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## **DOCUMENTS**

# **World Congress of the FOURTH INTERNATIONAL**

# Special Issue

One of the features of *Intercontinental Press* which many of our well-wishers have told us is especially appreciated is the number of documents which we regularly make available in translation from various languages and from various sectors of the political spectrum. In this issue the entire contents comes under the heading of "documents" and these documents are all from a single gathering, the world congress of the Fourth International held last April.

In our opinion, this was a political event of some importance to the revolutionary-minded left. As the Third World Congress since the Reunification, it registered the solidity achieved by the world Trotskyist movement after a major split that lasted for almost ten years until the breach was closed in 1963 on a principled programmatic basis. As the Ninth Congress since the founding of the Fourth International in 1938, it marked the continuity of the program and tradition handed down from Lenin through his coleader and disciple Leon Trotsky.

The congress itself did not meet under ideal conditions. It could not hold open sessions. It could not invite the press. It was not the guest of any state power. It had no extensive facilities. The Fourth International, more than thirty years since it was founded, remains a persecuted, proscribed organization, membership in which can mean long prison terms and worse not only in the capitalist countries under military or totalitarian dictatorships but in both the Soviet Union of the Khrushchevists and the China of the Maoists and their satellites.

Despite the hazards and difficulties, not least of which was finances, some 100 delegates and observers were present from about thirty countries. Of the English-speaking world, observers or delegates were present from Britain, India, Ceylon, several African countries, Canada, and the United States.

One of the most interesting aspects of the gathering was the wide range of information and experience reflected in the contributions of the delegates. This testi-

fied to the active way in which the Trotskyists in most countries are participating in vanguard struggles.

A noticeable feature of the congress was the youthfulness of many of the delegations. They represented the most politically conscious sector of the new generation of rebel youth that is stirring the world today. The question of how the Fourth International can take still better advantage of the great new openings internationally to recruit fresh contingents from this source was one of the major items on the agenda. It was likewise interlaced with other points in the deliberations of the delegates.

The discussion was an intense one throughout the congress, constituting the most graphic evidence of how the democratic side of the principle of democratic centralism is observed in the Fourth International in contrast to the stultifying, antidemocratic practices characteristic of the Stalinist and Social Democratic organizations with their iron-fisted and ivory-headed bureaucracies.

The most warmly debated issues at the congress involved three resolutions, one dealing with perspectives and orientation in Latin America, another assessing the "cultural revolution" in China, and a third concerning work among the student and worker youth. The majority resolutions on Latin America and the "cultural revolution," published in this issue of *Intercontinental Press*, passed by considerable majorities. In view of the importance of the issues, however, the delegates decided in both instances to continue an internal discussion on the questions in dispute following the congress. The resolution on the youth was accepted as the basis for further discussion on this subject.

We are pleased to be able to make available to the English-speaking world these documents presenting the current Trotskyist view on the most crucial political issues in the world today.

We are, in addition, publishing a translation of an editorial which appeared in the May issue of *Quatrieme Internationale* concerning the congress. In our next issue we will publish the message that was sent to the congress by the well-known Mexican literary figure José Revueltas, who is now being held in Lecumberri prison by the Díaz Ordaz regime as a political prisoner.

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# Resolution on New Rise of the World Revolution

At the Reunification World Congress, held in 1963, the international Trotskyist movement adopted a resolution, "Dynamics of the World Revolution Today," which took up the interrelation of the three sectors of the world revolution as it stands today—the colonial revolution, the political revolution in the bureaucratically degenerated workers states, and the proletarian revolution in the imperialist countries. In the five years since then the world revolution has suffered serious setbacks but it has also scored new successes, the most imposing of which was the May 1968 revolutionary upsurge in France. As a result, the global balance of forces is continuing to turn against imperialism, a still clearer interaction has emerged

among the three main sectors of the world revolution, and an important change has occurred in the dynamics of their interrelation—revolutionary struggles in the imperialist countries themselves occupying a more important place in this worldwide process today than in the past twenty years.

We must assess the implications of these changes and from them determine the major perspectives of the world revolution in the period before us. At the same time, the recent developments make it possible to answer in a detailed way a whole series of ideological questions being debated in the international revolutionary movement.

## I.

### Failure of the Imperialist Counteroffensive and the New Relationship Among the Three Sectors of the World Revolution

After the victory of the Cuban revolution, the colonial revolution unquestionably marked time.

In fact, starting early in the sixties the colonial revolution suffered a series of spectacular reverses. The rise to power of military dictatorships and the momentary decline of the mass movements in Brazil and Argentina (the two principal countries of Latin America); the overthrow of the Lumumba regime in the Congo, the Nkrumah regime in Ghana and the Ben Bella regime in Algeria; the victory of the Indonesian counterrevolution in October 1965; and the military defeat of the United Arab Republic and Syria in the six-day war of June 1967 constitute the main milestones in each of the epicenters of the colonial revolution—Latin America, Black Africa, the Arab world, and Southeast Asia.

Whatever the specific reasons for each of these setbacks, two general causes explain why the colonial revolution leveled off at the beginning of the sixties. On the one hand, the capacity to lead the anti-imperialist struggle of the masses—though strictly limited for well-known historical reasons—which the colonial bourgeoisie and the petty-bourgeois nationalist governments had for a certain period came to an end.

The colonial revolution had reached the point where it could go no further unless it made the transition into a socialist revolution—and for that the subjective factor was lacking. On the other hand, American imperialism, drawing its own conclusions from the victory of the Cuban revolution, shifted more and more openly to repressing

by military force all revolutionary movements which in its view threatened even incipiently to touch off the process of permanent revolution. Ever more systematically it brought to bear its strategy of permanent counterrevolution against such revolutionary movements.

Caught between the masses seeking a clear revolutionary socialist solution and imperialism, which strove to crush such tendencies in embryo, the Sukarnos, the Nkrumahs, the Nassers, and the Nehrus, who had dominated the scene in the semicolonial countries for fifteen years, reached the end of their era.

Since the formation of new revolutionary vanguards, even of the Fidelista type, lagged behind this process, the initiative passed for a whole stage to American imperialism with its CIA-financed plots, its counterrevolutionary interventions, and its ever-widening wars of aggression.

An acceleration of economic growth in the United States coincided with this stage of more direct and overt counterrevolutionary moves and created the means by which the imperialists could finance these projects for five or six years—which from "military missions" and "counterinsurgency" in Latin America to the war in Vietnam, including the upkeep and expansion of dozens of air-naval bases throughout the world, cost tens of billions of dollars—without opening up an assault on the living standard of the workers in the United States.

The might, expansion, and arrogance of Yankee imperialism seemed to reach new heights after its failure in the fifties in relation to both the colonial revolution and the power struggle with the Soviet Union.

The Vietnam war also was the culmination and, as it were, the crest of this imperialist counteroffensive. The Vietnam war became the turning point in the situation. As a result of the indomitable resistance of the Vietnamese masses, the colonial revolution was able to regroup its forces and stage a comeback in several important sectors. Simultaneously, the contradictions in the American imperialist society sharpened considerably.

Even the revival of direct mass action against the bureaucracy in the bureaucratically degenerated workers states has been stimulated in part by the profound influence the Vietnamese revolution has had on the most politically conscious working masses throughout the world.

In escalating its aggression against the Vietnamese revolution, American imperialism aimed not only at blocking the revolution's advance in a region of obvious economic and strategic importance (Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia); it sought not only to create a "deterrent" against a victorious revolution in Asia, which would represent a catastrophe of global scope for the international imperialist system. It wanted also to intimidate the exploited masses in all colonial and semicolonial countries, if not the entire world. It wanted to put them on notice by a terrifying example that if they took the revolutionary road they would have to face the most powerful military machine in the world and pay a terrible price in blood and destruction for an attempt to liberate themselves from the yoke of capital. Thus, the outcome of the confrontation in Vietnam assumed crucial importance.

Today, the militant revolutionary enthusiasm of the Vietnamese masses, unparalleled in recent history, has blocked the imperialists and kept them from achieving the principal objectives of their aggression. And the Vietnamese masses have achieved this victory despite the totally inadequate military aid they have gotten from the workers states, for which the Soviet Union as the most powerful of them bears the major responsibility; despite the unceasing pressures the Kremlin and its agents have brought to bear seeking to force the Vietnamese revolution to adopt a more "responsible" stance toward the aggressor and allow him to "save face"; and despite the no less inadequate scope of the international movement of solidarity with the Vietnamese revolution, which has not succeeded in drawing decisive strata of the workers in the imperialist countries into actions capable of actually blocking the imperialist war machine.

The 1968 Tet attack showed that the Vietnamese revolution held enormous reserves for taking the offensive, including among the urban masses, and that the military situation had deteriorated for the counterrevolutionary interventionist forces. At the same time, the escalation of their aggression began to reveal to the American imperialists the full extent of the dilemma facing them.

Because, while it is certainly true that any strategic retreat before the Vietnamese revolutionary forces could only encourage the revolutionary forces in the neighboring countries and throughout the world, the prolongation of the war also had that effect both in Thailand and Burma, where the guerrilla movement has expanded significantly, and in Indonesia. Paradoxically, in Indonesia, the Vietnam war has begun to undermine the results of imperialism's greatest success in recent years—the defeat of the Indonesian revolution in October 1965.

At the same time, a sector of the American bourgeoisie has recognized with dismay that even its colossal resources are not sufficient to simultaneously finance the nuclear arms race with the USSR, the "conventional" war in Vietnam, the worldwide consolidation of capitalism, and the minimal reforms necessary to put a damper on social tensions in the mother country itself. The economic price which imperialism has paid for continuing the war in Vietnam has been accelerated inflation, with a deepening crisis in the international monetary system and an accompanying exacerbation of interimperialist contradictions; reduced "aid" to the colonial bourgeoisie; and a cut-back in the "war on poverty" in the United States, which was intended to defuse the explosive nature of the Afro-American problem. Together with the encouragement the victorious resistance of the Vietnamese masses has given to the formation of a black and student vanguard in the United States on the subjective level, the objective effects of the war in Vietnam made possible both an unprecedented growth of the antiwar movement and broadening radicalization of the black masses, which in conjunction are creating the most explosive domestic crisis the United States has experienced since 1929-36.

Thus, American imperialism's failure to hold back the waves of world revolution has become evident.

The essential historical reason for this failure is threefold. As "Dynamics of the World Revolution Today" stressed, imperialism's incapacity to stabilize the political and economic situation in the semicolonial countries creates objective possibilities there for a rapid revival of the mass movement. The Indonesian example—where the grave defeat of October 1965 was followed by a still more rampant inflation, a decline in the productive forces, a famine, and general poverty—offers a typical illustration of imperialism's inability to stamp out colonial revolution for long.

Old and new contradictions in the social and economic system of the imperialist countries themselves continue to periodically provoke tensions and crises that can be stimulated by the advance of the colonial revolution. Finally, in a world where the capitalist system is being challenged by a majority of the human race, even the economic resources of the most powerful state in history are not sufficient to enable it to effectively play the role of world policeman. And this is all the more true because all attempts at lasting coordination of the military, diplomatic, economic, and financial policies of the imperialist states run up against the persistence of interimperialist contradictions, that is in the last analysis, into obstacles arising from the survival of private ownership of the means of production and of the bourgeois national state.

The Vietnam experience has shown the fallaciousness of the Soviet bureaucracy's argument that the strategy of peaceful coexistence would bring a peaceful advance of the revolution throughout the world as a simple result of the change in the global balance of forces, whereas revolutionary wars or armed insurrections risked becoming transformed into a nuclear world war. In reality, no revolution can advance or win without colliding with imperialist military intervention. Extending the revolution internationally remains the only way to compel imperialism to disperse its forces and to weaken it throughout the world. The

threat of nuclear war unquestionably remains—not because of this or that revolutionary war but because of the existence of nuclear weapons in the imperialist countries, above all the United States. This threat will be eliminated once and for all only with the overthrow of capitalism in the United States.

In the last analysis, the failure of the imperialist counteroffensive is an expression of the fact that the global balance of forces is already too unfavorable to imperialism for it to be able to reverse the trend on its periphery. There is no question that the international situation could have developed in a way much more favorable to the revolution if there had been an international revolutionary leadership able to marshal all the anti-imperialist and anticapitalist forces in a united front pursuing a global strategy counterposed to the global counterrevolutionary strategy of imperialism. But even in the absence of an effective world revolutionary leadership, imperialism was unable to reverse the balance of forces. Once the most oppressed and exploited classes, or at least their most alert sectors, began to become conscious on an international scale of the crucial fact that in today's world the heroic fighters of a little country like Vietnam can stall the war machine of the greatest imperialist power in history, a new and grave deterioration in the imperialist position began to develop.

First of all, the contradictions and difficulties faced by imperialism have mounted on numerous fronts. The revival of the colonial revolution in Southeast Asia has been spurred. Interimperialist contradictions have been accentuated. Secondly, the defeat which imperialism has suffered on its periphery has greatly contributed to reviving the revolutionary crisis in the very heart of the imperialist system, including in the United States itself through the struggle of the black masses.

The May 1968 revolutionary upsurge in France was the first stirring example of this resurgence.

The links between the victorious resistance of the Vietnamese revolution and the revival of revolutionary struggle in the central imperialist countries are obvious, both on the subjective and objective levels.

On the subjective level, this resistance impelled the formation of a new youth vanguard in the imperialist countries, strongly contributed to making it independent of the traditional reformist and Stalinist apparatuses, and helped it to gain experience and assume increasing boldness in its ceaselessly escalating clashes with the traditional parties, with the bourgeoisie, and with the repressive apparatus of the bourgeois state.

On the objective level, the economic and financial consequences of the Vietnam war have aggravated the dollar crisis, increased the tensions in the international monetary system, and sharpened the interimperialist contradictions, thus draining the reserves with which the international bourgeoisie could have cushioned the effects of the 1966-67 recession. Instead of a policy of concessions, the bourgeoisie, under the pressure of all these economic factors, has been forced in almost all the imperialist countries to attack the standard of living and certain improvements considered by the workers to be established rights (particularly full employment and fringe benefits). This in turn impelled a revival of the class struggle in those sectors freest from control of the trade-union bureaucracy

and shook the relative social stability that existed in most of the imperialist countries in the preceding period.

It is in the last analysis this exacerbation of the social contradictions within imperialist society—stimulated by the objective and subjective effects of the failure of the imperialist counteroffensive against the colonial revolution—that accounts for the objective possibility of the new revolutionary rise in Western Europe. The new revolutionary upsurge has profoundly altered the interrelation among the three main sectors of the world revolution, coinciding as it does with the end of the period of reformist illusions and political apathy among the masses in the bureaucratically degenerated or deformed workers states of Eastern and Central Europe. The first signs of this were to be seen in the action of the Yugoslav students in June 1968, which was of broad scope and high political level, and in the militancy and growing political radicalization of the Czechoslovak workers since August 1968.

For two decades the center of gravity of the world revolution had shifted to the colonial and semicolonial countries, the victory of the Chinese revolution coinciding with the defeat of the postwar revolutionary wave in Western Europe and the rise of McCarthyism in the United States. Today, the May 1968 revolutionary upsurge in France heralds a historic turning point. The profound crisis affecting society, the economy, and parliamentary democracy in Great Britain; the prerevolutionary situation in Spain; the stirring of the West German workers after their long passivity; and in Italy the rise of a mass movement and the shaking given to the social and political structures are all signs that this is not an isolated or passing phenomenon.

The appearance even in the United States of a wave of radicalization unparalleled in thirty years indicates that this is a deep-going and universal phenomenon.

The new revolutionary upsurge in Western Europe does not mean that the colonial revolution has lost its importance. To the contrary, one of the most dramatic results of this revolutionary rise could well be that imperialism will be forced to redistribute its financial and military strength throughout the world, which would reduce the pressure on the colonial revolution on several fronts, stimulate its resumption and the winning of new victories.

This new revolutionary rise means that essentially proletarian forces and vanguard political currents carrying on the traditions of revolutionary Marxism and workers democracy will be in the thick of the fight, that their methods of intervening, of action, and organization will draw much closer to the Leninist norm of proletarian revolutions. Thereby, the weight of the proletariat and of its most valuable and special traditions will be considerably enhanced in the overall process of the world revolution. This will have a profound influence on the course and the forms both of the colonial revolution and the political revolution in the bureaucratically deformed or degenerated workers states. The same course will arouse the American proletariat, whose entry on the scene will be the decisive factor in preventing nuclear war from being unleashed by imperialism when it confronts the final crisis in its system of rule. It will greatly favor the construction of the Fourth International, of the new mass revolutionary parties which it seeks to promote, and its own sections and sympathizing organizations.

## II.

## The New Revolutionary Upsurge in France and Its International Consequences

The revolutionary crisis that occurred in France in May 1968, touched off by the student strike and the night of the barricades on May 10-11, was the broadest revolutionary mobilization in Western Europe in thirty years. It encompassed even the most marginal strata of the population and drew in an important part of the new middle classes. The bourgeois state was paralyzed for almost two weeks. The militancy of the demonstrators led to numerous direct confrontations with the repressive forces. Many instances occurred in which the masses spontaneously moved toward establishing their control and even their power in opposition to the governmental, managerial, and other institutions integrated with the bourgeois state.

For a few days (May 24-30), the May 1968 mobilization put the overthrow of the bourgeois order and the conquest of power objectively on the order of the day. The absence of an alternative leadership, or the components of such a leadership, with sufficient authority among the workers enabled the traditional leaderships, most importantly the CGT [Confédération Générale du Travail] and the PCF [Parti Communiste Français] which had the great majority of the workers behind them, to betray this movement and divert it toward economic objectives. In the struggle for these, the workers displayed a combativity which on several occasions escaped the control of the official union leaders. Besides its scope, the characteristics of the revolutionary upsurge of May 1968, setting it off from the upsurges of June 1936 and the 1944-47 period, can be listed as follows:

(1) The detonator this time was not an electoral victory (the Popular Front) or the military victory of a workers state in alliance with the imperialist democracies but a struggle of the university students, the high-school students, and broad layers of young workers. This struggle was revolutionary in its forms (confrontations with the state forces) and in its political level (struggle for socialism and internationalism).

(2) A revolutionary vanguard, politically independent of the traditional leaderships, including the Stalinists, assumed mass dimensions in several demonstrations in Paris.

(3) The international context. In 1936, the struggle of the masses in Spain and France took place in the face of the extension of Nazism in Europe and the development of the most monstrous aspects of Stalinism in the Soviet Union. The May 1968 upsurge came after the victory of the Vietnamese Tet offensive and simultaneously with parallel student struggles in several imperialist countries and a new antibureaucratic thrust in the workers states (the fall of Novotny).

(4) The special role played by the university, high-school, and worker youth as the "detonator" and spearhead of the movement. In the context of political reformism, stagnation, and apathy in the traditional workers movement, and more or less advanced integration of the political and trade-union apparatuses into the bourgeois state, the needs and aspirations of the youth became virtually overlooked and were disregarded by established society.

As a result, the youth rejected the traditional leaderships, including the Stalinists. The prestige of the latter, moreover, had been greatly undermined in previous years by "de-Stalinization," the Sino-Soviet conflict, and finally by their inadequate defense of the Vietnamese revolution against American imperialist aggression. The incapacity of neocapitalism to satisfy the material and cultural needs of this youth, and the reappearance of unemployment among the youth, created the objective basis for this radicalization. One of the new features of these struggles was the participation en masse of the very young.

Despite the scope of the movement, the politically independent vanguard at the outset had no other organizations at its disposal than small political formations (Trotskyists, Maoists, and anarchists). Its base in the factories was insignificant—there was no lack of militants but the union apparatus had strangled all minorities for decades, barring all those suspected of opposing the PCF line from even the lowest trade-union posts. Furthermore, the university and high-school youth on the one hand and the young workers on the other had no contact with each other before the movement began. It was only in the course of the actions conducted by the students that the young workers, who found nothing to rally around in the factories, joined the student actions in numbers that mounted daily.

The betrayal committed by the PCF-CGT leaders can be summarized as follows:

- They opposed the revolutionary struggle of the students and did everything in their power to prevent them from linking up with the workers politically and organizationally.

- They divided the various categories of workers (private industry, the nationalized sector, civil-service workers) instead of uniting them on a common program.

- They refused to declare an all-out general strike on the pretext that it existed de facto. Their real reason was to avoid advancing the only slogan consistent with such a strike—the political slogan of struggling for power.

- They negotiated without regard for what the workers wanted and they accepted abject agreements which the workers rejected out of hand.

- They never took the least initiative toward mobilizing the strikers, limiting themselves to shutting them up in the factories or sending them home to do nothing.

- They attacked and slandered the "leftists" without letup, covertly encouraging physical violence against them as in the past. But they never organized the workers to defend themselves against the reactionary squads and the repressive forces of the state.

- They never raised the slogan of dissolving the repressive forces sent against the students (Gardes Mobiles, Compagnies Républicaines de Sécurité).

- They betrayed the defense of "foreign" militants against the government's repressive edicts (the Cohn-Bendit affair), putting their factional interests above proletarian internationalism.

- They never publicly denounced the maneuvers of Mitterrand and Mendes-France and they kept chasing after the FGDS [Fédération de la Gauche Démocrate et Socialiste] trying to get a "common program" that had nothing to do with the political situation.

- They took an equivocal position in regard to the referendum which de Gaulle decided on at one point.

- They never tried to overthrow de Gaulle and were the first to accept his decision to hold legislative elections.

- They did not want to take advantage of a movement heading toward socialism, seeking instead a "new democracy" of bourgeois type.

This betrayal by the PCF leadership was the trump card of French capitalism, paralyzed for fifteen days, whose armed forces could not handle even a part of the movement, which along with the large and small cities had swept up major sectors of the peasantry.

Despite this betrayal, the French workers have not been defeated. In the economic strikes into which the movement had been split up, they generally made gains, varying according to the industry but rather substantial as a whole. In their majority they do not feel frustrated. A growing minority, moreover, recognizes the traditional leadership's betrayal. In the course of the movement, the workers relearned the class methods of struggle which the apparatuses had not used for fifteen to twenty years (militant street demonstrations, calling strikes and demonstrations without the due notice required by law, etc., showing the superiority of these methods to petitions and other legal steps, parliamentary moves, etc.). The workers overruled their leaders on several occasions, notably in rejecting the Rue de Grenelle agreements; the authority of the leaders suffered. The continuation of the strikes was marked by the militancy of many important sectors; and the provocations organized by the government and the bosses often elicited militant responses (in the Renault factories in Flins) despite the leaders.

In addition to the appearance of a vanguard force to the left of the French Communist party, one of the most important gains of the May 1968 movement consisted of numerous forms of "dual power." These manifestations, of varying extent and duration, showed that the May movement went far beyond a struggle for elementary economic and social demands, proving that a sector of the participants consciously posed objectives of a much more sweeping nature.

In a still inadequate way, the May 1968 mobilization saw a first approximation of a transitional program in operation. This occurred in the factories (where the question of workers control and workers management arose in several cases), to say nothing of the major public services which were run partially or completely by their personnel. Similar developments occurred in many professional circles (the liberal professions, specialists, sports. . . ) in opposition to the official institutions. The question of transitional forms was posed most profoundly in education at all levels.

Drawing up a balance sheet in this area would provide many elements for a concrete transitional program for France. The question of workers control as a preliminary to workers management must be the central concern of the vanguard militants in the factories. Directly linked to this question is that of democratically elected committees.

One of the movement's greatest weaknesses lay in the fact that in almost all cases behind the name "strike committee" was to be found the local union executive committee. These were linked to each other through the apparatus of the union bureaucracy. In most cases these "strike committees" transmitted the CGT leadership's policy to the workers. But real strike committees, democratically elected by all the strikers, unionized or not, could have been a genuine expression of the rank and file. They could have linked up in a nonbureaucratic network, in which a real revolutionary leadership could have asserted itself.

Another important gain of the May 1968 upsurge is to be seen in the decline in influence of the traditional workers parties over the university and high-school youth. Today, for the first time since the advent of Stalinism, the revolutionary forces are in position to win political hegemony and even organizational predominance in the entire social layer which, even if it constitutes a minority and is marginal in comparison with the position of the industrial proletariat, nevertheless is able to influence the workers through various social transmission belts (vocational schools, numerous factory positions for former university students and graduates), not to mention the subjective impact it can have especially among working-class youth. It is a vital task to work out a program of transitional demands that will enable the French revolutionists to consolidate this political hegemony and mass influence—even though it is within a student milieu subject to inevitable ups and downs because of its social nature.

These two important gains of the May 1968 upsurge have created much more favorable conditions for constructing a revolutionary party in France. It is not yet possible to establish a mass party; but it is already possible to build more than a propaganda group. It is possible to create an organization that can mobilize and bring into action wider forces that can influence a narrow sector of the working-class vanguard. In the final analysis this improvement in the conditions for constructing a revolutionary party constitutes the most important result of the May revolutionary upsurge. It is the best guarantee that the upsurge will not turn out to have been a mere isolated explosion without important consequences but the beginning of a series of violent struggles extending over a period of some years.

By reviving the socialist revolution on the European continent, the revolutionary upsurge in France has created a new relationship among the three sectors of the world revolution (the proletarian revolution in the imperialist mother countries, the colonial revolution, and the anti-bureaucratic revolution in the workers states). It began to create the conditions that will enable the distortions and contradictions seen in the world revolution in the past twenty-five years to be overcome. It dramatically renewed the revolutionary Marxism which the Fourth International alone has unceasingly defended. It also enriched the lessons of many experiences in the most varied fields.

The revolutionary crisis in France has already had effects in the semicolonial countries, notably in the big cities of Latin America (Rio de Janeiro, Buenos Aires, Santiago de Chile, Mexico City) and countries where French imperialism still wields an important influence (Dakar). This upsurge gave Vietnam and socialist Cuba the greatest help they have received.

The revolutionary crisis in France has already had important repercussions in Yugoslavia. Demonstrations of solidarity with the French students have also occurred in Czechoslovakia. For its own purposes, the Chinese government organized big demonstrations in solidarity with the actions of the French proletariat. In the other workers states, that is, the Soviet Union and the workers states of Eastern Europe, the governments distorted the revolutionary movement in France still more shamelessly than *l'Humanité*. They gave exclusive stress to the workers' economic demands, denigrated and slandered the "leftists," and supported de Gaulle in the most critical moments, beginning to criticize him for his anti-Communist statements only after the movement had been betrayed by the Stalinist leadership.

But it will not be long before the truth is known about the events in France and the Stalinist lies will only reinforce resistance to the bureaucracy. The repression of recent years in the Soviet Union against the intellectuals and the university youth testifies that in the USSR also the students will play a very important role when a great revolutionary mass upsurge against bureaucratic rule develops. May 1968 considerably accelerated the process of the political revolution in the Soviet Union.

The revolutionary crisis in France expressed and powerfully stimulated deep-lying tendencies present in almost all the European countries.

The European socialist revolution froze when the postwar revolutionary wave was halted by Stalin's agreements with the imperialist democracies at Yalta, Teheran, and

Potsdam. The European socialist revolution was weighed down both by the Stalinist degeneration of the Russian revolution and the defeat of the German working class in 1933 along with that of the Spanish revolution just prior to World War II. Now, for the first time, a gigantic revolutionary thrust has opened new perspectives for the European workers. The crisis hit France first due to its economic situation, which remains precarious despite the transformations carried out by French capitalism in the postwar period and due to the political situation created by the Gaullist regime which, under the guise of a "strong state," eliminated in daily practice the buffers offered by a representative parliamentary regime. In all the most essential areas there was nothing but the arbitrary will of one man or an extremely small group.

At bottom, neocapitalism exhibits the same brittleness in all the European countries; the upsurge in France was only a harbinger of the crises soon to emerge in Europe.

Objective necessity compelled the European capitalists to concentrate their productive forces in the narrow, reactionary framework of the Common Market. The same objective necessity will revive the highest expression of revolutionary Marxism in the European workers movement, a mass revolutionary International. The expressions of proletarian internationalism which marked the street demonstrations of the revolutionary vanguard in the month of May testify that creation of the mass revolutionary International will soon become one of the major problems that must be posed by the revolutionary vanguard in Europe and likewise the entire revolutionary vanguard throughout the world.

### III.

## The End of the Long Imperialist Boom

In the United States since the beginning of the second world war, and in Western Europe and Japan since the postwar reconversion period, the imperialist countries have undergone a long-term economic expansion comparable to, if not exceeding, capitalism's best periods in the past.

Of course, the world context in which this expansion occurred was different from that of former times. This time, it did not go hand in hand with an extension but rather with a shrinkage of the area in which capital could freely exploit labor power. It was not an uninterrupted boom. During this period, except in West Germany, the imperialist economy experienced multiple recessions, all reminders of capitalism's inability to resolve its underlying economic contradictions. Moreover, parallel to this expanding imperialist economy was a still more rapidly growing economy in the workers states and a stagnating one in the colonial and semicolonial countries, both highlighting the crisis of the world capitalist system.

Finally, it must be remembered that the expansion in the imperialist economy, above all in Western Europe, was not automatically generated by spontaneous economic forces. To the contrary, it was a result on the one hand of the reformist and Stalinist leaderships betraying the European working class's revolutionary opportunities after the war; and, on the other hand, of massive aid

from American imperialism, which in the immediate postwar period concentrated all its energies on consolidating and reviving capitalism in Western Europe.

However, these reservations in no way detract from the scope and importance of this long-term period of expansion for the imperialist economy. The fact that the imperialist economies could enjoy such a boom even though fourteen countries had freed themselves from capitalist exploitation, that the disintegration of the colonial empires and declining colonial superprofits for the economies of the imperialist countries could go hand in hand with an exceptional expansion in these economies, must be recognized and explained.

To deny such obvious facts would not mean "maintaining unshakable faith in the revolutionary potentialities of the working class"; it would mean transforming the grounds for such confidence — a rigorously scientific grasp of reality — into dogmatic, religious humbug unworthy of Marxism. However, to limit analysis to the *current* facts, without indicating the deep-going, long-term trends, without clarifying the basic contradictions and thus disclosing their historically limited and passing character would obviously mean falling victim to vulgar empiricism. It would mean becoming a prisoner of bourgeois and petty-bourgeois ideology which has been proclaiming in



all keys that capitalism has found out how to "stabilize" continued expansion and guarantee full employment.

In general, revolutionary Marxists have succeeded in avoiding these twin evils. They have provided an overall analysis of the causes of the long period of imperialist expansion consistent with general Marxist theory.

This expansion was generated by accelerated technological renovation spurred by an exceptionally high level of arms spending maintained continuously over two decades (three decades in the United States)—an unprecedented phenomenon in the history of capitalism. This resulted in a more thoroughgoing industrialization of most of the imperialist countries themselves, involving a veritable revolution in the social structure of countries like France, Italy, Japan and Spain, with a rapid decline in the importance of the peasantry in the population and the economy. This expansion was protected against a recurrence of grave periodic crises of overproduction through the systematic and deliberate institution of a permanent credit and monetary inflation. The boom was sustained by an enormous, unprecedented volume of debt. Overproduction was not eliminated. It was concealed, on the one hand, by buying power generated through inflation; and it was "frozen," on the other hand, by the emergence of greater and greater excess capacity in a number of industries (coal, shipbuilding, steel, textiles, petrochemicals, and tomorrow, no doubt, automobiles).

This Marxist analysis reached three conclusions: first, that the essential motor forces of this long-term expansion would progressively exhaust themselves, in this way setting off a more and more marked intensification of inter-imperialist competition; secondly, that the deliberate application of Keynesian antirecessionary techniques would step up the worldwide inflation and constant erosion of the buying power of currencies, finally producing a very grave crisis in the international monetary system; thirdly, that these two factors in conjunction would give rise to increasing limited recessions, inclining the course of economic development toward a general recession of the imperialist economy. This general recession would certainly differ from the great depression of 1929-32 both in extent and duration. Nonetheless, it would strike all the imperialist countries and considerably exceed the recessions of the last twenty years. Two of these predictions have come true. The third promises to do so in the seventies.

West Germany's first real recession, in 1966-67, strikingly confirmed the inevitability of cyclical fluctuations in the capitalist economy. This recession, coinciding with Great Britain's fifth postwar recession, affected almost every country in capitalist Europe. Only Italy managed to escape because it had already had a serious cyclical downturn in 1964. This recession, the most serious in Europe since the second world war, brought the unemployed figure up to three million. However, since it paralleled a boom in Japan and a period in the American economy characterized by an initial boom followed by a mild short-term downturn ("an inventory-liquidation downturn"), a general recession throughout the imperialist world was narrowly averted.

Nonetheless, though still limited to the major countries of capitalist Europe, recession this has already seriously sharpened inter-imperialist rivalry. The devaluation of the pound sterling; the measures taken by the Johnson admin-

istration to "defend the dollar"; the masked devaluation of the French franc in November 1968; the Japanese automobile manufacturers' invasion of the European and North American markets; the competition between the American and European trusts within the Common Market; capitalist Europe's own crisis of economic integration (ostensibly provoked by the Gaullist rejection of British membership in the Common Market, but in reality spurred primarily by the fears and hesitations of the principal bourgeoisies facing a general slowdown in the expansion of the international imperialist economy)—these are the chief manifestations of this inter-imperialist competition. It is heading inevitably toward a new and more advanced phase of capital concentration—in many instances international concentration of capital—and thus generally tending to exacerbate excess productive capacity, mounting debt, and declining profit rates for the monopolistic trusts. The products of a first slowdown in the growth rate, this competition and stepped-up capital concentration must in turn produce a further decline in this rate.

All these factors, therefore, are combining to erode the foundation on which for thirty years it was possible to erect a colossal pyramid of debt and inflation. Confidence in the international capitalist economy's two so-called "reserve" currencies—the dollar and the pound sterling—has been profoundly shaken. This has tended to inhibit the expansion of international capitalist trade and impede the expansion of the means of international payment. Return to the gold standard is impossible in a declining imperialist world at grips with powerful anticapitalist forces. It would risk provoking an economic crisis too great for the system to bear.

But at the same time, continuing international inflation collides more and more sharply with the interests of a growing section of the international bourgeoisie. Growing lack of confidence in the dollar tends increasingly to cut back the expansion of international liquidity at a time when such expansion is urgently needed to revive the boom. This contradiction is pointed up by the failure of the New Delhi Conference and the imperialist countries' inability to increase their "aid" to the semicolonial countries (which is primarily aid to their own export industries), coming in conjunction as it does with the first signs that the expansion of trade among the imperialist countries is running out of steam.

Doubtless, American imperialism still commands sufficient reserves and resources to continue using Keynesian techniques in the United States for some time without mounting a direct assault on the living standards of the American working class. But the pressures on it to put an end to its chronic balance-of-payments deficit are becoming so great that an important restraint has been put on the inflationary expansion of the world monetary system. This increasingly general deflationary pressure is imposing a common monetary and financial discipline on a growing number of imperialist countries, which is to a large extent independent of the economic policies their changing governments select. Thus, they are being drawn one after the other into a general current which will carry them toward a general recession in a few years.

One of the imperialist economy's most striking features since the second world war has been the absence of an international synchronization of recessions. The American

recessions of 1949, 1953, 1957, and 1960, which had more or less immediate repercussions for the British economy and the economies of a whole series of lesser imperialist countries, coincided with a sustained boom in West Germany. The Japanese recession did not come until 1965, when the French and Italian economies were already on the upturn. And the German and British recessions of 1966-67 were accompanied by a boom in Italy and Japan and at least partial maintenance of the high economic cycle in the United States.

