exporters of raw materials and foodstuffs, completely dependent on the price fluctuations of the world market. They continue to carry the burden of tremendous unemployment or underemployment in the countryside. Even the limited industrialization process occurs at the cost of inflation and a lowering of real wages; i.e., at the cost of increased misery for the working masses.

Since the colonial revolution up to now has in the main been held within the framework of the capitalist world market, it has not inflicted staggering economic blows to the capitalist world economy as a whole nor touched off major economic crises in imperialist countries which lost their former empires. Only one imperialist economy, because of its peculiar economic structure, seems doomed to collapse the moment it loses its colonial holdings — Portugal.

But this does not mean that the colonial revolution has not affected the mechanism of imperialist economy. Its most noticeable consequence has been to slow down the export of private capital to the backward countries and to impel national or international public (government) bodies to assume the role normally undertaken by private capital in the heyday of imperialism. Grave monetary, financial and economic contradictions flow from this. In the imperialist countries in the past ten years, the reluctance of private capital — in the face of relatively rapid expansion — to export its surpluses to backward countries caught up in the process of colonial revolution has constituted a major problem. Government investment guarantees and insurance can mitigate but not overcome the block.

As long as the great majority of the newly-independent countries remain within the framework of the capitalist world market, these difficulties constitute a "lesser evil" from the viewpoint of world capitalism which can be handled, more or less, within the system — at least for the time being. Only if the main semicolonial countries were to break out of the capitalist world system by becoming workers' states would the colonial revolution deliver economic blows of such proportions as to rapidly create the gravest economic and social crises in the imperialist centers.

So far as real perspectives are concerned, it is not excluded that these countries will become workers'

states before the political revolution triumphs in the Soviet Union and before the proletarian revolution scores a decisive victory in one or more of the important imperialist countries. However, it would be inadvisable for revolutionary socialists to base themselves on this unlikely variant. Such a perspective implies not only the continuation of the process of permanent revolution in the colonial world (which is sure to occur) but also the victorious conclusion of this process in many countries within a specified time limit (before victories elsewhere). A policy based arbitrarily upon any one of the many possible time sequences in the development of the three main sectors of the world revolution could lead to exceedingly grave political errors.

THE objective conditions for the process of permanent revolution in the colonial countries rests basically on the inability of the colonial bourgeois or petty-bourgeois nationalist leaderships to solve within the framework of the capitalist mode of production fundamental problems created by economic and cultural upsurge. This is expressed most acutely by the incapacity of capitalism to undertake radical agrarian reform. The subjective conditions are determined by the fact that the colonial masses generally do not distinguish the conquest of national independence from the conquest of a high material and cultural standard of living. As long as living conditions do not improve, independence seems incomplete, inadequate and even unreal. This means that in the long run no social, economic or political stabilization is possible in these countries without the victory of the socialist revolution. Temporarily, political stabilization can be achieved by bourgeois or petty-bourgeois nationalist leaderships which continue to be identified in the eyes of the masses with a real anti-imperialist struggle for national independence and which succeed in selling the masses the idea that the process of social upheaval and economic development is actually under way. The outstanding cases of relative success in this were Peron in Argentina, Nasser in Egypt and Nehru in India. Even in these instances, the political equilibrium has proved to be quite unstable, indicating what would occur with the appearance of an alternative working-class leadership able to mobilize the general anti-imperialist feelings of the masses around basic, concrete, revolutionary goals which the traditional leadership cannot realize; for example, radical land reform in India.

For all these reasons, the most probable perspective for most of the backward countries is a succession of protracted social revolutionary crises which bourgeois or petty-bourgeois nationalist leaderships will desperately try to contain or to canalize but which, despite inevitable setbacks, will periodically leap over these limits. This protracted period of instability and social crises does not imply the automatic victory of proletarian forces or of revolutionary peasant forces led by a Marxist leadership; that is, the automatic establishment of workers' states. As in the case of equating the beginning of the colonial revolution (under bourgeois or petty-bourgeois nationalist leadership) with its victorious conclusion under proletarian leadership, any idea that this process will occur automatically or inevitably within a certain time limit necessarily leads to a distorted estimate of the actual relationship of forces and replaces scientific analysis by illusions and wish-

ful thinking. It presupposes that the objective process will solve by itself a task which can only be solved in struggle through the subjective effort of the vanguard, i.e., revolutionary-socialist conquest of the leadership of the mass movement. That this is possible in the very process of the revolution, and in a relatively short time, has been adequately demonstrated in the case of Cuba. That it is not inevitable, and that without it the revolution is certain to suffer serious defeats or be limited at best to inconclusive victories is demonstrated by much in the recent history of other Latin-American countries; for instance, Bolivia, Argentina and Guatemala.

A more precise perspective for each of the great ethno-geographical zones of the colonial revolution (Latin America, the Arab world, Black Africa, the Indian subcontinent and South-East Asia) can only be worked out on the basis of a concrete analysis of the specific social and political forces at work and of their more exact economic conditions. However, certain general social trends which apply to all or most of the colonial and semicolonial countries can be indicated:

(a) The numerical and economic weakness of the national bourgeoisie. Despite the priority granted them by history, the national bourgeoisie has proved incapable of handling the capital made available under the rubric of "aid to the underdeveloped countries" in such a way as to achieve optimum results in industrialization. This is perhaps the biggest obstacle in the way of a "bourgeois solution" of the problem of economic underdevelopment. Everywhere we find the same phenomena: of available surplus capital, a major part is diverted from industrial uses to investment in land or usury, hoarding, import of luxury consumers goods, even outright flight abroad. This incapacity of the national bourgeoisie is not the result or mere reflection of its moral corruption but a normal operation of the capitalist drive for profits under the given economic and social conditions. Fear of permanent revolution is not the least of the motives involved.

(b) The creation of the infrastructure of heavy industry through the state, taking the form of nationalized property. The social layer heading and embodying this process is the urban petty bourgeoisie, especially the intellectuals, the military and state functionaries. The process favors, is even indispensable, for the development of a national bourgeois state. It can clash, however, with the interests of many parts of the old

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bourgeois classes in the private sector — not only the traditional compradore bourgeoisie but even the industrial bourgeoisie. This is the explanation for the anti-capitalist demagoguery and nationalizations of bourgeois enterprises undertaken in countries like Egypt, Ghana, etc. The functioning of the state in this field constitutes the objective basis for the "socialism" of Nehru and even Nasser, whatever the other differences between the two regimes. The general capitalist character of the economy remains clear cut in such countries, however, as long as (1) the state apparatus itself and the nationalized sectors remain feeding grounds for private accumulation of capital and private industrial enterprise (through corruption, theft, outright gifts, subsidies, etc.); (2) the national economy continues to be geared to the capitalist world market; (3) petty commodity production, constantly reproducing capital accumulation, prevails in the countryside.

(c) The strategic role of the colonial proletariat. In view of the peculiar socio-economic structure of these countries, the main strength of the proletariat does not lie among the industrial factory workers who, with the exception of Argentina, form only a minority of the wage earners and a tiny fraction of the active working population of these countries. The colonial proletariat must be taken as the sum total of all those who live completely or essentially from the sale of their labor power; that is, industrial factory workers, public service workers, domestic workers, miners, plantation hands, agricultural workers and the rural and urban workers who find only partial or occasional employment. The emphasis should be placed on the latter four categories — the miners, plantation hands, agricultural workers and largely unemployed — typical for the colonial economy. They are numerically much stronger than generally supposed. Even in some countries of Black Africa (Rhodesia, South Africa, Angola, Congo) they constitute from one-fourth to three-fifths of the population. In the case of the Cuban Revolution, while poor peasants were the first recruits to the guerrilla forces, the base of the revolution shifted to field workers and rural unemployed, fusing finally with the proletariat of the sugar industry and the cities. Part of the explanation for the high level of consciousness which the Cuban Revolution rapidly attained lies in the composition of its mass base.

(d) The radical role of the peasantry. In the form of expanding guerrilla forces, the peasantry has undoubtedly played a much more radical and decisive role in the colonial revolution than was forecast in Marxist theory. It has revealed a social nature somewhat different from that of the traditional peasantry of the advanced capitalist countries. However, to prevent any misunderstanding or confusion, which in certain situations could lead to tragic errors (witness what happened in China after the introduction of the people's communes), two basic distinctions must be made.

First, the distinction between the revolutionary role of the peasantry fighting for the conquest of land as private property (even though brought together through co-operatives) and the conservative role of the peasantry in the phase of the socialist transformation of property relations in the countryside. Experience in Eastern Europe and also in China has confirmed the lesson learned in Russia that wherever the peasantry stands in the forefront of the fight against the old landlord-usurer-compradore alliance in order to become master of the land, it can as a class be the ally of the

proletariat only as long as the workers' state refrains from introducing socialist property relations in the countryside. Such relations can be based only on the poorest sector of the peasant class and can therefore be introduced only gradually in a country where agriculture prevails, if grave social crises are to be avoided. It should be noted, too, that the peasantry is not universally revolutionary. The existence of a large majority of small land-owning peasants has undoubtedly served as a momentary brake on the revolutionary process in several South-East Asian countries (Malaya, Thailand, even Ceylon).