This diffusion of recessions in time and space has clearly tended to moderate the extent and duration of business downturns, an increase in exports compensating in every instance for drop in sales on the domestic market. The causes of this situation lay in the fact that while in the last analysis recessions follow from a decline in productive investment, that is, the emergence of excess capacity or "frozen" overproduction, their immediate causes lie in governmental measures—credit restrictions and deflationary policies aimed either at balancing international payments or "dampening an overheated economy," or both at once. It was the general expansionist tendency and international inflation together that made possible this widespread monetary and financial manipulation in the imperialist world.

These two stimuli have already begun to weaken, considerably reducing every imperialist government's margin for maneuver. The Wilson government learned this to its cost when international finance virtually rammed down its throat a devaluation insufficient to enable the British bourgeoisie to win back their lost international markets. Because of the close international collaboration among central banks, the decline in these two stimuli is tending to result in the imposition of increasingly rigid monetary discipline. This is producing a tightening coordination of the monetary policies of the principal imperialist countries, which will sooner or later make inevitable a synchronization of economic recessions.

The synchronization of economic recessions is rooted in the productive process itself. It reflects, in the last analysis, the growing internationalization of capital, the levels of productivity and competitiveness among the different imperialist economies becoming evened out. In these conditions margins for monetary and financial maneuvers shrink considerably. Every maneuver, whether deflation,

monetary devaluation, or protectionism, immediately brings on negative consequences for the economies of the other imperialist countries and prompts them to take a similar course. In fact, the close collaboration among the central banks expresses on a conscious level the objective inability of the imperialist countries, even the strongest of them, to escape simultaneously the imperatives of inter-imperialist competition and the monetary retaliation inevitably provoked by any attempt to improve their own competitive position with the aid of financial expedients.

Historically there are more profound causes for the approaching end of the long-range expansion in the international imperialist economy from 1940 to 1965 than monetary problems, credit systems, or the interventionist policies of bourgeois states. It signifies that the contradiction between the expansion of the productive forces and the braking role of private appropriation, which capitalism was able to repress for a whole period with the help of temporary expedients, is emerging to the surface again in a powerful way. The efficacy of these expedients is waning. The stimulus of permanent inflation is being neutralized by the negative effects of this inflation on world trade. The stimulating effects of arms production are declining at a time when it has reached colossal proportions. Reviving the boom would require a new hike in military spending which even the American economy can no longer sustain. The more and more pronounced relative impoverishment of the semicolonial countries constantly reduces the fraction of the total industrial production of the imperialist countries which they can absorb. However, trade between the imperialist countries, which grew enormously during the long period of expansion, is increasingly restricted by inter-imperialist competition and by progressive equalization of the technical level among all the imperialist countries.

To sum up, the enormous productive capacity built up in these countries is coming into conflict more and more with the needs of capital realization. Only the expanding economy of the workers states might offer a temporary safety valve. But, although rising constantly, their trade with the imperialist countries is still too small to put the brakes on a general recession. The limitations on this trade, due to both the workers states very meagre export potential and the general international context which makes long-term credits very risky, will not be overcome to any great extent in the near future.

#### IV.

### **The New Stage in the Crisis of the Bureaucratic Regimes and the Meaning of the 'Economic Reforms'**

After the Hungarian revolution was crushed in 1956, the crisis of the bureaucratic regimes in the workers states of East Europe and the USSR seemed to have been temporarily halted or to have leveled off. The liquidation, beginning in 1957, of most of the reforms won by the "Polish October"; the halt in de-Stalinization in the USSR after the Twenty-Second Congress of the CPSU; the passivity of

the working masses; the political apathy, which was broken briefly by the victory of the Cuban revolution and its clashes with American imperialism but which was not shaken later even by the Sino-Soviet conflict—all these were expressions of the momentary suspension of the crisis. The removal of Khrushchev, whose economic policy had clearly become unpopular among the working masses,

occurred amid general indifference. Even American imperialism's war of aggression against the Vietnamese revolution, which drew such broad and violent protests from the vanguard youth in the imperialist countries, met with a much more indifferent climate in most of the European workers states—although the courageous independent actions of students in East Germany, Czechoslovakia, Poland, and above all Yugoslavia in support of the Vietnamese revolution must be mentioned.

The interaction of several factors explains this prolonged political apathy, this apparent renewed stability of the bureaucratic regimes in the workers states lasting for nearly a decade after the period of the violent tremors from 1952 to 1957. In general, the late fifties and early sixties were marked by a constant rise in the standard of living of the masses. This was more pronounced in some countries, like the USSR, East Germany, and Yugoslavia, than in others such as Poland and Czechoslovakia. But it was nonetheless real enough to account for the appearance of a climate fostering reformist illusions. The crushing of the Hungarian revolution also helped to nourish this climate. The mirage of a progressive "democratization" from above, stimulated by abrupt phases of cultural "liberalization" and growing interest in Yugoslav self-management, made up the general framework for the consolidation of this climate.

Underlying this apathy, however, was a more basic factor. In the Stalinist era, the working class in all these states, with the partial exception of Yugoslavia, was politically expropriated and atomized. The flagrant contradiction between the official doctrine—an apologist deformation of Marxism—and the political oppression and social inequality created profound distrust and mounting skepticism in the working class toward Marxist-Leninist doctrine. In periods of strong economic expansion, this distrust was combined with optimism about the possibilities of "individual success"; in periods of semistagnation, with general pessimism in this regard. But this loss of confidence in the Communist ideal prostituted by the bureaucracy was the fundamental cause of the workers' political apathy. Neither the periods of "liberalization" nor the intellectuals' fight for increased socialist democracy have overcome this factor, inasmuch as the workers, not without reason, consider these intellectuals to be part of the privileged bureaucracy and the "liberal" program as offering scarcely any attractions or immediate advantages to the workers.

However, for several years a series of factors has begun to undermine the relative stability the bureaucratic regimes regained after 1957. The crisis of these regimes is again bringing diverse layers of the population into action in Yugoslavia, Poland and Czechoslovakia. The Soviet bureaucracy itself displays panic over the possibility of such a revival in the USSR, too. Of the factors at work, four must be stressed: a slowing down of economic growth coupled with the detrimental effects which the "economic reforms" of recent years have had for the masses; the crisis in the "world socialist camp," that is, the crisis in the relationship between the workers states and the CPs; the bureaucracy's inability to develop a consistent ideological line to take the place of the Stalinist doctrine; the impact on the workers states of American imperialism's aggressive

escalation, of the victorious resistance of the Vietnamese working masses, and of the revival of revolutionary agitation and struggle in Western Europe.

The steady decline in the sixties of the rate of economic growth in the bureaucratically degenerated or deformed workers states is an expression of a deep-going crisis in bureaucratic economic management. It is universally recognized that hypercentralized bureaucratic planning fails when the time comes to go beyond the stage of industrialization where costs are not taken into account, when the prime necessity is to develop a more modern sector (electronics, petrochemicals, automated mechanical systems) and a consumer durables industry. But since the bureaucracy cannot replace this system with one of democratically centralized workers self-management, it seeks "automatic" mechanisms to take the place of contradictory, confused, and less and less effective directives from above. This is the reason why it has generally opted for "economic reforms" reviving the idea of a "socialist market economy." Underlying the bureaucracy's increased recourse to market mechanisms is a rivalry within the bureaucracy itself between an essentially technocratic wing and the conservative tendency, Stalinist in origin, of the political apparatus.

The intrabureaucratic character of this conflict appears most clearly in the program of relations with the working class which the "liberal" technocrats have developed. Nowhere do they take a stand for workers' self-management, even in principle. Everywhere they advocate increased powers for plant managers and more plant autonomy. Greater powers for the managers are meant not only with respect to the central planning authorities but with the workers as well. The technocrats favor a kind of austerity and economic rationality all the more suspect in the workers' eyes because it entails a reappearance of large-scale unemployment and the dismantling of free or low-cost social services such as housing at the same time as an increase in social inequality and in the salaries and bonuses of the bureaucrats.

It is one thing to note that in spite of everything the "liberal reforms" create an atmosphere more favorable to a revival of initiative and political activity among the workers. But this does not imply that the revolutionary Marxists support the liberal technocrats as against the conservative political bureaucrats on this basis. Unquestionably, this intrabureaucratic conflict and the liberal concessions accorded to writers, journalists, and students as in Czechoslovakia have improved the chances for a resurgence of activity by the workers. And the workers' activity might also turn against the economic consequences of the "reforms" which are detrimental to the working class. Trying to limit the embryonic new vanguard in these countries to a "choice" between a "lesser evil" (the liberal, technocratic bureaucracy) and a "return to Stalinism" would trap the rising vanguard in an insoluble dilemma. Only a bold program calling for the full rebirth of socialist democracy based on power exercised by workers councils, that is, on the program of political revolution, can bring the workers back on the political scene en masse. The working class is too antagonistic to the bureaucracy in its entirety to let itself be used as a mere auxiliary force in the conflict between two strata in the ruling caste.

The fact that the intellectuals and youth are the first

stratum in the bureaucratically degenerated or deformed workers states to begin to move is due not only to the workers' still very widespread political apathy. It reflects also the much more immediate discontent which the bureaucratic dictatorship has aroused in these circles. The workers in the best of cases have had the temporary satisfaction of an improvement in their standard of living and a marginal increase in their trade-union rights in the plants. For the intellectuals and the youth, the demand for freedom of creation in the arts and literature, for freedom of scholarly and, by implication, political debate, is a vital need without which they threaten to stifle. By liquidating the most extreme aspects of Stalinism without reestablishing a climate of genuine socialist democracy, the bureaucracy only removed the most extreme means for suppressing the demands of the intellectuals and students without satisfying them. This could not help but provoke a crisis of mounting virulence, inevitably leading to explosions.

This development was all the more inevitable because the bureaucracy's failure in the ideological field is much more pronounced than its failure in the economic one, which is only partial. The bureaucracy has been incapable of substituting a doctrine of even the slightest coherence for Stalinism. It has been incapable even of recasting its own history. Its bankruptcy in this regard has appeared in stark clarity in the laborious rewriting year after year of its "manuals" of philosophy, political economy, and the history of the CPSU, which are then revised again, and finally withdrawn from circulation. This bankruptcy is still more obvious when compared with the Soviet Union's conspicuous successes in the natural sciences and technology.

The bureaucracy's ideological bankruptcy is manifested also in the growing crisis in the "socialist camp" and the international Communist movement. This crisis was determined in the final analysis by conflicting interests among the national bureaucracies and reflects the differing relationships of these bureaucracies with imperialism. But the inability of the bureaucracy, and above all, of the Soviet bureaucracy to formulate a semblance of doctrine acceptable to all the workers states with regard to either their relations with imperialism or the ways to building a socialist economy and society unquestionably promotes centrifugal tendencies within the camp.

From this standpoint, the Kosygin-Brezhnev era has been still more disastrous for the Soviet bureaucracy than that of Khrushchev. Of the fourteen workers states, eight have now escaped the Kremlin's control (in chronological order, Yugoslavia, the People's Republic of China, the Democratic Republic of Korea, the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, Albania, Cuba, Rumania, Czechoslovakia). With Czechoslovakia's growing autonomy, the lure of autonomy likewise threatens to grow in Poland and Hungary. If this has not received expression in the German Democratic Republic, too, it is because bureaucratic rule in this country is directly dependent on military support from the USSR.

In the international Communist movement, the Kremlin's policy of "peaceful coexistence" and "economic competition" has cost it control over most of the Communist forces in South and Southeast Asia and has condemned the forces remaining loyal to it in Latin America to become a dwin-

dling minority. While this policy is fully endorsed by most of the CPs in the imperialist countries, it places them in an impasse with regard to the mushrooming youth movements in those countries, giving them only extremely limited access to this new vanguard.

The dialectic of the political crisis of the bureaucracy has not operated in a linear or direct way. The influence of the Maoist or even the Fidelista current is still insignificant or weak in the CPs and circles of young rebels in the bureaucratically deformed workers states. The failure of these tendencies to advance a concrete program or proposals dealing with the problems of these countries which could inspire enthusiasm is largely responsible for their weakness. The Maoists' continuation of the Stalin cult denies them any possibility of influencing the intellectual and student layers in Eastern Europe.

But the international political crisis of the bureaucracy has indirectly influenced and continues to influence the development of renewed activity in the East European workers states. The multiplicity of "official" resolutions encourages a revival of critical thought and increases the general skeptical attitude toward any "orthodoxy." The outcome is to increase the number of currents and sub-currents within the political leaderships in the bureaucracy. Every international confrontation becomes an occasion for debates reviving the polemic broken off momentarily by the halt in de-Stalinization in the USSR. Even modest successes in the struggle for socialist democracy have international repercussions, setting off a chain reaction. The Czech students come to the defense of Polish students victimized by the repression and both the Poles and Czechs sympathize with the nonconformist intellectuals persecuted in the USSR.

Furthermore, Peking's propaganda campaign against Moscow has unquestionably helped to undermine the authority of the bureaucratic Communist party leaders both in the capitalist countries and in the Soviet Union. Out of polemical necessity, the Maoists have told devastating truths about the "revisionists" and offered important examples involving the pro-Moscow CPs as proof of their statements. While this propaganda has gotten little response in the Soviet Union, in Eastern Europe, etc., chiefly because of the development of the Mao cult and the praise of Stalin associated with it, it has played a contributing role in the formation and activities of the youth vanguard in the capitalist countries, which in turn has contributed to the rise of opposition currents in the youth and among the intellectuals in the degenerated or deformed workers states. From this standpoint, the propaganda, as hypocritical as it was, concerning the "cultural revolution" had a special importance because it was ostensibly directed against the bureaucracy and proclaimed the need for the youth to "take power." The ultimate result of this was to contribute to undermining the stability of the Stalinist bureaucracy on a world scale.

The resistance of the Vietnamese masses and their victories over the imperialist aggression have come to exercise a positive influence in reviving a political vanguard in the workers states. It has cooled the sympathies of a section of the rebel intellectuals and students for bourgeois "democracy" and discredited American imperialism in their eyes. It has galvanized a current of active solidar-

ity, reinforced by the presence in the workers states of many students from the colonial countries. It serves today in the workers states, as in the West, as a touchstone to distinguish reactionaries and right wingers—who complain about the sacrifices imposed on the peoples of Eastern Europe "for the benefit of the Vietnamese and Cubans," who claim that the Vietnam war is only a "quarrel among the great powers," and who take a neutral or indifferent attitude toward the heroic resistance of the Vietnamese people—from the progressive currents whose spontaneous demonstrations and demands for more direct and massive aid go beyond the purely verbal affirmations of official "solidarity." The same observation applies even more closely with regard to the attitude adopted by the different currents in the workers states toward the revolutionary upsurge in France. The rightists regretted the weakening of a Gaullism favorably inclined to an "international détente" and criticized the PCF from the right. The genuine left currents expressed solidarity with the youth insurrection and criticized the PCF from the left.

The advance towards a political revolution in Czechoslovakia has revealed in the clearest way the deep-going tendencies as well as the inner contradictions of the progressive increase in mass militancy in the bureaucratically degenerated workers states. For an entire period, the workers in their majority stood aside from the struggle between the two wings of the bureaucracy. They began to take action, particularly by advancing their own demands, towards the end of the spring in 1968. The mobilization became accelerated because of the open intervention of the Kremlin and its satellites in the test of strength within the Czechoslovak Communist party, then because of the political and military pressure which the Soviet bureaucracy began to apply against the Czechoslovak government. It reached its highest point immediately after the military forces in the service of the Kremlin invaded Czechoslovakia. This constituted the biggest explosion of revolutionary mass action in Eastern Europe since the October-November revolution in Hungary.

On the road towards a political revolution, the working-class masses began to advance more and more clearly the slogan of workers self-management—of putting elected representatives of the workers in direct charge of the plants and of the entire economy. Notwithstanding all the ideological confusion among the vanguard workers and students resulting from the Stalinist past and the opportunist nature of the Dubcek leadership, a third tendency began to crystallize within the Communist party and the organizations of the masses and the working class. Oriented in a revolutionary direction, this tendency rejected both the neo-Stalinist conservative allies of the Kremlin and the right-wing partisans of a "liberal economic reform."

The capitulation of the Dubcek leadership in face of the Kremlin's drive to reestablish its bureaucratic control—at first with the aid of the Dubcek group itself—over the most important social domains which had begun to slip out of its grip, has placed heavy pressure on the militancy and self-confidence of the vanguard workers and students. The main objective of the Kremlin is to bring about a demobilization of the masses in Czechoslovakia.

After that it will be easy to replace the Dubcek group by more docile servants. For six months the admirable militancy of the masses has prevented this objective from being achieved. But in the long run this militancy cannot be maintained unless the movement spreads to the neighboring countries, above all the Soviet Union itself.

What probably led the dominant faction among the Kremlin leaders to decide in favor of intervening militarily in Czechoslovakia was not so much fear of the "Czechoslovak experiment" being repeated in other countries of the border area as fear that it would sweep into the Soviet Union itself. Especially among the minority nationalities of the USSR (Ukrainians, Georgians, Tartars of Crimea, Balts, etc.) some of the progressive conquests of the Czechoslovak masses in the January-August 1968 period enormously stimulated further political differentiations and the formation of oppositional currents. Of greatest importance in this respect were the abolition of the censorship, the promise to establish a genuine federal state structure, and the partial reestablishment of democratic norms in the internal life of the party, including among other things the right to form tendencies. In reacting as brutally as it did, even at the cost of accentuating the crisis of the world Communist movement, the Kremlin disclosed its fear of the Soviet masses. The appearance for the first time in thirty years of public political opposition, awakened by the invasion of Czechoslovakia, shows—even if it is a timid opposition—that the Kremlin's fear is not unfounded. In the USSR as well as in Czechoslovakia, Poland, East Germany, Yugoslavia, and Hungary, a new young revolutionary vanguard is slowly assembling. Despite a thousand difficulties and repressive actions that will tend to become worse, this vanguard is seeking to find its way to rediscovery of revolutionary Marxism both in theory and practice. The stepped up pressure, including the use of military force, which the USSR resorted to in April 1969, came as a response to both the militancy of the Czechoslovak masses and the increased opposition inside the USSR itself. The "victory" of the Kremlin in Czechoslovakia, far from stabilizing the power of the bureaucracy, only aggravated the crisis of Stalinism in the East European workers states.

The key problem facing the vanguard in the workers states is how to achieve a linkup between the students and intellectuals who have opened a direct struggle for socialist democracy and the workers who can and must win to this struggle. This linkup cannot be achieved without taking into account the present outlook, the material interests, and the historical objectives of the working class. The way to prepare this linkup is to work for the rebirth in these countries of revolutionary Marxist organizations supporting the full program of the political revolution.

The economic and social consequences of the "economic reforms" introduced in various workers states in Eastern Europe have for some time promoted tendencies in the international revolutionary movement which maintain that these countries are on the eve of capitalist restoration. The Maoist propaganda, which has been disseminated on a grand scale, has had an unquestionable impact. The evolution in the foreign policy of some of the governments of these countries, such as Rumania and particularly Yugoslavia, has given objective reinforcement to

these fears which the Soviet bureaucracy has used to justify the strict forms of control it exercises over these countries. This proved true again in the case of Czechoslovakia, where all of the support given by the Kremlin to the conservative neo-Stalinist Novotny tendency was justified on the basis of a purported danger of a return to bourgeois democracy.

Revolutionary Marxists must refute the arguments developed in these circles and defend a correct application of the Marxist analytical method. This is important not only because defending the theoretical gains of Marxism is an integral part of the struggle for world revolution; it is also the essential prerequisite for intervening in the crisis in progress in the workers states; since to advance the political revolution, such intervention must correctly weigh the social forces present, their respective weight, and their dynamics. Since the case of Yugoslavia has been chosen as a model, because of the way the private sector has expanded in that country, we must examine the capitalist restoration thesis in the light of the reality in this country.

From the standpoint of method, the partisans of the thesis that capitalism has been restored in Yugoslavia apply, at bottom, reformist conceptions in reverse. Since there has clearly never been a social counterrevolution in this country, since the party in power, despite all kinds of manifestations of rightist degeneration, is still the same party that completely expropriated the former possessing classes in 1945 and destroyed their state, the hypothesis of a restoration of capitalism implies that it is possible to go gradually and imperceptibly from a workers state to a bourgeois state, from a noncapitalist economy to a capitalist economy, in the same way that the reformists think you can go gradually and imperceptibly from a bourgeois state to a workers state, from a capitalist economy to a noncapitalist economy.

For Marxists there can be no capitalism without a bourgeois class in power in the economic sense of the term. There can be no bourgeois class without private appropriation of the means of production and the social surplus product. From this standpoint, it is impossible to show that the Yugoslav bureaucracy has taken any important step toward private appropriation of the major means of production. To the contrary, the system of self-management represents an additional political and psychological obstacle in the way of private appropriation. The workers are much less willing to surrender the plants, where they directly participate in the management, to private owners. The process of primitive private accumulation has assumed important proportions in agriculture, commerce, craft production, and the service sector. But this process is occurring in classes or social layers such as the rich peasantry, the private traders, etc., not in the bureaucracy. As for the private appropriation of a part of the social surplus product by the bureaucracy, it cannot be shown that this phenomenon is quantitatively more important than in the USSR in Stalin's time.

It is true that the symbiosis of a corrupt bureaucracy with a peasantry and a class of artisans and traders in the course of rapid enrichment creates major social and economic tensions in a socialized economy and introduces grave contradictions. These contradictions, however, are simply a repetition of analogous contradictions in the USSR in the NEP period. They do threaten the planned

character of the economy and its socialized foundation and they are aggravated by the Yugoslav CP's decisions to increase the economic decentralization and the progressive dismantling of the monopoly of foreign trade—this cannot be disputed. But the only conclusion that can be drawn is that a process of sharp social and political struggles is in the offing in Yugoslavia, as indicated by the political crisis since 1966, the strike wave of 1966 and 1967, and, above all, the student demonstrations and trade-union congress of June 1968. The March 1969 congress of the Communist League of Yugoslavia could only take note of the problems engendering these struggles and those facing the ruling layer, not resolve them. For capitalism to have been restored, the Yugoslav working class, the only one which has made a socialist revolution in Europe since 1917, would have to have been beaten; the social forces representing the private reappropriation of the major means of production would have to have triumphed. To say that capitalism has already been restored, without massive resistance from the workers, would be to proclaim defeat before the battle; it would demonstrate a defeatism that the recent events have shown to be totally unjustified.

Revolutionary Marxists reject any notion that the social nature of an economy or a society can be fundamentally changed by ideological factors or political conceptions. They reject still more emphatically the Maoist thesis that capitalist restoration is "automatic" if the vestiges of capitalist ideology are not eliminated. This is a genuinely idealist and voluntarist revision of historical materialism. Restoration of capitalism in a country where it has been overthrown is possible only if a new bourgeois class, whose existence is clearly shown in economic and social reality, appropriates the major means of production and overthrows the bureaucratized workers state to replace it with a bourgeois state. Nothing of this sort has occurred in Yugoslavia.

Yugoslavia no more than the USSR or China presents us with a definitive model or "ideal" of a society and economy in transition from capitalism to socialism. In all these cases, grave deformations developed that were new and unanticipated in the theoretical schema. But this is no reason to abandon the basic Marxist criteria for determining the social character of a state, to consider only the distortions and overlook what is essential. Excessive economic decentralization, the reappearance of unemployment, and accelerated primitive private accumulation in the service sector in the case of Yugoslavia are grave deformations. But they are of the same order as the destruction of all workers control and power at the plant level in the USSR in Stalin's time, the bloody repression of the Hungarian workers councils by Khrushchev, the economic stagnation in Czechoslovakia under the Novotny regime, and the widespread development of a black market and a parallel market in the USSR in the fifties. In none of these cases was the fundamental underpinning of a workers state—the elimination of the big bourgeoisie, nationalized ownership of the major means of production, controlled planning of major investment projects, the banks, and big industry abolished. As long as these bases remain, and the workers have not been defeated by a new bourgeoisie, there can be no capitalist restoration.

## V.

## Problems of the Resurgent Colonial Revolution

In each of the colonial revolution's chief centers—the revolution in Southeast Asia, Latin America, the Arab countries, and Africa—there are increasing signs of a resurgence or extension of revolt. At the same time, the pre-revolutionary situation in West Bengal heralds the development of a new vitally important center of the colonial revolution—the Indian revolution. Therefore, the principal problems the resurgent colonial revolution faces in each of these centers must be specified along with the conditions under which the new revolutionary leaderships can successfully undertake to solve them.

The Vietnamese revolution's triumphant resistance has created conditions favorable to an extension of the revolution in Southeast Asia to the principal neighboring countries: Laos, Thailand, Burma, and Indonesia. Even in Malaysia, relatively the most stable country in this zone, revival of the mass struggle has started. Simultaneously, in the Philippines there has been more vigorous oppositional activity in the cities along with the beginning of resumption of guerrilla struggle.

Up until now, the international extension of the Vietnam revolution in Southeast Asia has not been a spontaneous mass phenomenon. It has been the result primarily of the activity of the North and South Vietnamese revolutionary forces (above all in Laos) and the Chinese CP's preponderant influence on the Southeast Asian Communist parties. After the disaster of the Aidit policy in Indonesia, and in connection with the "cultural revolution," the Maoist leadership took a left turn tactically in its attitude toward the Asian "national bourgeoisie." Almost everywhere it advocates unleashing armed struggles under Communist leadership in accordance with the model of guerrilla warfare becoming transformed into a people's war. A notable exception is Pakistan, where the Communist forces under Maoist influence have been led to maintain a moderate wait-and-see attitude toward the regime in power, which for diplomatic reasons Peking wants to treat tactfully and which is nevertheless being shaken by an ever-deepening crisis.

Most of these countries are essentially agrarian societies with little or no industry, whose level of socio-economic development is well below that of China in 1949 or even Vietnam in 1954. The peoples of these countries either have little experience in struggle (Thailand) or have undergone long periods of conflicts centered around the national issue in which the urban masses played little role. This means that the climate in these countries is especially propitious for the development of the tactic of guerrilla war which can end in a victory if a minimum of favorable conditions is assured, including a leadership independent of both Peking and Moscow.

In its desperate search for a minimum of political and social stability, the Burmese officer caste has gone a long way in opposing imperialism in this region. Practically all imperialist property and the greater part of the urban property of the Burmese "national" bourgeoisie has been nationalized. It has nonetheless proved true, as in all countries of this type, that the key to Burma's social future

lies in the countryside. Without a genuine agrarian revolution there can be no real mobilization of the popular masses. Above all, without an agrarian revolution it is impossible to create the basis for overcoming, if only gradually, the real causes of underdevelopment. In this area, the Burmese military regime has failed. The failure has facilitated the resumption of guerrilla warfare, which has forced Rangoon to beg for military and economic aid from imperialism.

The turn which most of the CPs in this region have taken toward guerrilla warfare and toward unleashing an agrarian revolution unquestionably favors the selection of a new revolutionary vanguard, hostile to "peaceful co-existence" and gradualist illusions, and ready to unleash a process of "uninterrupted revolution." Thus far their ties to Peking have encouraged their development toward a more revolutionary orientation. However, this evolution is not irreversible. As in the case of Indonesia yesterday and Pakistan today, the bureaucracy in power in Peking may try again to use the revolutionary movement in this or that Southeast Asian country as small change in its diplomatic maneuvers. Therefore, to establish the most favorable conditions for taking advantage of all the opportunities to advance the revolution, it is necessary for the CPs in these countries to free themselves from all subordination to any of the bureaucracies now in power in the workers states.

American imperialism recognizes the threat to its interests involved in an extension of the Vietnamese revolution internationally. That is why it has built an immense military base in Thailand, a veritable counterrevolutionary staging area in Asia, which is supposed to enable it to strike hard as the need arises at any point in the zone extending from Manila to Karachi.

Indonesia is clearly the key country in this whole zone. It is there that imperialism's counterrevolutionary intervention in Southeast Asia has had its most detrimental effect, giving a team of Indonesian generals the necessary confidence to crush the Communist movement. But it is there also that the "national" bourgeoisies' inability to achieve even the slightest political and social stability has been most strikingly exhibited. Despite the October 1965 bloodbath and the breadth of imperialism's political victory, in the face of the corruption and chronic incompetence of the native ruling class, imperialist military and economic "aid" (backed discreetly by the Soviet bureaucracy) has not been enough to halt economic disintegration or a catastrophic new drop in the living standard of the masses, which was already so low at the close of the Sukarno era. This objective evolution has given the impetus permitting a renewal of the struggle in armed form.

The PKI [Partai Komunis Indonesia] was decapitated. It lost most of its leading cadres. But its intermediate cadres were already too numerous to be exterminated. Among these cadres a process of selection and intensified regroupment is in progress. While there is a defeatist and conservative wing that draws conclusions from the

failure of the Aidit policy tending toward neo-Khrushchevism, the majority of the surviving cadres are turning toward the left, toward the necessity for armed struggle. The revolutionary Marxist cadres must participate to the fullest in this turn and support it with all their strength. They must promote a critical examination of all the errors in the Aidit line—those inspired by Moscow as well as those inspired by Mao. And by forming their own nucleus, they must help to form a new leadership for the Indonesian revolution.

With the OLAS [Organización Latinamericana de Solidaridad] conference, a new stage opened also in the creation of a revolutionary leadership in Latin America. A separate document deals with all the lessons of the decade of struggle in Latin America since the victory of the Cuban revolution. It is sufficient here to point to the lamentable bankruptcy of the national bourgeois and petty-bourgeois leaderships of the traditional mass movement (AD [Acción Democrática] in Venezuela, APRA [Alianza Popular Revolucionaria Americana] in Peru, the MNR [Movimiento Nacionalista Revolucionario] in Bolivia, the Peronists in Argentina, the "Liberals" in Columbia). The collapse of the Goulart government in Brazil and the integration of the Vandor team into the Argentine military dictatorship doubtless are the most typical examples. Caught between the fire of the Cuban revolution and the pressure of imperialism, these forces have everywhere allied themselves with pro-imperialist tendencies, although not without suffering continual splits and shrinkage of their popular base in the process.

The CPs have not fundamentally changed their policies of the period before the victory of the Cuban revolution. They are still chasing the mirage of an "alliance with the national bourgeoisie" and a "constitutional road" to liberation from the imperialist grip. Even when the pressure of the ranks has forced them to turn toward armed struggle as in Venezuela, Colombia and Guatemala, this turn has been episodic, partial, and pragmatic; and they have tended to fall back into an overall strategy dominated by "peaceful coexistence." The increasingly numerous conflicts between these CPs and the Cuban leadership and the local supporters of its revolutionary line attest to the depth of this contradiction.

The Fidelista leadership sought for a time, at the Tri-continental conference and before, to work through the traditional Communist parties in order to draw the most extensive forces behind its line of armed struggle unleashed simultaneously in a series of countries and a socialist revolution on a continental scale. Now, it has drawn a balance sheet on the congenital incapacity of the Latin-American CPs to reintegrate themselves in the ongoing revolutionary process. This was the reason they set up the OLAS conference independently of the traditional CPs. This is why they are trying to regroup on a national and continental scale, without excluding anyone, all the revolutionary forces that are ready to engage in the revolutionary struggle and to accept both the socialist character of the Latin-American revolution, its continental nature, and the predominant role armed struggle is to play in it.

The original conceptions of the Fidelista leadership on the tactics and strategy of armed struggle have not remained static. In the light of hard-won and painful

experience, a series of modifications have been introduced. The most important are recognition that the first expectations of an early victory in a number of countries proved to be overoptimistic, that the struggle must be conceived as one of long duration, and that imperialism has learned lessons which increase the difficulties of guerrilla warfare. Of particular interest is the thought being given by the Fidelista leadership to the distinction between generally revolutionary conditions and a revolutionary situation favoring an uprising.

The Cubans have also developed a more complex strategical concept than the original idea of a "guerrilla focal center" triggering off a successful overthrow of a reactionary government and the bourgeois state. This has been modified to include the necessity of organizing mass support among the peasantry and widening the armed struggle to include the broad layers of the urban population. These are important advances. Still lacking is a revolutionary Marxist appreciation of the need for a transitional program for the city masses in order to set these explosive forces in motion through their own inherent needs. Likewise lacking as yet is a revolutionary Marxist appreciation of the role which a party of the calibre of the Bolsheviks could play in bringing the struggle to a successful conclusion at the earliest possible moment.

The Arab revolution suffered a severe setback when the retreat of the Algerian revolution set in preceding the fall of Ben Bella. The possibility for new progressive developments appeared in Syria in 1966-67, and, in the last analysis, it was to stamp out this possibility that the June 1967 Israeli aggression was launched. The defeat suffered by Egypt and Syria in this war of aggression momentarily increased the weight of the reactionary Arab governments. But at the same time it heightened the anti-imperialist consciousness of the masses, which in Egypt led them to act in an independent way for the first time in ten years.

The most promising revolutionary revival taking shape at present in the Arab world is in Palestine. By their revolutionary struggle, the urban and rural masses of Aden and South Yemen were able to drive out the imperialists, the semifeudal sheiks, and most of the neocolonialist tools. The guerrilla war started up by the Palestinian masses in the territories occupied by Israel rekindled revolutionary hope and enthusiasm throughout the Arab world. The consolidation of these gains requires both the formation of revolutionary cadres much more tempered and conscious than those of the 1956-66 decade, and the extension and centralization of the struggle to broader and broader sectors of the Arab world as a whole.

In fact, the sun is setting for the Arab revolutionary generation dominated by essentially "national" bourgeois Nasserism and petty-bourgeois Baathism. The conditions are ripening for the formation of a genuine party of the Arab revolution, based on revolutionary Marxism and combining a resolutely anti-imperialist orientation with genuine proletarian internationalism, which will facilitate solving the Israeli and Kurdish problems. The elements of this party will be assembled not only among the Palestinian and Yemenite fighters but also among the vanguard of the Moroccan, Algerian, Tunisian, Egyptian, Syrian, and Iraqi students and workers who are



now drawing a balance sheet on the experiences and defeats of the traditional Communist parties, Nasserism, and the Baath.

In Black Africa also, the initiative passed for an entire period to imperialism and its neocolonialist agents. In general, the military coups d'etat which have occurred have maintained, if not reinforced, the neocolonialist structures. The overthrow of Nkrumah in Ghana, the elimination of Oginga Odinga in Kenya, the changes in the regimes in Mali and the Congo (Brazzaville) marked grave rightward turns in the governments of these countries. The unilateral declaration of independence by the white colonists in Zimbabwe (South Rhodesia), the reinforcement of the regime of apartheid and semi-fascist repression in South Africa are some indications of the lag experienced by the African revolution in recent years. The OAU's growing paralysis, or rather its progressive transformation into an instrument of neocolonialism, capped this temporary setback.

At the same time, however, forces have been coming together whose role is decisive today for a revival of the African revolution. The consolidation of the guerrillas in so-called Portuguese Guinea and Eritrea; the revival of guerrilla warfare in Angola and Mozambique and its first appearance in Zimbabwe, and a current increasingly inclined to guerrilla struggle in the antiapartheid movement in South Africa are the clearest expression of this.

The peculiarities of African society involve the survival of tribalism and the rudimentary character of the bourgeoisie, which make neocolonialism endemically weak but which at the same time place additional obstacles in the way of a genuinely anticapitalist revolution. Under the protection of neocolonialism, the private accumulation of capital has continued at an accelerated pace in almost all the countries of Black Africa. This process has promoted the emergence of modern social classes from the old tribal structures, as is shown with special clarity by the secession of Biafra organized by bourgeois forces manipulating tribal structures and fears.

This can only increase the importance of the South African revolution, the only one which can base itself on a mass of workers and peasants who have been proletarianized and largely detribalized in the crucible of capitalist exploitation and apartheid oppression. The historic role of all the armed struggles now in progress on the African continent, which are slowly moving southward, is to prepare, facilitate, and spur the outbreak of the South African revolution, beginning with guerrilla warfare.

The Indian revolution is called upon to play a crucial role in the advance of the colonial revolution in the seventies. The Congress party's electoral defeat in 1967 revealed the bankruptcy of the traditional leadership of the Indian masses, established since the start of the struggle for independence against British imperialism. The Indian bourgeoisie sought in vain to halt this disintegration of their power by two military adventures, against China and Pakistan respectively, in an attempt to generate a chauvinist climate of "national union" in the country. It strove in vain also to prepare alternative bourgeois leaderships—on the "right" with the Swatantra party and Jan Sangh, on the "left" with the Bangla Congress (which sought to govern in a coalition with the opportunist workers parties). The social crisis is proving more powerful than political

maneuvers. The Indian cauldron in which such mighty forces are on the boil is inexorably nearing the point of explosion.

The industrialization of India cannot be considered a total failure, despite the industrial recession which has been going on for more than two years. The productive forces in industry have developed. The proletariat has increased in numbers and skill. The cities have continued their monstrous growth. But what was a fraud and a farce was the propaganda about the "social" or "noncapitalist" character of this industrialization. In reality, what we saw was a classical process of large-scale primitive accumulation to the profit of the Indian bourgeoisie. And in today's world context, this primitive accumulation of capital has reproduced on a still broader scale the phenomena which accompanied this process in Europe in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries—destruction of small-peasant ownership; tens of millions of rural families dispossessed of their means of agricultural or craft production; an accelerated rural exodus; heavier and heavier indebtedness of the mass of the people; low wages, greater unemployment and generalized misery for the urban proletariat and subproletariat, existing in foul slums—if they are not left without a roof over their heads at all—and subjected periodically to outright famine.

The most explosive issue in India today is the agrarian problem—the problem of agricultural laborers who work only one day in three, of peasants dispossessed of their lands, of small tenant farmers and independent farmers crushed by rent, taxes and usury. The technical problem of irrigation—which the production of basic necessities depends on—cannot be solved so long as the social question is not solved. No revolution can triumph in India unless these tens of millions of workers and poor peasants in the villages of the country rise up.

But a peasant uprising would not be enough by itself. It would have to go over into overthrowing the political power of the bourgeoisie and creating a Soviet-type government. Only such a government could carry out and consolidate on the scale of this immense subcontinent the confiscation of the land from the landlords and capitalists, cancellation of debts, division of the land for the benefit of the poor peasants and the creation of the first producers cooperatives among the agricultural wage workers. Historical experience has shown that any alliance with the "liberal" or "left" wing of the bourgeoisie, any acceptance of the electoral or parliamentary road, any confusion as to the character of the state and government resulting from the revolution blocks the accomplishment of these urgent tasks.

The CP led by Dange has long been mired in class collaboration with the Indian bourgeoisie. In this it has followed the instructions of the Kremlin, which wants to maintain a political alliance with New Delhi, prating about the "noncapitalist road of development" chosen by the "leading circles" of the Congress party.

The so-called "left" CP, to which the hopes of the masses were transferred and which leads them in the two key states of Bengal and Kerala, has followed Dange down the road of coalition with the bourgeoisie. It has not hesitated to participate in coalition governments within the framework of the bourgeois state to help maintain the bourgeois "order" challenged by the hungry masses, and

even to use repressive means against them. The political, social, and economic crises of recent years have given birth to a new revolutionary vanguard to which the cadres coming from the left wing of the left CP can make an important contribution. The Socialist Workers party, the Indian section of the Fourth International, will work toward this through programmatic clarification, the selection of cadres, and by setting an example in a new type of struggle.

While this vanguard can develop through programmatic clarification, it will arise primarily from the immediate struggle of the masses, which had already reached a semi-insurrectionary stage in the great antifamine struggles of 1966.

In 1967, the first sparks of a peasant rebellion were struck in the struggle in Naxalbari. This must be carefully prepared, broadened, radicalized, and organized by revolutionaries until it leads to the creation of organs of dual power—armed workers and peasants committees.

Doubtless in a territory as vast as that of India this dual power will also take on a character of geographical division. The uneven development of the different parts of the country makes a breakup of the union probable in an early phase. Moreover, reactionary forces are striving to make regionalism the last redoubt against the revolution, above all in regions less affected by the famine like Bombay. But in today's world, the Indian revolution will find more powerful allies than the Chinese revolution

could in the twenties and thirties. And the resistance of the possessing classes will be proportionately weaker inasmuch as the balance of forces has altered profoundly in favor of the revolution and continues to do so.

The Pakistan revolution will be the most reliable ally of the Indian revolution. One of the principal means used by the Indian bourgeoisie to maintain control over considerable sectors of the toiling masses in the past has been to appeal to chauvinistic sentiments against China and Pakistan. The Ayub Khan dictatorship, despite its flirtation with Peking, objectively facilitated these diversionary maneuvers. The rise of the student movement in Pakistan since November 1968 profoundly changed things. In their struggle for democratic rights, the students have already achieved important gains. In February 1969 they succeeded in triggering off a series of strikes of the working class that qualitatively altered the nature of the struggle, resulting in the downfall of Ayub Khan. This is the first time that a student-worker alliance has brought down a regime. The army coup that followed this success will not be able to hold down the movement for long. With vanguard sectors of the working class, especially the railway workers, coming into action, openly anticapitalist slogans appeared in Pakistan. This revolutionary trend in Pakistan, coinciding with new electoral defeats of the Congress party in the elections in India early in 1969, cannot help but accelerate the development of a revolutionary crisis in Bengal.

## VI.

### **Crisis of the Traditional Workers Movement and the Appearance of a New Youth Vanguard in the Imperialist Countries**

Already, before the end of the long period of expansion in the capitalist economy, the social contradictions had been slowly sharpening in the West European countries. The favorable economic cycle itself had made possible relatively high wage demands thanks to the prolonged period of full employment. These wage increases, in combination with the factors already mentioned, undercut the average rate of profit. The capitalists reacted in two ways: (a) an increasing limitation on the trade unions' freedom of action through imposition of an "incomes policy," a voluntary or legal limitation on wage increases by "mutual agreement"; and by (b) accelerated automation and credit restrictions imposed at determined moments in order to rebuild an industrial reserve army, weaken the workers' response, and sow disarray and apprehension in the ranks of labor by creating fear of massive layoffs.

A vigorous and aggressive workers movement equipped with a program of transitional demands prepared precisely for such situations, a movement which had educated the workers in the spirit of resolute anticapitalism and kept intact their capacity to fight back and mobilize in a militant way, could have profited from the end of the period of full employment in Western Europe to deal the capitalist system very hard blows. With a growing contempt for a system compelled itself to dispel the myths and illusions which it had fostered, the workers could have

refused to accept unemployment and a wage freeze, could have launched powerful strikes and demonstrations, occupied factories, forced the governments to retreat, and created an objectively prerevolutionary or even revolutionary situation.

Anticipating this turn in the objective situation, revolutionary Marxists in several West European countries have concentrated their efforts for years on preparations for such responses to the general offensive of big capital. They understood that what was required to mount such counterattacks was not only a correct political program, cadres, and a revolutionary organization struggling to produce a new revolutionary leadership, but also sufficient roots in the mass movement and adequate organizational transmission belts to draw the broad masses into a determined, coordinated general counterattack against the capitalist offensive.

The increasingly pronounced integration of the reformist bureaucracy into the capitalist system; the sociological transformation of a part of the reformist apparatus which, abandoning its mass support in the workers movement, based itself more and more exclusively on the apparatus of the bourgeois state itself; the rightward evolution and progressive Social-Democratization of the Khrushchevite Communist parties; and the political incapacity and centrist hesitations on the part of the left wing of the trade-

union bureaucracy once again succeeded in largely wrecking the chances of a revival in the West European workers movement in the 1963-1967 period. The result of this was clear. Almost everywhere the capitalist offensive in these countries succeeded in imposing a massive reappearance of unemployment without arousing any violent reactions from the workers. Along with the effects of this capitalist victory, the objective consequences of unemployment have stricken and demoralized layers of the proletariat. This disarray weakened the trade-union and electoral positions of the workers movement in most countries, produced a rightward political drift, and reinforced extreme right-wing, racist or chauvinist tendencies, feeding in part on the demoralization of marginal layers of the working class.

The inability of the *Confederazione Generale Italiana del Lavoratori* and the *Confédération Générale du Travail* to wage any consistent struggle whatsoever against the effects of the Franco-Italian recession of 1964 was already significant. Two years later, the British and West German workers movements found themselves facing the same test but on a much broader scale. Wilson's policy of blocking wage increases and reconstituting an industrial reserve army provoked only disjointed and scattered reactions. The grave Ruhr crisis which broke out in West Germany did not stir the least response from the workers movement. Still worse, in entering the "great coalition," the German Social Democracy went to the aid of capitalism at the very time when after twenty years of economic successes which had made a deep impression on the working masses, it began again to exhibit its historical bankruptcy.

However, at the same time that the traditional workers movement was suffering a new setback due to the betrayal of the reformist and Khrushchevite bureaucratic apparatuses, a new generation of militants completely free of the weight of the skepticism and demoralization engendered by the defeats and failures of the preceding generations was erupting into the West European political scene.

Young students in most of the West European countries, but also young workers, brought a more militant and intransigent tone to the strikes in Besançon, Le Mans, and Caen in France and at Fiat and Pirelli in Italy, as well as to the demonstrations against the monopolistic Springer press combine in West Germany following the attempted assassination of Dutschke. This new generation enjoys a much greater freedom of initiative and action because it has largely escaped the control of the traditional organizations. The May 1968 upsurge in France was a dramatic example of this.

In other documents the Fourth International has analyzed the social, economic, and political origins of this new youth vanguard, which is a worldwide phenomenon. In Western Europe, it has various sources—the movements challenging the bourgeois university arising from the worsening crisis faced by this institution in the age of the university explosion and the current technological revolution; anti-imperialist movements chiefly inspired by the victorious resistance of the Vietnamese revolution to American imperialist aggression and by the Cuban revolution; and a bitter revulsion against the self-satisfied, hypocritical, and ultraconformist generation ensconced in the

neocapitalism of the "consumer society"; etc. All these movements, despite their social composition and their political and theoretical contradictions, have developed an anticapitalist and revolutionary consciousness on a broad scale. It is the duty of revolutionary Marxists to participate in the front ranks in the direct action that is playing a major role in the formation of this vanguard, while at the same time clarifying the content of the experiences achieved and offering an overall perspective oriented toward the participation of fresh layers in the revolutionary struggle of the proletariat for the conquest of power.

The fact that its appearance coincides with a new weakening of the traditional workers organizations unquestionably magnifies the danger of negative manifestations within the ranks of this ardent youth—a skepticism regarding the objective revolutionary capacities of the Western proletariat; third-worldism; adventurism of an anarchistic nature; refusal to take into consideration the need of drawing ever broader masses into anti-imperialist and anticapitalist action. The ideologies of Fanon, Marcuse, and Sweezy are only adaptations to this kind of mentality, which is objectively petty bourgeois even if it is inspired by the sincerest revolutionary motives. Even the passing infatuation of a section of the youth vanguard with the "great Chinese cultural revolution" and Maoism merely reflects at bottom this same mentality of skepticism in regard to the revolutionary potential of the Western proletariat.

But life itself, as well as the implacable logic of the class struggle, has rapidly given the young generation the necessary experience, showing them that they would get trapped in a blind alley if they stayed on the path of their "elitist" conceptions. Everywhere, in West Germany, in Italy, in Belgium, in Great Britain, in the Netherlands, in Denmark, after an initial phase of protest action and revolt centered on purely political objectives or university reform, the student vanguard rediscovered the necessity of orienting toward the factories and the workers. It realized the need of establishing a solid alliance first with the vanguard of high-school and vocational-school students and then with the young workers, who serve as a bridge for reuniting the student revolt with the workers revolt. The task of revolutionary Marxists confronted with the crucial problem of linking up the student and worker vanguards is not to adopt a sterile, paternalistic, polemical stance—not to lay down ultimatums—but to defend Marxism firmly and creatively and, above all, to spur concrete initiatives and seek new forms of action aimed at the plants.

The slowdown in economic growth, the reappearance of massive unemployment, above all among the youth, the decline of the Social Democracy, the attrition and ever more pronounced crisis of bourgeois democracy, and the weakening of the CP's grip on the worker youth in France and Italy dovetail to create a much more unstable situation throughout Western Europe. The revolutionary upsurge in France in May 1968 was the first and clearest expression of this. The dynamics of the expansion of this revolutionary upsurge to the rest of Western Europe will depend on both the vicissitudes and the outcome of the French crisis, both its objective repercussions (factors which block economic recovery and accentuate the crisis

of the international monetary system) and its subjective repercussions (a powerful encouragement for the activity of the new youth vanguard in the rest of Europe, deepening of the crisis in the traditional parties of the workers movement); and the way in which the spearhead of the vanguard in each country solves the specific problem of engaging in actions of the kind capable of drawing broad layers of the working class into the anticapitalist struggle.

In connection with this, rather sharp differences should be noted in developments in the major capitalist countries in Europe. Italy has witnessed not only a massive upsurge in broad working-class struggles since 1968 but even a clear radicalization of a considerable vanguard of the working class as expressed in the adoption of more advanced forms of struggle, a wave of militant demonstrations, and important instances of the workers escaping the control of the Communist party and undertaking actions on their own. From this standpoint, the situation is even more advanced today in Italy than it was in France on the eve of May 1968. The main contradiction in the upsurge is that in face of the growing militancy of the workers there is no political pole of attraction to the left of the CP capable of coordinating the many initiatives and leading them toward precise transitional anticapitalist objectives.

In Britain among the working people there is universal discontent with the cynical antiworking-class and anti-union policies of the Wilson cabinet. But the militancy of the workers has only recently passed beyond the stage of skirmishes at the factory level. The political strikes of February 27 and May 1, 1969, against government policy represented an important step forward in this respect. However, the very slow rate of radicalization of the working class has enabled the "left" union leaders to limit themselves to purely verbal opposition against Wilson, and at the same time has accentuated the tendency of the youth, including the working-class youth, to seek new forms of expression beyond the traditional framework of the labor movement in struggling against the powers that be. This explains the extraordinary success of the October 1968 Vietnam demonstration, which was much more proletarian in composition than the CND marches of the early sixties. In the absence of any effective alternative working-class leadership inside the labor movement, it is the Tory party that will most likely profit at the beginning of the political crisis caused by the growing disaffection of the British working class with the traditional reformist and parliamentary structures. On the other hand, the upsurge of industrial struggle, although modest at present, can provide an opportunity to begin constructing an alternative leadership.

As for West Germany, it remains relatively the most stable of the great capitalist countries of Western Europe, owing to its industrial and financial strength which exceeds that of all its European competitors and to the fact that the level of class consciousness and militancy of the working people is lower than that of the other large European capitalist countries as a result of the whole tragic history of the German working class and labor movement in the past forty years. Thus the gap between the new youth vanguard and the mass of older workers is wider in West Germany than in the rest of Europe. However, even here the combined effects of the 1966-67 recession and the

activities of the student vanguard have had repercussions among the working-class youth, leading to trade-union congresses of a more turbulent nature since the fall of 1968 than has been seen for a long time in Germany. The decision of the West German government to legalize the Communist party at this time is obviously not the result of any strong pressure from the masses but of a calculation that it can serve to divide and divert the new vanguard.

Everywhere, including West Germany, the changed social and political climate has created a deep crisis of leadership among the traditional political parties, whether bourgeois or working class. This crisis, which has even shaken the party system in Britain after sixty years of stability, will not be resolved for some years. For the moment the relationship of forces in the class struggle does not permit the bourgeoisie to resort to extreme antiworking-class solutions. The first effects of the May 1968 revolutionary upsurge in France and the slowdown in the international expansion of the capitalist economy will operate in the same direction.

But the political crisis shaking capitalist Europe (in which the crisis of the "unification" of capitalist Europe is only one aspect) will ultimately reach a climax, especially if a new deterioration in the economic situation should occur. The revolutionary Marxists must bear in mind that if the repeated thrusts forward of the working class fail to achieve decisive revolutionary results, then the workers will become tired and discouraged, and under such conditions bourgeois coups, whether to install, to consolidate, or to bolster "strong states," are not only possible but even inevitable in various countries.

Greece, Portugal, and Spain represent special cases within European capitalism. Although they, too, in different ways, have profited from the long period of capitalist prosperity following the "Korean war boom," and in different degrees have undergone a process of industrialization—which only in Spain resulted in profound changes in the economic structure—all three contain explosive contradictions of a different kind than in the other capitalist countries of Europe. In Portugal, these contradictions remained below the surface throughout the last decade. However, the burden of Portugal's colonial wars will bring them slowly to light. In Greece, the mass movement, on the rise for several years, exploded violently into the streets when the king dismissed the Papandreu government in 1965. A prerevolutionary situation was created there which the bourgeois-liberal and Khrushchevite leaderships of the movement managed to smother. The underlying instability resulting from it, however, led one wing of the bourgeoisie (bankers and shipping interests) to install a military dictatorship. The establishment of this dictatorship without any violent reaction from the masses also constituted a defeat for the European working class. But it was a partial and temporary defeat and not a decisive one like the triumph of the Nazis in 1933 or the defeat of the Spanish revolution of 1936-39. The dictatorship, installed through a typical military putsch and carried out in accordance with NATO's "Prometheus plan," lacks any mass base at all comparable to that of the fascist regimes. What is involved is a bonapartist military dictatorship that utilizes certain fascist methods. The slow and tenacious organization of a resistance movement

orienting at first toward armed struggle and then toward a not merely antimonarchist but resolutely anticapitalist solution will in any case create a permanent threat to capitalist rule in Southeast Europe and will be stimulated by the revolutionary upsurge in the rest of Europe.

However, Spain is where prerevolutionary conditions are ripest in Southern Europe. The slow decomposition of the Franco regime, which has lasted more than a decade now, has not been able to produce a "constitutional" or "European" solution. This is not primarily due to the resistance put up by the remnants of the Falangist apparatus but to the too explosive nature of the social contradictions in Spain, which in the eyes of the Spanish capitalists, make even municipal elections, freedom of the press and trade-union organization seem too great a threat to the survival of the system. Thus we have not seen the gradual "liberalization" and progressive "legalization" of the "oppositon" hoped for not only by the liberal bourgeoisie, the petty bourgeoisie, the Christian Democrats, and the Social Democrats, but also by the CP. To the contrary, we have seen a steady growth in the strength of the workers and students movement to which the government has responded with ever harsher repression, culminating in the state of emergency decreed at the beginning of 1969. The attempts of the Christian Democrats, reformists, and the CP to defuse the explosive character of the mass opposition by diverting it toward exclusively trade-union and semilegal paths have been in vain. The masses have counterattacked against the government's harsher repression in the only effective way, by simultaneously broadening their action and radicalizing its forms. Thus, in Spain, too, a new youth vanguard, tempered in the struggle in the universities, has been able to play and will continue to play an important role in the "Comisiones Obreras" [workers committees] in stirring a current determined to move out of a strictly trade-union framework and toward revolutionary action to overthrow Francoism and capitalism.

The interaction between the appearance of a new youth vanguard and the gradual liberation of the workers movement from the paralyzing grip of the old reformist and Khrushchevite apparatus is evident also in Japan and the United States. It is beginning to develop in the same direction in Canada and Australia.

In Japan, the workers movement, facing a situation of exceptionally rapid capitalist growth whose end will not necessarily coincide with the close of the long period of economic expansion in Western Europe and the United States, has found itself trapped between maximalist propaganda and action strictly limited to immediate demands. This has engendered a growing crisis which has torn both the SP and the CP and also had its repercussions within SOHYO [General Council of Japanese Trade Unions]. The development of the economic structure itself and the growing weight of ultramodern industry with one of the most advanced technologies in the world clearly requires a change in the whole pattern of trade-union work.

The student vanguard which emerged chiefly in the anti-imperialist struggle, first in 1960 and later in the struggle against the Vietnam war, has been able to overcome the effects of the split in Zengakuren [National Federation of Student Self-Government Associations] which weakened it for several years. Its increasingly militant actions for university reform, against American bases, and for the return

of Okinawa to Japan have drawn in layers of young workers and influenced even peasant strata. The task of the Japanese revolutionary Marxists is to take part in these struggles and impel them forward, striving to give them a clearly anticapitalist character—the construction of a revolutionary party aiming at leading the Japanese proletariat toward the seizure of power by the revolutionary road.

But the progress of the world revolution can be most profoundly affected by the interaction of the black liberation struggle, the appearance of a new youth vanguard, and a reawakening working class in the United States. For more than two decades after its feverish wartime boom, American capitalism enjoyed a high level of economic stability. This, together with the years of McCarthyism and the trade-union bureaucracy's criminal adaptation to the foreign policy of big capital and Democratic party machine politics, caused the class struggle to subside in the United States. The American working class as a whole remained relatively passive on the economic front and did not rise to the objective need of breaking with the two-party system.

The first social layer to begin to challenge the political and social stability of the United States was the black community. This challenge was first launched on a legal and parliamentary basis, centering on the system of discriminatory education and social segregation. As the ineffectiveness of these methods became more and more evident, the black community turned toward direct action in numerous forms, including boycotts, picketing, protest demonstrations, marches, etc. This led to debate over the relative merits of "nonviolent" action and more militant methods, to an impassioned debate which was symbolized by the two martyrs of the black community, Martin Luther King and Malcolm X. Uprisings in the ghettos, with the first massive one occurring in Watts, injected a new element into the debate. Thus, a new chapter opened in the black liberation struggle, ushering in concerted struggle by an entire ghetto. Now on the agenda is the problem of giving structure and coordination on a national scale to the elemental forces which have shown such an explosive power in American society.

The black liberation struggle has had a major effect on the class struggle in the United States. However, in a certain sense, this has only begun because it has not yet emerged on the political arena as an independent force. That may very easily happen in the coming period; the speed with which the slogan "black power" has been picked up is extremely symptomatic.

Two driving forces in this development should be especially noted. The first is the radical changes in American industry—the expansion of automation and the massive transfer of industries away from the older industrial regions. This has hit the poorest strata of the American working class the hardest, creating very widespread and persistent unemployment in the ghettos. The second is the effect of the African and Cuban revolutions and of the resistance of the Vietnamese people to the American imperialist aggression, which have heightened the black masses' consciousness of the intolerable humiliation to which racial segregation and the absence of a voice in the government of their country have subjected them.

The black liberation struggle attracted the attention of

rebel youth on the campuses in the United States and this youth began to participate actively in the fight. Thus, the black liberation struggle played a key role in promoting radicalization on the campuses. The Cuban revolution advanced this process by attracting those youth who were most alert and critical-minded on questions such as the role of American imperialism in today's world, the tendency in the colonial world to turn toward revolution, the historic alternative between capitalist barbarism and the socialist system of planned economy, "peaceful coexistence" as against the expansion of the revolution, "peaceful and parliamentary roads to socialism" as against armed struggle, etc. Finally, the escalation of American intervention in the civil war in Vietnam stirred an extensive revolt on the campuses crystallizing in an antiwar movement, which in turn has continued to expand and deepen and which has been marked by mobilizations on a scale never before witnessed in the United States. These mobilizations have had international repercussions, stimulating the class struggle in other countries where they have been particularly felt by the university youth, helping to revive the spirit and practice of international solidarity.

The combination of a dynamic black liberation struggle and a young generation tending to challenge capitalist ideology, institutions, and politics more and more, although in a still confused way, has produced a deep-going process of radicalization in the United States. On the basis of the economic consequences of the war and inflation, the pressure of technological progress, the cut in social-security expenditures, the opposition to the war and fear of what it could lead to, this radicalization process is shaking the apathy of the whiteworkers. Numerous signs have appeared, such as rank-and-file pressure on the trade-union bureaucracy in contract negotiations, readiness to strike, a sector of the trade-union bureaucracy beginning to participate in the antiwar movement, and a

rift between the two wings of the union bureaucracy headed by George Meany and Walter Reuther. The growing difficulties which the international capitalist system is bound to undergo as a result of stepped-up competition, of an unstable monetary system, political rivalries, revolutionary developments, etc., cannot but help accelerate this process.

These shifts, these changes, and the rise of new forces which threaten to shake the political and social stability of American society as never before have precipitated differences within the American ruling class, particularly over tactics in regard to the war it started in Vietnam. But up until the present this has gone no further than an effort to keep the restless sectors corralled in the traditional two-party system. That is the significance of the "peace" propaganda advanced by certain Republican and Democratic candidates in the elections and the policy of giving additional posts in the administration to blacks capable of influencing a certain number of voters.

These demagogic gestures may have a short-term diversionary effect but they cannot solve a single one of the acute problems giving rise to the new mass radicalization in the United States. Considerable concessions would be necessary to appease this mounting discontent for a long period. But such concessions seem excluded because they would require drastic retreat in the international arena. Above all, this would mean abandoning the role of world policeman in many areas, sacrificing the decrepit reactionary regimes which the Pentagon and the State Department are now maintaining around the globe, and permitting new revolutionary advances by insurgent peoples.

The coming period in the United States will be a stormy one and there will be no lack of opportunities to forge a solid alliance among the black masses, the millions of impatient youth on the campuses, and the most powerful force of all—the American working class.

## VII.

### The Construction of a New Revolutionary Leadership

During these last years, an enormous improvement has occurred in the conditions under which revolutionary Marxists have stubbornly pursued their work of building a new revolutionary leadership. This is true to such an extent that we may even speak of a qualitative change. The breakthrough of a new leadership is not yet here, but an important stage of quantitative reinforcement and rejuvenation of cadres has been concluded which will permit a leap forward in the next stage, so long as political and organizational errors are avoided.

Concretely, this fundamental improvement has resulted from the confluence of the Vietnam war, the Cuban revolutionary leaders' turn toward building new revolutionary forces in Latin America, and the almost universal emergence of a new youth vanguard. In the historical sense, these factors reflect a more fundamental change—a major reinforcement of those social layers moving in a broad and continuous way toward world socialist revolution. For the first time since the 1945-48 period, if not for the first time since its origin, the international Trotskyist movement has been able to move out of its relative isolation

in a large way. In many countries it no longer has to swim against the stream but is being borne along and propelled by popular currents which, while still remaining small minorities in society, are already much more extensive than the revolutionary Marxist organizations themselves.

The success of the worldwide campaign to stave off the threat of death hanging over Hugo Blanco was a foretoken of the change, and this campaign can be said to have saved the life of the Peruvian revolutionary leader. The criminal passivity of the SPs and CPs, as well as the trade-union apparatuses, toward the imperialist aggression against the Vietnamese revolution, and the ultra-opportunist character of the feeble Khrushchevite campaigns for "peace in Vietnam" or "negotiations," which repelled the vanguard youth, created an organizational vacuum with regard to the need for radical opposition to this dirty war and active solidarity with the Vietnamese revolution. This vacuum was filled in many countries by ad-hoc or youth movements in which revolutionary Marxists were able to play an important and in some cases

decisive role (the antiwar movements in the USA, Canada, Australia; the Zengakuren in Japan; the Comités Vietnam Nationaux and the Jeunesse Communiste Révolutionnaire [JCR] in France; the Sozialistischer Deutscher Studentenbund [SDS] in West Germany; the Vietnam Solidarity Campaign [VSC] in Great Britain; the Vietnam committees in Belgium and Denmark, etc.).

The revolutionary upsurge of May 1968 confirmed both the qualitative change in the relationship between the new vanguard and the traditional organizations as well as the considerably expanded opportunities for work by the revolutionary Marxists within this vanguard. Since its origin, our movement has never had the opportunity for such impact on revolutionary events in any imperialist country comparable to what the JCR had in May 1968.

The Cuban leadership's left turn between the Tricontinental and the OLAS conferences created the possibility for a united front of all tendencies in the Latin-American revolutionary movement which agree with the general line of OLAS. The revolutionary Marxist forces have been able to take advantage of this possibility to broaden their field of action in countries like Argentina, Bolivia, Peru, Chile, and Guatemala. The convergence between the final message of Ernesto Che Guevara and the theses of the Fourth International did not fail to impress revolutionary militants in many countries. It is not by chance that after the assassination of the Cuban leader, revolutionary Marxist militants and organizations were in the first rank of those who launched an international movement of solidarity with Che and with OLAS. In many countries, they have been practically the only ones to do so.

The onset of "de-Stalinization" in the USSR, the Twentieth Congress of the CPSU, the Khrushchev report, and the Sino-Soviet conflict had already served to break down the old anti-Trotskyist prejudices in the international revolutionary Communist movement. The role played by revolutionary Marxists in defending the Algerian and Cuban revolutions, their participation in the front ranks of the defense of the Vietnamese revolution, and the extension of the Latin-American revolution have led to the point where these old prejudices are collapsing and disappearing.

However, the disappearance of these old anti-Trotskyist prejudices represents only the removal of an obstacle to the construction of a new revolutionary leadership. Success depends on positive qualities—on constantly renewed and updated Marxist analysis of a ceaselessly changing reality; on bringing together and unifying forces emerging from different backgrounds; on involvement in action. These qualities must first be demonstrated in practice and confirmed by successes and breakthroughs in several countries before the balance of forces within the international workers and revolutionary movement begins to shift decisively in favor of the revolutionary Marxists.

While the appearance of the new youth vanguard represents an important opportunity for revolutionary Marxists to widen their field of activity, to link up with new social layers, increase their numerical strength, and train many young cadres, it also confronts them with prejudices and objections of a new type which they have not been accustomed to dealing with. From now on, instead of old slanders and falsifications of history, they will be confronted much more with a certain indifference toward the prob-

lems of the period 1923-48, with a blanket condemnation of the classical workers and Communist movement (which in the eyes of many young revolutionists encompasses the Trotskyist current as well), with questioning of some of the fundamental concepts of Marxism, such as the decisive role that must be played by the workers in the imperialist countries in the world revolutionary process, or the role of a revolutionary party to assure the victory of the revolution. Revolutionary Marxists must learn to answer these challenges without arrogance or impatience through theoretical debate on a high level, constant enrichment of Marxism, and most of all by demonstrating their qualities as revolutionists and as leaders of groups and layers engaged in determined anti-imperialist and anticapitalist action.

Two problems merit special attention in this regard; reaffirmation of the revolutionary role of the proletariat; correct application of the united-front tactic in the anticapitalist and anti-imperialist struggle.

The decisive revolutionary role of the proletariat in achieving the victory of the socialist revolution flows ultimately from the place the proletariat occupies in the productive process, from their ability to paralyze all of economic and social life by the determined action, initiative and organization they can demonstrate on the broadest scale once the fetters of the bureaucratic apparatuses are broken by the resurgence of spontaneous class action. The experience of May 1968 in France dramatically confirmed this and refuted the pessimistic analyses of Sweezy, Marcuse, and others. This experience showed that the relative improvement in the standard of living, the differentiation of the proletariat, its extension into "technical" and "professional" layers, the influence of the mass media—in brief all those factors on which these theoreticians based their explanation for an alleged growing integration of the workers into neocapitalist society—were not really objective obstacles, that they could even become factors abruptly reinforcing the revolutionary striking power of the proletariat. It was the systematic demobilization of the proletariat by the traditional political organizations and the absence of any consistent exposure of bourgeois ideology for the masses that allowed these factors temporarily to promote a decline in militancy. But once conditions more favorable to a revival of militancy and even revolutionary explosions appeared, reality surged up behind the appearances. And the reality is that the Western proletariat retains its revolutionary potential which arises from the unsolved fundamental contradictions of bourgeois society.

For three decades the problem of unity in action—which must not be confused with a united front of mass organizations—was largely a propagandistic and literary problem for revolutionary Marxists. In the most recent period it has become increasingly a problem of practical activity, especially in the struggle to defend the Vietnamese revolution and within the new youth vanguard. It is essential to point out the two misconceptions which revolutionary Marxists must avoid in applying this tactic.

The line of seeing the united-action tactic as merely an instrument for building the revolutionary party by "unmasking" other tendencies and denouncing their errors and crimes before the masses is a sectarian deviation. United-action committees can no more be reduced to the

level of a means for denouncing opportunist, centrist, or ultraleft currents than strike committees can be reduced to mere instruments for building a revolutionary party rather than for winning victory in strikes—that is in specific episodes of the class struggle. In united-action committees for the defense of the Vietnamese revolution, for the defense of the student revolts, and to revive working-class struggles, revolutionary Marxists must take a responsible attitude and never subordinate the needs of the broader class movement and its victory as a whole to narrow group interests.

On the other hand, renouncing the task of building new revolutionary parties under the pretext of complete devotion to united action is an opportunist deviation. The success of such actions is indispensable to victory in specific episodes in the class struggle. But our historic task is not just to achieve episodic victories; it is to lead the working class to victory by overthrowing the international capitalist system and capitalism in each individual country. If we limited ourselves solely to united actions, we would run the risk of a general defeat in the wake of episodic and ephemeral successes. This would more and more sap the potential for further successes, because what is most necessary to achieve such successes is a correct theoretical and practical grasp of reality which is unattainable without the incomparable instrument of a revolutionary party.

Building a party is necessary to develop a continuous accumulation of forces carrying the revolution to victory. United actions, which by the nature of things are discontinuous and fragmentary, will contribute most to building the party if through them the revolutionary cadres learn to act as the most devoted and capable defenders of the broad interests of their class. In this sense, the tactic of united action correctly applied—which means that revolutionary Marxists maintain their right to criticize all the other currents with which they are associated (although this criticism, to be effective, must deal with the objectives of the united action) is far from being in contradiction with building the revolutionary party. On the contrary, these two aspects complement and reinforce each other.

The sudden development of the new youth vanguard into a mass movement has caused a resurgence of the worship of spontaneity. This is another new obstacle to a breakthrough by revolutionary Marxists. Such conceptions, like the opportunistic application of the united-action tactic, are based implicitly or explicitly on the illusion that the thousands of students or young workers fighting shoulder to shoulder against the Vietnam war, for a "confrontation" with the bourgeois university or even capitalist society as a whole, have already reached the same ideological level as the revolutionary Marxists and that therefore a revolutionary Marxist party and International are no longer necessary.