Second, the distinction between the ingrained individualism of the classical peasantry with a background of centuries of petty commodity production — either possessing land or aspiring to possess it; and the predisposition toward collectivism among rural populations still living under conditions of total or partial tribal (communal) property. This class, in contrast to the traditional peasantry, is not per se opposed to the introduction of socialist property relations in the countryside. It therefore remains an ally of the proletariat throughout the whole process of permanent revolution. In certain countries its existence can give a peasant uprising a powerful, semiproletarian character from the outset. Even in a favorable situation such as this, however, the level of consciousness of these masses should not be idealized. Miserably oppressed, having virtually literally "nothing to lose but their chains," these masses can offer humanity the most shining examples of revolutionary heroism and self-sacrifice. But only education under a capable Marxist leadership and a workers' state can make it possible for them to achieve revolutionary-socialist consciousness, especially the essential components of discipline, self-management and modern industrial rationality.

To win leadership among the colonial masses, the revolutionary Marxist vanguard must learn how to bring the basically progressive aspirations of the toiling masses into intimate connection with the program of revolutionary socialism. The constant struggle to educate the proletariat of the imperialist countries in the need to support the colonial revolution unconditionally must be linked with practical activity in bringing material aid to the colonial revolution. Among the freedom fighters in the colonial countries, it is a primary task to raise elementary revolutionary consciousness to the level of scientific socialism and an understanding of the dialectical interaction among the three main sectors of the world revolution today. All this cannot be achieved through some automatic process. It is an absolute necessity to educate revolutionary Marxist cadres and to build tendencies and independent parties wherever possible in all colonial countries. The building of sections of the Fourth International capable of working out concrete analyses of their specific national situations and finding concrete solutions to the problems remains a central strategic task in all countries.

TO DETERMINE the place of the colonial revolution today in the general process of the world revolution, it is insufficient to take into consideration its consequences only in the politico-military field, where it has struck imperialism staggering blows, or in the economic area, where it has not yet seriously undermined the world economy of capitalism. We must also examine the effects of the colonial revolution on the relationship of class forces in the imperialist countries,

particularly on the working-class movement, and on the conflicting social and political forces in the bureaucratically deformed or degenerated workers' states.

In most of the imperialist countries, the colonial revolution up to now has not significantly modified the relationship of forces to the expense of the bourgeoisie and the gain of the proletariat. However, in the case of France it was the Algerian Revolution which — by continuing in its heroic struggle against French imperialism despite the lack of help — prevented a decisive stabilization of the bonapartist dictatorship of de Gaulle. The French working class, which received a terrible blow when de Gaulle came to power in May 1958, was given a breathing spell, precious time in which to recover its morale and begin to reassemble its forces. In Portugal, the outbreak of revolution in Angola and other colonies proved decisive in undermining the stability of the Salazar dictatorship, creating the prerevolutionary climate which has placed the overthrow of Portuguese fascism on the order of the day. The fall of Salazar would help accelerate the Spanish revolution, weaken the bonapartist regime in France and intensify the new wave of militancy in the West European labor movement.

Up to now the colonial revolution has not contributed directly toward radicalizing the mass movement in most imperialist countries; at best it has but increased the general consciousness, already widespread among significant layers, that the world capitalist system is growing relatively weaker. But it has affected elements in an immediate way, crystallizing new revolts against the waiting, passive or treacherous attitude of the old leaderships toward the colonial revolution or fresh reactions against the generally low level of politics in some imperialist countries. This has occurred not only in France where these new layers have been most vocal but also in several other European countries, especially Spain, and in the United States where the opportunity to solidarize with the Cuban Revolution has opened the door to radical politics for a new generation of vanguard elements. In the same way the influence of the colonial revolution, especially the African revolution, upon vanguard elements in the Negro movement has helped prepare the emergence of a new radical left wing. In all these cases, it is the task of revolutionary Marxists to seek to win the best elements of this newly emerging vanguard to Trotskyism and to fuse them into the left wing of the mass movement.

The influence of the colonial revolution on the awakening masses of the workers' states has been complex and many-sided. In general the colonial revolution has helped to overcome lethargy and the feeling of political impotence. The interest displayed by these masses toward the colonial revolution (primarily the Chinese Revolution but also the Algerian and Cuban revolutions since 1959) has been great and it is still increasing along with feelings of solidarity. At the same time the problems raised by the anti-revolutionary strategy of the Communist parties in both colonial and imperialist countries and by the ambivalence which the ruling bureaucracies of the workers' states display toward the colonial revolution have contributed toward political differentiation within the Communist parties of the workers' states: at first between sections of the youth and the bureaucracy, later between the Mao Tse-tung and Khrushchev factions. However, Mao Tse-tung's opportunistic and unprincipled bloc with the most conservative wing of the Soviet bureaucracy and

his resistance to destroying the cult of Stalin, as particularly evidenced in the bloc with the Albanian CP leadership, has limited the extent and practical consequences of this differentiation among most CP's of the workers' states. An additional factor is the direct effect of the colonial revolution through such forces as colonial students who find it difficult to breathe in the monolithic atmosphere of the world Communist movement, and who at times pass beyond words to deeds to express their feelings as in the student demonstrations in Moscow and Sofia. The emergence of mass revolutionary forces led by parties or tendencies which have developed outside the realm of Stalinist control (Cuba, Algeria) has introduced a most powerful disintegrating element into international Stalinism, favoring the development of a revolutionary left wing.

IF THE direct economic and political effect of the colonial revolution has not been strongly felt in the imperialist countries, the establishment of workers' states in China, North Korea, Vietnam and Cuba has had powerful ramifications among the Communist parties and in the formation of revolutionary leadership as a whole.

The Yugoslav and Chinese Communist Parties failed to develop their "tendency" on a wide international scale for a number of specific reasons. The Yugoslavs sought a false, opportunistic alliance with the national bourgeoisie of the colonial and semicolonial countries. This effectively barred an alliance with the fighting elements of the colonial revolution. In Western Europe they took an opportunistic attitude toward the reformist bureaucracies, with parallel crippling effects on linking up with the revolutionary proletarian movement. Progressive developments inside Yugoslavia, however, have had considerable repercussions among the workers' states. For instance, "revival" of workers' councils has resounded especially in Poland and Hungary even though this important step is limited by the fact that the councils do not wield political power.

The Chinese Communist Party has scored some successes among the Communist parties of the colonial world where Peking has special appeal because of its antagonism to some (not all) of the national bourgeoisies. In the imperialist centers and in the workers' states, the Chinese appeal has been much more limited because of the unprincipled alliance with the unreconstructed Stalinists and because of the opportunistic regime maintained in China. On these two key issues militant workers in the metropolitan centers, and workers, youth and peasants of the workers' states, feel alienated from the Chinese. However, the criticisms levelled at Togliatti and similar figures have met with a favorable response among the ranks of many Communist parties.

The victory in Cuba marked the beginning of a new epoch in the history of the world revolution; for, aside from the Soviet Union, this is the first workers' state established outside the bounds of the Stalinist apparatus. Such a development, whatever the size of the country involved, was a turning point whose effects have necessarily reverberated on a tremendous scale throughout the whole world Communist movement.

In fact, an international, Castroist current has appeared inside the world Communist and revolutionary-socialist movement which, as was to be expected, is strongest in the colonial areas, especially Latin Amer-

ica and Africa. It is also noticeable in the other workers' states. In Algeria the influence of Castroism again testifies to the importance of the Cuban development.

Except in Spain and Portugal, Castroism has not had great impact in Europe. Its influence in other metropolitan centers such as the United States and Japan is likewise limited. One of the reasons for this is that the Cuban leadership has not yet reached an understanding of how it can best facilitate revolutionary rebirth in these areas.

The appearance of more workers' states through further development of the colonial revolution, particularly in countries like Algeria, would help strengthen and enrich the international current of Castroism, give it longer range perspectives and help bring it closer to understanding the necessity for a new revolutionary Marxist International of mass parties. Fulfillment of this historic possibility depends in part on the role which the Fourth International plays in the colonial revolution and the capacity of sections of the Fourth International to help win fresh victories.

The infusion of Trotskyist concepts in this new Castroist current will also influence the development of a conscious revolutionary leadership, particularly in the workers' states, will help prevent "Titoist" deviations and better assure the evolution of mass pressure and class action into the cleansing force of political revolution. The development of the Portuguese and Spanish revolutions, historically possible in a short period, can also give rise to new tendencies of the Castroist type which would help the Cubans and related currents to achieve a fuller understanding of the process of world revolution in its entirety.