The reality of course is quite different. At a given moment an apparently complete convergence can develop between the new mass vanguard and revolutionary Marxists on some specific combat objectives. But nowhere have we seen the emergence of mass youth currents adopting the revolutionary Marxist program as a whole or agreeing with it on the essential strategic and tactical problems that must be solved for the world revolution to triumph. To give up building the party under the pretext that the mass of vanguard youth is already won to revolutionary Marxist ideas means replacing the revolutionary program and theoretical rigor of Marxism with episodic and superficial agreements liable to be broken at the first turn of the movement or the first difficulties encountered. That is why, without any sectarianism, and while advocating as broad as possible unity in action with other currents and unorganized militants on specific goals—including at times revolutionary goals—the revolutionary Marxists will defend more than ever the need to train revolutionary Marxist cadres and will pursue this objective unrelentingly.

The worldwide imperialist counteroffensive profited both from the extraordinary concentration of forces deployed by American big capital as well as from the lamentable dispersion, division, and disorientation of the international anti-imperialist and anticapitalist forces. Never has the need for a global anticapitalist strategy been so keenly felt—and expressed by Guevara and the North Vietnamese—as at the time of the Vietnam war. Ten years ago, when not a few forces in the international workers movement were flirting with "polycentrism," even many vanguard currents rejected the idea of an International. Today, in the face of the global strategy of imperialism, the need for a world center to work out policies, strategic orientation, and the coordination of action is making itself cruelly felt.

The new relationship arising among the three sectors of the world revolution guarantees that the question of the International will be divorced from the polarization around the Soviet Union which has been in effect ever since October 1917. Although this polarization was beneficial when the Soviet Union was led by Lenin and Trotsky, it had pernicious effects long after Kremlin policy came into direct opposition to the expansion of the world revolution.

The Fourth International has shown that even with still very weak forces important results can be attained in building an International. By doggedly continuing to build their own parties and their own International, revolutionary Marxists feel that at the same time they are making the most effective contribution to creating the mass revolutionary Marxist International which is indispensable in bringing the enormous revolutionary potential that has now appeared to realization as victories.



# Report on New Rise of the World Revolution

By E. Germain

## I.

### The Meaning of the 1968 Turn in the World Situation

The theses on the new rise of the world revolution which I am presenting to the congress sum up in six basic points the turn which occurred in the world situation in 1968.

1. The imperialist counteroffensive unleashed in the aftermath of the victory of the Cuban revolution has been halted decisively by the heroic struggle of the Vietnamese popular masses. This counteroffensive, directed essentially against the colonial revolution, had the aim of preventing at any cost a recurrence of conditions permitting this revolution to grow over into a socialist one. The offensive began by scoring important successes, above all the victorious military coups in Brazil, Indonesia, and the Congo-Kinshasa, which caused momentary halts in the colonial revolution in three of its principle epicenters. The massive counterrevolutionary intervention of American imperialism in Vietnam represented a kind of culmination of this counteroffensive. This intervention failed thanks primarily to the indomitable courage and combativity of the Vietnamese masses. After the 1968 Tet offensive, these masses went on the offensive against the American forces and their puppets and forced them to withdraw from a good part of the countryside, where a new state power, elected by the poor peasants, is beginning to be set up. The unexpected breadth of the antiwar movement in the United States played an important though subsidiary role in this development. And the revolutionary Marxists in America are now trying to take this movement into the imperialist army, which must be disintegrated. It is the scope of this international movement of solidarity with the Vietnamese revolution that has forced the Kremlin to extend important material aid to the Vietnamese—although this aid is totally incommensurate with what it could give and with the extent of the involvement of imperialist forces.

2. The victorious resistance of the Vietnamese people coincided with a general slowdown in the economic growth of the imperialist countries. The successive recessions in Japan, Italy, France, Great Britain, and West Germany culminated in 1967-68 in the first downturn in the growth rate of the American economy, which will certainly lead to a new American recession this year or the next. This slowdown in its economic growth has reduced imperialism's margin for maneuver, which was already cut into

by the unexpected costs and losses of the Vietnam war. The result of this has been a general toughening toward labor on the part of capital, except in Japan. In the United States, real wages have even failed to rise for more than two years. In West Germany, the first recession since the end of the second world war also reduced total wage payments for the first time. In France and Italy, the increase in wages, which was considerable in the early sixties, declined sharply after the recessions in those countries. In Great Britain, the Wilson government's reactionary wage-freeze policy followed by its incomes policy even produced wage dips at times.

3. From this has resulted a general change in the socioeconomic climate in West Europe which helped to produce the outbreak of the revolution of May 1968 in France. In most of the imperialist countries, massive youth unemployment has reappeared as a result of the coincidence between the slowdown of economic growth and the advance of the third industrial revolution, which has been distinguished by an exceptional increase in productivity. This unemployment has played an important role in transferring into the factories the spirit of social revolt shown by the students on the barricades. The outbreak of the first widespread revolutionary struggles in West Europe for twenty years is not an episodic phenomenon nor one limited to one country. A pre-May climate is establishing itself in Italy and Spain, and even a country like Great Britain is evolving in this direction, although at a slower rate. Thus, the interrelation among the three great sectors of the world revolution, as it emerged over the last twenty years, has been profoundly altered. The proletariat of the imperialist countries is once again called upon to play an important, even preponderant, role in this worldwide process in the years to come.

4. The victorious defense of the Vietnamese revolution, followed by the renewal of revolutionary struggle in the imperialist countries, has given the colonial revolution time to overcome the most debilitating results of the temporary setbacks it suffered in the 1962-67 period. The revival has been clearest above all in Southeast Asia, where the influence of the Vietnamese revolution has been felt most immediately. Today, it is extending progressively to several

sections of the Indian peninsula, beginning with East and West Bengal, and to certain sectors of the Arab world. But in Latin America and Africa signs are also multiplying of the revival which is imminent or already begun.

5. Stimulated by the Vietnamese revolution and by the revolutionary upsurge in France, the ripening of conditions for political revolution in the bureaucratically deformed or degenerated workers states has also accelerated, determined in the last analysis by the inner contradictions of the society in these countries. The outbreak of broad mass struggles in Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia has been the most important expression of this. But phenomena like the very extensive outflanking of the Maoist leadership by the masses of Red Guards in the final phase of the "cultural revolution" in China must also be put in this category. The same is true of the reappearance of an articulate communist opposition in the USSR, whose manifestations are no longer merely literary or ideological but directly political. By aggravating the crisis of the Communist parties internationally, the various episodes in the crisis of the Soviet bureaucratic system of rule have considerably weakened the bureaucratic hold of these parties over the substantial sectors of the mass movement which they controlled or still control. And this has favored the reappearance of independent vanguard groups, endowed with a capacity for revolutionary initiative.

6. The emergence of this vast revolutionary youth vanguard has its own social and political causes which the crisis of Stalinism has only accentuated. Its appearance makes it possible to approach more concretely and with perspectives for important successes in the short run the historic task of our epoch—solving the crisis of leadership of the world proletariat. If the revolutionary upsurge in France and Czechoslovakia in 1968 could once more be stemmed by counterrevolutionary forces, it is obviously because there was a lack in these two countries of a revolutionary leadership with sufficient authority among the masses. However, the scope of the revolutionary upsurge was so great in both cases that the betrayal of the bureaucratic leaderships could not decisively break the movement. The movement is regrouping conscious and organized forces on the basis of the experience gained. These forces are doubtless greater in France than in Czechoslovakia, but in both countries the strengthening of the revolutionary forces marks the opening of a new stage in the process of forming a new revolutionary leadership. The same phenomenon can and must be repeated in the years ahead of us in a series of countries and result in a breakthrough for the Fourth International, at least on the vanguard level.

These six new factors, taken together, explain a real reversal in the world situation. They must be considered a coherent whole, each factor reinforcing the others. What this change reflects on a historical level is a new deterioration in the relationship of forces for imperialism as against the working masses and for the bureaucratic apparatus against the mass movement which they seek to canalize. In this sense, the remarks made by various comrades in our movement who have compared 1968 to the great revolutionary years of 1848 and 1919 were entirely justified. What is more, we have never seen such a broad mass participation as in the general strikes in France and in Czechoslovakia (as well as in the successive twenty-four-

hour general strikes in Italy since then). Nor have we seen a revolutionary explosion spread literally to five continents, as did that of the French students.

Regardless of the immediate vicissitudes of these movements, it is clear that they reflect extremely profound social crises and that those who are counting on a rapid solution of these crises by a combination of reforms and repression, as do the bourgeoisie and the bureaucratic apparatuses, are greatly deceiving themselves. March 1969 has already confirmed this in France. And we will no doubt soon see a confirmation of this in Czechoslovakia as well. Movements of such scope cannot be dammed up or broken in the space of a few weeks or a few months. They will continue at least for several years, thus increasing the chances that the process of building a new revolutionary leadership will come to fruition before the pendulum begins to swing decisively in the other direction.

Thus the imperialist bourgeoisie and the Soviet bureaucracy, in their respective spheres of domination, find themselves facing a real dilemma. Whether they stiffen or relax their policy they risk adding fuel to the revolutionary process and stimulating its spread. It is this dilemma which in the last analysis explains the crisis of leadership that has become manifest both in the major imperialist capitals and in Moscow. But the best illustration of it is offered by the twisting and turning of the American imperialist leaders confronted with the failure of their counterrevolutionary war in Vietnam.

Both the obvious military impasse into which they have stumbled as well as the exorbitant costs of this war are putting pressure on the leaders in Washington to finish with their dirty war in Vietnam. And high on the list of these exorbitant costs is the revival of mass radicalism in the United States which in the long run threatens the political and social equilibrium in the principal imperialist fortress. The unpopularity of the war among the majority of the working people of the United States was already apparent before and during the 1968 presidential campaign. It makes it imperative for the Nixon administration to bring a halt to the war. It is heading for certain electoral defeat if it continues the intervention in Vietnam.

But, faced with the exemplary combativity of the Vietnamese masses and the impossibility of transforming its retreat from Vietnam into a political "draw," Washington is compelled to recognize that retreat would lead to an impasse comparable to the one that would result from pursuing the war. Without even considering the encouragement such a retreat would represent for the revolutionary masses on other continents, the Pentagon sees that it would threaten to considerably stimulate armed insurrection in several Asian countries, above all those bordering Vietnam.

Of all these countries, imperialism is most worried about Indonesia, where mass armed struggle is reviving, and Thailand, where it has already passed the stage of consolidating armed nuclei. In Thailand, American imperialism has to confront a three-front guerrilla war, in the North, the Northeast, and in the South. Bourgeois sources estimate that there are 4,000 armed combatants and "unknown thousands of communist political, administrative and propaganda cadres together with peasants who support the revolt." (*Far-Eastern Economic Review*, January 23, 1969.) According to the London *Economist* of March

29, 1969, the Thai guerrillas have already begun to levy taxes—which the rubber plantations are paying. This says a great deal about the relationship of forces!

For Washington, Thailand constitutes the staging base for its entire military system in Southeast Asia, covering a tangent extending from the Philippines to Bengal. Hundreds of millions of dollars have been spent there to build one of the most powerful air-naval bases in the world. About 100,000 American troops are already there, and the bulk of the troops in Vietnam would be brought there if a retreat were decided on. But what would be the sense of such a retreat if it involved them, after a brief interval, in a war that would more and more resemble the war in Vietnam?

Nixon's hesitations reflect not only the personal limitations of this very mediocre individual. They reflect the insoluble difficulties in which imperialism has trapped itself in Southeast Asia. The war in Vietnam is costly, but withdrawal could be as costly as remaining. And the American masses are less and less ready to pay the price either of remaining in Vietnam or of other such wars in the future.

In this situation, certain voices have been raised among the American bourgeoisie in favor of revising the policy toward China. We do not believe, as certain tendencies in the international workers movement do, that this reflects a desire for an alliance with China against the USSR,

which would remain its No. 1 enemy. In a situation of revolutionary revival in Europe, imperialism really has no interest in forcing Moscow and the leaders of the European CPs to reconsider their policy of "peaceful coexistence." Quite the contrary! I think that these maneuvers reflect the hope that in exchange for the proffer of lifting the quarantine, the Peking leaders will exercise the same braking role on the revolutionary movement in Thailand, Indonesia, and Burma that Moscow is exercising in France and Italy. But despite the fact that this hope may not prove illusory—I say "may not" instead of "will not" because the revolutionary fervor of the masses of youth in China and the internal situation in the Chinese CP may very easily upset these calculations—it is still very unlikely that the Indonesian and Thai masses will let themselves be demobilized by a mere directive from Peking. It is not very likely that they will accept this after a rich experience of struggle extending over several years, after having learned the terrible price of defeat—symbolized by the Indonesian massacres of 1965—and after having been able to see by the Vietnamese example the effectiveness of revolutionary struggle, even against the most powerful army in the world!

The dilemma of imperialism is, then, a real one. It indicates in the most concentrated way the improvement that has occurred in the international situation over the last eighteen months from the standpoint of the world revolution.

## II.

### The Crisis Shaking Imperialist Society Is a Global Crisis

What is the historic meaning of May 1968 in France? What does it presage for the other imperialist countries in the months and years to come?

Some bourgeois sociologists, cheerfully seconded by the reformists and neo-reformists of all stripes, have claimed that there was no real revolutionary crisis in France because that country was not suffering any economic crisis or recession, but was going through an upturn. They seem not to understand that this argument—which no one invoked in May and early June and for good reason!—in reality turns against all the open or veiled apologists of capitalism.

It is in fact impossible to deny that in France we witnessed the most extensive general strike in the history of capitalism, which far outstripped not only the one of June 1936 but even the broader strikes in Germany between 1918 and 1923. It is likewise impossible to deny that this general strike mobilized a movement of confrontation that drew in not only the workers in big industry and the public services—that is, the best organized and most conscious part of the working class—but also the marginal layers and the technical "new middle classes," the great majority of which for the first time joined in challenging the system.

And if this occurred when there was neither a grave economic recession nor pronounced poverty, it must reflect a more profound social crisis, a refusal by the majority of the vital forces of the nation to accept the capitalist

system and the bourgeois state. And this heralds still more violent explosions if an economic downturn should be added to the basic, structural causes of these outbreaks.

It is worth noting in this regard that between the revolution of 1848 and the publication of his famous "Preface" to his *Contribution to a Critique of Political Economy* [1859], Marx modified his views on the underlying causes of social revolutions. In his writings on the revolution of 1848 and later in his *Class Struggles in France*, he still linked social revolutions closely to economic crises of overproduction. But in the preface to *Contribution to a Critique of Political Economy*, he explained the nature of the epoch of social revolution in a much more profound way:

"At a certain stage of their development, the material forces of production in society come in conflict with the existing relations of production, or—what is but a legal expression for the same thing—with the property relations within which they had been at work before. From forms of development of the forces of production these relations turn into their fetters. Then comes the period of social revolution."

And further on:

"Just as our opinion of an individual is not based on what he thinks of himself, so can we not judge of such a period of transformation by its own consciousness; on the contrary, this consciousness must rather be explained from the contradictions of material life, from the existing

conflict between the social forces of production and the relations of production."

What May 1968 revealed in a flash was that despite the long boom in the imperialist economy this fundamental contradiction, far from attenuated, had become exacerbated to the point that for the first time it became the main target for the action of millions of workers. This is the new aspect of the revolutionary upsurge which is now developing in West Europe. It is challenging more and more directly, for the first time in the history of conflicts between capital and labor, the power of capital, its representatives, and its state to command men and machines. Nothing could be more fundamentally revolutionary in a society dominated by monopoly capital.

This instinctive, or at best semiconscious, revolt of the working masses against capitalist production relations obviously did not come from nowhere. In the last analysis, it has resulted from a clear aggravation of the contradiction between the development of the productive forces and the survival of capitalist productive relations. This crisis of these production relationships has been glaringly evident in all economic development over the past fifteen years. It has been revealed in the growing difficulty of maintaining the advance of science and technology in the framework of private property, and the resulting necessity for the capitalists to force an increasing socialization of these costs, if not even of the cost of the productive investments this research leads to. This crisis has likewise been revealed in the impossibility of containing the productive forces within the limits of the bourgeois national state, which is as outmoded as private property. Without this growing socialization of the costs of development and without the appearance of multinational companies, the third industrial revolution could not have occurred within the framework of the capitalist system.

On top of the crisis of private property and of the bourgeois national state, there is the crisis of hierarchical work relations. It is not by chance that the students and the researchers were the ones who first perceived the fraudulent nature of the argument defending such relationships on the basis of differences in skills. But as the third industrial revolution drives unskilled labor out of industrial life and raises the level of the skills and culture of the working class, the workers' revolt against these hierarchical relationships will become as pronounced as that of the intellectual workers and students today, if not still more so.

If we give such importance today to the question of workers control, it is because the struggle for this transitional demand can and must constitute the bridge between the objective necessities of the revolutionary crisis which is rising in capitalist Europe, and the still insufficient consciousness of the masses. Between the absence of a revolutionary leadership and this insufficient level of consciousness, there is an interaction which must not be underestimated. The proletariat needs a revolutionary leadership to overthrow capitalism and take power. It will only follow this revolutionary leadership when it has reached a certain mature level of revolutionary consciousness. The revolutionary leadership can, in its turn, help along this process of maturation by providing the necessary bridges between what the workers sense in a confused way and what they must understand—bridges first in the form of slogans

and propaganda motifs and then in the form of struggle experience. It would be self-deception to believe that the workers are prepared to go in one leap from immediate objectives to the seizure of power, which involves their managing the plants themselves in a framework of socialist planning. The campaign for, and the struggle to win, workers control will be an indispensable school for convincing the worker vanguard of the necessity both for this self-management and this planning.

Only an explanation of the crisis which has now struck imperialist society—above all in Western Europe—as a general crisis can, in the last analysis, integrate phenomena like the world student and youth rebellion into a coherent framework. However, in insisting on the totality of this crisis as a crisis of capitalist production relations per se, I am by no means trying to minimize the importance of the changes that have occurred in the economic position of imperialism and which helped to cause the turn in the situation starting in 1968.

The slowdown in the growth rate is shown both in the successive recessions since 1964, in the deepening crisis of the international monetary system, which is closely related to the means the capitalists use to prevent recessions from turning into grave economic crises, and in the extension of the phenomenon of excess capacity which has now hit such numerous branches of world capitalist industry such as coal, textiles, steel and petro-chemicals. It is also revealed in the decline in the growth rate of those industries which largely "carried" the long phase of expansion in the last two decades. The example of the automotive industry is particularly significant in this regard. In the six Common Market countries, the annual increase in the number of automobiles in use remained stable from 1955 to 1963, fluctuating around 16.5% a year. Then it dropped sharply to 13.9% in 1964, 12.3% in 1965, 10.9% in 1966, 9% in 1967, 8.2% in 1968; and the Brussels Commission anticipates that the rate will continue to drop toward 6.6% at the beginning of the 1970's. Even in absolute figures, the annual increase which had reached 3,000,000 automobiles in the period 1961-1966 has been dropping since then and will undoubtedly stabilize around 2,500,000 to 2,700,000 cars.

In this context, the slow but constant decline in the rate of profit, sharpened international competition, and accelerated capital concentration, including in its international form, are advancing inexorably. Capitalist experts anticipate that in fifteen to twenty years, some 250 to 300 multinational companies will dominate the international capitalist economy. There are no longer any sanctuaries from the ferocity this competitive struggle stoked by the needs of realizing stocks of capital often exceeding \$500,000,000 or \$1,000,000,000. While American penetration is increasing in Western Europe, European monopolies are storming the U. S. market, Volkswagen and FIAT have assured themselves a preponderant place on the automobile market in Brazil and Argentina. And at the same time Japan is winning stronger and stronger positions not only in Asia but even in Australia and its most powerful steel combine has become the second largest in the world, capable even of challenging U. S. Steel for first place, which has been the predominant power in the world steel industry for more than half a century.

In these conditions, the capitalists' makeshift efforts to reorganize their political and legal structures to contain this formidable dynamic of capitalist concentration, such as the European Common Market, already seem outworn. Still more pitiful are the attempts of the Khrushchevist parties, mimicked by some Maoist groups, to pose as the defenders of "national sovereignty" against this thrust of international capitalist concentration. The only possible counter to this thrust would be the international or worldwide organization of a socialized economy on the basis of conscious control of the economic forces. The economic and social needs felt by millions of workers and young people demand satisfaction so urgently that the boldest postulates of revolutionary Marxists thirty years ago seem like commonplaces today!

It is most of all for the Japanese and American comrades to draw the necessary conclusions from the stirring experience of May 1968 in France and all that this implies for capitalist Europe. France is not the capitalist country with the most advanced industry or economy. It never has been. But, to borrow a phrase from Engels, it is the country where "more than anywhere else the class struggles have been fought to a clear decision and where, therefore, the changing political forms in which these struggles move and in which their results are summed up, assumed the sharpest contours." In the present phase of the new rise of the world revolution, May 1968 revealed these sharper contours and we will find the same outlines repeated in the years to come in most of the important imperialist countries.

### III.

## The Rise of the Political Revolution in the Bureaucratically Deformed and Degenerated Workers States in the Light of the Czechoslovak Example

The theses review how in the wake of the crushing of the Hungarian revolution a "reformist" climate was gradually established in the USSR and in most of the so-called people's democracies. They also recapitulate what factors have eroded the masses' illusions that they would see their objectives—which remain essentially analogous to those of the Hungarian revolution—progressively achieved by means of reforms granted from above by an "enlightened" wing of the bureaucracy. I will not repeat the full analysis here. I will only indicate that with the fading of these illusions in the USSR and in Eastern Europe, certain tendencies in the international workers movement which exhibited similar illusions, also began to free themselves from them. The most important example of this is Isaac Deutscher who, toward the end of his life, was moving close to the view that an antibureaucratic political revolution was inevitable in the USSR and in Eastern Europe, a concept he had moved away from twenty years before.

To complement the analysis in the theses, it is worth examining the mechanisms which governed the rise of the antibureaucratic political revolution in the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic [CSSR] and which later led the Soviet bureaucracy to intervene. These mechanisms, without any doubt, offer an indication of what will happen in the USSR in the years to come.

The source of the crisis of bureaucratic regime in the CSSR was objective—a complete halt in economic growth in the early sixties and the transformation of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic in less than ten years from a leader in industrial and scientific technology in Europe to a country missing out on the third industrial revolution. In the conditions of general political apathy generated by the Gottwald and Novotny police state, and which was still more pronounced because de-Stalinization was relatively delayed in Czechoslovakia in comparison with several neighboring countries, this objective crisis provoked a split in the Czechoslovak bureaucracy. A so-

called "liberal" wing emerged, which favored a more "efficient" system of economic management and planning. This technocratic wing was to demand political and ideological "liberalization" measures arising from its economic objectives. It is, in fact, impossible to increase the independence and initiative of economic specialists without a minimum of freedom to discuss and to advocate non-conformist opinions both in the ideological and political spheres. The technocratic wing of the bureaucracy quickly got the support of the workers, the scholars, and the journalists, who suffered the most from the stifling Stalinist atmosphere which had fallen on a country with an old industrial and bourgeois liberal tradition. Facing this bloc, the old Stalinists no longer exercised the decisive weight, and began to lose their footing. The Stalinists' attempts to sabotage the various reform movements were thwarted by the first autonomous mass intervention, that of the students in October 1967, which rallied working-class opinion against the repressive forces and led to the January 1968 plenum of the Central Committee of the Czechoslovak Communist party.

Up to this point, we were seeing the classical development of an intrabureaucratic conflict, in which both wings feared to make a real appeal to the masses, who remained on the sidelines watching and waiting. There was not much in the liberal reformers' program to attract the working masses. They could even fear that their already very meager standard of living would worsen as a result of the objective consequences of some of the measures proposed by the technocrats, such as an increase in the price of consumer goods, the reduction of social security benefits, layoffs in the factories, and the reappearance of unemployment. It must also be remembered that during this phase the question of workers' self-management was not raised at all.

Three factors altered this situation and caused the development of political consciousness and increasing independent activity by the masses.

First, the de-Stalinization filtered into the trade-union organization. There was a massive replacement of appointed shop stewards by delegates elected by the workers, and a certain number of these elected representatives penetrated into the trade-union apparatus itself.

Next, this apparatus took the initiative of promoting the beginnings of workers self-management—or more precisely of workers codetermination—in a certain number of big plants in the country and a broader participation by some factory collectives in public debates on the economic reform.

Finally, there was the brutal and cynical arm-twisting by the Soviet bureaucracy and its agents to force a despised leadership on the Czechoslovak CP and workers. This pressure from the Kremlin caused a shift in the attitude of the popular masses which became apparent in June 1968 through the astonishing success of the campaign organized by the students to collect signatures in support of the Dubcek team. While the first two factors impelling the politicalization of the Czechoslovak working class were motives of class interest, the third was a motive of defending the right of the Czechoslovak working people to choose its leadership freely without interference from the Soviet bureaucracy.

It was in response to the military intervention of the Kremlin and its satellites, that the rise of the political revolution in the CSSR reached its height. The political activity of the Czechoslovak working class in the decisive week of August was the most advanced seen in Eastern Europe since the Hungarian revolution. Moreover, given the different social structure in Czechoslovakia, the workers were much more decisive in the entire process of resistance than they had been in Hungary. The workers self-management bodies, shop stewards' committees, and certain CP groups in the factories and working-class neighborhoods—which were often supported by sections of the state apparatus and most frequently given their impetus by revolutionary students—served as organs of dual power and broad mass mobilization. Confronted with the exceptional scope of this mobilization which threatened to turn the easy military success into a total political failure, the Soviet bureaucracy made a turn. It temporarily dropped the idea of replacing the Dubcek team with a more servile leadership, and used the liberal wing of the bureaucracy to undermine the combativity of the masses. Once the main danger was eliminated, it would be relatively easy for them to get rid of the capitulationist liberals.

The Kremlin's tactic again ran into unforeseen obstacles, most of all because of the high degree of mobilization which characterized the attitude of the working class over long months and because of the manifold links the revolutionary students had developed with the vanguard sectors of the proletariat. But this interlude is now coming to a close. Taking advantage of the "ice hockey game incidents," which were probably staged by provocateurs, the pro-Stalinist faction has begun to score important gains in this period. The gap between the Dubcek team and the masses is widening and the antibureaucratic vanguard is becoming isolated. The progressive wing of the unions is retreating to positions of purely economic self-defense. Even the workers codetermination experiment is beginning to suffer profound distortions. This is clear

above all when we see that 70 percent of the members of these "workers councils" are now technicians and specialists.

It is probable that while some convulsions are still possible, the antibureaucratic political revolution will not achieve victory within the limits of Czechoslovakia alone. Such a victory can only come from an international extension of this revolutionary rise, above all in the USSR itself. We must, then, examine the lessons that can be drawn from the Czechoslovak experience regarding the conditions for the development of the political revolution in the USSR itself.

I will not go back over the analysis which our movement has made in the past of the objective contradictions of the bureaucratic dictatorship in the USSR in economic, social, cultural, and ideological areas. Instead, let us examine, in the light of the Kremlin's reactions to the Czechoslovak events, what it was that really worried the Soviet bureaucracy, provoking even momentary panic.

It is clear that it was not the economic "liberalization" that worried the Kremlin. All those who sought to justify the Soviet intervention, entirely or in part, by presumed dangers of capitalist restoration resulting from this "liberalization" have wasted their effort. As we predicted in the period preceding the military intervention, the Kremlin has no intention of making the slightest change in the economic reforms introduced in the CSSR. In expanding trade with the imperialist countries and even in admitting foreign capital investment, the Soviet bureaucracy itself has gone at least as far if not further than the Dubcek-Sik team.

The aims of the Soviet intervention were to reverse in the order of importance: (1) The CP statutes that reestablished the right of tendencies. (2) The authorization of revolutionary organizations independent of the CP. (3) The abolition of censorship and centralized control by the CP central apparatus over all the press, radio, and television media serving the workers of the CSSR. (4) The steps taken in the direction of workers self-management. (5) The project of introducing real federalism, real autonomy for the Czech and Slovak republics. All these reforms were converging toward a central point—shaking the bureaucracy's monopoly of political power. Secondly, in the eyes of the Soviet bureaucracy the transmission belts between the Kremlin and the Czechoslovak bureaucracy—that is supervision of the secret police, the security forces, and the Czechoslovak army by the Kremlin's direct agents—had to be defended or reestablished at all cost.

If we transfer this analysis to the political and social tensions that are mounting in the USSR, we can outline the paths which the rise of the political revolution will take there as follows: a struggle to deepen the de-Stalinization through the intellectuals and the youth demanding that the whole truth be told about Stalin's crimes, that all his victims be rehabilitated, that broad freedom of discussion be established not only in scientific matters (where it cannot be repressed) and in the artistic field but also in the areas of ideology and politics; a struggle for the reinstatement of the Leninist norms of party life, especially the right of tendencies; a struggle for real equal rights for nationalities in the Soviet Union and for a genuinely federal state system; defense of the interests of the workers not

only as consumers but also and above all as producers, with a drive toward planning based on democratically centralized workers self-management.

These basic thrusts must be the axes of a transitional program for the bureaucratically deformed workers states. It is these thrusts which are beginning to develop in the USSR, which the Soviet bureaucracy fears more and more in its own country. The ferment in the Ukraine, where the Czechoslovak cause was very popular, clearly revealed their existence. And, far from repressing these drives, the military intervention in the CSSR doubtless even stimulated them. We have just learned from a confidential report transmitted by the Czechoslovak ambassador to Moscow, which was cited in *Le Monde*, that more than eighty cells of the CPSU [Communist party of the Soviet Union] protested against the military intervention in Czechoslovakia. For the first time since the Left Opposition was crushed, an open and public political opposition has manifested itself in the USSR. This is another aspect of the historic turn represented by the year 1968.

The bureaucracy in power in the workers states has not been insensitive to the driving forces of the political revolution that are gaining momentum. It has reacted in its own way by alternating concessions and repression and sometimes by a combination of the two. The question which many tendencies in the revolutionary movement have asked themselves—that is, how can you measure exactly the nature of the different political currents within the bureaucracy—cannot be answered unless you start from the conception of the program of political revolution as a *coherent*

*whole* aimed at establishing a system of socialist democracy based on collective ownership and a planned economy. In fact, this political revolution must at once assure the democratic exercise of power by the workers, the management of the economy by the workers themselves, a fundamental reversal of the more and more crystallized tendencies toward social inequality, and a return to a foreign policy aimed at supporting the process of the world socialist revolution.

Every one of the tendencies now showing up in the international Communist movement combine progressive reforms in some areas with clear regression in others. The Titoists advocate advances in workers self-management and in political democratization combined with increasingly pronounced social inequality and a more and more right-wing foreign policy. The Maoists advocate advances in the area of social equality and an international revolutionary line, combined with clear retrogression in the area of workers democracy and a refusal to raise the question of workers self-management. The Fidelistas share many of our views with regard to struggling against social inequality and for setting a course toward world revolution. They may move close to our point of view on democratically centralized workers self-management. But they do not understand the question of socialist democracy. Only our movement presents a coherent position on this question, a position which meets as a whole the fundamental problems posed by the necessity of reconstructing the societies arising from the overthrow of capitalism on the basis of the exercise of power by the working masses themselves.

#### IV.

### Some Problems in the Revival of the Colonial Revolution

The revival of the colonial revolution, the initial stages of which have been quite apparent for a year, poses a series of general and specific problems, which I want to review rapidly here. The general problems concern the social and political relationships between the different classes and social layers which in the last analysis govern the process of the colonial revolution. The specific problems have to do with the concrete obstacles which in the previous phase prevented a new leap forward by the colonial revolution in each of its main epicenters—the Latin-American revolution, the African revolution, the Southeast Asian revolution, and the revolution on the Indian peninsula. Since there is a separate discussion on the Latin-American revolution at this congress and many questions concerning the Arab revolution may be dealt with in depth at another point on the agenda, I will say a few words on the problems of the African revolution and on the revolution on the Indian peninsula.

First of all let us consider the general problems of the revival of the colonial revolution. The theses recall that one of the principal features of the period coincident with the imperialist counteroffensive of 1962-67 was the collapse of a series of traditional leaderships of the anti-imperialist movement, bourgeois or petty-bourgeois national leader-

ships that progressively exhausted their capacity to mobilize broad masses, or their political credit among the most exploited masses of their countries. The fall in succession of Nkrumah, Ben Bella, and Sukarno, the decline of the Congress party in India and the Muslim League in Pakistan, the decline of political Peronism in Argentina and of the APRA in Peru have been the clearest manifestations of this process of decomposition. In other cases this decline was only on the order of a loss of predominant influence within the vanguard, as in the case of Nasserism within the Arab revolutionary vanguard. But the phenomenon in itself seems universal. The whole mythology of the "third world" in the political sense of the term, of "active neutralism," and "nonengagement," as well as their Khrushchevist reflection in the theory of a "noncapitalist road of development" which at the same time would not be socialist, collapsed barely ten years after the Bandung conference.

Our movement has already stated its position on the causes of this collapse and a brief review will suffice in this regard. The social crisis in the semicolonial countries continued to deepen after independence was granted. The social contradictions sharpened. The mass movement continued to broaden. The examples of the Chinese, Cuban and

Vietnamese revolutions exercised an ever more pronounced attractive power over the masses. On the other hand, imperialism accelerated this process of polarization by intervening in a more and more open counterrevolutionary manner. Under these conditions, there was no longer any historical margin for a limited bourgeois or petty-bourgeois anti-imperialism. The revolution on the one hand demanded more and more an immediate growing over toward socialist measures; on the other, it required a broadening mobilization of the increasingly radical masses against imperialism and its native allies. For all the well-known reasons involving social interests and political vacillations, the traditional national bourgeois and petty-bourgeois leaderships proved either incapable of making this turn or became even more stubbornly opposed to it. And so, the ground literally caved in under them.

But we also know that the retreat of the mass movement, resulting from the temporary successes that imperialism managed to win in its struggle against the colonial revolution can only be of brief duration. All the economic, social and political motivations which stimulate anti-imperialist struggle are still present. The reactionary teams installed in power with the aide or compliance of imperialism are incapable of extricating semicolonial society from its historical stagnation. The question then arises: Will this new rise of mass struggle—most clearly heralded by the great student mobilizations in Latin America in 1968, the growing resistance of the Palestinian masses to the Zionist occupation, the revolutionary rise in East and West Bengal, the unleashing of armed struggle in Indonesia, and the advances of the guerrillas in a series of Southeast Asian countries—will this new rise of the mass struggle be confronted with a compact bloc of imperialism, the traditional oligarchy, the comprador bourgeoisie, the national bourgeoisie, and the traditional petty-bourgeois national teams? Or will it instead be the signal for a new political differentiation within the conservative forces, for the appearance of new attempts to canalize the resurgent mass movement toward objectives other than those of socialist revolution?

We cannot yet give a categorical answer to this question but all the experience of the past ends to indicate the second variant. Imperialism, the national bourgeoisie, the nationalist petty bourgeoisie will continue to maneuver as long as they survive and have the minimum material means for maneuvering. The commitment of American imperialist forces in Southeast Asia, the necessity of reinforcing imperialism's clearly threatened European front; and the reduction of the reserves available to imperialism, especially as a result of the slowdown in economic growth and the dollar crisis, all strengthen the probability of certain retreats, of certain attempts to canalize the mass movement. The divisions which are appearing in the Indonesian and Brazilian dictatorships; the electoral farce in Thailand, which without any question has stimulated the process of the politicalizing of the masses; the reestablishment of a few democratic rights—very limited to be sure—in Ghana; and even the anti-imperialist maneuvers of the military junta in Peru are all indicators of new fissures appearing among the counterrevolutionary forces in the semicolonial countries.