III. The Political Revolution

The increasing political passivity and apathy of the Soviet masses after 1923 was determined by two main factors: the defeat of the international revolution and the consequent isolation of the first workers' state, and the low living standard of the masses due to the economic collapse of Russia. These forced the Soviet masses to become preoccupied over the daily struggle to make ends meet, the feeling that under these same conditions the workers' state remained in mortal danger of attack from imperialist forces contributed to the political passivity.

Since the turn in the world relationship of forces about by the victory of the Chinese revolution, the factors that favored political apathy of the Soviet masses have been steadily undermined. The conditions favoring a rise in mass political awareness and militancy have been maturing. The isolation of the first workers' state has been broken, not only in Europe but in Asia and the whole world. The growth in the living standards of the masses since 1923 — a result of growing mass pressure on the bureaucracy under conditions of increased technological and economic progress — has enabled the people to devote part of their energies to cultural and political work. The emergence of the Soviet Union as the second industrial power of the world, even holding the lead in several technological fields, has made its relatively low standard of living all the more incongruous, and has served to stimulate increased economic demands. The threat of imperialist attack re-

mains, and the bureaucracy uses this threat quite consciously to periodically silence the voices of opposition. However, the masses cannot help but feel the new power and standing of the Soviet Union in world affairs in the epoch of missile warfare when the leaders of the bureaucracy themselves continually boast of their ability to inflict a crushing defeat on the imperialist warmongers.

The evolution of the workers' states as a whole since the victory of the Chinese Revolution in 1949 and especially after Stalin's death in 1953 has therefore steadily removed the causes that fostered political passivity among the masses and their vanguard. In the East European workers' state this development was hastened, although made more complex, by a strong feeling of national oppression among the masses. All these new factors contributed to such events as the June 16-17, 1953, general strike and uprising in Eastern Germany, to the Poznan events in the spring of 1956 in Poland, to the beginning of the political revolution in Poland and Hungary in October 1956, to the revival of political militancy among some layers of the workers' vanguard and oppositional Communists during the "hundred flowers bloom" period in China in early 1957, to the increasing pressure of the Soviet masses on the bureaucracy which won the concessions of 1953 (breaking up of the GPU power, dissolution of the slave-labor camps and a radical modification of the oppressive factory labor code), then the denunciation of the Stalin cult in 1956 at the Twentieth Congress and a continuous rise since 1953 in the mass standard of living as a result of radical changes in the bureaucracy's general economic policy, and finally the important new political concessions granted at the Twenty-second Congress (new political rights written into the new party program, partial public rehabilitation of the victims of Stalin's purges, etc.).

Mass pressure in the Soviet Union began with a general revolt against the most barbaric and arbitrary forms of Stalin's bonapartist dictatorship, in which all social layers participated. The pressure then began to become differentiated in the economic field, all social layers participating, but each with its own set of demands. From this, the movement advanced toward specific political demands, first from the ranks of the bureaucracy who demanded and obtained a stabilizing of conditions for the bureaucrats as individuals. This was done by widening the participation in the exercise of political power. These reforms were welcomed by the workers. The first rumblings from the peasantry were demands for kolkhoz democracy, voiced publicly here and there in the Soviet Union. The ferment among the intellectuals and students, which is expressed around such issues as freedom in art and scientific research, foreshadows demands for political democracy. Certain sectors of the bureaucracy have indicated awareness of the objective need to loosen the Stalinist stranglehold on the productive forces, the better to meet the threatening military and technological advances of U.S. imperialism.

As yet, such key demands as workers' management in the factories and the establishment of control through democratically elected councils have not been raised. But it is only a question of time until they begin to appear. One reason for the sensitivity of the Soviet bureaucracy toward "Yugoslav revisionism" is fear of the attraction which Yugoslav experimentation with

workers' councils and self-management can hold for the advanced Soviet workers, youth, intellectuals, and even the lower layers of the bureaucracy, especially the lower ranks of the trade-union officialdom, who are in direct contact with the proletariat.

It is necessary to distinguish clearly between generalized mass pressure, the beginning of mass actions (invariably of reformist character), and the opening of the real political revolution. This distinction is not always easily made in the heat of events since it involves successive stages of one and the same process, each linked to the next and without clear boundary lines. This was clearly borne out in the case of the Polish events in 1956 and the actions leading to the first phase of the Hungarian Revolution. Nevertheless, a few generalizations can be made concerning the Soviet Union.

In the first place, the dominant trend since 1953 has been mass pressure rather than mass action. There are some outstanding exceptions: The revolt at Vorkuta and other slave-labor camps probably played a decisive role in hastening the liquidation of this whole utterly reactionary system. Some local strikes wrenched considerable concessions for the workers in housing and better distribution of consumer goods. Certain actions by students, youth groups and vanguard intellectuals may have contributed in bringing about the political concessions made to the masses at the Twenty-second Congress. But in general the pressure on the bureaucracy has remained below the level of mass actions. The pressure of a formidable mass of people, slowly awakening to political life, is of course a sufficient nightmare to the bureaucracy to wring substantial concessions.

Far from satisfying the masses and lulling them into apathy, the concessions have only whetted appetites. The discontent of the masses over their low standard of living is certainly more vocal, if not actually greater in force, than it was before Stalin's death. Such seemingly paradoxical phenomenon is well known in capitalist countries. What the concessions have gained for the bureaucracy is a general reformist atmosphere, especially since the Hungarian events, an atmosphere in which the masses expect that continued pressure will be rewarded by substantial new concessions. They do not yet see the need or possibility of broader mass actions, the scope of which would reach revolutionary proportions.

This atmosphere can perhaps last for some time, but it will not last forever. Two forces inherent in the current dialectical relations between mass pressure and bureaucratic reforms tend to undermine it. The first force is the inclination of the masses to convert into reality the political rights conceded to them on paper. At a certain point this can lead to open collision with powerful sectors of the bureaucracy. The second force is the tendency of mass demands to evolve into demands for workers' control and workers' management. Pressure along this line was reflected in a manifest way for the first time in the Central Committee of the Communist Party at its November 1962 plenum. In fact, the greater the concessions before the stage of open clashes is reached, and the stronger the Soviet economy becomes, the more decisive will be the character of the clashes and the more favorable the relationship of forces for the masses at the time of the political revolution.

IN ANALYZING the interaction between the three components of the world revolution — the colonial revolution, the political revolution (above all in the Soviet Union), and the proletarian revolution in the imperialist countries — the time element is of decisive importance. Even without the restoration of proletarian democracy, the Soviet Union exercises enormous attractive power on the masses of the colonial countries — if only because the Soviet Union proves what can be done in less than a half century to bring a backward country up to the level of an advanced industrial country in economic development and improved standard of living. Should a revolutionary-socialist leadership recume power in the Soviet Union in the not too distant future, with the consequent establishment of socialist democracy internally and revolutionary solidarity abroad, the process of fusing the colonial revolution with the workers' states would be tremendously speeded up.

This would take a double form in practice. The new Soviet leadership would end Moscow's general current strategy which is to depend on alliances with the colonial bourgeoisie. Naturally the new leadership would continue the Leninist policy of giving critical support and material assistance to bourgeois or petty-bourgeois nationalist leaderships in open conflict with imperialism. What it would put a stop to is the reactionary policy of subordinating the revolutionary vanguard to the national bourgeoisie. Removing this source of political and material strength, would hasten loss of control by the colonial capitalist class over the decisive sectors of mass opinion. The other side of the same policy would be rejection of the opportunist leadership in control of most of the Communist parties in the colonies today whose main strength lies in identification with the Soviet Union. The new Soviet leadership would assist those oppositional forces within the Communist parties that want to make a decisive turn to the left, or it would support the new revolutionary proletarian forces now springing up outside the traditional Communist parties, especially in countries where they are either very weak or utterly compromised in the eyes of the colonial masses because of their past errors or betrayals. In both ways the conquest of leadership of the colonial revolution by genuine revolutionary proletarian forces would be greatly facilitated and along with it, under favorable objective conditions, the tendency of the colonial revolution to end in the establishment of workers' states would be greatly accelerated.

An early victory of the political revolution in the Soviet Union would at the same time hasten the process of proletarian revolution inside the imperialist countries in an even more decisive manner. The re-establishment of Soviet democracy in the USSR on a higher level — signifying for the first time since the early twenties a regime of real democracy and intellectual freedom, qualitatively superior to the most democratic bourgeois states — would end at one stroke the main objective against communism held by class-conscious workers of the imperialist countries. It would lead rapidly to the disappearance of the bureaucratic Stalinist leadership in the old CP's, which would split in various directions, principally into a left-reformist wing and a genuine revolutionary-socialist wing. In countries like France and Italy, where the Communist parties, despite their opportunism, continue to control the mass movement, this would mean rapid develop-

ment of a revolutionary mass party which would put the proletarian conquest of power on the agenda at the first favorable objective occasion. In countries where the Communist parties are weak secondary forces, it would favor the emergence of a revolutionary-socialist mass movement through the fusion of the left wing in the Social Democratic parties — attracted by the reborn Soviet democracy — and the best elements among the old CP militants. In this way the crisis of revolutionary leadership could eventually be overcome and new objectively revolutionary situations would open the road for the victory of the proletariat.

However entraining the picture of the world-wide consequences of an early victory of the political revolution in the Soviet Union may be, the process may prove to be longer drawn out than we desire. It would of course be an error for Marxist revolutionary forces to stake everything on this one card, meantime overlooking the very real opportunities for breakthroughs in the colonial and imperialist countries before the political revolution in the USSR succeeds. Consequently, it is advisable to take into account the effect which continuous technological and economic progress of the USSR and the other workers' states can have on the world revolutionary process in the absence of an early victory.

AS ALREADY stated, the continuous economic and cultural rise of the workers' states has an important effect in undermining the confidence of the colonial masses in any "capitalist way" of solving the problem of underdevelopment and in increasing their confidence in the socialist solution of this problem. Economic progress, especially of the Soviet Union, increases the weight of the workers' states in the world economy, enabling them to break the imperialist monopoly of buying primary products from many backward countries, and putting them in position to offer an attractive alternative to the onerous imperialist grants of equipment and development projects. The further technological and economic advance of the workers' states objectively favors the colonial revolution and the tendency, in the throes of this revolution, to break away from the capitalist world market. The example of Cuba shows the possibility. It is evident that the sudden imperialist blockade and attempt to force Cuba to its knees would have been enormously more effective if the workers' states had not been able to come forward as an alternative.

The increasing weight of the workers' states on the world market is quite far as yet from enabling them to play a larger role than imperialism in the foreign trade of the backward countries as a whole. It is little likely that the combined economic power of the workers' states will surpass the combined economic power of the highly industrialized countries of the West for some years to come, unless of course a revolutionary victory occurs in the main imperialist sector. It must not be forgotten that the USSR and China are not economically supplementary to the underdeveloped countries to such a high degree as are the West European capitalist powers. It should also be observed that as long as the political revolution does not score a decisive victory in the USSR, the Soviet bureaucracy will not be prone to utilize to the fullest extent the revolutionary possibilities that are opened up with the increasing eco-

nomic power of the workers' states, since this conflicts with the orientation of an alliance with the colonial bourgeoisie.

The view that the economic and technological advances of the workers' states can in themselves decisively modify the relationship of forces between the classes in the imperialist countries or contribute decisively to the overthrow of capitalism in these countries, must be rejected as false. The positive results upon capitalist society in the West of such advances can be felt objectively in increased competition for foreign markets for some industrial products, and subjectively in the slow disappearance of many reactionary prejudices against communism which were created or aroused by the crimes of Stalinism. The subsidence of prejudices will become more noticeable as the living standards of the Soviet masses come closer to those of Western Europe. But neither effect is sufficient to rehabilitate small and discredited Communist parties or to miraculously swing the opportunistic bureaucratic leadership of the mass Communist parties in France, Italy and Greece into a revolutionary orientation.

The main contribution to the development of the proletarian revolution in the imperialist countries remains therefore the effect in the labor movement of the crisis of Stalinism and the technological and economic gains of the USSR. This is evident in the growing differentiation inside the Communist parties, the possibility of real mass opposition tendencies developing within some of these parties, the increased possibility of mergers between the revolutionary Marxist vanguard and the leftward-moving mass of militants in some of these parties, and the rapid disappearance of anti-Trotskyist prejudices inside many Communist parties as a result of the decisions of the Twentieth and Twenty-second Congresses.

IV. The Proletarian Revolution in the Imperialist Countries

SINCE the postwar revolutionary upsurge in Western Europe and the postwar strike wave in the United States, great changes have taken place in the labor movement and in the objective conditions of class struggle in the imperialist countries. Contrary to the expectations of both Marxist and non-Marxist economists, the capitalist economy of the advanced industrialized countries, including Japan, underwent an expansion not experienced since World War I, i.e., for nearly half a century. The interaction of such economic growth and the treacherous opportunist policies of the traditional working-class leaderships in Western Europe and the trade union bureaucracy in the U.S., in the absence of an alternative revolutionary leadership, made possible the temporary relative stabilization of capitalism in Europe. The main center of the revolutionary movement thereupon shifted for the time being to the imperialist countries.

This temporary development fostered both revisionist and defeatist views of the proletarian revolution in the imperialist countries. Each of these tendencies ruled out the possibility of the proletarian revolution struggling for power in the West for a long time to come. Since it is impossible not to note that the general world trend is running against capitalism, partisans of these concepts expect essentially outside forces to eventually overcome capitalism in the imperialist countries.

ters. A theory current in leading circles among many Communist parties is that the economic progress of the USSR will eventually solve the problem of winning socialism in the West. When the living standard of the Soviet people rises above the living standards of the West European and North American workers, then these workers will automatically turn toward communism. Another theory, voiced more or less consciously by ideologists like Sweezy and Sartre, is that the colonial revolution will eventually bring down imperialism and that the vanguard in the advanced capitalist countries cannot play a much bigger role than actively aiding the colonial revolutionists.

Both theories are based on a single wrong assumption: i.e., that it is impossible for the Western proletariat to fulfill its historic mission in the next decades. This pessimistic assumption is then made less bitter by assuming that there are other alternatives which should be taken as goals of action. Under careful analysis, however, the imagined alternatives do not stand up as realistic.

Even if the USSR's per capita production overtakes that of the United States within the next ten years, at least another decade will be needed to overtake the U.S. per capita standard of living, since this is a combination of current production and past accumulation of consumer goods and public welfare provisions. A catastrophic fall in the living standard of the American and West European workers due to a major economic crisis would, of course, change this perspective. But then it is obvious that the revolutionary consequences of the crisis would be much more important than the attractive power that might be exercised by Soviet economic growth.

Even if the USSR's per capita standard of living becomes the highest in the world, it does not follow that this in itself would break down capitalism in the West, for it would not automatically lead to depressions, economic decline and a lowering of the workers' standard of living. Those who defend this theory start from the wrong assumption that the proletariat in the West is generally "satisfied" with the present economic "prosperity" and lacks awareness of the deeper aspects of the situation that permeates capitalist society.

The capacity of the colonial revolution by itself to cause the downfall of Western imperialism — we have already analyzed the reasons why this is an unrealistic perspective.

The truth is that both these defeatist theories concerning the revolutionary potential of the Western proletariat lead in the final analysis to the absurd conclusion that imperialism is still assured of a long period of peaceful existence.

The basic fallacy in all variations of these theories is the crude mechanistic economic determinism. The underlying premise is that a working class enjoying a relatively high standard of living is unwilling or unable to struggle for the overthrow of capitalism. The assumption is groundless both theoretically and empirically. At the level of theory it should be clear that the standard of the workers is determined by many forces among which the absolute level of the standard of living is only one among other determinants. It makes a world of difference whether a high standard of living is the result of working-class struggles, and therefore appears as a series of conquests that must be defended or whether it appears to the workers to be a "gift" from

a "beneficent" set of masters. In the first case a high standard of living can give powerful impulsion to militancy rather than acting as a brake; in the second case a high standard of living can have a demoralizing effect, feeding the class-collaborationist illusions cultivated by the bourgeois spokesmen and the ideologists of the right wing of the labor movement. On the empirical level, Marx gathered considerable material showing the revolutionary effect on the British workers when they won the ten-hour day in the past century. Rosa Luxemburg called attention to the revolutionary effect of all fundamental trade-union achievements. Recent strike waves in Belgium, Spain and Italy — spearheaded by the best-paid workers — again proves that it is quite false to hold that the highest paid workers are automatically "corrupted" by "capitalist prosperity."

What both theory and experience do prove is that the most revolutionary consequences follow not so much from the absolute level of real wages and living standards as from their relative short-term fluctuations. Attempts to lower even slightly a hard-won high level, or the widespread fear that such an attempt is in preparation, can under certain conditions touch off great class actions that tend to pass rapidly from the defensive to the offensive stage and put on the agenda struggles of an objectively prerevolutionary significance around transitional slogans. Such struggles may even lead to revolutionary situations.