Maneuvers of this type must be expected and it would be illusory to think that from here on out the masses will be faced only with a clear choice between open counter-

revolution and permanent revolution. However, we must nonetheless stress that it is not to be concluded from this that there are still chances for a prolonged period of democratic freedoms and a constitutional climate paralleling a rise in the mass movement. In this regard, examples as geographically distant as the bloody repression of the student movement in Mexico and the restoration—temporary, we hope—of the military dictatorship in Pakistan indicate clearly that neither imperialism nor the native reaction in the semicolonial countries have abandoned what might be called "the Santo Domingo line." Whatever the cost, whatever may happen, they will not tolerate the rise of a revolutionary mass movement to an insurrectional level in which the masses are armed, even under a traditional bourgeois-liberal anti-Communist leadership. It is in this sense, that we speak of a new historic phase in the colonial revolution and an inevitable bypassing of these old leaderships through the process of permanent revolution.

On the specific problems of the African revolution in its present stage, I will limit myself to two remarks. First, we have submitted a discussion bulletin to this congress with three articles which seek to provide a Marxist analysis of the civil war in Nigeria. The articles were published by our African comrades themselves. A fourth contribution which came to us from Ghana arrived too late to be included in this bulletin and we will try to distribute it during the congress. In this civil war, revolutionary Marxism has been confronted with one of the most complex problems it has yet had to deal with—the problem of the formation of nationalities, of the birth of a national reality in countries where there has been no tradition of bourgeois national struggle and where tribalism and feudalism have provided the essential political structures of nationalism, even if this nationalism clearly involves phenomena of primitive capitalist accumulation. There is no need to stress the opportunities for maneuvering which this extreme example of uneven and combined development has offered imperialism and the Soviet bureaucracy. But it is important, above and beyond the specifically Nigerian aspect of this question, to understand the wider theoretical problem which this problem raises in an underdeveloped society like that existing in most of black Africa. In the course of the sharpening confrontation between the revolutionary and counterrevolutionary forces on the African continent, we can be certain that we will come on this problem again tomorrow in other countries.

Precisely because it is the only country in black Africa which is much more developed economically, socially, and culturally, South Africa occupies a special position in the process of the unfolding African revolution. For this reason, it is an imperialist bastion. The investments in South Africa represent, if you add them to those in Rhodesia, more than the private imperialist investment in all the rest of black Africa. For the same reason, there is a special kind of proletariat in South Africa very similar to the Cuban rural proletariat before the revolution. It is in part an industrial and mining proletariat and in part a proletariat of farm workers. It is alternately urbanized and sent back to its reservations. It is at one and the same time a poor peasantry and a proletariat. And because of this combined character it has an enormous objective capacity to rally the immense majority



of the South African population in a resolute anti-imperialist and anticapitalist armed struggle.

On the basis of all their experience, our own South African comrades have reached the conclusion that this is the road to follow to carry out an uprising which promises to be without any doubt the most difficult in the history of Africa and one of the most difficult the world will witness. Imperialism can rely on a broad white bourgeois and petty-bourgeois layer which will fight with every means at its command. But the combativity and heroism of the masses will be equal to the oppression, exploitation, and innumerable humiliations which they suffer and of which they have become fully aware. To help our South African comrades organize this revolutionary struggle is one of the most important tasks of revolutionary Marxists throughout the world.

The problems of the revolution in the Indian peninsula take a different form today. In the immensity of this subcontinent, the ruling national bourgeoisie has not even succeeded in creating the political and legal framework of a unified national market and famine may reign in one district while bringing in surplus foodstuffs from a neighboring region is forbidden. Here the primary problem is to change an immemorial tradition of submission and apathy among the most exploited masses, which has been successively reinforced or consolidated by the caste system, British colonialist domination, and the Gandhian ideology of the bourgeoisie. It is improbable that in this immense country the revolution will break out everywhere at once. It is more likely that the uneven ripening of the revolutionary crisis will favor certain states like Bengal or Kerala. In any case, that is the eventuality which American imperialism is now actively preparing for. It expects the breakup of the Indian union.

In view of the dimensions of the country, the crystal-

lized political forces, the explosive character of the poverty in the big proletarian cities, as long as the situation remains what it is, there is no reason to advocate small isolated uprisings in the countryside. Such uprisings cannot even assume the form of organized guerrilla warfare, to say nothing of a general peasant insurrection. To the contrary, what is needed is to promote bold experiments to revive and organize the most oppressed masses, the landless peasants and the agricultural workers in the countryside, and the slum dwellers of the big cities. This must be done to alter the relationship of social forces which remains unfavorable for the organized proletariat. The workers threaten to be drowned in the ocean of the Indian countryside. There, in my opinion, is where the key to the Indian revolution lies.

All the traditional organizations of the Indian workers movement, including the so-called left Communist party, have failed in this task, particularly because their leading cadres came almost without exception from the higher castes and from the landlord strata. If, after reinforcing their organization and training the number of cadres necessary to tackle such a task, our Indian comrades succeed in breaking with this tradition and plunging themselves into the work of revolutionary organization and action among these poorest masses, then the explosive nature of the situation in India will be apparent not just in Calcutta or among the plantation workers of Assam. Then, this explosiveness can surface in much vaster regions, which will be the natural cradles of the Indian revolution. Today, this advice may still seem premature, because we are still in the stage of assembling the initial cadres, without which broader action tomorrow will not be possible. But experience has taught us that these first cadres can be assembled more easily and more effectively if an organization has a longer term strategic plan, and this is what must be developed.

## V.

### The Place of the Ninth World Congress in the Process of Building a New Revolutionary Leadership

The Fourth International finds itself today at a turning point in its history. This turning point has been made possible by the interaction of two factors. On the one hand, there is the new rise of the world revolution in which the imperialist countries have assumed a greater weight and which has taken some of the so-called classical forms of socialist revolution — with more massive intervention by the industrial proletariat in the process. Secondly, there is the appearance of a new youth vanguard on a world scale, which includes millions of college and high-school students, as well as young workers, who can be mobilized for anti-imperialist, anticapitalist, and objectively revolutionary causes. And within this new youth vanguard, the influence of the old traditional leaderships of the workers movement is in rapid decline, if not, in some places, virtually vanishing. These youth no longer have the old prejudices against revolutionary Marxism and Trotskyism.

The combination of these two factors has radically improved the chances for building our movement. It has created opportunities for revolutionary Marxists to fill the vacuum produced by the criminal passivity of the Khrushchevists and Social Democrats toward events like the American imperialist aggression against the Vietnamese revolution. The role that our sections and our militants have been able to play in the struggle against the Vietnam war in many countries as distant from each other as Japan and Great Britain, Canada and Belgium; and the role they have been able to play in inspiring the antiwar movement in the United States and radicalizing it by stages have clearly demonstrated these new possibilities. Revolutionary Marxist militants have organized meetings attended by thousands. They have participated in demonstrations numbering some times in the tens of thousands. They have been able to speak to thousands and thousands of young people.

But it is in France that the juncture between a revolutionary upsurge and the primitive accumulation of revolutionary Marxist cadres really epitomized the new period of international Trotskyist expansion. Thanks to the bold and politically effective intervention of our young comrades in May and June, the bases were laid for a breakthrough by the revolutionary Marxist organization surpassing anything our movement has known in the past. This breakthrough makes it possible to envision an accelerated process of assembling young working-class cadres, which will prepare the way for a new qualitative leap—provided that the objective conditions do not change fundamentally and that serious errors in orientation can be avoided.

The example of France, we are convinced, can bear immediate fruit in several other countries, and not only in Europe. But this example must be studied and evaluated by our sections and militants in all countries most of all in order for them to appreciate the turn in our situation and the new dimensions of the problem of building revolutionary parties and a revolutionary international.

Of course, when we talk about the possibilities our movement has to achieve a breakthrough on the French model, we must immediately make it clear that this does not at all mean that we can build mass revolutionary parties in short order. It does not mean that we can rapidly build the kind of parties that could, under their own banner, lead mass struggles opening up the way to a seizure of power by the proletariat. The forces at our disposal are still too meager for us to realistically outline such a perspective for our organizations in the short run.

What we mean is a breakthrough beyond the threshold of "primitive accumulation" of cadres—that is a breakthrough creating organizations capable of intervening independently and boldly in the class struggle and in revolutionary combat. These organizations would not yet be revolutionary mass parties, but they would be already the nuclei of such parties. They would no longer be propaganda groups satisfied with propagating our program and our ideas in word and in writing and limiting their intervention to criticizing or denouncing the traitorous traditional leaderships. They would be organizations already able to *demonstrate in action* that a different solution is possible for the mass movement than the reformist and neoreformist line of the old leaderships. And because of this they could become a pole of attraction for the young and critical forces in the mass movement, which have never been as numerous as they are today.

It is in the same spirit that we must approach the problem of how we can win or consolidate hegemony in the new vanguard against the adversaries we must face—essentially the Maoists, the spontanéists, and the Mao-spontanéists.

The obstacles these currents put on the road to building a revolutionary party do not derive so much from the strength of the ideas they represent. They reflect rather social factors militating against the construction of revolutionary Marxist parties—on the one hand, the attractive power of the Chinese revolution, including the "cultural revolution," which represents tens of millions of human beings; on the other hand, the specific social and psychological characteristics of the student milieu, which are not the sort to facilitate an understanding of the Leninist theory

of the party and of the principles of organization and democratic centralism.

In confronting these obstacles, we can base ourselves on three factors which can counterbalance them and which must enable us—sooner in some countries, but in the not too distant future in an important series of countries—to become the main political force in the new youth vanguard.

The first of these factors is our theoretical and political superiority, which remains our principal card. Clearly the Maoists and spontanéists cannot counter our analyses with their confused and pragmatic, dogmatic and revisionist views which events will soon discredit. But in order for us to fully exploit this superiority, it is necessary for us to remain always on the alert, not to think that mere defense of the theoretical gains of Trotskyism is enough; it is necessary for us to approach open minded-ly all the new phenomena which the reality of today's world, more complex, dialectical, and contradictory than ever, ceaselessly generates.

In recent years, our movement has made a considerable theoretical effort in analyzing phenomena like black nationalism in the United States, the economic contradictions of neocapitalism, the economic problems of the transitional period, and the sociology of the student revolt. The first foundations have been laid in the development of a transitional program in the bureaucratically deformed or degenerated workers states as well as in the analysis of the "bureaucratic bourgeoisie" and state capitalism in the semicolonial countries. And at this congress, the first elements of a transitional program for the youth are being added. All these questions require an ever deeper analysis, testing against experience and practice. And they need critical evaluation through the contribution that can be made by the new forces that are appearing in the revolutionary arena, such as the revolutionary left forces in the workers states, the young revolutionary forces in the countries caught up in the whirlwind of the colonial revolution, and the young forces in the imperialist countries of Europe, America, and Asia.

To maintain and increase our superiority in this area, it is more than ever necessary to free ourselves from all dogmatism, from any stereotyped recitation of formulas learned by heart, of any reluctance to cross swords at the highest appropriate theoretical level with all the new ideological tendencies promoted or revived by the revolutionary rise. The vanguard within which we are fighting for hegemony is neither simple-minded nor ignorant, nor primitive. It is much more cultivated than similar vanguards in 1918-23 or 1944-48, not only as regards general culture but also in political culture. Simplistic answers and neat formulas will scarcely satisfy this vanguard. We hold all the cards to get the majority to agree that we are right. But to achieve this a constant struggle is necessary and this struggle makes it necessary also to constantly raise the level of our own publications and deepen our analysis of the world reality today and its great historical tendencies.

The second factor is a systematic attempt to extend the revolutionary organization among the working class, which by nature is less inclined to spontanéism than the student milieu.

All this organizational, theoretical, and political work

is essential to win hegemony in the new youth vanguard. It is indispensable but it is not sufficient. The vanguard we are trying to win is no longer restricted to a handful of individuals who can be attracted by ideas. This vanguard already has a mass character. The masses—and this is a fundamental truth of Marxism and Leninism—can only be won in action. The breakthrough that we can make in a series of countries can equip us for action. In the stage that has now opened, our ability to build our organizations depends on our capacity to act, to take the initiative, and to lead actions that in practice draw in the healthiest sectors of the vanguard.

This does not mean yielding to the narrow activism of some spontanéist tendencies. But it does mean understanding that the profound break of the new youth vanguard with a certain type of debilitating politics which the Khrushchevist parties have given perfect examples of in many countries is also a break with everything which is purely verbal and literary, which is critical only at the theoretical level and which threatens to end in a pure play of words. The young generation is starved for action especially because it is revolted by the hypocrisy of all the leaderships which daily practice the opposite of what they affirm in their declarations of principles. Its skepticism toward us is essentially a skepticism toward any current known to be right but whose capacity to put its theory into practice is suspect. It is here that a decisive turn is necessary. The new conditions we are working under offer the means and the opportunity to make a turn toward action in several countries.

This appeal must not be misinterpreted or permitted to give encouragement to adventurism or activist excesses. With the limited forces at our disposal, we are duty bound to practice a strict economy in our activity, carefully weighing the risks and not proposing any actions which are beyond our means. Miscalculation on this score would inevitably lead to demoralization. But we must fully and completely understand what is new in the opportunities facing the Fourth International and not miss these chances out of routinism, skepticism, or an inability to understand the profound changes in the objective and subjective situation which are now in progress.

A young leader of my section, who already has rich experience in mass work in the student milieu ended a recent report on youth work with these words: "We will build our organization if we are able to demonstrate the necessity for its existence to the vanguard by our action itself." These words sum up admirably the task of the International in the period now opening. In different ways, depending on the different conditions of the revolutionary struggle in each country, these words apply to the work revolutionary Marxists are already engaged in in France and Bolivia, in the United States, in Japan, in South Africa, in Argentina, in Great Britain, in India, and in many other countries. If we are capable of carrying out this line, with all that it implies, then at the next congress we will be able to record, as many advances over the present congress as we can record today over the last world congress.

# Resolution

## on the 'Cultural Revolution' in China

(1) The "cultural revolution" constitutes a momentous dividing line in the political evolution of the People's Republic of China. It marks the irreparable shattering of the nucleus of veteran Communists clustered around Mao, which led the Chinese Communist party in the civil war, founded the republic, and overturned capitalist rule, and which, since the victory over Chiang Kai-shek, has run the economy, governed the country, and directed the state and party apparatus. The "cultural revolution" tore this nucleus into contending fragments that cannot be put together.

Initiated in September 1965 by the Maoist faction in the Chinese Communist party leadership, it reached its major objective with the expulsion of Liu Shao-chi from the party at the October 13-31, 1968 "enlarged" twelfth plenum of the Central Committee. Liu, the chief of state, Mao's first lieutenant and main interpreter for several decades, his designated heir until the factional struggle broke into the open, was singled out as the central target of attack under such epithets as "the Khrushchev of China," the "first person in a position of authority who has taken the capitalist road," and, finally, as the "enlarged" twelfth plenum put it, "the renegade, traitor and scab Liu Shao-chi."

Mao has defined the internal struggle which has convulsed China as "in essence a great political revolution under the conditions of socialism made by the proletariat against the bourgeoisie and all other exploiting classes; it is a continuation of the prolonged struggle waged by the Chinese Communist party and the masses of revolutionary people under its leadership against the Kuomintang reactionaries, a continuation of the class struggle between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie." (*Peking Review*, No. 43, Oct. 25, 1968.)

This official version bears little resemblance to the truth. The "cultural revolution" is not a "political revolution" for the promotion of workers democracy; it was not made "under the conditions of socialism"; it was not undertaken by the proletariat as the continuation of its struggle against the bourgeoisie. The suggestion that the opposition, which was denied the most elementary rights of proletarian democracy, represented the "Kuomintang reactionaries" is a slander.

The "cultural revolution" represented a phase of sharp public conflict in an intrabureaucratic struggle between divergent tendencies in the topmost circles of the Chinese Communist party leadership which eventually affected every sector of Chinese society. It constituted the greatest single crisis experienced by the bureaucratic regime since its establishment and expressed an important weakening of that bureaucratic regime, both as the result of its inner

contradictions and of a widespread mobilization of the masses.

(2) The sharpness of the intrabureaucratic struggle in China, and the large-scale intervention of the masses in that struggle, can only be understood against the background of objective contradictions and problems which had accumulated since the end of the fifties and the beginning of the sixties, a growing trend of conflicts in Chinese society and a growing discontent among the Chinese masses.

The Chinese People's Republic has registered major accomplishments and made remarkable advances in many fields since the military victory over the Kuomintang in 1949, especially when measured against the relative stagnation of such colonial countries as India, Indonesia and Brazil where capitalism has not been overthrown. However, the colossal problems of economic, social, political and cultural development confronting so backward a country as China, with its huge population, were far from having been solved, and the authoritarian methods practiced by the Maoist leadership have in addition seriously hampered the working out of such solutions.

The main contradictions which the People's Republic of China had to face during the last decade were the following ones:

(a) The contradiction between the rate of growth of the economy, which was still too low, and the rate of growth of the population, which threatened to bring to a near standstill the annual per capita rate of growth of real consumption.

(b) The contradiction between the objective necessity to socialize the surplus product of agriculture, for purposes of accelerated economic and industrial development, and the political need to achieve this socialization with the approval of the majority of the peasantry.

(c) The contradiction between the objective necessity to interest materially the bulk of the poor and middle peasantry in increasing agricultural production, and the inevitable tendency to increased inequality and private accumulation which results from these "material incentives."

(d) The contradiction between the general low level of consumption of the mass of the people and the increasing bureaucratic privileges appropriated by the ruling strata in the fifties, and even the early sixties, under conditions of great hardship for the mass of the population.

(e) The contradiction between the objective needs of an accelerated industrialization and the obstacle to this same industrialization suddenly created by the abrupt and brutal decision of the Kremlin, decreeing an economic blockade of China.

(f) The contradiction between the rapid expansion of

literacy and the increase in general level of education of the Chinese youth on the one hand, and the still relatively low number of skilled jobs available in China.

All these contradictions were intensified by the damage done to Chinese agriculture and economy during the second phase of the Great Leap Forward and the near-famine period at the beginning of the sixties. They created an explosive situation in the country, in which a process of political differentiation and increased political activity of the masses became possible. In this situation, conditions for a genuine political revolution against the ruling bureaucracy matured. The "cultural revolution" constitutes objectively an attempt by the Mao faction to divert the social forces pushing in that direction from an overthrow of the bureaucracy into a reform of the bureaucracy.

(3) Some of the exploding social contradictions accumulated in China during the last decade would have manifested themselves, whatever the domestic and international conditions faced by the country or the nature of the leadership. Others were greatly sharpened by the autocratic and paternalistic nature of that leadership. All were heavily increased by the sudden isolation into which the People's Republic of China was precipitated in the late fifties by the Kremlin's abrupt suppression of all economic and military assistance to China.

This criminal act by the Soviet bureaucracy, extending to the state level the factional struggle between that bureaucracy and the Chinese CP inside the world Communist movement, was a stab in the back of the Chinese revolution and the Chinese people, at the very moment when they were confronted with near-famine at home and increased aggressive pressure from U.S. imperialism abroad. The historic responsibility for breaking up the Sino-Soviet alliance, and the advantages which imperialism could draw from this breakup, lie at the door of the Kremlin.

The leadership of the Chinese CP, educated in the Stalinist school, has always accepted the theory of "building socialism in one country." However, in the fifties, the importance of the help which the other workers states could give to the economic growth and the military defense of the People's Republic of China made the dangerous implications of that theory inside China less important than in the USSR in the late twenties and the thirties (its international implications detrimental to world revolution continued to manifest themselves even then). The reversion of the Maoist leadership to a policy of "self-reliance" and large-scale economic autarchy and self-sufficiency is only a rationalization of the consequences of the Kremlin's blockade and the tremendous burden imposed on China by the need to develop its own nuclear weapons, given the refusal of the Soviet bureaucracy to assist it in this field.

The more radical line pursued by the Chinese leadership towards world revolutionary developments since the beginning of the Sino-Soviet conflict which, on several important questions, brought it nearer to the positions of revolutionary Marxism (an analysis confirmed in 1968 by Peking's attitude, in contrast to the Kremlin's towards the May revolution in France, the prerevolutionary struggles in India, the Mexican students' struggles and the rising political revolution in the CSSR leading to the Warsaw Pact countries' occupation of Czechoslovakia),

reflects both the specific relationship of imperialism and the Soviet bureaucracy towards the People's Republic of China, and the objective impact of the rising tide of world revolution on the Chinese masses.

It is however also true that the bureaucratic character of the Mao faction has added to the international isolation of the People's Republic of China and increased the contradictions and political conflicts inside the CP of China.

Although Peking maintained its resolution to defend the USSR against imperialism and the Kremlin failed to reiterate similar assurances to the People's Republic of China, Mao himself is also responsible for the absence of a consistent policy favoring an anti-imperialist united front in Vietnam, thereby harming the defense of the Vietnamese revolution and the political influence of the CP of China in the world Communist movement.

In place of conducting a policy stimulating a consistent development of the world revolution, which could have brought new socialist allies into being and carried the struggle for socialism into the main strongholds of the capitalist system, the policy led the Maoist tendencies in Pakistan several times to oppose the mass movements that developed there.

This helped prepare for the catastrophe in Indonesia, the worst defeat suffered by the world revolution since Stalin permitted Hitler to come to power without a struggle. The development of the cult of Mao, the glorification of Stalin, and opposition to de-Stalinization in the Soviet Union crippled the defense of the Chinese revolution in other lands, reduced Peking's prestige and influence, and gravely injured the cause of socialism internationally.

The extension of the Sino-Soviet conflict from the level of parties and ideology to that of states culminated in the bloody incidents on the Ussuri which went far beyond anything previous. It must be remembered in connection with this that the main responsibility for the rupture between China and the USSR falls on the Soviet bureaucracy, which, moreover, has not hesitated to seek diplomatic solidarity from the capitalist governments. But the Chinese riposte over the border difference was likewise determined by bureaucratic interests and prestige considerations and was inspired in the final analysis by the concept of "socialism in one country." Thus considerable injury was dealt the cause of socialism by both the Soviet and Chinese bureaucracies.

It can even not be excluded, moreover, that a change of line of U.S. imperialism towards China would lead to a significant modification of revolutionary militancy advised by the Chinese leadership to its followers abroad—a normalization of relations at state level with the USA in itself of course cannot be criticized.

The setbacks in foreign affairs heightened the stresses and strains created by the sharpened tensions within Chinese society between the different layers of the peasantry as well as between the peasantry and the state, and between the working class, the student youth, the intellectuals and the bureaucracy in the urban centers. These multiple pressures generated deep differences on domestic and foreign policy in the leadership of the party, government and armed forces. The correctness of Mao's past decisions and his omniscience came under increasing questioning.

(4) Because of the fragmentary, contradictory and un-

confirmed nature of the information available, it is difficult and hazardous to attempt a precise delineation of the evolution and content of the disagreements inside the leadership of the CP of China. The available evidence indicates that a number of oppositional tendencies were involved. The Maoist machine has not permitted their spokesmen—or they have not dared or cared—to state their positions or platforms publicly, frankly or fully.

The voluminous Maoist polemics, filled with self-contradictions, present obviously falsified accounts and distorted interpretations of the opinions of their opponents and critics. It is, for example, absurd to think that the head of state Liu Shao-chi, the mayor of Peking, Peng Chen, and other Political Bureau members such as Teng Hsiao-ping and Tao Chu (the leading Chinese Communists most publicly identified with the Sino-Soviet clashes), the deposed military leaders, the better-known disgraced Communist intellectuals, and other alleged "renegades, enemy agents or counterrevolutionary revisionists" conspired or aspired to bring back capitalism on behalf of "the imperialists and the Kuomintang reactionaries."

Even though the roots, history and specific character of the differences remain obscure and unverified, the consequences of the conflicts they precipitated are clear. The central leading team has been broken up. A period of uncertainty as to the eventual composition and orientation of China's leadership has now opened. Great new forces have been set in motion.

The high officials around Liu apparently sought to close ranks against Mao following the disastrous results of the Great Leap Forward. Liu and his close associates took fright at the appalling consequences of this adventure, counseled retreat, and succeeded in switching over to a more prudent economic course. During this readjustment, the Liu grouping took control of the party apparatus and pushed Mao to one side. Their aim, evidently, was to take him away from the helm and reduce his status to that of a figurehead while utilizing his prestige to lend maximum authority to their decisions and course of action. Thus they assiduously protected his public reputation for infallibility, which later facilitated a comeback for Mao.

By 1965 Mao felt that he was in position to break Liu's hold upon the regime and regain his lost supremacy. By exploiting his immense prestige, by maneuvering between the diverse tendencies and cutting them down one after another, by slandering Liu and his men through a relentless propaganda campaign, Mao succeeded in isolating them and eroding their bases of support among the masses. In the party, the army and the provinces and completing their downfall. The objective basis of this success lies in Mao's capacity to mobilize larger masses, especially of the youth, and to exploit the hatred which had been accumulated in the people against the bureaucracy as a whole. The Liu faction was paralyzed by sticking to the bureaucratic rules and by its inability to question the Mao myth, which it had itself largely contributed to create.

(5) The factional warfare which burst forth in the upper echelons of the bureaucracy passed beyond the confines of the ruling circles in the middle of 1966 after the show-down in the eleventh Central Committee plenum of early August which adopted the 16-point decision on the "cultural revolution." In their maneuvers, they sought support

among layers extending far outside the party. A social upheaval was touched off. This unfolded in successive waves, starting with the mustering of the student youth organized from above in the Red Guards, spreading to the industrial workers in the big cities during December 1966-January 1967, stirring up parts of the peasantry, and also involving certain sectors of the armed forces.

These interlinked commotions drastically upset the equilibrium of the bureaucratic regime. Despite the present victory of Mao's faction, the turbulent events have weakened its position and power. The regime will not be able to regain the prestige and stability enjoyed before Mao launched the "Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution." The internecine struggles and the accompanying Maoist propaganda have served to generate new revolutionary energies within the youth and the vanguard elements among the working masses which will not be easily or quickly subdued.

The real situation in China is quite different from the simplistic interpretations offered by various circles. Mao's supporters, and those who take his propaganda at face value, claim that he is promoting an antibureaucratic political revolution against agents of the class enemy, a revolution which aims at and is effectively realizing a wider democracy for the popular masses.

This flies in the face of obvious facts. The authoritarian manner in which the "cultural revolution" was launched, conducted, guided and concluded; the suppression of dissenters, coupled with the conscienceless deformation of the views of the anti-Mao tendencies; the outrageous cult of Mao; the absence of elections and democratic institutions controlled by the workers and peasants; the increased authority of the army under Lin Piao—all testify to the bureaucratic characteristics and direction of the political course taken by the Maoist faction, which has dwindled down to a small core of the old leadership.

Likewise in error are those who view Mao's present position as nothing but a replica of Stalin's tyrannical personal dictatorship. While the bureaucratic ruling castes of the USSR and China have much in common, there are profound differences between the historical situation which enabled Stalin to consolidate his power and the international and domestic context in which Mao advanced the slogan of "seizure of power" by the Red Guards. In China today, the mobilizations of the masses under the impetus of the upheaval, limited as they have been, have altered the relationship of forces between the bureaucracy and the people to the advantage of the latter. The movement of the masses weakened the bureaucratic regime. This outcome differs from Stalin's rise during the late twenties and early thirties when the masses were crushed and beheaded and fell into a state of unrelieved political passivity which did not appreciably change until after Stalin's death.

The triumph of Mao's faction has by no means eradicated the power of the diversified opposition. Resisters of all sorts remain deeply entrenched in the party, the unions, the army, the universities, the regional committees, the provincial governments, the state apparatus, and in the countryside.

As against this, however, the army, under Lin Piao, Mao's new heir apparent and chief lieutenant, has gained greatly in political weight. By virtue of its interventions

in the conflicts between the contending bureaucratic factions and between the masses in motion and the regime, the army — at the expense of the leading role of the party — has become the mainstay of Mao's rulership, the chief arbiter and principal centralizing force in the country.

This is one of the most dangerous consequences of the "cultural revolution." However, Mao tends to reduce again this great weight gained by the army during the previous period, by putting the emphasis on the reconstruction of the party as the mainstay of the regime and the necessity of a single central leadership for all power apparatuses.

(6) The "cultural revolution" was prepared and launched by Mao and his liegemen to eliminate the most resolute and persistent critics of his domestic and foreign policy, to give a free hand to his pared-down faction in the top leadership, and, by way of concession to the masses, to curb the worst abuses of the bureaucratic overlords he had himself trained, encouraged and shielded. Having been placed in a minority in the Political Bureau, Mao took the risk of bypassing the official cadres of the party and state apparatus where his opponents were entrenched, going over their heads, and mobilizing the students of the universities and high schools as the instrument to re-establish his control over the country.

Throughout its course, the Red Guard movement was highly contradictory.

The fact that the Red Guard movement was initiated from above and not by the youth themselves, that in general it did not have to confront either the police or the armed forces, greatly facilitated the efforts of other sectors of the bureaucracy to counter Mao's factional action by setting up Red Guard groups under their own auspices. Since all the groups were formed under the guise of carrying out Mao's directives and Mao's "thought," it was difficult for broader masses to understand their political differences. Nevertheless many of the groups became differentiated sufficiently in their interpretations of Mao's doctrines to come into conflicts that were at times very sharp.

Where civil strife ended in violent confrontations, whether through differences among the Red Guards or more generally through the incapacity of Mao's partisans to actually "seize power" where opposing forces were strongly entrenched, the army moved in. Thus behind the Red Guard movement stood the army as the final authority, sometimes manipulating the bands of youth, at other times, restraining them or even reversing what they had done.

It would be a mistake, nonetheless, to view the Red Guard movement as merely a pliant instrument of factional politics in the domestic strife that featured the "cultural revolution." The Chinese student youth had many grievances comparable to those of youth in other lands today. These included social discrimination in the selection of the student body, inadequate living quarters, lack of campus autonomy, and scant opportunities after graduation. They resented haughty and uncontrolled bureaucratic authority; they wanted greater democracy; they wanted a political revolution to open the road to socialist democracy; they identified their fate with that of the world revolution.

This explains why Mao had such difficulty retaining control of the Red Guard movement and curbing it once

it had served the main purposes he envisioned. The Red Guard movement acquired a logic of its own.

Roaming the countryside on their own, engaging in actions of a violent nature against echelons of the bureaucracy, millions of youth gained in self-confidence and boldness. The most unmanageable of these elements passed beyond the specific objectives set for them by their bureaucratic patrons and even collided with them. Their tendency to move in the direction of critical thought and independent political action was observable in many of the wall posters and mimeographed or printed publications put out by the Red Guards and in some of the "seizures of power" in which they engaged. The movement became so dangerous to Mao's objectives that he finally found it advisable to demobilize the Red Guards and send them back to the classrooms or the countryside for labor.

However, ferment persists among them. The most advanced and revolutionary-minded members of this new generation, who received their political baptism in the "cultural revolution," may later detonate further mass actions against the Chinese bureaucracy as a whole, including the Maoist victors.

Nevertheless, of much greater significance than the Red Guard demonstrations were the mobilizations of the proletarian masses from December 1966 through February 1967. Taking advantage of the splits among the contending factions on top and spurred into action by one or another of them, sectors of the work force began to put forward their own economic and social demands and move along independent lines. This action flared into general strikes in transportation and many plants in Shanghai, Nanking, and other industrial centers.

The movement from below, which in its further development would have threatened the control of the Maoist leadership, was stopped short by combined methods of manipulation and repression. The brevity of the massive strikes does not diminish their historic import. They signaled the end of political apathy among the industrial workers and the resumption of their autonomous action.

(7) The two principal groupings vying for supremacy in the party, state apparatus and the army centered around Mao Tse-tung and Liu Shao-chi. On the fringes of these two groupings stand oppositional tendencies of rightist or leftist coloration.

Neither of the chief factions contending for supremacy within the Chinese Communist bureaucracy is actually striving for socialist democracy or has a program of genuine revolutionary policies at home and abroad. By Marxist standards, neither of the chief factions deserves political support against its rival. From the available information — and it is admittedly scanty and inadequate — neither faction can be judged to be more progressive than the other.

As long as Liu's group retained supremacy it practiced the abominable customs of bureaucratic command learned in the school of Stalinism. Its doctrines and practices were indistinguishable from those of the previous period when Mao was in direct control. The pent-up hatred among the youth, the workers and peasants enabled Mao to arouse these forces against the bureaucratic majority without much trouble.

While the Mao faction has issued calls for rebellion and appeals to the initiative of the masses, its deeds do not

harmonize with its words. Mao's objective was to regain supremacy for his faction and line in the bureaucracy, not overthrow the bureaucracy. This explains why he followed the Stalinist methods of slander, physical violence and the fostering of cultism in his struggle and strictly limited his appeals to the masses. Whenever and wherever any segment of the people, whether among the youth, the proletariat, the peasantry or the intellectuals, has showed signs of slipping away from domination and direction by Mao to act on its own account, it has been restrained and called to order, sometimes by repressive measures.

The promise held out in section 9 of the original 16-point program in the official declaration of the "cultural revolution," adopted by the August 1966 Central Committee plenum, of "a system of general elections, like that of the Paris Commune," which would usher in an extensive democracy, sounds like a mockery today. Not only have no such elections been held but the very idea is now scoffed at. ("Blind faith in elections is also a form of conservative thinking.")

Instead of instituting an expanded workers democracy on the model of the Paris Commune, Mao has reorganized the bureaucratic regime under the auspices of "the triple alliance," regulated by the army and presided over by that part of the cadres loyal to his faction. The "revolutionary committees" set up during the "cultural revolution" have not been elected by the working masses themselves and kept under their surveillance by measures of democratic control but have been constituted by compromise between contending factions under the supervision of the Mao-Lin Piao hard core.

There have been reports of elements on the left flanks of the contending top factions, both among Mao's followers and among the workers and intellectuals sympathetic to Liu and other disgraced leaders, who have revolutionary ideas and inclinations and who could form the nuclei of a genuinely antibureaucratic opposition. These revolutionists deserve international support. However, under current conditions, it is extremely difficult for such dispersed left Communists to come together, to communicate with one another, to work out a common program, select leaders, and undertake a consistent line of organized activity.

(8) The Maoists accuse their adversaries of "revisionism." But the very arguments they invoke to justify their current course show that they are as guilty as their opponents of blatantly revising a number of the basic tenets of Marxism.

(a) In countries that have overthrown the bourgeoisie and abolished private ownership of the means of production, they assert that capitalism can be restored by gradual and peaceful processes through machinations and false policies of one or another tendency in the leadership of the Communist parties. This discards or disregards the Marxist theory of the state which asserts that such fundamental changes cannot be accomplished either gradually or peacefully.

(b) They identify the bureaucratic degeneration of the revolution with capitalist restoration. In explaining this phenomenon, the Maoists lapse, moreover, into an extreme voluntarism, enormously exaggerating the social weight of ideology. Mao locates the chief cause of the danger of bureaucratic degeneration and capitalist restora-

tion, not in the material foundations of the socio-economic order, but in the realm of ideology. He proclaims that if revisionism is not rooted out on the theoretical, scientific, artistic and literary levels, it will inevitably lead to the overthrow of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Marxists have never believed that the *ideas* of those reactionary classes which have lost economic and political power as the result of a social revolution are capable of gradually changing the class nature and structure of the state. A colossal counterrevolution of this kind could occur only through a civil war between the former possessing classes and the toiling masses in which the masses were crushed; or through the hypothetical generation of a new bourgeoisie which became strong enough economically to launch a civil war and topple the workers state. This has not happened, and it is far from happening, not only in China but in other workers states whose leaderships are at odds with Peking, whatever the incipient tendencies may be in these countries in the direction of capitalism.