Two generations of revolutionists in the West have been educated in the belief that revolutionary situations in industrialized countries coincide with big crises or complete breakdowns of the capitalist economy and state such as occur in war or military defeat (Germany and Central Europe after World War I, Greece, France and Italy after World War II). But again theory and

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history prove that this is but one road to possible revolutionary crisis in a highly developed industrial country. The big strike wave of 1936-37, and along with it the Spanish Revolution, came neither at the end of a war nor at the peak of a major economic breakdown. They came in the period of relative economic recovery between the two big crises of 1929 and 1938. A whole series of contributing factors — the most important being the threat of fascism and the desire of the workers to make up for the suffering borne during the big economic crisis — gave this strike wave a pre-revolutionary character in the U.S. and Belgium and a revolutionary character in France. In the imperialist countries in the next five to ten years such revolutionary crises and opportunities are much more likely to occur than crises of the breakdown type of 1918-19 or 1944-48.

No Marxist, of course, will deny that a long period of economic "prosperity" brings changes in the proletariat's mode of life and thought. Habits formed during long periods of misery — indifference toward personal property in consumer goods, the tendency to express immediate solidarity in sharing money, the acceptance of daily sacrifices as normal, the indifference and hostility toward many institutions and the whole superstructure of capitalism — gradually disappear. New habits and ways of thinking appear which, to superficial observers, seem "petty bourgeois." It is a mistake, however, to approach these changes from an abstract "moral" point of view — the idealization of misery, degradation and the reduction of needs to purely physiological levels is wrong in theory and very dangerous in practice! New ways of thinking and acting are important only as they serve to retard or advance the class struggle under given conditions. The automobile of the American workers — taken not so long ago by many people as the symbol of the "petty-bourgeois mentality of the American proletariat" — became the instrument of a completely new and radical strike technique at the end of World War II. The scooter and motorbike of the European worker appeared during the Belgian general strike in the form of flying strike squads, an embryo of the future revolutionary defense guards of the Belgian proletariat.

If some of the obviously fine qualities of the underdeveloped proletariat of yesterday seem to have disappeared among Western workers, other good new qualities have appeared, precisely as a result of the higher standard of living and culture gained by the proletariat in the West. The gap between the knowledge of the skilled worker and the bourgeois technician has virtually disappeared or been greatly reduced. Technologically the Western worker is much more capable of socialist self-management today than was his father or grandfather, and he feels more strongly the need to play a conscious leading role in the process of production.

It is also easier for today's worker to reach an understanding of the over-all economic interaction among all the factors, the intertwining of all economic problems and the needs and practical purposes of socialist planning. The increase in leisure time in many countries also means the increased possibility to participate on a mass scale in political administration, something that never existed in the past. It is not for Marxists to deny the basic Marxist truth that capitalism is the great educator of the workers for socialism, at least on the economic field.

THE mechanism through which prerevolutionary or even revolutionary situations can arise in the framework of the relatively stabilized capitalist economics of the Western imperialist countries can be briefly stated as follows:

After a first period of rapid economic expansion fed essentially by the war preparations, by the need for reconstruction (both absolute and relative; i.e., rebuilding destroyed cities and plants, modernizing outmoded equipment) in Europe and Japan, and by the big wave of technological revolution spurred by both reconstruction and preparations for a new world war, the economies of the imperialist countries have now entered a period in which the forces of expansion are slowly spending themselves and in which competition among the newly equipped imperialist countries is sharpening in a world market that is relatively smaller as a result of the victories in the colonial revolution and the economic expansion of the workers' states. This increased competition, heightened still further by the constitution of the Common Market in Western Europe, will strengthen the inevitable tendency for the average rate of profit to decline. (In the final analysis this tendency is a consequence of the new technological revolutions; i.e., of the higher organic composition of capital.)

In reaction to these tendencies, the capitalist class will seek periodically to ameliorate its positions in the competitive struggle by slowing down the rate of increase of real wages, by freezing wages, or even by trying to reduce real wages, especially in the imperialist countries where the workers enjoy the highest relative wages. The response of the proletariat to these attacks can lead to great struggles that will tend to move toward pre-revolutionary and even revolutionary situations, provided that the working class, or at least its broad vanguard, has sufficient self-confidence to advance the socialist alternative to the capitalist way of running the economy and the country. This in turn hinges essentially on the activity and influence of a broad left wing in the labor movement that educates the vanguard in the necessity of struggling for this socialist alternative and that builds up self-confidence and an apparatus capable of revolutionary struggle through a series of successful partial struggles.

This is, of course, only a generalized pattern in which various particular variants should be included: the possibility of the working class reacting violently against an attempt to limit or suppress its fundamental political and trade-union rights (against an attempt to impose a "strong" state or against an emergent fascist danger); the possibility of a swift reaction to a sudden financial or political crisis; the possibility of mass opposition against an attempt to launch a new colonial war, or against general preparations for war, etc. The essential point for revolutionary Marxists is to link up the program of revolutionary socialism with the masses through a series of transitional demands corresponding to the specific conditions of each country and through intimate ties with the mass movement. The objective is to stimulate and broaden mass struggles to the utmost and to move as much as possible toward playing a leading role in such struggles, beginning with the most elementary demands and seeking to develop them in the direction of transitional slogans on the level of government power and the creation of bodies of dual power. (Labor to Power; For a Workers Government; A Work-

ers and Peasants Government; A Workers Government Based on the Trade Unions; and other variants.)

In the United States the wave of working-class militancy which can lead to a decisive turn in the domestic situation will in all likelihood follow a comparable pattern. It will come about as the capitalist class undermines its alliance with the trade-union bureaucracy by starting to pass on to the American working class the cost of measures required to counteract the chronic deficit of the balance of payments, mounting inflation and depreciation of the dollar accompanied by suppression of escalator clauses in collective contracts, attempts to freeze or lower real wages in order to improve the competitive position in foreign markets, increased indirect taxation of low and medium incomes, etc. The long-range tendency toward rising permanent unemployment and the relative whittling down of trade union strength will add to the ferment. The first major moves of the capitalist class against the working class could touch off a tremendous defensive reaction, forcing some union leaders to break their alliance with the Democratic party and finally opening up the road for the appearance of a mass labor party.

The most probable variant in the next few years is, therefore, the following: the colonial revolution will continue, involving new countries and deepening its social character as more workers' states appear. It will not lead directly to the overthrow of capitalism in the imperialist centers but it will play a powerful role in building a new world revolutionary leadership as is already clear from the emergence of Castroist currents. The pressure of the masses in the workers' states will continue, with a tendency toward increasing mass action and the possible beginning of political revolution in several workers' states. Both these developments will favorably influence the resurgence of mass militancy among the proletariat in the imperialist countries, reinforcing a tendency stemming directly from the socio-economic mechanism of advanced capitalism and the slowing down of its rate of expansion.

The possibility of a working-class victory in an imperialist country — not just Portugal or Spain but the other West European countries and Japan, Australia and Canada — thus exists in the next decade. A victory in any of these countries would in turn hasten the victory of the political revolution in the key country, the USSR, if it had not already occurred, and these would react in turn to speed the victory of the American revolution. The victory of the socialist revolution in any of the advanced countries would play a decisive role in developing the economies of the backward countries at the most rapid possible rate.

SINCE the close of the World War II, the imperialist powers have been engaged in feverish preparations for a third conflict. In fact imperialism has engaged in virtually constant wars, on a larger or smaller scale, in an effort to stem the advance of world revolution: the wars in China, Vietnam, Indonesia, Malaya, Kenya, Korea, Suez, Algeria, Laos, Angola, plus such interventions as Eisenhower's moves in Guatemala and Lebanon and Kennedy's invasion of Cuba at Playa Giron. The master plan of launching nuclear war on the USSR and China reached dangerous levels on several occasions during the past fifteen years: during the opening stages of the cold war, again during the American invasion of North Korea, at the battle of Dien Bien Phu,

during the Suez crisis, the 1960 Berlin crisis, and finally and most ominously during the fall 1962 crisis over Cuba.

Several conjunctural factors explain why imperialism has not yet launched a full-scale atomic world war. Economic expansion was still possible with the help of periodic waves of rearmament; no major economic crisis loomed as an immediate threat; the hope still exists of diverting the colonial revolution through a de facto alliance with an apparently "neutralist" colonial bourgeoisie. (An example is the so-called "neutral" solution of the Laos question, in which the Soviet bureaucracy assists American imperialism to impose a halt on the Laos revolution.)

Other considerations gave the American imperialists pause, forcing them to postpone their timetable. At the end of World War II, the American armed forces proved unreliable for any further wars. In the face of great protest strikes and "Get Us Home" demonstrations, they had to be brought back to the United States and a totally new force constructed. In addition, possible domestic political opposition to another war had to be contained and reduced. The years of McCarthyism cut deeply into democratic rights and civil liberties in the U.S. but it is still doubtful that the public is really conditioned to accept another world war. The experience in Korea was very revealing in this respect. It rapidly became the most unpopular war in American history, and the adventure had to be brought to a halt. The colonial revolution has played a similar role by helping to bring the Negro movement in the United States increasingly into the political arena as a potentially strong independent force which could easily link up with any moves toward a labor party among the trade unions and political opposition to another world war. The possibility of American troops becoming "contaminated" by revolutionary ideas through contact with the forces against which they must be pitted also enters into the calculations which have caused American imperialism to hesitate at going over the brink into another world war.