(c) No less voluntaristic is the Maoist belief that incessant appeals to the spirit of sacrifice, the idealism and enthusiasm of the toiling masses can in and of themselves suffice to surmount the immensely difficult problems arising from the inadequate development of the productive forces in China during the transition from capitalism to socialism.

(d) In defiance of the historical lessons drawn by Lenin in *State and Revolution*, the Maoists proclaim that in the period of transition from capitalism to socialism the class struggle is bound to intensify and not diminish, and can even go on for hundreds of years. This "theory" serves to justify intensifications of the role of the state as a repressive instrument. The state, instead of withering away under socialism as Engels forecast, will endure for an indefinite period, if Mao is correct. Thus a "theoretical" excuse is provided for the worst bureaucratic excesses and abuses of power.

(e) The strategy of world revolution expounded by Mao and Lin Piao extols the insurrectionary movements of the peasantry in the backward colonial areas and systematically underrates or dismisses the key role which the industrial working class in the advanced countries must play in overthrowing the power of imperialism and helping to create the new socialist society.

(f) In the field of culture properly speaking, the Chinese leadership has advanced anti-Marxist positions of a Zhdanov type, defending the notion of "proletarian culture" and bureaucratically submitting literature, art, and science to the "party line."

(9) The "cultural revolution" has given widespread currency to the idea that a workers state can become subjected to deformation and degeneration after the conquest of power, an idea that was previously propagated only by the world Trotskyist movement. Coming after the anti-bureaucratic campaigns in Yugoslavia and Cuba, the Maoist propaganda on this point, distorted though it is, has focused attention upon one of the most crucial problems confronting a victorious socialist revolution: how to protect and promote workers democracy.

The need for a political revolution where state power has been usurped by a bureaucracy and all avenues of democratic control have been closed to the masses has been made clearer and more understandable to broad



sections of the international Communist movement and the revolutionary vanguard. This lesson has been reinforced by the abrupt and brutal halting of the drive toward democratization in Czechoslovakia in 1968 by the Soviet occupation.

If the "cultural revolution" has helped popularize and win acceptance of the notion of political revolution in the bureaucratized workers states, its course and outcome under the tutelage of Mao Tse-tung demonstrates that the methods pursued by his faction lead to the opposite result. It is impossible to eradicate bureaucracy by bureaucratic means. The "cultural revolution" has ended in an attempt to stop the mass movement and to restore a new form of bureaucratic rule, under the guise of the "triple alliance," instead of the rule of the old party and state bureaucracy which had, in its majority, supported Liu. This "triple alliance" is in reality a compromise between the Maoist faction and parts of the old majority faction, a compromise initiated when the masses started to intervene autonomously into the struggle and thereby threatened the whole bureaucratic rule.

There is no other road for effective struggle against the bureaucratic degeneration of the revolution and the authoritarian regimes it spawns than the program outlined by Lenin and Trotsky; that is, the consolidation and institutionalization of workers power on the basis of democratically elected councils, the widest proletarian democracy, the right of various socialist tendencies and parties to exist legally within that constitutional framework, the limitation and progressive abolition of inequality in remuneration, the management of the economy by the workers themselves, the planned development of the productive forces, and the international extension of the revolution, above all, to the centers of imperialism.

(10) The position of the Fourth International on the Chinese revolution, which has been set forth in numerous documents and declarations in recent years, can be summarized as follows:

The Fourth International has been a firm supporter of the socialist revolution in China from its beginning. Its partisans within China and throughout the world stand for the unconditional defense of the People's Republic of China against military attack by U.S. imperialism or any of its vassal states.

The Fourth International holds the Kremlin leadership primarily responsible for the Sino-Soviet split, condemns its vengeful withdrawal of economic aid from China, and its continued diplomatic deals with Washington, Paris, New Delhi and other bourgeois governments against the People's Republic of China.

At the same time, the Fourth International criticizes the ultrasectarian attitude and bitter-end factionalism exhibited by Peking in its relations with other workers states that do not fully endorse its policies. Especially harmful has been its stubborn refusal to propose or participate in joint action with the Soviet Union, Cuba, and other Communist countries against U.S. intervention in Vietnam because of political disagreements with them, although some

practical agreements on military assistance to Vietnam were finally concluded.

While not forgetting that the Chinese leadership is led by the defense of its own interests to inspire among its partisans in the world a more militant line than Moscow's, the Fourth International criticizes the bureaucratic centralist nature of the policy. In seeking to gain influence in the colonial and ex-colonial countries, Peking uses a strongly anti-imperialist language and actually grants material aid to the guerrilla forces in several countries.

This has not only created an image far to the left of Moscow but also objectively favored anti-imperialist struggles in various parts of the world, especially Southeast Asia, the Arab countries and Africa. Likewise, the sharp campaign which Peking unleashed against the right-wing opportunist line of the Communist parties following Moscow's lead, and against some key features of the bureaucratic rule in Eastern Europe, has objectively contributed to deepening the world crisis of Stalinism and to facilitating the upsurge of a new youth vanguard the world over. Inside that youth vanguard the general sympathy for China and Maoist criticism of the Kremlin's revisionism remains deep, even if extreme organizational sectarianism and political infantilism have prevented the orthodox Maoists from stabilizing important youth organizations anywhere.

On the other hand, Peking's basic policy has continued to imply support to whatever bourgeois government in a semicolonial country happens to diplomatically collaborate with China (yesterday Indonesia, today Pakistan and Tanzania), which leads to disastrous results for the revolutionary class struggle in these countries.

The conduct of the Chinese Communist party leadership since it came to power proves that it has not shaken off its Stalinist heritage. These bureaucrats do not hesitate to subordinate the welfare of the Chinese masses and the interests of the international revolution and socialism to the protection and promotion of their own power and privileges.

Analogous features mark the policies and behavior of the Maoist groups that have appeared in numerous countries since the Sino-Soviet split. They mix adventurism with opportunism. They have shown themselves incapable of critical or independent thought along Marxist lines. As a result, most of them display little internal cohesion and tend generally to splinter into warring fragments.

The experience of the "cultural revolution" offers fresh evidence that also in China, the bureaucracy cannot be removed by reforms. It will have to be removed from power by the new vanguard of genuine revolutionaries now in the process of formation in China who will come to the head of the aroused and organized masses in the subsequent development of an authentic antibureaucratic revolution. Such a resurgent independent movement will break the grip of the bureaucracy over China's economic, political and cultural life and really expand and consolidate the workers democracy which the "cultural revolution" promised in its propaganda but lamentably failed to deliver.

# Report on the 'Cultural Revolution' in China

By Livio Maitan

## I.

[The following is an extensive summary of the report approved by the congress in conjunction with the resolution adopted on this subject.]

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In order to understand the "cultural revolution," we have to go back and spend some time on the principal contradictions and tensions which lie at the root of the events of the last three and a half years.

First of all, as regards economic development, it must not be forgotten that China started off from an extremely backward economic base, far inferior to the one from which the Soviet Union started. The first five-year plan (1953-57) unquestionably scored spectacular successes in various fields. But in spite of an extraordinary effort and substantial aid from the Soviet Union, the results were still quite modest in absolute figures.<sup>1</sup> Moreover, in 1957 the growth rate declined with respect to 1956.<sup>2</sup>

The line of the Great Leap Forward and the People's Communes was designed to meet the following necessities:

(a) The necessity of not only maintaining but accelerating the tempo of industrial production. This had to be done without limiting the flow of capital into the modern sector while at the same time developing the secondary and traditional industries.

(b) The necessity of achieving a sharper increase in agricultural production in order both to satisfy greater domestic needs and to increase exports and, hence, foreign currency reserves.

(c) The necessity of dealing with the problem of rural underemployment and exploiting fully the advantages of the new productive relations.

In the countryside, the Maoist leadership wanted also to counteract rightist tendencies which in the years 1956-57 showed up in an attempt to liquidate a certain number of cooperatives.

As is well known, the Great Leap Forward was marked in its initial stage by spectacular growth, but it ended in

a failure which created a grave situation, especially in the years 1961 and 1962. It was after this that the Chinese leadership proceeded to carry out a profound readjustment of its economic orientation, giving priority to the development of agriculture. Thus in 1963-65 an unquestionable revival took shape. Nonetheless, the rate of growth remained limited and clearly insufficient in relation to the country's needs. It is difficult to give concrete data on this subject because the Chinese authorities have not furnished overall statistics for almost ten years (this silence, however, is very eloquent). According to the estimates of bourgeois economists, it seems, though, that in 1965 China had again come up to its 1958 level (that is the 1958 per capita level) and that only toward 1970 would the country regain its 1960 level of production.<sup>3</sup> In agriculture where the difficulties were indicated, among other things, by the large imports of foodstuffs, the 200 million tons of cereals obtained in 1958 has not yet been equaled.

I am not overlooking the fact that important successes were scored in certain branches of industry nor am I minimizing the influence of unfavorable noneconomic factors such as bad weather conditions and natural calamities—and above all the abrupt suspension of Soviet collaboration. In any case, the impetus of growth remained absolutely insufficient, and that was all the more grave because the world economy was characterized in this period by substantial new advances in the realm of technology and industrial production.

The limited industrial growth rate had the consequence of accentuating the conflict between the tendency toward urbanization on the one hand and the contraction of the urban economy's capacity of absorption on the other. The urban population had increased as a result of migration to the cities stimulated by a search for jobs, higher salaries, and generally more comfortable living conditions. At the beginning of the sixties it had reached 130,000,000, while the economic policy makers considered that at the time it should not have exceeded 110,000,000.<sup>4</sup> If it is considered that the Chinese population increases by about 14,000,000 to 16,000,000 persons a year and that each year the youth reaching working age number 10,000,000, the extent of the problem will be comprehended. In certain periods, the return to the villages took on considerable proportions, and it is significant that, even today, official

1. See in this regard *The Socialist Transformation of the National Economy of China* (Foreign Languages Press, Peking, 1960), p. 241. According to *An Economic Profile of Mainland China* (Washington, 1957), p. ix, the per capita consumption at the end of 1957 had not yet exceeded the 1933 level.

2. The gross value of industrial and agricultural production is supposed to have increased by 7.8% in 1956. In regard to industry more particularly the growth is supposed to have declined from 31% in 1956 to 10.9% in 1957. (See the article published in the Chinese magazine *Agricultural Machinery Technique* translated in *Selections from China Mainland Magazines*, November 4, 1968, No. 633, p. 5.)

3. See *An Economic Profile*, pp. xi, 53, and 73.

4. See an interview with Po I-po by Anna Louise Strong in January 1964.

propaganda, by means of a directive from Mao, is stressing the necessity for the young people to go into the villages.<sup>5</sup> In any case, serious bottlenecks had developed on the eve of the "cultural revolution."

The draft resolution stresses another contradiction, the one "between the rapid expansion of literacy and the increase in general level of education of the Chinese youth on the one hand, and the still relatively low number of skilled jobs available in China." A single statistic is sufficient to show this. In the ten years before 1960, the number of secondary school and university level diplomas rose to 3,300,000; in the subsequent six years it rose to about 23,000,000. It must be added that according to official sources it was impossible to provide education for all those who wanted it.<sup>6</sup> In the case of the higher level technical specialties, the opposite phenomenon occurred. The supply did not match the demand.<sup>7</sup>

Coming to the problems of the countryside, let us keep in mind first of all that the weight of the rural population and the agricultural economy remained heavily predominant and that backward conditions subsisted in all fields. Subsistence agriculture accounted for 80 percent of the total. Mechanization touched only limited sectors and electrification was only in its beginnings.<sup>8</sup> The launching of the People's Communes, which aimed at assuring both a very marked increase in production and the overcoming of the social conflicts which the spread of cooperatives throughout the countryside had failed to eliminate, ended essentially in failure on both scores, which was implicitly acknowledged by a readjustment both in general economic policy and in the structures of the Communes themselves. Thus the oscillation between collectivist thrusts on the one hand and tendencies toward private accumulation, the use of private plots, and utilization of the "free" market, on the other, reoccurred even after the Communes, especially in 1961 and 1962. To return to the draft resolution, there existed "the contradiction between the objective necessity to socialize the surplus product of agriculture, for purposes of accelerated economic and industrial development, and the political need to achieve this socialization with the approval of the majority of the peasantry" and "the contradiction between the objective necessity to interest materially the bulk of the poor and middle peasantry in increasing agricultural production, and the inevitable tendency to increased inequality and private accumulation which results from these 'material incentives.'"

The period 1949-65 was not characterized in China by a social stratification as pronounced as the one that occurred in the USSR in the thirties, which was reflected in certain aspects of the official ideology. However, as our movement has not failed to note on several occasions

in the past, differentiations and tensions nonetheless developed.

First of all, there were inequalities between the living conditions in the cities and the countryside. It is significant in this regard that taking precedence among the demands of the peasants who mobilized at the beginning of 1967 was the demand for a reduction of their relative disadvantage. In the second place, I have already alluded to the inequalities persisting or widening in the villages due to different opportunities for accumulation and remuneration. At the extremes of a wide gamut were found on the one hand peasants living exclusively from the income of their labor and on the other middle or "rich" peasants who were able to accumulate important savings.<sup>9</sup>

Among the workers, tensions were provoked by the stagnation of wages at a very modest level that lasted quite a long time (for all practical purposes, it seems that no more general increases were given after 1959; the increases in 1963 probably represented the promotion of workers toward better-paid categories).<sup>10</sup> Conflicts were provoked also by the existence of quite important inequalities (the differentiation into different categories was accentuated by the employment of piecework, the introduction of bonuses, the granting of consumption and vacation privileges, etc.).<sup>11</sup> We must not forget either the malaise caused by job insecurity and by delays in the payment of wages.<sup>12</sup>

In opposition to the workers and the overwhelming majority of the peasants, unquestionably privileged strata existed. The vestiges of the old ruling classes themselves were considerable and, despite the expropriations, the former capitalists enjoyed exceptional living conditions.<sup>13</sup> Differentiations had, however, taken form within the post-revolutionary society. Within the economic apparatus, technicians and managers enjoyed salaries about double those of the best-paid workers. In the state apparatus and in administration in general, a wage differential of one to twenty-six introduced marked inequalities. But most of all at the highest levels in the party and the state, privileges were extended and consolidated beyond the formal incomes. While this was already clear to us before, after 1966 it was confirmed by the denunciations made by the Mao tendency and the Red Guards. They raised the question of privileged living conditions, luxurious habits, and manipulation and misuse of public funds for private aims, etc.<sup>14</sup> In the case of the army, the remunera-

9. In the book cited (p. 403), Snow speaks of peasants with bank accounts living in "privileged" conditions with respect to the masses.

10. See *An Economic Profile*, p. 494.

11. The differential in workers' wages, in general, was on the order of one to three. See *An Economic Profile*, passim; and Snow, op. cit., pp. 190-91, and elsewhere.

12. See *An Economic Profile*, p. 682. The problem of delayed wage payments is mentioned in the *Urgent Notice* published during the January movements. (See Hsinhua News Agency, Hong Kong, January 12, p. 21.)

13. American sources estimated in 1966 that the indemnities paid to the former capitalists—5% per annum on the value of the confiscated property—were quite substantial and that 90,000 families benefited from them. (See the *New York Herald Tribune*, September 16.)

14. See on this subject the sources cited by E. Germain in *Quatrieme Internationale*, July 1967, p. 35. See also, for

5. Certain sources have spoken of a displacement of tens of millions of people. (See *An Economic Profile*, p. 422.) For Mao's directive, see, for example, *Peking Review*, No. 1, 1969, p. 14.

6. See *An Economic Profile*, p. 682; and *People's Daily*, March 31, 1966 (quoted also in *An Economic Profile*, p. 516). On this question, see also Edgar Snow, *The Other Side of the River*, p. 212 in the Italian edition.

7. See *An Economic Profile*, p. 529.

8. See Bettelheim, *La Construction du Socialisme en Chine*, p. 87. According to Snow (op. cit., p. 198), 94% of the territory of China is being cultivated without the aid of mechanical implements.

tions of the generals were among the highest paid by the state.<sup>15</sup>

Let me repeat: the social differentiation in China in 1965 was not as pronounced as it was in the USSR in the thirties. But in order to comprehend the trend, relative terms are as important as absolute ones. What is more, the fundamental question arises of who made the big economic and political decisions?

The extent of actual centralization in 1965 was more limited than generally thought and remains so today. Central economic planning operated in a very relative way and a quite large margin was left to decentralized decisions (in certain cases with real possibilities for influence to be exercised from below). It is enough, moreover, to recall that the agricultural economy, which remained heavily predominant, was essentially outside the plan.

Nonetheless, the essential decisions, both political and economic, were the prerogative of the state and party, and more particularly of their highest spheres. Once again, by their denunciations in 1966-67, Maoist sources confirm that this apparatus was very hardened, that it played a conservative braking role, and that it was detached from the broad masses of the people. This was all the more true because the party, which was the real backbone, by no means functioned in a democratic manner and because certain commitments to increase internal democracy that were made at the 1956 party congress remained a dead letter.<sup>16</sup>

The party's relations with the intellectuals, finally, provoked especially important conflicts. On the one hand,

the intellectuals were a part of the privileged strata, but on the other hand they were the only ones who in the given conditions were able to express the malaises and criticisms that existed and even initiate a public polemic. To the extent that the intellectuals kept to their own milieu and raised primarily their own demands, the regime took a benevolently paternalistic attitude. But when their criticism became more political and they tried to step forward as the spokesmen of broader collective needs, they were pilloried and became the target of virulent attacks reminiscent of Zhdanov's methods and arguments.<sup>17</sup>

This then was the background against which the 1965-66 events were to explode. To the tensions I have summarized must be added other factors of a major portent. The now complete break with the Soviets and the evolution of the USSR under the Khrushchev and Brezhnev regimes led the Chinese leadership to ponder the fundamental problems of the transitional stage between capitalism and socialism. The conclusion of the Maoist tendency was that the post-Stalinists had worked for a restoration of capitalism and that the adoption of similar methods would involve a danger of capitalist restoration in China also. Thus, in their view, it was essential to wage an all-out struggle. The circumstances assumed a more dramatic cast, moreover, as a result of a world situation distinguished at once by American imperialism's attack on Vietnam—which clearly represented a very great danger for China also—and by the defeat suffered in Indonesia by the strongest Communist party that had aligned itself with the Chinese positions.

## II.

I will not go back over the precise origins of the Mao-Lin Piao offensive here nor the question of how clearly Mao and his followers saw from the start the scope and difficulty of the battle they were unleashing. What is certain is that profound differences in a whole series of areas had existed for years, especially since the time of the Great Leap Forward and the Communes. Mao's resignation from his post as president of the republic, among other things, had a much greater significance than was supposed at the time.

As regards the positions of the various tendencies and personalities prior to November 1965 and during the "cultural revolution," an evaluation remains extremely difficult. In accordance with an old bureaucratic custom, only the victors have the right to speak and the positions of the others are known only through truncated or ar-

example, *Selections from China Mainland Magazines*, No. 633, November 4, pp. 17-18. See also Snow's book (pp. 32, 190, etc.). Snow himself notes that the salaries of 95% of the party officials were markedly higher than the wages of workers.

15. See Snow, p. 263.

16. As regards the completely subordinate role of the workers even inside the plants, see, for example, Hsinhua News Agency, April 6, 1967, p. 14. The 1956 congress had set a maximum term of five years for the calling of a new congress and decided that plenary meetings of the Central Committee would be held every year. None of these specifications were met.

bitrary quotations or by views attributed to them on no-one-knows-what foundation. The monstrous accusations directed against Liu Shao-chi and other former leaders can only be taken seriously by those who have a stake in propagating them or by incurable innocents. The fact is eloquent, moreover, that not a few of the criticisms raised against these officials during the "cultural revolution" were raised in the past, sometimes in exactly the same terms, against other oppositionists by Liu Shao-chi, Peng Chen, Lo Jui-ch'ing, Chou Yang, etc. This said, the Maoist polemics and accusations hold a certain interest because they reflect the orientations and conceptions that the Chinese leaders wanted to prevail. In this sense, these arguments represent essential source material.<sup>18</sup>

In its initial phase, Mao's battle developed along the following lines:

(a) Attacking those intellectuals most dangerous both

17. Very significant in this regard is the polemic against the "miscellaneous scholars" undertaken by Teng To, which was spoken of frequently in the official publications, especially in June 1966.

18. As regards the orientation of the main leaders attacked by Mao and certain episodes in the struggle, see the report given to International Executive Committee of the Fourth International in March 1967. (*World Outlook*, August 25, and September 8, 1967.) (See also "Stormy Internal Conflicts in China," *World Outlook*, October 7, 14, 1966.)

because of the implications of their polemics and because of their position in the party and administrative apparatus (the offensive of November 1965); (b) winning the leading group in the army by eliminating the doubtful Lo Jui-ch'ing and by assuring strict control by Lin Piao (the military conference of January 1966); (c) dismantling the fortress around Peng Chen in Peking (the offensive of spring 1966).

As the conflict developed, Mao saw the breadth and the strength of the opposing front. He realized quite quickly that he could not win a majority, at least a stable majority, in the decisive party bodies and that even the campaigns he was launching could be deflected by other forces (see, for example, the vicissitudes of the first wave of the "cultural revolution" in the universities). The August 1966 Central Committee plenum, which ended with a certain compromise, confirmed the resistance of essential sectors of the apparatus. This is why, precisely at this time, he decided to renew the struggle by appealing to sectors of the masses. This decision could not fail to be heavy with consequences.

Why did Mao choose to appeal first to the students? The reasons for this are manifold and can be summed up as follows:

(a) This was a sector of the population particularly sensitive to certain kinds of appeals against the vestiges of conservative structures and conceptions. And this was true, above all, inasmuch as it suffered from some of the most acute tensions, which I have just mentioned.<sup>19</sup>

(b) The problem of the new generations and their relationship to the leadership of the party and the state was particularly felt and this concern had a basis in objective reality. In fact, for the older generations who had known the barbarous exploitation under the former regime, the gains of the revolution were not put in question by the difficulties and contradictions of the new government. For the youth, however, who had been born or who had grown up after the revolution, the revolutionary gains represented a starting point taken for granted and they were inevitably drawn to examine the failings and inequalities of the new society, whose possibilities they wanted to exploit fully, with a more critical eye. It was not without a profound significance that Mao strove to make the youth go through experiences substituting for those undergone by the anti-Japanese war and civil-war generations and to have them learn the horrors and the sufferings of Kuomintang China from the mouths of the old people.<sup>20</sup>

(c) Mobilization of the student masses involved much more limited consequences for the life of the country, especially in the functioning of the economy. Moreover, the leading group may have thought that the youth could be more easily controlled.

Thus the Red Guards were mobilized by means of revolutionary democratic and equalitarian slogans, and they mounted an assault on a very large section of the appara-

tus, and, more generally, against the various symbols of privilege. Although the initiative unquestionably came from above, and was tied to the specific interests of the Mao-Lin Piao tendency, the organization was not rigid in form or strictly controlled. From the beginning, a very pronounced fragmentation occurred, giving rise to sometimes very numerous groups competing among themselves in the name of the same Maoist orthodoxy (the official documents are quite explicit in this regard). In a series of schools and universities, including the University of Peking, these divisions and these internecine struggles stretched out over two years, lasting until the intervention of groups of workers at the end of July 1968. In the initial phase, the attacks of Mao's partisans were directed against "work groups" allegedly led by oppositionists. These groups were attacked especially for their "excesses" and their "violence." From the spring of 1967 on, the criticisms were directed primarily against ultraleftist, anarchist, etc., groups which were often accused of pushing too far in purging the old cadres. In general, from the beginning, a very clear tendency took form to outdistance the Maoist tops who had unleashed the mobilization, to break out of the limits that they wanted to impose, to work—despite the subjective will of Mao and Lin Piao—for clearly antibureaucratic and revolutionary goals. Those who fail to understand the objective dynamic of mass mobilizations and do not go beyond the intra-bureaucratic crises at the top cannot comprehend the full portent of the Chinese crisis of the last three years.

Facing the persisting resistance and difficulties, toward the end of 1966 Mao decided to appeal to the workers, calling on them also to mobilize directly and build revolutionary committees in the plants. The consequences of this appeal were not long in coming, and they far exceeded what Mao would have wanted. The beginning of 1967 was marked by a powerful wave of workers struggles (with strikes, demonstrations, building occupations, etc.), which, while it reached its height in Shanghai, spread throughout a number of the country's provinces and big cities. To quote the document with which we opened the discussion after the 1967 IEC plenum: "The immediate cause of the events of January 1967 lay in the rupture in the leadership of the Chinese CP and in the growing disintegration of the party and state apparatus at all levels. A vacuum, a relative absence of power, was thus created. In these conditions, in which the appeals to the masses helped, the various social forces were set in motion, each impelled by its own needs and objectives."

The question as to how much the Mao group's appeals influenced the demonstrations of January-February 1967 and how much it was the oppositionists who inspired or made use of these demonstrations is, after all, a secondary one.<sup>21</sup> The essential thing is that the workers judged the time had come to express their demands and to throw themselves into direct actions to win these demands. And at the same time they sought to develop new organiza-

19. Let us remember that, among other things, professors' salaries were among the highest.

20. Examples of youth listening to the stories of the old about their past recur quite frequently in Chinese publications.

21. In the case of Shanghai, it must be taken into account that the local leadership at the beginning of the "cultural revolution" had been considered a stronghold of the Maoist tendency and the accusations that the opposition fomented the

tions.<sup>22</sup> The tendency for the mobilization to get out of hand, which had distinguished the mobilization of the student masses, reoccurred in a still more explosive form among the workers.

The response of Mao and Lin Piao was again symptomatic. Their essential aim was to halt the strike movement, to canalize the mobilization of the workers, including by resorting to threats and repression. But at the same time, not wanting to cut themselves off from the masses, they continued to appeal to the population by launching the slogan of taking power, that is, a profound reorganization of the country's entire apparatus of leadership. It is precisely this attitude which explains why these outbreaks recurred periodically, why multifarious organizations mushroomed, and why the political crisis shook the country for a quite long period.

As regards the countryside, I must rectify the opinion expressed at the IEC plenum in March 1967 that the

movement was limited primarily to the areas close to the big cities like Shanghai and Peking. On the basis of many items provided since then by the official sources, I must conclude, rather, that the upset was quite widespread. In addition to the demands that I have already underlined—such as the demand for eliminating the relative disadvantage of the countryside—substantial peasant sectors raised demands similar to those that took shape after the halting of the movement of the People's Communes, especially in 1961-62—that is, a relative freedom for private accumulation, an expansion of the private plots, the chance to use the "free" market, a decrease in deliveries to the state, etc. It is significant that in certain cases it was the Maoists who sought to counteract excessive state intervention, which was attributed to Liu Shao-chi and his supporters. In other words, the "classical" conflicts of the transitional period were recurring once again in the Chinese countryside.

### III.

As I have said, faced with the movements which were sweeping the country, Mao intervened to halt them and canalize them, threatening to go as far as repressive measures and appealing primarily to the army, which in the decayed state of all the apparatuses, remained the only effective instrument.<sup>23</sup> He drew up a plan for politically reorganizing the country which could make use of the forces newly emerging from the great turmoil. In the initial phase, emphasis was put on revolutionary-democratic themes, appealing to the tradition and concepts of the Paris Commune. But all this was toned down quite rapidly<sup>24</sup> and new political and organizational forms appeared. Thus the formula of the "great alliance" was constantly repeated, whose aim was to unify all the various groups that had emerged. Also repeated over and over again was the formula of the "triple alliance," which as we know, was supposed to group the representatives of the masses, of the army, and of the cadres. It was on this basis that the "revolutionary committees" progressively formed, which were presented as the essential elements in the organization of the state and administration in general.

This reorganization was achieved, however, with very great difficulties. Manifold difficulties arose anew among the various tendencies and groups, all of which claimed to be Maoist. It was only on the eve of the anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic in 1968 that

the reorganization was completed in all the Chinese provinces. Despite at times stubborn resistance, the old cadres will be very largely "rehabilitated" (according to the current watchword, 95 percent should be considered healthy). But the army will unquestionably play the most important role in the entire operation, while representatives of the masses will probably get a higher percentage of seats in the committees.<sup>25</sup> It must not be forgotten, in any case, that these committees were not elected but were the product of agreements at the top. As for the students, I have already mentioned the leaders' moves to put an end to the conflicts in the universities. Let me add that the role reserved for the Red Guard has been more and more limited to the point that for several months after the fall of 1968, official propaganda almost stopped talking about it.<sup>26</sup>

The reorganization of the party, which is being completed by the congress in progress as this report is being given, is the culmination of the reconstruction that has followed the storm of the "cultural revolution." In Mao's concept, contrary to what some Maoists tinted with spontanéism think, the party retains its primary role. And it is significant that Liu has been insistently accused over the last months of spontanéist tendencies. Moreover, even in the periods in which the party structures were most profoundly shaken, the most important decisions were made and published in the name of the leading party bodies.<sup>27</sup>

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strike by means of this leadership seem to have scant foundation.

22. The official documents mentioned organizations of a trade-union type which arose at the time.

23. Differences existed, however, even in the army, certain sections of which were opposed to intervening directly in the vicissitudes of the political struggle.

24. The use of the term "Commune" to describe the new structures in a few big cities had only an ephemeral duration.

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25. According to Chinese sources, the members of the provincial revolutionary committees will number about 4,000 of which 2,000 are supposed to come from "the revolutionary masses."

26. This holds at least for the big national press, whose main articles are circulated widely abroad.

27. See on this subject the report to the March 1967 IEC plenum already cited.

## IV.

According to the propagandists of the "cultural revolution," the concepts formulated by Mao constitute an original contribution, a major development of Marxism-Leninism. In practice, the appeals to Marx and Lenin are being more and more overshadowed by excessive commendation of Chairman Mao's thought.

It could not be said that the Maoism of the "cultural revolution" involved any fundamentally new elements with respect to the Maoism of the past. And in this sense, the effort made by official propaganda to establish a line of strict continuity is not unfounded. Of course, the conceptions and orientations of the Chinese CP have undergone not a few swings and rectifications. That is why the present leaders are breaking sharply from everything considered "un-Maoist" in the history of the party, and to this end they have resorted to arbitrary reconstructions and outright falsifications, attributing the most embarrassing decisions to various scapegoats, especially Chen Tu-hsiu and Liu Shao-chi. Thus in the last analysis, the Maoist conceptions are a *mélange*. They are made-up reassertions of very general Marxist and Leninist propositions and of the experience of the Stalinist USSR, put in a positive light (including the collectivization of the early thirties); and—however strange it may seem—of certain Khrushchevist ideas; as well as specifically Maoist ideas which flow often from the specific features of the revolutionary history and present reality of China. In general, certain of the orientations proposed seem justified and may even have a concrete validity in a well defined context. But their error lies in trying to make a virtue of necessity and to erect purely empirical conclusions into theory. This, moreover, harks back to a tradition of the Chinese CP (we need only recall here the fanciful theories of the initial phase of the People's Communes).

The Maoist theories are understandable, however, if you take into account not only the present stage in the development of Chinese society but also an international context involving at once the constant threat of an imperialist aggression, relative economic encirclement of China, and the process of further degeneration in the USSR and in the European people's democracies. The crisis of the bureaucratized transitional society which emerged in the fifties has presented the bureaucracy itself with the hopeless problem of finding new or relatively new solutions with respect to the Stalinism of the thirties and forties. Over and above multiple variants, a solution was outlined in the Khrushchev-Libermann line, that is a right-wing technocratic bureaucratic solution whose results can already be judged on the basis of about fifteen years experience. In Mao's eyes, these results are fundamentally the following: (a) a deep-going social differentiation with the crystallization of privileged layers; (b) political administration completely divorced from the masses and exercised, in the last analysis, for the benefit of neobourgeois strata; (c) a development of powerful centrifugal forces both in the industrial and agricultural sectors (with the logic of profit-seeking prevailing in the former and tendencies to private accumulation predominating in the latter); (d) an ideological demobilization with a mush-

rooming of all kinds of revisionist theories which serve as a vehicle for an outright bourgeois ideology; (e) and last but not least, a line of compromise with imperialism on a world scale to the detriment of revolutionary struggles.

There is no need for me to recall the unquestionable historical fact that the degeneration of the USSR began well before 1953. What interests us here is that, basing themselves on the negative results in the USSR in the years 1959-69, the Maoists are trying to outline an alternative solution to the crisis of bureaucratized transitional society and to present the "cultural revolution" as a struggle to achieve such a solution.

Let us see then, briefly, what the Maoist solutions are in the main areas and to what extent they can be regarded as valid.

In the area of agriculture, Mao clarified or reasserted the following ideas during the "cultural revolution":

(a) Collectivization is a prerequisite for mechanization because otherwise industrialization in the countryside could not develop without introducing new productive relations and this would take place under conditions permitting a continual regeneration of capitalism.<sup>28</sup>

(b) Collectivization does not necessarily entail centralization and nationalization; to the contrary, it can facilitate the utilization of local resources and cut down state intervention.

(c) Mechanization must be based on giving priority to the development of a small and medium agricultural implements industry. As regards use of tractors, the solution of state tractor stations was rejected in favor of the Khrushchev-type solution of turning over the tractors to the communes.

(d) Nonmechanized methods of cultivation must be widely utilized and preference must be given to natural fertilizers.

(e) Production must not be spurred by adopting individual stimuli which smack of a capitalist logic. This implies a criticism of concepts relying on private plots, tendencies to individual accumulation, setting production quotas on a family rather than a group basis, and methods of remuneration which were in force before the "cultural revolution" (repeated criticism of "work-points in command").

The summit of all these conceptions is represented by the idea of the primacy of politics and Mao's thought, which leads to the primacy of political cadres, essentially, the party cadres, for whom political loyalty and class origin count for more than technical skills.

Let us remember, first of all, that similar ideas were behind the campaign for the Communes and even, to a lesser extent, for the development of cooperatives. However, the Communes failed to assure a stable, high rate of productive growth. They did not make it possible either to avoid economic and social differentiation among the peasants in the long run. These tendencies cannot,

28. A very important Chinese document on this question, "History of Struggle Between Two Lines," has been reprinted in No. 633 of *Selections from China Mainland Magazines*.

then, be eliminated now. And this is all the more true because the basic structure of the Communes remains much less collectivist than is generally thought and, despite everything, does not involve any qualitative differences from the kholkhozes.<sup>29</sup> The decision to turn over the tractors to the Communes and the appeal to self-help in contrast to broader state intervention—no matter what reasons inspired them—are, moreover, likely to provoke further differentiations.

As for individual or "private" stimuli, while they in fact involve a danger of inequality and can block the expansion of collectivist relations, they cannot be replaced in the long run by propaganda, by a simple appeal to subjective consciousness. They can only disappear really and completely when new objective conditions void them of their content. The verdict of experience, including in China, is absolutely clear in this matter.