In addition, nuclear war brings a new element to bear in war as an extension of politics — the very real possibility of suicide. A war that promises self-destruction loses its main purpose — which is victory and enjoyment of the spoils of conquest. The American imperialists have brandished the H-bomb for many years but still find themselves not quite capable of emulating Hitler in setting the torch to the funeral pyre they have put together. Thus, much as certain warmongers urge the rulers holding decisive power to take the final plunge, they have felt a still stronger compulsion to postpone the final reckoning.

Conscious of the danger that the capitalist system now faces of going down altogether, its statesmen have sought to strengthen it internally since the end of World War II. Behind the major policies of world capitalism is the view that survival of the system can be assured, or its demise postponed, only through a worldwide strategy of defense against the forces of the world proletarian revolution. The main capitalist countries and the satellites tied to them through interlocking military alliances (NATO, SEATO, etc.) have been acting as a world capitalist police force.

But while American imperialism must necessarily mobilize world capitalism as a whole for the assault on the workers' states, particularly Western Europe and Japan, the capitalist system is far from mono-

lithic. The old imperialist powers like Britain and France, reduced to the status of mere satellites to the American colossus, may well find it highly profitable to prepare for war and to accept the American hand-outs needed to shore up their structures. Experience has taught them, however, that war itself is not necessarily as profitable as its preparation. And this elementary truth holds especially in the case of nuclear war which can end in the destruction of all the higher forms of life on this planet, including capitalists. They thus exhibit a strong tendency to drag their feet as doomsday draws nearer. A sudden move by de Gaulle exposes unexpectedly deep fissures in the capitalist alliances and new doubts are thrust upon the rulers of the West.

Insofar as changes in the relationship of forces due to the colonial revolution, the class struggle in the capitalist countries, the economic situation of capitalism or the economic progress of the workers' states do not threaten to put an immediate end to capitalism, a new compromise is always possible between the heads of the two main opposing camps. As long as they do not face an immediate major threat, both U.S. imperialism and the Soviet bureaucracy will remain facing each other, striving to gain better positions or to avoid falling into worse ones, to strengthen their economic and military power, to acquire new allies or to avoid losing old ones, always seeking a compromise when the opponent appears ready to plunge into war. It is a dangerous game. How acute is the "security space" that each side tries to keep in reserve? It can be punctured at any time by an "error" or by a "misunderstanding" or by an act of mad folly.

In the face of nearly unanimous scientific opinion that a full-scale nuclear world war would signify the complete destruction of human civilization, if not the very physical existence of all mankind, it is obvious that the central strategic goal of the world labor movement must be a speculative victory in an atomic world war. To build communism, mankind must exist. A certain minimum material infrastructure is also necessary. The assumption that "communist consciousness" is sufficient to build communism in a world of radioactive wastes deep below the level of the primitive human conditions. The goal must be to prevent a nuclear world war.

With the development of Soviet nuclear weapons, the next step toward prevention of a nuclear world war. Without the Soviet A-bomb, a world war would certainly be broken out as a consequence of the struggle in either Korea or Vietnam. But at present the only means of preventing a nuclear world war is the disarmament of imperialism by the workers of the imperialist countries. This is feasible since nuclear weapons cannot be used in a civil conflict without the capitalist class committing mass suicide — a possibility of remote possibility despite the appearance of such famous slogans as "Better dead than red."

A world nuclear war is not inevitable. The realistic alternative is to disarm imperialism by overthrowing it in its main bastions. The interacting process of colonial revolution, political revolution in the workers' states and proletarian revolution in the imperialist countries has this as one of its end results. The development of this process operates in a dual way on the outlook of the imperialists. As the revolutionary forces grow stronger, the imperialists become less and less confident in their own ultimate perspective and

more hesitant about staking everything on nuclear war. On the other hand the very same development increases their tendency to close their eyes to the future. When they feel that no other alternative is open but passive capitulation before the revolution, they are capable of plunging into a fatal adventure. But at a certain point, the momentum of the class struggle will place the workers in the imperialist countries in position to intervene in time and prevent imperialism from unleashing nuclear war.

In the final analysis only the victory of the proletariat in the most highly developed imperialist countries, above all the victory of the American proletariat, can free mankind definitively from the nightmare of nuclear annihilation. This is the revolutionary-socialist solution which the Fourth International opposes to the utopian illusions of "peaceful coexistence" and "victory" in a nuclear world war. The classical alternative, socialism or barbarism, today boils down to a socialist America or the nuclear destruction of the human race.

In this way revolutionary Marxism today brings to all sectors of the world proletariat a single integrated concept of world revolution, full support to wars of liberation waged by colonial peoples being an important contribution to the coming disarmament of imperialism by the proletariat of the imperialist countries. For the same reason, transition slogans of a unilateral pacifist nature in imperialist countries, far from being "reactionary" or "utopian," as old-time pacifism was, can play an extremely progressive role provided that they are linked with other transitional slogans culminating in the working-class struggle for power.

V. The Fourth International

THE year 1963 marks the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Fourth International and nearly four decades since the label of "Trotskyism" began to be attached to revolutionary socialism. In ideas, our movement has been very productive, more than justifying its existence by this alone. In its programmatic declarations and in its participation in the class struggle on a world-wide scale it has proved itself to be the legitimate heir and continuator of the great tradition of revolutionary Marxism. Events have proved it right on so many points that even its antagonists have had to borrow from its arsenal, though in a partial, one-sided or distorted way.

The struggle led by Leon Trotsky and the Left Opposition for rapid planned industrialization of the USSR as the only means to prevent the kulak from undermining the socialist mode of production in industry and the monopoly of foreign trade was vindicated as early as 1927-28. Hardly anyone in the world labor movement today doubts the correctness of the Trotskyist struggle against Stalin's notorious theory and practice of "social fascism" in the early thirties which paved the way for Hitler. The Trotskyist critique of the theory and practice of "popular frontism" has been shown to be correct in the most painful way, again and again, by the unnecessary defeats suffered by the working class when objective conditions were most favorable for victory as in France and Spain in 1935-37; in France, Italy and Greece in 1943-48; etc.

The Trotskyist exposures and denunciations of the crimes of Stalin in the thirties have now finally had their belated echo in official Soviet doctrine, beginning with Khrushchev's admissions at the Twentieth Cen-

gress of the CPSU. The validity of the Trotskyist explanation of the character of the bureaucracy as a social force has become accepted by all serious students of the Soviet Union. It is even reflected in the theoretical basis and justification offered by the Yugoslav government in its experimentation with workers' councils and self-management. The correctness of the Trotskyist struggle for the revival in the Soviet Union of the Leninist norms of proletarian democracy received striking confirmation in the more or less spontaneous appearance of workers' councils at the very beginning of the political revolution in Poland and Hungary in October 1956.

The timeliness of even some of the oldest Trotskyist positions is graphically shown by the following case: In 1928 Trotsky held that if a certain degree of bureaucratization of a workers' state in an underdeveloped country is objectively inevitable, then it is the task of a revolutionary party to limit this to the utmost by developing all the objective and subjective conditions favoring working-class political activity and participation in the management of the state and economy. Above all the extent and gravity of the danger should not be denied, nor should the party succumb to the pressure of the bureaucracy, still less itself become an instrument for helping the bureaucracy to usurp power. In 1962 Fidel Castro voiced burning denunciations of the incipient bureaucracy in the Cuban workers' state and followed this by condemning the bureaucracy as being based on materially privileged elements in the state and the economy, divorced from the mass of workers. The attack Fidel Castro launched against the Anibal Escalantes of Cuba sounded like a repetition of Leninist and Trotskyist speeches heard in the Soviet Union almost forty years ago!

In the same way the theory of the permanent revolution, kept alive by the Fourth International as a precious heritage received from Trotsky, has been confirmed to the hilt both negatively and positively. (Negatively, by any number of defeats of the revolution and by the inability of the bourgeois leaderships in countries like India, Tunisia, Morocco, etc., to carry out a radical land reform; positively, by the fact that wherever some of the historical tasks of the bourgeois democratic revolution, above all land reform, have been carried out it has been through establishment of a workers' state as in Yugoslavia, China, Vietnam and Cuba.)

The Trotskyist estimate of the fundamental change in the world relationship of forces which occurred with the victory of the Chinese Revolution is today accepted by the whole international communist and revolutionary movement. The Trotskyist analysis of the class nature of the Soviet Union enabled us to foresee as early as 1946-47 that even in the countries occupied and held white by the Soviet bureaucracy in Eastern Europe, a great upsurge of productive forces would follow the then noticeable breakdown if the structure of these countries were to be adapted to that of the Soviet Union.

The Trotskyist analysis of the world situation enabled us to foresee before Stalin's death the upsurge of the Soviet proletariat and the deepening crisis of Stalinism which would eventually head toward political revolution and the restoration of Leninist-type proletarian democracy. The Fourth International was the only tendency inside the international labor movement which, at the height of West European "prosperity" and on

de Gaulle's coming to power, kept faith in the revolutionary potential of the European proletariat, thereby accurately foreseeing the new working-class struggles which in 1960 began flaring up in Belgium, Spain, Italy and elsewhere.

If we turn from the field of ideas to that of organization, the world Trotskyist movement appears to be far less successful. With the exception of Ceylon, the Fourth International has not yet achieved durable mass influence in any country. Its sections are still nuclei of future mass revolutionary parties rather than revolutionary parties in the full sense of the word; i.e., organizations able under their own banner to mobilize sizeable sectors of the working class.

This gap between the power and correctness of the program of Trotskyism and its weakness as an organized movement has been noted repeatedly, especially by new layers coming from large Communist parties and colonial revolutionary organizations. They incline to agree with the programmatic concepts of Trotskyism but remain skeptical about the organizational achievements and possibilities of the Trotskyist movement. The contradiction is a real one and deserves the most thoughtful consideration.

First of all, the problem must be brought into historical perspective. The Trotskyist movement has no interests separate and apart from the long-range ones of the world proletariat. It is not interested in constructing an "organization" simply for its own sake or as a mere pressure group. The organization it seeks to build is a definite means to a definite end — the victory of the proletariat on a world scale. This requires the highest possible consciousness, and therefore complete honesty and integrity, no matter how bitter the immediate consequences. These qualities often contradict rapid construction of an organization. The Fourth International has no choice but to follow this difficult course, for it is demanded by the interests of the world socialist revolution. Insofar as it represents the theoretical and political consciousness of that mighty process, its own ultimate fate cannot be separated from it.

To assess the strengths and weaknesses of the Fourth International in a more reasonable way, it is well to compare it with its predecessors. The First International, established under the direct leadership of Marx and Engels, never achieved great organizational strength, no matter how stupendous its theoretical accomplishments were in the history of mankind. The Second International added to the theory of Marxism and built huge organizations. But these all ended in the debacle of 1914. To achieve victory in Russia, the left wing found it necessary to split from the parent organization. The Third International moved ahead rapidly under the beneficent guidance of the Bolsheviks only to succumb to Stalinism and end finally in shameful dissolution as a wartime gift from the Kremlin to Roosevelt, the political chief of Allied imperialism. Obviously it is not easy to construct a revolutionary-socialist International and bring it to successful accomplishment of its aims.

Bearing in mind the program for which the world Trotskyist movement is struggling, it is quite superficial to accuse it of organizational stagnation. It is many times stronger today than at its inception in the days of the Left Opposition in the Soviet Union or at the time of the assassination of its founder. Less than

ten sections were present at the founding conference of the Fourth International in 1938; less than twenty at its Second World Congress in 1948. Today Trotskyist organizations exist in forty countries and most of these organizations are stronger than they were ten or twenty years ago — if they existed at all at that time.

Two significant developments must be stressed. In the first place the Trotskyist movement in recent years has grown in a notable way, more or less following the general rise of revolutionary developments on a world scale. This fact in itself proves that the Trotskyist movement corresponds to the objective needs of the world proletariat and is not a mere passing phenomenon peculiar to particular countries for a brief phase. Especially worth noting is its success as against other oppositional trends in the communist movement which began initially with much greater strength. Among these we may list the Bordiguists in Italy, the Brandierites in Germany, the Lovestonites in the United States, the Catalan Federation in Spain, the Communist League in Japan, and a number of others. All these "national communist" oppositional tendencies completely failed to develop into world-wide organizations and most of them have all but disappeared or are weaker than the Trotskyist forces even in their home base. It should be observed that one competitive oppositional trend, the Yugoslav Titoists, have held state power for nearly twenty years, and yet have proved incapable of offering a serious challenge on the international field.

Secondly, Trotskyism has again and again proved its attractiveness to revolutionary-minded youth whether originating in the Social Democratic or Communist parties and in countries as different as the United States and Belgium, France and Japan, Indonesia and Italy, Greece and Britain. This is striking proof that the Trotskyist movement corresponds to a burning need on an international scale felt by thousands of vanguard elements moving away from the opportunist policies of the traditional working-class leadership and seeking ways and means of building a new alternative revolutionary leadership capable of guiding mass struggles to success.

The contradiction between the correctness of the program of Trotskyism and the organizational weakness of the movement struggling for its realization is not new. In the late twenties and in the thirties it commonly took the form of the skeptical question, "If Trotsky was so right, how did he happen to lose power to Stalin and why is he unable to regain it?"

What was lost sight of in this personal symbolization of the problem was the ebb and flow of opposing social forces which Trotsky and Stalin represented. Trotsky's incapacity to hold power after 1924 was di-

rectly related to his capacity to win power in a situation like that of 1917. In remaining faithful to the long-range interests of the proletariat, Trotsky had to share its temporary eclipse in the Soviet Union under the rise of the reactionary social forces which Stalin came to represent and to express. With the downfall of the Stalin cult, Trotsky's star has again begun to rise in the Soviet Union — in other words, the proletariat there is once more beginning to move into the political arena.

IN THE final analysis, the fate of the Trotskyist movement is linked to the dialectical interrelationship between the three sectors of the world revolution. This is the necessary basis for any real understanding of the organizational vicissitudes of the Trotskyist movement, including solutions for its most difficult organizational problems.

Being proved theoretically correct in the twenties and thirties did not lead automatically to the strengthening of the Trotskyist movement. Trotsky's theory explained why the British general strike of 1926 was lost, why the Chinese Revolution of 1925-27 was lost, why Hitler was able to come to power virtually unopposed, why the Spanish Revolution was defeated and why the great upsurge in the French labor movement in the middle thirties came to naught. But these defeats were defeats for the proletariat and therefore defeats for the Trotskyist movement and it suffered the most heavily of all. Its cadres were decimated, whether through discouragement, capitulation, imprisonment, or outright murder. All world reaction centered its most terrible blows against the Trotskyist movement — from Stalin, through Roosevelt to Hitler. In all history no radical political movement has suffered such persecution or received so little help from sources outside its own ranks as the Trotskyist movement. That the pioneers could hang on at all is monumental testimony to the tenacity of the human will.

With the turn of the class struggle on an international scale at the end of World War II, it might have been expected that the Trotskyist movement would be the first to profit from the new upsurge. Its interrelationship with the concrete process of world revolution proved to be more complicated than that. The Trotskyist movement could benefit only in the final analysis and in the long range.

To understand this, it is necessary to go back to the most important single event in World War II — the victory of the Soviet Union. This victory started a chain reaction, the end of which is not yet in sight. The oppressed peoples of the world turned again as they had at previous times to the first workers' state for inspiration and guidance. But government power in the Soviet Union was held by the Stalinist bureaucracy. Consequently this bureaucracy — and not Trotskyism — was temporarily strengthened.

This paradox was explained at the time by the Trotskyist movement. We also forecast that the very forces strengthening the bureaucracy would soon begin to undermine it, and the end consequence would be the doom of Stalinism. It took until 1956, however, for this process to register even partially in the official declarations of the Soviet government, and it is only today that the world monolith has been shattered irreversibly, opening the way for new political currents that tend to gravitate toward Trotskyism. The tendency

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clearly be seen in the pattern of the rise of the workers' states since the end of the war — from Eastern Europe to Yugoslavia and China and finally to Cuba, the leadership has demonstrated increasing independence from the Soviet bureaucracy.

The tendency can be seen in another way. The break-up of the Stalinist monolith has been accompanied by an increasing necessity for discussion among the Communist parties, and an increasing need to deal with real issues in a reasoned way instead of in Stalin's way of substituting false issues and replacing reason by epithets, slander and frame-ups. It is instructive for instance to see that one of the major points under world-wide debate today is the necessity of extending the proletarian revolution as the only realistic way to end the threat of imperialist war. Clearly the disputants affirming what up to now has been considered exclusively the realm of Trotskyist discourse. The victory of the Soviet Union in the war, the victory of the Yugoslav and Chinese Revolutions and most recently the Cuban Revolution, as well as the destruction of the Stalin cult, cannot help but strengthen Trotskyism. As I. F. Stone, the acute American radical journalist observed after a trip to Cuba, the revolutionists there are "unconscious" Trotskyists. With the coming of full consciousness among these and related currents, Trotskyism will become a powerful current.