Finally, the polemic against the methods of remuneration in force has not been accompanied thus far by any really innovating proposal. (The method adopted by the celebrated Tachai brigade, which is presented as a model, changes nothing fundamental. It involves primarily the peasants themselves estimating the remuneration to which they are entitled. It was already in practice before November 1965.)

In the state industrial sector, the real leadership in the past belonged to the party committee, which was considered to represent more the party at the plant level than the workers of the plant in which it was active. Participation from below was quite limited.<sup>30</sup> According to Chinese sources, the criterion of unified leadership exercised by the plant manager was later introduced, at least in some sectors. At the same time, the stress is supposed to have been put on the necessity of adopting profit as the basic index and the administrative apparatus is supposed to have considerably increased. In fact, economic arguments developed in China on several occasions that were similar to those which took place in the Soviet Union. The economist Sun Ken-fang, whose adversaries accused him of wanting to "put money and profit in command" is supposed to have come to the fore as an extreme Libermannist.<sup>31</sup>

In this sphere also, polemics seemed to predominate over concrete proposals and to the extent that solutions were outlined, they were more political measures designed to avoid or block certain degenerative processes than they were real innovations. Two important conferences had stressed already in April 1966 the demand for tripartite collaboration among the leadership, the technicians, and the masses, denounced the danger of technocratic backsliding, and reaffirmed the primacy of the party leadership and Mao's thought. During the wave of 1967 and the period of reorganization, the constantly recurring themes were the criticism of material incentives and opposition to the utilization of profit and profitability as

primary criteria, stress on the right of leadership belonging to the working class, the affirmation of the duty of cadres not to separate themselves from production and to reject all privileges, as well as the need for substantial reductions in the administrative apparatus.

This opposition to the technocratic bureaucratic solutions advocated in the Soviet Union and in the majority of the European people's democracies obviously cannot in itself be criticized. But we must not forget the following facts either:

(a) Planning and economic development cannot exclude certain economic indexes, of which profitability is one, without a very high cost in waste and irrationality which must be paid for in the final analysis by the masses.

(b) Rejection of material incentives as the supreme criterion is justified but it would be absolutely wrong to reject not only all kinds of material incentives but also all wage and income increases for the masses.<sup>32</sup> Sacrifices can be asked and even imposed during exceptional periods and with precise aims (for example, the Cubans' campaign for 10,000,000 tons of sugar), but such practices cannot be prolonged indefinitely without causing physical and psychological exhaustion, which, in the last analysis, has a negative effect on the productivity of labor—to say nothing of the possible political and social consequences.

(c) The tendency of the apparatus to become detached from the masses cannot be eliminated by voluntary and partial measures. It can only be counteracted if real workers management is achieved and genuinely democratic structures exist at all levels which deprive the apparatuses of all opportunity to determine the fundamental choices. It is symptomatic, moreover, that campaigns were conducted in the past also for direct participation of specialists and managers in production without preventing the crystallization of privileged apparatuses. Also, degenerative tendencies took form quite rapidly in the newly constituted "revolutionary committees." This must not, however, lead us to overlook the fact that mighty energies from below were mobilized and that broad strata of workers acquired a clearer consciousness of their rights and aspirations—which will not fail to have its consequences in the future.

I have already stressed the Chinese leaders' characteristic tendency to often make a virtue of necessity and to convert into a general rule a procedure that is valid only in a narrow sense or in a very specific context. This is the case, for example, of their *self-reliance* concept, which, moreover, is related to the concept of "socialism in one country." No one could honestly criticize China, which is still the target of severe economic sanctions by imperialism and hard hit by Moscow's criminal reprisals, for appealing to its people to use all their ingenuity. But we have to take a different view when the Maoist leaders advance the idea of self-reliance as a fundamental principle of building socialism. In the last analysis, exactly the contrary is true. China will only be able to overcome all its difficulties and contradictions—which have profound roots—when it can integrate itself in a truly inter-

29. Let me note once again that in the Communes, ownership by the production team, and to lesser extent the brigade, predominates over collective property in the strict sense.

30. On this subject, see Bettelheim, *op. cit.*

31. A notable article on the theory of value and profit in a transitional society was published in August 1966. (Hsinhua News Agency, August 13.)

32. A whole campaign has been developed in China to show that workers have no interest in material advantages.



national system of workers states endowed with a great economic potential.

Similarly, as I already said at the 1967 plenum, we cannot take for good coin the theory that the division of labor is being overcome in an original way in China. The system that requires the Chinese to devote themselves at the same time to industrial, agricultural, and cultural activities, as well as military training, may correspond to the needs of a period when a war against imperialism remains possible while the economic level of the country is still modest. However, such a system has nothing in common with the conditions that will be achieved in the stage of communism. The explanations given for sending or returning large contingents of youth to the countryside are of more or less the same sort. These campaigns are explained by the conflicts and bottlenecks I described in the first part of my report.

Regarding the political reorganization, the renewal achieved at the end of the great crisis is much more limited than the official propaganda would have us think. It is true that all the structures have been thoroughly shaken up and that a change occurred on a considerable scale. (I will return to the question of the objective consequences of three years of the "cultural revolution"). But, it must be repeated, the "revolutionary committees" which emerged as the essential instruments of renewal are not a real democratic emanation from the masses but the result of deals at the top, with the old cadres

regaining the basic functions in the majority of cases. Furthermore, despite the reconstruction of the party, the army has not ceased playing a leading role. Military men often hold the key posts in the committees. I am not forgetting that because of its class nature, its traditions, and its structure, the Chinese army cannot be compared with the traditional armies. But the question is whether the structure of any army—even the most democratic—can be considered a model of proletarian democracy for the society as a whole. I definitely do not think so.

But we can see the feature that most reveals the very undemocratic and unproletarian character of the structures of the Chinese workers state, even after the "cultural revolution," if we consider that according to the official conception, the crown of the whole edifice resides in Mao's thought. Mao's thought is considered the supreme, absolutely unquestionable, value. In other words, the summit of the whole structure is a small, highly centralized leadership, the quintessence and symbol of which is Mao, who is the object of an unbridled cult that is in fact most often absolutely grotesque.<sup>33</sup> A political structure which projects such an ideology is, in the last analysis, profoundly authoritarian, just as is any conception which calls for mobilizing the masses by slogans which are not designed to develop their consciousness or expand their critical spirit. Moreover, such an ideology is a very unreliable kind of social cement. And this, in the long or short run, means that the outlook is for new instabilities and new ruptures.<sup>34</sup>

## V.

I do not have the time here to deal extensively with the international role of Maoism. I will note only two quotations.

"Within the framework of the world Communist movement, the Fourth International reaffirms its critical support to the Chinese Communists in their struggle against the neoreformism of the Khrushchev leadership and of a big part of the other Communist leaderships, because it holds that the Chinese line on the fundamental problems of the anti-imperialist and anticapitalist struggles (methods of struggle against the war, conception of the colonial revolution, 'uninterrupted' revolution, the road to socialism in the advanced capitalist countries) is on the whole more progressive than that of the Khrushchevists and is more capable of polarizing the currents of the left in the Communist movement." (*Fourth International*, October-November, 1963, p. 63.)

The resolution of the 1965 World Congress stated among other things:

"The Fourth International has stressed many times that fundamentally the Sino-Soviet conflict involves two bureaucracies. But revolutionary Marxists never limit themselves to bare characterizations like this which cannot solve the problem of what specific attitude to take in each concrete case. They have never identified the workers states or the Communist parties with the bureaucracies leading them; nor have they viewed the bureaucracy as nothing but a single reactionary mass without internal distinctions.

On the contrary, they have tried in each concrete case to determine wherein the bureaucrats are only defending their own reactionary class interests and wherein they are compelled by their own social position to defend at the same time—in their own way—the acquisitions of a revolution. Similarly they have explained the stratification of the bureaucracy and how conflicts can arise between different layers under the pressure of conflicting objective factors and clashing social forces. . .

"The attitude of the world Trotskyist movement flows from the same logic. It supports the Chinese Communists in their defense of the Chinese revolution and the People's Republic of China against the economic blockade mounted by the Kremlin and against the military aid granted by the Kremlin to the Indian bourgeoisie. It supports the Chinese Communists in their struggle against the Khrushchev concept of conjuring away the danger of

33. The primary role of the masses proclaimed by the Chinese documents is rigorously subordinated to the acceptance and understanding of Mao's thought as the supreme value which must be "inculcated" into the population. Many quite explicit quotations could be given on this subject.

34. With regard to certain idealist features in the Maoist conceptions and ideology, see the chapter "The Ideology of the Mao Tendency" in the plenum report which has been previously cited. See also the article by E. Germain in *Quatrieme Internationale*, July 1967.

imperialist war through 'peaceful coexistence,' and their attitude toward the colonial revolution and their criticism of the neoreformist orientations of most of the Communist parties." (*International Socialist Review*, Spring 1966, p. 85.)

As the draft resolution shows, I consider that these evaluations remain fundamentally correct. For that reason I would be opposed to any change in orientation in this area. It goes without saying that we are not changing any of the criticisms that we advanced in the two documents quoted. On the basis of the experiences of the last

years, we give special stress to our criticism of the Maoist conception of the international Communist movement. This conception seeks to impose an absolute monolithism around "Mao's thought" and, in practice, around every position taken by the Chinese leading group. It is characterized by an extreme sectarianism with respect to any current, including any revolutionary current, which does not fit into the schemas of Maoist orthodoxy.<sup>35</sup> This conception and these attitudes are, moreover, at the root of the failures and fragmentation of the official Maoist groups in the majority of countries.<sup>36</sup>

## VI.

The "cultural revolution," which was unleashed as a result of conflicts among different tendencies at the summit of the Chinese Communist party, attained the scope of a profound social and political shakeup in its culminating phase. Whatever its conclusion, it has shaken the country from top to bottom, putting the apparatuses, the structures, and the relationships of forces again in question. The struggles of the masses for their demands will develop in the next stages in much more favorable objective and subjective conditions than in the past.

The draft resolution states unequivocally that the strategy of revolutionary Marxists in China is centered on the perspective of an antibureaucratic revolution which will be the task of the new vanguard of revolutionists presently in formation to achieve. Let me add that this vanguard has greatly progressed and matured in the course of the events of the last three years. The lack of real information makes it impossible to say exactly in what groups and in what sectors this vanguard appears. The charges of Trotskyism which have been leveled in certain documents have at least a symptomatic value. And there is no doubt that conceptions have developed among the Red Guards and the Revolutionary Rebels that are in reality closer to revolutionary Marxism than Maoism. In any event, it is among the most principled contingents of the youth who took part in the movements of August-September 1966 and the workers who unleashed the strikes of January-February 1967 that the cadres will emerge for an antibureaucratic revolution, for a real socialist democratic reorganization of the Chinese workers state.

The transitional demands which revolutionary Marxists propose to stimulate the mass antibureaucratic struggles in China were already formulated in the document which opened our discussion in 1967. They can be summed up as follows:

- Struggle for broader democracy for the masses and against bureaucratic advantages and privileges. Democratic election of committees by the masses, organization

of the state on the basis of such bodies. Freedom of organization and speech for all working-class political currents, trade-union independence from the state, the right to strike, the right of assembly, freedom of the press, the right to demonstrate and to participate in elections, permanent supervision by the masses of elected representatives and the right to recall them, in accordance with the lessons of the Paris Commune.

- Democratic planning by bodies democratically elected by the masses from the bottom to the top of the system. It is through such a system and not by decision of the bureaucratic tops that the fundamental economic choices must be determined—especially the relative share of investment and consumption, that is, in the last analysis, the wage level and the living conditions of the workers.

- In the countryside, complete democratization of the life of the Communes in order to counteract possible conservative tendencies. Real participation by the peasants in formulating general economic policy and the determination of the necessary priorities at every given stage.

- Rejection of all Zhdanovist-style conceptions and practices in the cultural field. Freedom of expression and criticism, rejection of the leader cult, and a free confrontation of ideas and tendencies. Struggle against the vestiges of the ideologies of the past must not be conducted by means of administrative measures and demagogic slogans but the development of the potentialities of the new society.

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35. The most extraordinary example of this is the attitude the Chinese leaders have taken toward the Cuban revolution and the Castroist movement, which has gone to the point of maintaining a conspiracy of silence against the epic and the death of Che Guevara. Similarly, the Chinese in general avoid mentioning the organizations and leaders of the Afro-American revolutionary movement, thus encouraging the sectarian blindness of their American supporters in the Progressive Labor Party.

36. In a series of countries, Maoist influence is expressed mostly in "unorthodox" pro-Chinese movements and organizations, often strongly colored by spontaneism.

# Resolution on Latin America

## I.

### Economic Tendencies and Increased Imperialist Exploitation

(1) Above and beyond the national and regional peculiarities and conjunctural ups and downs, the economic tendencies operating at present in Latin America remain pretty much the same as in the past, the most negative features tending generally to become worse. The situation can be summarized as follows: In no country has there been an economic expansion which would meet the needs of real development and counterbalance the rate of population increase. Industrialization, even when it extends into new sectors, remains limited and partial. Investment is inadequate and in no case offers a basis for more balanced development and absorption of the unemployed and underemployed. The national debt is still a source of financial crises and budgetary difficulties. The draining off of profits from the Latin-American economy (by American, but also, in part, European and Japanese imperialism) is continuing and increasing, as is the general unfavorable evolution in terms of trade. Agricultural production is deteriorating and proving in any case more and more inadequate with respect to the needs of consumption, which is growing, if only as a result of the increased population. The weight in the economy of low-profit or unprofitable sectors, far from decreasing, has risen still more. In most of these countries inflation remains a chronic or very frequent phenomenon.

(2) A relatively new tendency which has increased in recent years is a movement of foreign investment into

modern, dynamic industrial sectors not directly linked to the processing of raw materials. This has resulted in two things. First of all, it has created economic sectors exclusively controlled from the start by imperialist corporations in lines traditionally reserved to the so-called national bourgeoisie. Secondly, it has produced a grave and imminent threat to national industries which though relatively developed cannot meet the competition of a much more dynamic technology and far more efficient organizational and managerial techniques, and which moreover need capital not available locally. This means that while continuing to bear the crushing burden of all the traditional forms of economic domination and exploitation, Latin America now finds even its most modern sectors facing the same sort of threat the European countries face (absorption, elimination owing to American competition, etc.). The consequence can only be new economic distortions and greater imperialist exploitation. This means that an economic development in any way capable of solving this continent's tragic social problems is totally ruled out. This is all the more true because the Latin-American bourgeoisies have proved incapable, in general, of carrying out even very modest attempts to develop regional "common markets," and at a time when it is becoming more and more clear that the dimensions of the present national states are too narrow to permit a real takeoff for modern industry.

## II.

### Dynamics and Role of the Social Classes

(3) The economic and social processes, more especially in the past fifteen years, have culminated in important changes in the relative composition of the ruling classes. The most striking element has been the decline in the economic and political weight of the traditional layers of the big landlords, especially those less directly linked with the commercial and financial bourgeois layers. The more specifically urban ruling strata, linked to the new industrial sectors, to big business and to financial capital, have increasingly played the fundamental role, seeking to translate this economic and social reality into new formulas of political rule (for example, the Frei experiment in Chile, to a lesser extent that of Belaúnde in Peru).

However, the relative reenforcement of the industrial bourgeoisie in nowise means that a vigorous social class has developed able to play an effective leading role and to act independently. The economic consolidation of this

class, its existence, is tightly bound up with the operations and interests of Yankee imperialism; or, in far fewer cases, of European imperialism. In the best of cases, it is more precisely joint ventures of foreign and native capital that is involved in which the native capitalists most often play a completely subordinate role and have no possibility of acting on their own. Thus, it would be absolutely incorrect to project the perspective of an increased role for the national bourgeoisie as a historical class capable of any kind of consistent struggle to free itself from imperialist tutelage (the bankruptcy of the Belaúnde experiment is significant in this regard, since Peru is one of the countries where there has unquestionably been a certain amount of industrial development).

(4) As a result of the well-known phenomena of the last fifteen to twenty years, and especially with the growing urbanization, the new petty-bourgeois strata — white collar

workers in various government bureaus, trade, and the services, the liberal professions, etc. — have gained strength. These are the strata where the ideological influence of imperialism is the strongest (relative success of propaganda for the model of the consumer society, for the American Way of Life, etc.), where it is most difficult to mobilize against imperialism, and where the government parties recruit their electoral clientele (for example, part of Frei's support in Chile, of Leoni's in Venezuela, of the old coalition parties in Peru). However, the position of these strata is quite precarious, either because they live off risky enterprises or get their incomes (at least in part) more from assorted expedients skirting the law than from the "normal" functioning of the economic machine. They are at the mercy of this or that clique or group in power, being the first in any case to pay the price for recessions, attacks of inflation, and changes in the ruling cliques. They have no perspective for any real security or substantial social advancement for their children (who swell the ranks of the students engaging in "confrontations"). This new petty bourgeoisie, then, can temporarily aid the political operations of the ruling classes and imperialism; but, in the last analysis, it is no social cement for the system; and, in critical situations, it can be swept by sudden flames of revolt. In certain countries, moreover, layers of employees of the state and of different administrations have already played an important role in some of the broad and militant trade-union mobilizations.

(5) The peasantry represents a decreasing percentage of the total population and its specific economic weight is declining more markedly and more rapidly than its quantitative weight. In certain countries particularly, the tendency toward expansion of the agricultural proletariat is increasing. Nevertheless, in absolute terms it still constitutes the majority and often the overwhelming majority of the population. It is still the social class which suffers the worst exploitation and oppression and which, in the existing economic and social context, has the least perspective.

The causes of the peasants' discontent and anger are manifold—the traditional land hunger, the choking off of subsistence agriculture, conflict with the state administration which extorts taxes and appears most often as an instrument of repression in the service of the exploiters, disillusionment arising from the fraudulent nature of the official "agrarian reforms," fear of a comeback by the landlords in the countries where they have had to renounce certain privileges, difficulties arising from price and market problems especially for small independent farmers, unfavorable repercussions from prices on the world market, etc. In countries like Peru, Guatemala, Bolivia, etc., the social oppression is also expressed in terms of national oppression, hitting a high percentage of the population. The outcome is always the same. Far from improving, the lot of the peasants remains tragic and is even getting worse. Hence the persistent impetus to struggle and revolt. This is all the more true because the peasants are less and less isolated from the international political and ideological currents; have largely assimilated the lesson of the Cuban revolution; have learned a great deal from the guerrilla experiences and are not cut off from the student revolutionary movements, whose influence reaches them through a thousand different channels.

(6) The working class has not undergone any quanti-

tative growth, despite the development of industrial production in certain countries. This is due to the fact that certain industrial advances have gone hand in hand with a crisis in the traditional sectors and have been based on technological innovations and rationalizations which involve a contraction rather than an expansion in manpower employed. Aside from completely exceptional cases, the tendency is by no means for the standard of living to rise but rather to stagnate and most often decline (in some cases, for example, Uruguay, to a dramatic degree). For both objective reasons (unemployment, underemployment, etc.) and subjective reasons (their subordination to the government, their bureaucratization, the control of pro-Soviet Communist parties, etc.), the trade-union organizations are increasingly incapable of meeting this situation, even of exercising effective pressure within the framework of the system. Most often it is primarily the mechanism of inflation that depresses the workers' standard of living, cancelling out the wage gains that are occasionally made. Furthermore, from the social standpoint, the workers are usually the ones who often suffer the effects of the rural exodus, inasmuch as their very modest wages must provide the subsistence for groups of relatives and friends swollen by newcomers from the countryside (in exceptional cases, as for example in Bolivia during the crisis in the mines, the inverse phenomenon develops, namely, a partial return of workers to their villages of origin). Finally, the proletarian populace has not experienced any improvement in housing, living conditions, medical care, transportation, etc., or the possibility to assure a normal education for their children.

For all these reasons, the working class is absolutely not, and has no consciousness of being, even a relatively privileged layer—as superficial theoreticians claim. Exploited and oppressed in manifold forms by the capitalist and imperialist system, they have not ceased in reality to be an explosive force, a motor force of the revolution. Powerful strikes in defiance of military dictatorships (for example, in Brazil), mobilizations accompanied by clashes with the repressive forces (Uruguay, Chile, Bolivia, etc.), linkups between nuclei of workers and the student movement (Mexico, Brazil) constitute, moreover, significant symptoms of a proletarian resurgence at the present time. If the broadest layers of the working class are still immobilized or neutralized and if the workers have not been able to play a substantial role in the revolutionary actions of recent years in certain countries, this is by no means a result of any degeneration or intrinsic weakness of the proletariat as a revolutionary force. It is the result of well-defined concrete factors, such as the momentary prostration resulting from severe defeats and repressions; the pernicious role of the trade-union bureaucracies which are more and more integrated into the government structure, especially in certain important countries, the no less negative role of opportunist political leaderships enjoying prestige sometimes rubbed off from an international Communist tradition, the weight of unemployment which has continued to increase in recent years, and the danger of reprisals in the event of struggles or strikes—which is a danger the workers are ready to face only if they see a real perspective for political change.

(7) As a result of the persistence, or even accentuation of the rural exodus, the concentrations of plebian masses

on the periphery of the big cities are still growing. These masses can find no real openings in the basic economic structure and remain condemned to a poverty-stricken and precarious existence (sometimes a meager wage must suffice for a whole group, sometimes they live literally from hand to mouth, most often they apply their "initiative" in the most diverse ways, from peddling and occasional services to theft and prostitution). The assignment of a part of this disinherited population to the service sector is an outright statistical obfuscation. Far from being a symptom of progress and modernization, the expansion of the "services" is only an additional expression of the economic and social decay, involving the extension of nonproductive activities and of strata with the most precarious and pathetic kind of income. For this reason the masses grouped around the big cities still represent an explosive potential which could be fully tapped in critical situations by the revolutionary forces. This potential, moreover, has already partially expressed itself several times in the course of the last ten years and in abrupt and violent mobilizations (for example, in Caracas, Rio de Janeiro, Santiago de Chile). More particularly, because of its essentially peasant origin and proletarian composition, this plebian element offers precious opportunities for concrete linkups between the working class and the peasantry and for the circulation of revolutionary ideas.

(8) The revolutionary student movement shook several Latin-American countries simultaneously with the student upsurge sweeping Western Europe and the United States. Common objective causes and subjective factors are unquestionably at the root of this upsurge which fits into the more general framework of the international revolt of the young generation. The common feature uniting all these struggles is the irresistible impulse generated by the ever deeper and more dramatic crisis shaking imperialism as a world system (which is concretized most specifically in Latin America in the influence of the Cuban revolution). It would be an error, however, to make too close an

identification or analogy, forgetting in particular that:

(a) Students in the colonial and semicolonial countries have traditionally played a progressive and even revolutionary role since the beginning of the anti-imperialist struggles and they also played this role in powerful mobilizations for university reform in the twenties.

(b) The phenomenon of the population explosion in the universities and schools which is at the base of the crisis in the European countries has not assumed the same proportions.

This does not imply any underestimation of the revolutionary role the student strata can play on a continental scale in Latin America. In any case the role of the students will be much more substantial than in the past and must no longer be conceived as simply a supporting force or source of cadres for the revolutionary organizations. The student movement must be understood as a political and social force capable of stimulating or deepening revolutionary crises by its intervention. This is true for the following reasons:

(a) The dynamics of the student mass movement is assuming an entirely different character than in the past because it no longer expresses the demands of strata of the national bourgeoisie for independence and autonomy. The student movement, whatever its point of departure, is becoming a consistently anti-imperialist and anticapitalist movement (reflecting, among other things, a change in the social composition of the student population with the access to education of broad petty-bourgeois and even popular strata).

(b) The international and continental context has radically altered, opening new perspectives with regard to the radicalization and mobilization of petty-bourgeois forces.

(c) The cadres and activists of the student movement have not suffered all the demoralization from the bad experiences of the old organizations and their leaderships and are not tied by any umbilical cord to the traditions of the workers movement or the traditional national-revolutionary movement.

### III.

## Political Situation and Perspectives

(9) The essential features of the political development can be summed up schematically as follows:

(a) Bankruptcy or profound crisis of the regimes which were presented as pilot models of the "democratic reformism" boosted with the propaganda send-off of the so-called Alliance for Progress (the fall of the Belaúnde regime in Peru following the bankruptcy of the most "progressive" wing of the national bourgeoisie, crisis of the Frei regime in Chile, deep erosion of the Venezuelan regime, which is incapable even of performing its repressive functions effectively).

(b) The collapse of the political equilibrium in those countries which for both historical and conjunctural reasons have known rather long periods of relative stability, and which represent exceptions with regard to the conditions prevailing on the continent as a whole (Uruguay and Mexico).

(c) A universal tendency toward the establishment

of open or hypocritically camouflaged military regimes.

(d) A crisis of the military regimes themselves which are proving incapable of offering any solutions of the least durability to the crucial problems and as a result can maintain themselves only by the harshest repression (Bolivia, Brazil, etc.).

These conditions and tendencies as a whole, which in the last analysis reflect the economic and social tendencies mentioned above, create not only a continentwide structural instability but more precisely a prerevolutionary situation which is taking the form of both a more or less rapid ripening of profound social and political explosions (Brazil, Mexico, Chile), the outbreak of real revolutionary crises (Uruguay), and the emergence of a state of civil war in certain countries (Guatemala and partially Bolivia). The year 1968, in particular, was marked by a new revolutionary upsurge expressed in the mass mobilizations in Mexico and Brazil, the July-August crisis in Uruguay,

the breakup of the regime and renewal of struggle in Bolivia a few months after the grave defeat of the guerrilla group led by Che, and the first symptoms of a revival of working-class nuclei in countries which have undergone years of stagnation (for example, Argentina).

(10) In view also of the international context (involving primarily the Cuban revolution's continuing to play its historic role\*), the general perspective must be one of increasing and mounting social and political tensions tending toward the outbreak of revolutionary situations.

In the economic sphere, a major improvement and hence a reversal of the trend would only be possible, for example, under the following conditions: a substantial rise in agricultural production, industrial development capable of absorbing large masses of the unemployed or underemployed population; the creation of new jobs for the youths leaving the universities and schools generally; a favorable trend in the prices of certain products on the world market; the defense and expansion of outlets compromised or threatened, among other things, by the Common Market and the arrangements between the Common Market and certain African countries; and the development, if only very incompletely, of Latin-American common markets. These are clearly unrealizable conditions in the present context, and thus the situation is hopeless for any economic solution, with all the inevitable implications this entails in the political field. In this context, then, the ruling classes will have no chance of forming coalitions or blocs on any even relatively stable base. In particular, this is so because none of the strata of these classes—including the "new" national bourgeoisie—can get any real popular support either in the cities or in the countryside; because, as difficulties mount, internecine struggles within these classes will inevitably multiply; and because American imperialism's margin for maneuver—most of all in the economic sphere but also in the political—is tending to shrink constantly.

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\* It is not the purpose of this document to analyze the inner development of the Cuban revolution. However, it is obvious that the survival of the Cuban revolution and its maintaining its present role are dependent in the long run on an extension of the revolution in Latin America. The threat of imperialist military action against Cuba still exists and the crushing of the revolutionary regime would have very grave repercussions throughout Latin America. The danger of bureaucratization is not excluded. Objective factors favor such a development despite the conscious antibureaucratic campaign by a leadership which over a decade has given many proofs of its capacity.

This does not exclude possible oscillations in the most disparate directions, including new ephemeral pseudo-reformist attempts, political gambles, and even variants within the framework of military regimes (groups of officers are continually playing at "Nasserism" in several countries and the immediate import of military coups is not always the same in every given situation). But this will change nothing in the general, deep-seated tendency: in a situation of chronic crisis and prerevolutionary tensions, the ruling classes will inevitably be impelled to adopt brutal repressive measures and utilize despotic and terrorist political regimes. Since these classes often are not very solid as social forces and cannot realistically contemplate solving their problems with popularly based reactionary regimes on the fascist model, military regimes remain the most likely recourse.

This is all the more so because the military strives to constitute a relatively coherent force united by common caste interests and characterized by a discipline absent from other social formations, thus able to function effectively as an instrument of leadership and political organization and even to outline an ideology of its own (which does not exclude the existence of perceptibly different currents among the military, reflecting in the last analysis different places in the hierarchy and different shares in the booty).

To the extent that the native conservative forces reveal their inherent impotence more directly and prove incapable of preventing the collapse of the system, American imperialism will finally be compelled to intervene militarily, either in direct form or in the guise of one of its "national" allies.

Thus not only in a historical sense but in a more direct and immediate one, Latin America has entered a period of revolutionary explosions and conflicts, of armed struggle on different levels against the native ruling classes and imperialism, and of prolonged civil war on a continental scale.

It goes without saying that this conclusion by no means implies the simplistic interpretation of an inevitable collapse of the system. If the objective possibilities are not exploited in time by the revolutionists, imperialism and indigenous capitalism will reorganize, if only precariously, alternating between "new" and traditional solutions.

## IV.

### Criteria and Lines of a Revolutionary Strategy

(11) The fundamental dynamics of the Latin-American revolution is the dynamics of permanent revolution, in the sense that the revolution is developing into a socialist revolution without intermediary stages or dividing lines. This does not mean that the revolution could not begin as a democratic anti-imperialist revolution in regard to its objectives and the consciousness of the masses participating in it. But such a possibility does not affect the inherent logic of the process with all its inevitable implications for the lineup and role of the social classes. Because a workers state already exists in Latin America, in an eminently revolutionary world context; because the broad-

est masses are constantly impelled by powerful objective factors to struggle against the capitalist system as such and have made great advances in their social and political consciousness; and because the imperialists, after the Cuban experience, have clearly recognized the dynamics of the confrontation that is developing, the perspective of the permanent revolution is no longer only a historical tendency but a reality in this stage of the class struggle. The age of permanent revolution, in a direct and immediate sense, has already begun in Latin America. The fact that this conclusion is shared by the leadership of the first Latin-American socialist revolution is a historic step

forward. This leadership by its attitudes, its actions and generalizations has contributed in a decisive way to the maturing of a new vanguard.

(12) The first conclusion that follows from this analysis is that any perspective of collaborating with the "national" bourgeoisie or certain of its so-called progressive sectors must be rejected. Parallel to this, all equivocal conceptions or formulas on the nature of the revolution such as "national democracy," "people's democracy," "anti-imperialist revolution," or "bloc of four classes," which have been irretrievably refuted both positively and negatively by vital revolutionary experiences, must be rejected. In this area, too, what was true in general in the past is assuming a more concrete and immediate importance when, faced with the Cuban workers state, the bourgeoisie cannot help but align itself on the side of imperialism (leaving aside possible temporary diplomatic maneuvers) and is proving itself absolutely incapable of achieving a program of even the most modest democratic reforms. New or relatively new tendencies in industrial development (see points 2 and 3) do not justify any change in the basic evaluation. The national bourgeois strata linked to modern industry arise or develop by intertwining themselves completely within the imperialist structures and in strictest dependence on them. They are intrinsically incapable of the least independent action in either the economic or political fields.

(13) In a revolution proceeding according to the logic of the permanent revolution and in a worldwide and Latin-American context, which necessarily forces a split between the fundamental classes from the outset, the leading role in achieving revolutionary democratic objectives belongs to the working class, which, by its place in the process of production, is the basic force antagonistic not only to imperialism but to native capital. This does not imply any underestimation of the role of the peasantry, especially of the poorest peasant strata and radicalized petty-bourgeois layers. In fact, in most of the countries the most probable variant is that for a rather long period the peasants will have to bear the main weight of the struggle and the revolutionary petty bourgeoisie in considerable measure will provide the cadres of the movement. This means that the leading role of the proletariat can be exercised under diverse forms: either directly by the wage workers (industrial workers, miners or agricultural workers) participating at the head of revolutionary struggles, which will doubtless be the case in only a minority of Latin-American countries; or indirectly, the leadership of these struggles being in the hands of organizations, tendencies, or cadres issuing from the workers movement; or in the historic sense of the term, by means of the program and theories issuing from Marxism. The completion of the revolution into a socialist revolution is in any case inconceivable without the mobilization and very broad participation of the proletariat.

(14) The problem now posed in Latin America is not that of determining in general terms the driving forces of the revolution, a problem which for revolutionary Marxists has been resolved at the theoretical level. The working class, still representing a small percentage of the population in most of these countries, obviously cannot play its role without the fundamental and irreplaceable support of the peasantry. The events of 1968, moreover, have further clarified the role which radicalized petty-

bourgeois strata and the masses of student youth can play (among other things, they can serve as a medium for concrete interaction between the cities and the countryside, between the urban vanguard and the vanguard forming in the villages). Gigantic forces composed of millions of men and women in fact exist and can be mobilized in revolutionary struggle now or in the next stage. The real problem is to determine and to apply a strategy based on premises of general scope while being at the same time adjusted to specific and conjunctural needs, which could take advantage of all the existing potential, coordinate the different sectors, and strike the adversary effectively without running the danger of the movement being crushed. In the immediate future, the revolutionary vanguard must be aware of the grave danger inherent in the present situation, characterized, particularly in several countries, by a crying contradiction between the objective potential and the subjective will to struggle of broad strata on the one hand and on the other by the persistent weakness of the organized vanguard, even sectors which have played an effective role in major episodes of the most recent years. The danger lies more precisely in the possibility either of spontaneous explosions without a leadership and without clear perspectives, or premature and adventurist moves by nuclei of courageous militants. In both cases, the result would be a quick and murderous repression which would decimate the vanguard and throw the movement back.

(15) The rich experiences in guerrilla warfare — with its successes, its vital role in upsetting the political equilibrium, and even its grave defeats — as well as the experiences with great mass movements, especially in 1968, which have revalidated urban struggles, against the generalizations of superficial theoreticians, but which have at the same time confirmed their limitations and their blind alleys, make it possible now to delineate more clearly an overall strategy, avoiding the sterile antithesis between conceptions based on the absolute primacy of mass work, which consider guerrilla warfare to be only a completely secondary point of support, and simplistic conceptions, according to which guerrilla warfare alone can unfailingly unleash a revolutionary process and assure its victorious development.

There is no universally valid formula which can be applied to surmount difficulties and contradictions which have real objective roots; even the adoption of correct basic guidelines offers no automatic guarantee against making mistakes in applying them. In other words, no generalization is sufficient to resolve the problems facing the revolutionary movement unless it is constantly tested and enriched by concrete analyses. The failure of certain guerrilla experiments (in Peru, for example) came about, in large measure, more from errors in assessing the situation, the trends, and the relationship of forces among the masses than from errors in conception.

In Latin America, the polemic between the advocates of the "democratic" and "peaceful" road and the advocates of the revolutionary road has been entirely outmoded; the first hypothesis does not have the least objective justification and can be defended only by naive and unrepentant utopians or by ossified bureaucrats who have lost all revolutionary perspective and inspiration and whose sole concern is to cover up their conservative, routinist practices with theoretical obfuscation. The prob-

lem which is posed is that of the concrete forms of the revolutionary road; it is necessary to guard against simplistic schemas on the one hand, but on the other, no concession whatever must be made to ideas according to which armed confrontation, conceived as the culmination of a progressive rise and broadening of the mass movement, can in principle be reduced to a minimum.