This in turn will influence the development of the three sectors of the world revolution. The appearance of mass Trotskyist parties will bring to bear a new powerful force in the political arena. Even before these parties gain majority status in various countries, their mere presence and the partial successes they will begin to register can profoundly influence world events by hastening the natural rhythm of the revolutionary process in the three main sectors.

The cadres of the Fourth International carried out their revolutionary duty in keeping alive the program of Trotskyism and adding to it as world events demanded. But this does not signify that the organizations adhering to the program of Trotskyism were immune to the effects of long years of isolation and persecution. Two main problems have proved of perennial concern. At times a tendency has appeared here or there that sought a short cut to the establishment of a mass organization. Such experiments have in every instance proved disastrous, ending in the disappearance from the revolutionary-socialist movement of many of those who became caught up in these adventures. A greater problem has been the occasional rise of sectarian tendencies. In contrast to the opportunists, who seek escape from the pressure of the hostile environment by moving away from principles, sectarians retreat into the books and convert the texts into dogmas. A revolutionist isolated by circumstances over which he has no control can fall into sectarianism quite unobtrusively. It is therefore a more insidious danger for a small organization than opportunism, which is generally easier to recognize.

The building of an alternative leadership of the working class; i.e., of new revolutionary mass parties, remains the central task of our epoch. The problem is not that of repeating over and over again this elementary truth, but of explaining concretely how it is to be done. In fact, the building of revolutionary mass parties combines three concrete processes: the process of defending and constantly enriching the Marxist

revolutionary program; of building, educating and hardening a revolutionary Marxist cadre; and of winning mass influence for this cadre. These three processes are dialectically intertwined. Divorced from the mass movement, a revolutionary cadre becomes a sect. Divorced from the program of revolutionary Marxism, cadres immersed in the mass movement eventually succumb to opportunism. And divorced from practical testing by cadres struggling as part and parcel of the masses, the revolutionary program itself becomes ossified and degenerates into a sterile incantation of dogmatic formulas.

The world Trotskyist movement has given much consideration to the problem of setting out with small forces to win the working class and organize it into a party capable of challenging the rule of the capitalist class. The over-all principle on which it has proceeded on the organizational level is the Leninist dictum that a revolutionist must not permit himself to be separated from his class under any circumstances. It is thus the norm for Trotskyists to belong to the union of their trade or industry and to play an active role in union affairs no matter how reactionary the union bureaucracy may be. They likewise belong to the big organizations of the masses whether they be nationalistic, cultural or political in character. Insofar as possible, they advance the ideas and program of Trotskyism among the members of these organizations and seek to recruit from them.

In countries where the masses have an old tradition of class consciousness and powerful political organizations, as in Western Europe and Australia, an especially difficult problem is posed for the revolutionary nuclei. Because of this tradition and the power of their numbers, these organizations command deep loyalty from the workers. As a result of past defeats and the long period of bureaucratic control over the labor movement, the masses, when they display readiness to take the road of revolutionary action, do not begin with a fully developed Marxist consciousness but with an outlook which is closer to left centrism.

In addition to this, the bureaucratic leaderships do not facilitate bringing revolutionary Marxist educational material to the ranks. They operate as ruthless permanent factions, completely hostile to the ideas of Trotskyism and prepared to engage in witch hunting and the use of the most undemocratic measures against those who advance fresh or challenging views.

Such are the general conditions that must be faced by the revolutionary nuclei. They have no choice but to practice "entryism"; that is, to participate as an integrated component in the internal life of the mass movement. The special function of the nuclei in such situations is to advance transitional slogans that serve to bridge the gap between the inadequate consciousness of the masses and the objective need to enter into action on the road to revolution. The revolutionary nuclei actively participate in building left-wing tendencies capable of leading broader and broader sections of the masses into action. Through the experiences built up in these actions, they assist in transforming the best forces of these centrist or left-centrist tendencies into genuine revolutionary Marxists.

The purpose of "entryism" is not to construct a "pressure group," as some critics have charged, but to build a mass revolutionary Marxist party in the real conditions that must be faced in a number of countries. The tactic is mined with dangers and dif-

culties and cannot be successfully carried out unless these are constantly borne in mind. But for a certain stage of work, no practical alternative remains open. Owing to national peculiarities, the tactic has many variants. It must be applied with great flexibility and without dogmatism of any kind. The norm for those engaging in it is to maintain a sector of open public work, including their own Trotskyist publication.

No matter what the specific situation may be in which a Trotskyist organization finds itself, so long as it remains essentially a small propaganda group, it cannot play a leading mass role. Nevertheless it can work effectively in helping the masses to learn by experience through active and persistent effort at bridging the gap between their level of understanding and the objective situation. Stated in the most general way, this is also the course that must be followed to become a mass party. It is summed up in "The Transitional Program," written by Trotsky in 1938. This program must be kept constantly up to date through study of shifts in mass consciousness and through constant effort to connect up with them.

An acute problem in relation to the construction of revolutionary-socialist parties in many countries is lack of time to organize and to gain adequate experience before the revolution breaks out. In previous decades this would signify certain defeat for the revolution. Because of a series of new factors, however, this is no longer necessarily the case. The example of the Soviet Union, the existence of workers' states from whom material aid can be obtained, and the relative weakening of world capitalism, have made it possible for revolutions in some instances to achieve partial successes, to reach certain plateaus (where they may rest in unstable equilibrium as in the case of Bolivia), and even to go as far as the establishment of a workers' state. Revolutionary Marxists in such countries face extremely difficult questions, from an inadequate level of socialist consciousness among the masses to a dearth of seasoned or experienced cadres to carry out a myriad of pressing tasks. No choice is open to them in such situations but to participate completely and wholeheartedly in the revolution and to build the party in the very process of the revolution itself.

The building of new mass revolutionary parties remains the central strategic task. To co-ordinate this work, the existing nuclei of these parties must be brought together in an international organization.

The final test of truth, as Marxists well know, is human action. Without the test of action, all theory becomes bare and sterile. The correct analysis of the world situation today is more complex than ever before. One fact alone graphically illustrates this: the peoples of more than one hundred countries are for the first time in history constantly involved in world events, sometimes in a highly explosive way. Only analysis of the world situation constantly re-examined and tested in the light of practical action can enable all the sectors of a world-wide movement to feel the pulse of history in the making. Only an International based on democratic centralism, permitting different tendencies to confront each other democratically while uniting them in action, can allow experiences from all corners of the world to become properly weighed and translated into revolutionary tasks on a world scale. It is not possible on the national field any longer to

arrive at a correct analysis or action without a general understanding of world developments. Never have countries and national sectors of the working class been so interdependent as today. The view that revolutionary movements can be built on a "national" scale or in "regional" isolation has never been so behind the times as in the age of Intercontinental Ballistic Missiles and travel in outer space.

What is involved is the construction of something qualitatively different from the mere sum of the national organizations. By pooling national experience and opinion in accordance with the rules of democratic centralism it is possible to build an international leadership much superior to anything within the capacity of a single section. The basic concept is not that of assembling a staff of intellectuals, however valuable and necessary this is, but of combining on an international scale leaderships that are deeply rooted in their own national soil and connected in a living way with the masses of their own country. An international leadership of that kind is capable of performing the difficult dual task of keeping theory up to date and of working out viable policies of revolutionary action on the great world issues of the day.

The necessity to build a strong, democratically centralized International is underscored all the more by the present dialectical relationship between the three main sectors of the world revolution. In the advanced countries, the International can perform crucial services in behalf of revolutions in colonial countries, opening up ways and means of appealing to the feeling of solidarity that exists even among the most politically backward workers. The International can help the fighters of the colonial revolution remain true internationalists, retaining their confidence in the world proletariat and learning to distinguish the working masses in the imperialist countries from the governments and the treacherous leaders of the traditional mass organizations. Among the advanced workers, intellectuals and youth of the workers' states, the International can play a special role in helping them to dig through the debris of forty years of falsification, distortion and slander as they seek to find their way to revolutionary Marxism.

The victory of the Cuban Revolution has led some tendencies in the international labor movement to put a question mark on the necessity of building revolutionary Marxist parties, and especially on the necessity of building a democratically centralized revolutionary Marxist International. Such a conclusion is all the more unfounded in view of the fact that Fidel Castro, as a result of his own experience in a living revolution, today stresses the decisive importance of building Marxist-Leninist parties in all countries.

In truth, the need to build revolutionary mass parties and a revolutionary-socialist International flows from the objective tasks facing the proletariat in seeking power, in winning it and in exercising it after the victory. The inadequacy and treachery of the old leaderships of the working class have made the need all the more imperative. The threat of nuclear annihilation has converted it into a matter of life and death for all mankind. There is no way to win world socialism except through revolutionary mass parties fraternally associated in an international organization. Difficult as the task may seem, it will be accomplished — and in time.