The fundamental perspective, the only realistic perspective for Latin America is that of an armed struggle which may last for long years. This is why the technical preparation cannot be conceived merely as one of the aspects of the revolutionary work, but as the fundamental aspect on a continental scale, and one of the fundamental aspects in countries where the minimum conditions have not yet been met. It must not be forgotten, however, that the armed struggle itself cannot succeed, in the last analysis, except on the basis of a correct political line, and that the application of such a revolutionary strategy requires first assembling a minimum of organized and politically homogeneous forces.

(16) The great mass mobilizations of 1968 were extraordinarily important because they expressed the depth and explosive nature of the contradictions of Latin-American society and its structures; because they swept away with one blow all the "theorizing" on the inherent corruption of the urban milieu and *a fortiori* all the lucubrations on the incapacity of the worker masses and the urban masses in general to play a dynamic revolutionary role; because they gave a powerful stimulus to the maturing of thousands of new cadres who will be instrumental in the victory of the revolutionary struggles which are being prepared. Nonetheless, revolutionary Marxists cannot conclude from this that the "classical" variant calling for a progressive rise and broadening of the mass movement and its structuring and reinforcement through traditional organizational forms before it reaches the armed struggle has been revalidated. In the international context, after all the experiences of the last decade and in face of an increasingly brutal repression by the native ruling classes and imperialism, such a variant is not the most probable. In reality, the adversary is in no wise ready to allow a mass revolutionary movement to organize more or less legally or normally, not only because in the given economic and social conditions a general mobilization even for economic goals would threaten disastrous consequences for the system, but also and above all because the men in power no longer underestimate the dynamics of mass movements, even when they start off with limited objectives. The experience of Bolivia, where all forms of normal organizational activity are continually stamped out, as well as the experience of Peru, where the repression has not let up since 1962, especially in the countryside, are absolutely clear. The same holds for Mexico where the ruling class, reverting to its most barbaric traditions, did not hesitate to stage a full-fledged massacre of the students (the Brazilian regime's official and "semiofficial" counter-attack followed the same logic).

The exceptional variant of an explosive crisis involving the breaking up or paralysis of the state apparatus and a mass mobilization so impetuous that it could prevent or neutralize recourse to repression as a decisive measure, cannot be categorically excluded, but a strategy on a con-

tinental scale cannot be based on exceptional phenomena, and in such a case imperialism would very likely intervene militarily (as happened already in the case of Santo Domingo).

(17) Even in the case of countries where large mobilizations and class conflicts in the cities may occur first, civil war will take manifold forms of armed struggle, in which the principal axis for a whole period will be rural guerrilla warfare, the term having primarily a geographical-military meaning and not necessarily implying an exclusively peasant composition of the fighting detachments (or even necessarily preponderantly peasant composition). In this sense, armed struggle in Latin America means fundamentally guerrilla warfare.

The strict selection of this central axis must be complemented by a very precise understanding that there will inevitably be a whole gamut of variants and that the different factors at work will combine in different forms according to the different countries and conjunctural situations. The two extreme possibilities can be indicated almost symbolically by taking on the one hand the case of a country like Uruguay where the armed struggle will be essentially urban and where the regime could have already been overthrown on the basis of a powerful urban mass movement if it had been technically and politically armed with such a perspective, and on the other hand by taking the case of a country of overwhelmingly peasant composition, without large urban concentrations, where the guerrilla war will be almost exclusively rural and peasant until the very eve of the enemy's final defeat. A variant that merits particular study is that of very large countries where armed struggle could result in the occupation of whole regions, geographically and socially favorable to this, for a prolonged period without bringing on the disintegration of the central power. In such cases the contradiction of mobile columns would not necessarily be contradictory to that of liberated zones.

(18) Under the perspective of a prolonged civil war with rural guerrilla warfare as its principal axis, even in the most difficult phases of severe repression and temporary prostration, the problem of liaison between the guerrillas and the masses will be a vital one.

In a situation of prerevolutionary crisis such as Latin America is now experiencing on a continental scale, guerrilla warfare can in fact stimulate a revolutionary dynamic, even if at the start the attempt may seem to have come from abroad or to be unilateral (which was the case with Che's Bolivian guerrilla movement). But in any case it must be realized that without the active sympathy, the protection, and the solidarity of certain sectors of the masses, the chance for consolidating and strengthening the guerrilla nuclei diminish to the extreme and the political repercussions which the armed action is striving to provoke dwindle. Secondly a major problem which no clear-sighted revolutionary leadership can sidestep is how to utilize all the explosive social potential (which for structural reasons cannot be channeled into the framework of the actions and initiatives proper to revolutionary minorities) during the whole struggle and not just at the culminating moment of the overthrow of the system.

Hence the necessity to:

(a) Take advantage of every opportunity not only to increase the number of rural guerrilla nuclei but also to



promote forms of armed struggle specially adapted to certain zones (for example, the mining zones in Bolivia) and to undertake actions in the big cities aimed both at striking the nerve centers (key points in the economy and transport, etc.) and at punishing the hangmen of the regime as well as achieving propagandistic and psychological successes (the experience of the European resistance to Nazism would be helpful in this regard).

(b) Advance a program not just of immediate economic and political demands but also transitional demands able to mobilize and raise the political consciousness of the worker, petty-bourgeois, and plebian masses as well as the student masses and thus create growing tensions threatening the system (this would also make it more difficult for the governments to concentrate their repressive forces exclusively in the zones of armed struggle). An orientation and mobilization based on a transitional program conceived in accordance with the logic of an anti-capitalist struggle would, moreover, help certain revolutionary organizations to overcome the difficulties arising from the fact that while having been formed for revolutionary combat and armed struggle, these organizations have been unable for conjunctural reasons to put their ideas into practice. They thus run the risk in practice of combining abstract revolutionary propaganda with mobilizations for immediate goals which do not involve a revolutionary dynamic, even if pursued by extraparliamentary and extralegal means. The determination of the themes of a transitional program for each given stage is clearly the task of revolutionists in the various countries.

(19) Such a conception of the revolutionary strategy of armed struggle and guerrilla war refutes not only the simplistic "guerrillist" idealizations (which reflect a lack of patience with regard to organized action and a hope of substituting improvisations for the whole, often onerous, labor of preparation and organization), but also the spontaneist theses which challenge the role of the party (most often on the basis of an arbitrary interpretation of and generalization on the Cuban revolution). Spontaneism, substituting abstract notions for concrete historical analy-

sis, draws the conclusion, from the absolutely necessary critique of specific parties which bear a heavy responsibility for the manifold failures and prolonged prostration of the workers movement, that parties in general must be rejected as instruments of revolutionary struggle. From their very nature, such conceptions are incapable of providing an answer to the essential problem of the liaisons between the guerrillas, the armed struggle and the mass movement and the political development of the latter. Unfortunate experiences have been, in the last analysis, brought about or facilitated either by false or illusory solutions to this problem or a mystical confidence in the automatic nature of certain processes.

While it is necessary to reject the schematic and paralyzing conception according to which everything hinges on the preliminary existence of a genuine party with all its traditional structures (and the Cuban experience has unquestionably shown that under certain conditions it is possible for the political organization to develop and reinforce itself as the armed struggle unfolds), the two following fundamental facts must, however, never be lost sight of:

(a) The existence and functioning of a revolutionary party, far from being an outworn schema of outmoded Marxists, corresponds to the concrete and ineluctable needs of the development of the armed struggle itself (this, among other things, is the lesson of Hugo Blanco's experience in Peru).

(b) The revolutionists must struggle for the most favorable variant: acting in such a way that when the armed struggle begins, if there is not already a genuine party, completely structured, with a large mass influence (a very unrealistic perspective in almost all of the Latin-American countries) in existence, there is at least solid nuclei of a political organization, coordinated on a national scale. This means more particularly in the countries where the armed struggle is not on the agenda at present, not to choose the road of spontaneist or putschist temptations inexorably doomed to failure, but to take advantage of the breathing space.

## V.

### Situation of the Revolutionary Workers Movement and the General Lines of Orientation

(20) The Cuban revolution, the conflicts in the international Communist movement, particularly the Chinese polemics, and the experiences of the struggle in recent years have produced profound upsets, new relationships of forces, splits, and multiple realignments in the Latin-American revolutionary workers movement. The overall picture can be outlined as follows:

(a) The Cuban revolution continues to represent the fundamental pole of attraction, and on the level of ideological and political influence the Castroist current remains by far the strongest. However, this tendency has not developed any important degree of organization and in fact the OLAS likewise has not succeeded either in finding a solution to the problem of crystallizing and consolidating organized new vanguards.

(b) The traditional workers organizations have been undergoing an irreversible erosion and are being ceaselessly shaken by grave crises. In certain socialist parties (Chile, Uruguay), the Castroist influence is very strong. And this is true also for most of the Communist parties, especially those which have not yet suffered left splits and are compelled to engage in centrist maneuvers in order to capitalize, if only partially, on the prestige of the Cuban revolution (e.g., the attitude of the current represented by Arismendi and certain attitudes even of the Chilian CP).

(c) The revolutionary nationalist movements which played a key role for a whole period have definitively exhausted themselves; and where they retain a measure of influence (APRA in Peru, AD in Venezuela), this goes

hand in hand with an outright reactionary policy. This does not exclude the possibility that tendencies or groups issuing from these movements can survive and still play a certain role, on condition, however, that they break completely with the old organizational structures and integrate themselves into the revolutionary left on the basis primarily of defense of the Cuban revolution (this possibility exists, for example, for left Peronist nuclei, Brazilian left nationalist currents, and groups in the PRIN and even in the left MNR in Bolivia). The problem of relations of the revolutionary organizations with such groups, moreover, is an aspect of the more general problem of the relations between the revolutionary vanguards and petty-bourgeois sectors capable of being drawn into the struggle against imperialism and national capitalism.

(d) The revolt of the Catholic vanguard has now assumed considerable scope (Camillo Torres has become the symbol of a continentwide current) and will increase still more in the coming stages of the struggle. The importance of this rests fundamentally in the fact that it is an additional expression of the way the social and political crisis is tearing the ideological fabric of the system, driving toward the revolutionary pole plebeian and petty-bourgeois strata who have been tied essentially by ideological bonds.

(e) The revolutionary left is going through a feverish phase of splits and restructuration with a whole gamut of results, going from the important advances in vanguard regroupment in Brazil (especially the formation of the POC) to the still very difficult situation of the Peruvian revolutionary organizations (where the Vanguardia Revolucionaria gained strength relatively for a certain time owing to the fact that it was hit much less hard by the repression than the FIR, the MIR, and the ELN), from new experiments on a centrist or left centrist basis (for example, the Argentinian student organization which came out of a split from the CP) to other experiences following a much more revolutionary direction (the Chilean MIR in particular). The birth and development of revolutionary groups and organizations have been stimulated by the example of the Cuban revolution, the continentwide pre-revolutionary situation, the anti-imperialist struggle in Asia and more particularly Vietnam, and, recently, by the repercussions of the international wave of student revolt. The temporary difficulties, the lack of experience, the inevitable failures, and the contradictory impulses coming from the international workers movement are causing a fragmentation which reflects in part the historic divisions in the working-class movement and results in new variants and combinations which in certain cases represent a new level in the reorganization of the revolutionary movement (for example, the experiences of the POC and PCR in Brazil, the Castroist and pro-Chinese movements in Santo Domingo, the united Guatemalan guerrilla front).

While the revolutionary left starts off from a common acceptance of the general conception of armed struggle, a basic division repeatedly recurs over the characterization of the Latin-American revolution, with certain tendencies still questioning its outright anticapitalist character, advancing the old formulas of anti-imperialist, antiféudal, people's revolution, etc., and thus leaving open the perspective of collaboration with layers of the "national" bourgeoisie (see in this regard particularly the theses

of the orthodox pro-Chinese organizations). A second cleavage emerges around conceptions advanced under the opposing form of a people's war (most often based on the Asian experiences). Finally, differences arise continually over the analysis and assessment of gains and setbacks as well as over determining the tempos and forms of actions in preparation.

In conclusion, the problems of regrouping the revolutionary forces and giving structure to the new vanguards is far from resolved despite powerful objective stimuli, enormous advances in subjective revolutionary development, and the massive irruption onto the scene of the young generation. The necessary solutions can be envisaged, in the last analysis, only on a continental scale, but without leaving aside the manifold particularities and without any consoling illusions such as the automatic nature of the processes or the possibility that audacious subjective actions are sufficient by themselves (repeated experiences have shown that even the formation of a guerrilla nucleus is not automatically a positive solution; moreover the painful ups and downs of the Venezuelan guerrilla movement prove how many difficulties arise in the course of the armed struggle).

(21) Revolutionary Marxists, in the work of regrouping and organizing the vanguard, must bear in mind the following very general criteria:

(a) Integration into the historic revolutionary current represented by the Cuban revolution and the OLAS, which involves, regardless of the forms, integration into the continental revolutionary front which the OLAS constitutes.

(b) Rejection of any *a priori* exclusionary attitude toward any revolutionary tendency, which, while not excluding criticism and polemics, implies the possibility of common revolutionary fronts making it possible to regroup forces and to collaborate in both the anti-imperialist and anticapitalist struggle and the struggle against the conservative and bureaucratic tendencies of the workers and peasants movement.

(c) Elaboration of a revolutionary strategy, based on the continental experience and the general principles outlined elsewhere in this document, corresponding to the concrete needs and potential of each country or group of countries at a given stage. This also implies the need for a political program under which broad social layers can be mobilized with the aim of continually deepening the contradictions of the existing regimes at all levels; in other words, a program which, without ignoring immediate economic and political demands (the importance of which was confirmed, for example, by the events of the summer of 1968 in Mexico), would stress objectives and slogans of a transitional nature, able to mobilize the masses at their present level of consciousness in a struggle, the dynamics of which would necessarily collide with the system as a whole.

It is the job of the various national revolutionary Marxist organizations to translate this general orientation into concrete formulas and guidelines. They must, in any case, understand that they cannot measure up to the height of their tasks in the dramatic stage which is opening, if they prove incapable of building more solid organizational structures on the basis of substantial political homo-

geneity, of adopting methods of work corresponding to the necessities of a struggle conducted under conditions of repression and strict clandestinity, of combining detailed empirical analyses and tactical flexibility with firmness in criteria and general conceptions (the prerequisite

for avoiding any impressionism and hasty generalizations), of assuring much more than in past years international and continental coordination by more genuine integration in the International, including the level of its centers of leadership and theoretical work.

# Worldwide Youth Radicalization and the Tasks of the Fourth International

A fresh generation of revolutionary youth has come upon the world scene and is playing an ever more important part in its politics. Over the past decade, a movement has grown from symptomatic indications of a mood of rebellion against a number of rotted institutions into a powerful revolt of youth on a global scale.

The social group most affected by this process of radicalization up to now has been the student population which, owing to its increasing social weight and its sensitivity to world politics, has taken on greater and greater importance. The student youth do not reflect in a direct way the interests of the class to which they belong, or to which they will belong, but reflect primarily the contradictions and class struggles of society as a whole. The student radicalization mirrors and announces the current crises of the world capitalist system—hence its characteristic strengths and weaknesses.

The powerful student radicalization has shown its capacity to serve as a transmission belt, speeding the development of a radical political consciousness among other social layers of the same generation. In several countries it has triggered mass action by the working class as a whole.

The growing combativity and revolutionary élan of this new generation have been proved many times over, in all three sectors of the world revolution. In Czechoslovakia the student movement played a central role in initiating the struggle for socialist democracy during the spring and summer of 1968.

In Pakistan the students touched off a social crisis of revolutionary proportions which brought down the regime of Ayub Khan. In Mexico in the summer and fall of 1968, mass student demonstrations around basic democratic demands led to a sympathetic response from the masses of Mexico City and precipitated a political crisis for the Díaz Ordaz regime.

In France in May 1968, the student revolt catalyzed the biggest general strike in history and precipitated a revolutionary situation. The May-June events in France

provided a graphic demonstration of the fact that not even the main centers of capitalism can avoid the dynamic effects of the student radicalization. These lessons have not been lost on the capitalist ruling class internationally.

While the bourgeoisie and their echoers in working-class circles decry the "conflict of generations," the "generational gap," and even "symbolic parricide," the issues posed by the youth in revolt are not primarily generational ones. They clearly reflect the major class conflicts of our time. The fundamental significance of this unprecedented radicalization of the youth is the emergence of new forces, ready, willing, and able to enter the arena of class struggle on the side of the colonial peoples and the working class and to give battle to world imperialism and its accomplices, who falsely claim to speak in the name of the working class and its allies.

The new wave of radicalization began during the late fifties in response to the upsurge of the colonial revolution, the new rise in the Afro-American struggle in the U.S., and in reaction to the Khrushchev revelations of Stalin's crimes and Moscow's suppression of the Hungarian uprising in 1956. It was furthered by the Algerian revolution and given added impetus by the revolutionary victory in Cuba. It reached a qualitatively higher stage when U.S. imperialism escalated the Vietnam war, making Vietnam the focal point of the international class struggle, and millions of young people around the world rallied to the defense of the Vietnamese people.

The radicalization of the youth is of crucial importance to the Fourth International and its sympathizing organizations. It poses a major challenge to the entire world Trotskyist movement—how to provide leadership for it and win the best of the new generation to the banner of the Fourth International. Whether the Trotskyist current in a country is a small nucleus or an established tendency of some strength, this central task remains unchanged. *To recognize and carry out this task is central to the work and orientation of the International in the next period.*

## I.

## Root Causes and Common Features of the Worldwide Youth Radicalization

The political character of the radicalization of the new generation is rooted on the one hand in the crisis of imperialism and on the other in the correlative crises of Stalinism and the Social Democracy—the historically bankrupt major tendencies in the workers movement. The new generation is achieving political understanding during the most intense period of social convulsion in this century. In Vietnam it has seen modern imperialist war in all its brutality. In a few brief years it has witnessed big revolutionary upheavals and counterrevolutionary bloodbaths. Current history consists of a succession of upheavals, and not even the United States is immune, as the ghetto uprisings and campus revolts bear witness.

The economic contradictions of imperialism are the underlying source of the social explosiveness of our era. Even while there has been a prodigious expansion of the productive capacities of the advanced capitalist countries in the past two decades, the gap between the rich and the poor nations has steadily widened. Successful revolutions in China, Cuba, and North Vietnam, along with the destruction of capitalist relations in Eastern Europe and North Korea, have removed vast areas from the sphere of direct imperialist exploitation. Political instability and the threat of revolution in one colonial country after another have inhibited capitalist investment in these sectors. At the same time competition between the major industrial powers for a larger share of the world market steadily intensifies.

These economic contradictions are intertwined with the necessity felt by imperialism to halt any further advances of the world revolution. *The efforts of the imperialists to maintain their exploitation and oppression and crush revolutionary movements have been the prime factor in radicalizing the youth in both the advanced capitalist countries and the colonial countries.*

While the example set by the insurgent youth in their challenge to capitalism has affected the youth in the workers states, the dissidence in these areas has been engendered primarily by the efforts of the bureaucratic caste to maintain their privileged positions and totalitarian rule.

The continuing crisis of world Stalinism has been a powerful factor in radicalizing the youth in both the Soviet bloc and the capitalist countries. The prestige and authority of the Kremlin have considerably diminished since 1956. The Sino-Soviet conflict, the Cuban revolution, the Vietnam war, and finally the invasion of Czechoslovakia have all contributed to the disintegration of Stalinist monolithism. The counterrevolutionary implications of the doctrine of "peaceful coexistence" and the "parliamentary road" to socialism, and the grotesque distortions created by the absence of workers democracy and the abuses committed by a privileged bureaucratic caste, have become increasingly obvious to growing numbers of radical youth.

The Social Democracy is equally disqualified in the

eyes of the new radical generation. The Social Democrats have become so thoroughly identified as guardians of capitalist rule that they have no attraction for the youth. Their youth organizations, with rare exceptions, are, like the Communist party youth organizations, empty shells with few active members or followers.

The new generation has come into politics under the impetus of a succession of victories. The Chinese, Algerian, Cuban, and Vietnamese revolutions, and the advancing Afro-American liberation movement, have been key rallying points and sources of inspiration and emulation. The new generation has seen defeats, some of them bitter and tragic, as in the case of Indonesia. But it has not undergone the numbing experience of such terrible and enduring catastrophes as the rise of Stalinism and fascism before the second world war and the betrayals by the Communist leaderships in Western Europe following that war. Most of them were too young to have had direct experience with the early years of the cold war. Many recall the victory of the Cuban revolution as their initiation into political life.

The dissident youth in the workers states have grown up during the erosion of the power and influence of Stalinism and are obliged to come to grips with all the problems involved in the antibureaucratic struggle.

While the interlocked crises of imperialism and of the historically superseded leaderships of the working class have shaped the basic political development of the student radicalization, they do not suffice to explain the social weight of the current student movements. Students have often engaged in forays in the past without causing much concern to the capitalist rulers or the bureaucratic regimes of the Soviet bloc.

The enhanced social weight and political impact of the student movement derive from the fundamental changes that have taken place in the sphere of education under pressure from the scientific, technological and industrial advances involved in the "third industrial revolution." These developments call for a more highly educated and technically qualified type of personnel which is capable of innovating, developing, and operating the most complex, up-to-date means of production and destruction.

These economic conditions require larger numbers of better educated people not only among the administrators and superintendents of the productive processes but also in the work force at all levels of industry and trade. Higher educational and cultural standards flow from higher levels of productivity and greater "capital intensity." The steady rise in the norms of qualification all along the line has greatly altered the character and structure of higher education, particularly in the more advanced countries over the past twenty years.

It has also resulted in the increasing proletarianization of white-collar workers as intellectual labor is introduced into the productive process on a larger and larger scale and the relative weight of unskilled manual labor is reduced in the productive process.

On a world scale, and in most individual countries, the facilities for higher education and the size of the student body are undergoing explosive expansion. According to the latest UNESCO figures, between 1950 and 1963-64 the student population in the world's colleges and universities more than doubled. In France it multiplied by 3.3; in West Germany by 2.8; the U.S., 2.2; Italy, 1.3; China, 6; Czechoslovakia, 3.2; the USSR, 3; East Germany, 2.8; Turkey, 3.7; Colombia, 3.5; India, 2.2. The high-school population has increased even more during the past fifteen years.

This turbulent growth has created more problems than it has solved. On the one hand, the educational setup has not been reshaped quickly enough or thoroughly enough to suit the requirements of the ruling class in the capitalist countries and the experts entrusted with looking after its interests. On the other hand, the demands imposed upon the university in transition from the old ways to the new have generated great dissatisfaction among the student body and sections of the faculty. The students' feeling of alienation resulting from the capitalist form of the university, from the bourgeois structure and function of higher education and the authoritarian administration of it, has become more and more widespread. This dissatisfaction has led to confrontations and sharp collisions with both the academic administrators and the authorities over them. The university has consequently been plunged into a severe and permanent state of crisis which cannot be overcome short of a revolutionary transformation of the social order.

In view of the rapid turnover of college "generations," these clashes touch layer upon layer of students in a relatively short period of time. They find that the university is often not equipped to train them in the skills they need to find employment or that it insists upon molding them according to the crassest needs of big business or the bureaucratic regime. In any case, the university is not designed to impart the most elementary truths about living society. In complicity with the established authorities, it tries to hide or to distort these truths and even to insist on falsifications. The insistent demands of the students for freedom of political inquiry and activity and control over the universities they attend bring on the now familiar head-on confrontations with the academic officials and the ruling class or bureaucratic caste which stands behind them.

While the specific issues, whether on or off the campus, which incite or rally the students to action vary considerably from one country to another, and even from one university to another, their movements are strikingly similar in pattern. The rebellious students find themselves arrayed against the powers that be and confronted with a showdown struggle.

Thus the sitdown occupation of the Belgrade university in June 1968 precipitated a national political crisis in Yugoslavia, as did the demonstrations of the French students a month earlier. The student demonstrations in West Germany, Japan, Pakistan, Egypt, and California have had powerful political repercussions.

In the last two decades, as it has grown in size, the student population has strikingly altered in complexion in several important ways.

(1) The time spent as a student has appreciably length-

ened. Millions of young adults now spend their most productive and energetic years in the university environment. Many family restraints have been left behind, and they are not yet restricted to holding down a job to earn their livelihood. They have access to more information than the ordinary citizen and time to absorb and discuss its implications.

(2) They are concentrated in educational institutions or areas to a degree exceeding the work force in all but the most giant factory complexes. The overwhelming majority of these educational institutions throughout the world are located in the major urban industrial centers where the working class is also concentrated and where the decisive battles for power will take place.

(3) While the composition of the student body in the capitalist lands is still preponderantly middle class in origin, there has been some influx (a significant one in the United States) from working-class backgrounds.

(4) Social distinctions and stratifications within the student body are not so sharply defined as they were twenty or thirty years ago. A college degree no longer means that the holder automatically becomes a government functionary, a small businessman, or a member of the professions. Under today's advanced technology, a college graduate will more likely become a highly paid technician or a skilled worker in the productive apparatus. He has nothing to sell but his more qualified labor power and no perspective of escaping the essential condition of a wage worker. These circumstances tend to link him more closely to the industrial working class. The attitudes of university students are more and more influenced by this situation so that growing numbers tend to identify with the status awaiting them after graduation rather than with their family origin.

(5) The owners and organizers of the economy are far more dependent for the operation of their enterprises upon the qualified personnel coming from the higher educational institutions and are therefore far more concerned about their moods, attitudes, and political orientations.

(6) Students have stronger ties than previously with the rest of their generation in the high schools, factories and draft armies, making their radicalization a more serious matter for the rulers. Regardless of class, youth are subject to more or less the same restrictions imposed by the norms of patriarchal bourgeois society, norms which usually prevail even in the countries that have abolished capitalist property relations. They are subject to the same discriminatory laws such as those dealing with political rights, military conscription, and social restrictions. These factors help to cement the ties between various social strata of the generation.

All these conditions taken together give the student population impressive social and political significance. The opinions and actions of this social layer have great impact on national life.

The new features of academic life are most evident in such highly industrialized powers as the United States, Japan, Germany, and the Soviet Union. But all countries which compete in the world market or the military arena are subjected to their presence and pressures to one degree or another.

The pace of the global radicalization of the students,

the ways in which it is refracted through diverse issues, and the depth of its impact vary considerably in the developed capitalist countries, the workers states, and the colonial lands. Nonetheless, the intensity and impact of the student demonstrations in Paris and Tokyo, Mexico and Brazil, Egypt and Pakistan, Poland and Czechoslovakia, testify to the universality of the phenomenon. The almost instantaneous world communications network and the degree of international travel play a large role in this continuing universalization. The rebellious youth in one area rapidly copy the methods, take up the slogans, and study the political lessons of struggles in other areas. The general admiration for heroes such as Che and the

common inspiration drawn from the Vietnamese revolution are indices of a surprising degree of homogeneity in the youth vanguard the world over. They speak a common language.

The international interdependence of political ideas and experiences is key to understanding the current student radicalization as a world phenomenon, despite the variations determined by national particularities. Given the various social and political factors outlined above and the explosive character of our epoch, the current student radicalization is not just a conjunctural phenomenon, but a permanent one that will be of continual concern to the revolutionary movement from now on.

## II.

### Ideology and Politics of the Student Radicals

The student radicals exhibit a broad spectrum of ideological tendencies and political positions. For the most part, they disdain the Stalinism of the Moscow school and the reformism of the Social Democracy.

The treacherous, class-collaborationist role of Stalinism and the Social Democracy is responsible for the fact that the student radicals as they gain political understanding have no mass workers parties to turn to to learn the traditions and organizational and political norms of revolutionary politics. The new generation of radicals begins by rejecting Stalinism and the Social Democracy, and bypassing them in action. In doing so they usually come to see themselves initially not so much as a clearly defined alternative ideological current but as an alternative political vanguard united in action around particular issues.

In their quest for a new ideological basis, the student rebels originally resurrected some of the primitive notions which had been tested and found wanting in earlier periods of socialist and labor history. The emphasis placed by the Cuban leaders on practice and their discounting of theory helped to foster this trend. The new radicals initially neglected scientific theory and a carefully worked-out political program of struggle in favor of pragmatic expedients. These served as a charter for impressionism and opportunism and later as an excuse for adventurism. In place of democratic centralism, "participatory democracy" and decentralization were advanced as nostrums. Under these banners, however, small uncontrolled cliques often manipulated movements in an undemocratic way. They substituted spasmodic actions, "propaganda of the deed," or "revolutionary style," for patient and persistent organization of the revolutionary forces.

The radical student movement goes through different organizational stages and forms, but these are not necessarily consecutive. Thus while in one country the student movement may evolve from a "student unionism" phase, through an anarchistic "participatory democracy" stage, to a stage where it sees itself as made up of various ideological tendencies, in another country all these various

forms and stages may well overlap to a greater degree, or exist simultaneously.

Many of the radical student currents failed to recognize, or denied, the decisive historic role of the working class and its revolutionary vanguard party. The essence of their position was repudiation of Marxism in the field of ideology and Leninism in the sphere of organization. On the key question of Stalinism, over which many had begun their course to the left, they were unable to explain its nature as the historical antithesis of Leninism.

The basic weaknesses of many of the student radicals—instability, ultraleftism, and inability to solve the organizational question—are rooted in the social nature of these currents. The same conditions which enable them to quickly reach a high level of political sensitivity—more leisure, less job discipline—make it more difficult for them to understand the need for a permanent organization, long-term strategy, and patient and persevering political action.

The result was the paradoxical phenomenon of large numbers of young people moving to the left of the Communist and Social Democratic parties in their temper and activities but remaining deficient in their theoretical equipment and organizational concepts.

For example a layer of the new radicals in the West drew inspiration from the views of C. Wright Mills, Herbert Marcuse, and others, who doubted the capacity of the working class to serve as the prime historical agency for social change, denying that it possessed the revolutionary potential ascribed to it by Marxist theory.

They disqualified the industrial workers. In the advanced capitalist countries they interpreted the twenty years of relative quiescence as evidence of a permanent structural characteristic of the working class. In the workers states, they held the workers to be incapable of breaking the rigid bureaucratization. In the colonial world, they noted that workers were often a relatively privileged layer compared to the poor peasantry, and drew the conclusion they were thus incapable of leading revolutionary struggles.

They identified the working-class movement with the Stalinist and Social Democratic organizations and union officialdoms. They initially saw the possibility of victorious revolution in the postwar period only in the colonial world where the peasantry remains preponderant.

The general crisis of bourgeois ideology and the repulsive aspects of bourgeois society that have started many radical youth in search of collective political solutions induced others, often known as Hippies or Beatniks, to seek an individual means of maintaining personal freedom without overturning capitalism. Some have reached utopian positions, believing that bourgeois society can be transformed through love and unselfishness. This tendency toward petty-bourgeois escapism and self-indulgence, the search for a new "left style," has its political reflection in the various anarchistic tendencies that exist in every country.

However, the political outlook of the radical students has not remained static. It has begun to evolve quite rapidly in the past two years. The various currents have been exposed to all contending schools of thought in the radical milieu, have gone through intense internal disputes and sometimes bitter factional alignments, and started to regroup. Maoism, spontanéism, neoanarchism, state capitalism, Castroism, and Trotskyism have all won adherents and left their marks on the activists and their organizations.

The new radicals often attempt to combine theoretical and ideological elements from all the various political currents in the working class. But after a time, the march of events and experience in struggle compel many of them to define and further clarify their positions. Political tendencies emerge which basically reflect the different currents in the world labor movement. The thrust of the youth radicalization has been away from the opportunism of the Moscow wing of Stalinism and the Social Democracy. But lacking mass organizations with principled class struggle traditions from which they can learn, and frustrated by the limitation placed on the role a student vanguard can play, the biggest danger in the student movement becomes one of ultraleftism. Competing with, and systematically polemicizing against these various opponent currents is an essential part of winning the best elements to the banner of revolutionary Marxism.

The various weaknesses which are often seen amongst the new radicals and their organizations, however, come nowhere near outweighing their strengths:

(1) By and large, national and international politics absorbs the new generation of radicals. Often unacquainted with extensive mass mobilizations in their own living experience, many have had to arrive at revolutionary conclusions through independent critical thought, and have had to work out solutions on their own to important and complex problems.

(2) The days of Communist and Socialist youth organizations, primarily concerned with social activities, sports contests, ye-ye, etc., are gone. The best of today's radical youth are attracted to the revolutionary youth groups and join them because of the militant actions they initiate or take part in around the most burning political

issues of the day, because of their political programs, their international perspectives, their seriousness toward theory.

(3) Above all, the current radicalism of the youth is characterized by the rebirth of an authentic internationalism, the kind of solidarity that is the complete opposite of the narrow bureaucratic nationalism of the Stalinist movement. The greatest impetus to this development has been given by the Vietnamese and Cuban revolutions. The courage of the Vietnamese in resisting the aggression of American imperialism helped bring into being a worldwide effort on their behalf. The Cubans contributed to this revival by setting an example in their own appeals, by Che's call for "two, three, many Vietnams," and by their insistence that the best way to defend a revolution under attack from imperialism is to spread it to other countries.

The new radical generation is aware that it confronts a common enemy in imperialism, the capitalist ruling class of the United States in the first place. It has already shared a series of common political experiences in the struggle against imperialism (Cuba, Vietnam). International campaigns are readily geared together and joint actions rendered more effective by the ease of communication and travel in the world today.

(4) One of the most promising characteristics of the student radicalism is its antiauthoritarian bent, its lack of respect for tradition, and its readiness to challenge and question most of the hallowed norms, rules, and regulations of the past. In its search for answers to problems which it did not create, the new generation is willing to consider with an open mind precisely those solutions which have been regarded as heretical and taboo. In fact, whatever is opposed by the state, school, parents, church, employer, or bureaucracy is thereby recommended to the rebels.

(5) Many young radicals are groping toward a revolutionary Marxist understanding of national and world politics. Leaving aside those who reject Marxism and Leninism out of prejudice, without seriously studying and testing them, most of them are earnestly striving to make their way in a confused, experimental way through the fog of lies and distortions spread by the capitalist agencies as well as the falsifiers of Marxism.

They may be temporarily diverted into the blind alleys of Maoism, neoanarchism, or ultraleftism, but bit by bit they are rediscovering the truths of Marxism and learning how they apply to contemporary reality.

It is these qualities of the new radicalization, and its development outside of, and as an alternative to, the organizational forms of Stalinism and Social Democracy, which give it key importance for the world Trotskyist movement. It is the existence of broad currents with these political strengths that makes it possible and crucially important to build broad united-front organizations for struggle around specific issues. It is also these political strengths that open unparalleled opportunities to win large numbers of this new generation to revolutionary Marxist youth organizations, and the very best of them to the revolutionary party.

## III.

## Strategy of the 'Red University'

Radical student circles are hotly debating the central question of orientation. What should be the direction and objectives of the student struggle? What kind of relationship should the student movement seek with the broader struggle of the working masses and oppressed nationalities? What sort of program should the revolutionary vanguard put forward for the student movement?

The reformist tendency maintains that students should concern themselves primarily with narrowly defined university issues — grades, courses, the quality of education, living conditions, narrow campus politics. They see struggles around such issues in isolation from the crisis of capitalist society as a whole. They counterpose such limited struggles to the inclinations of the politicalized students themselves to take up issues of key concern to the world, such as the war in Vietnam.

At the opposite end of the spectrum stand the ultra-lefts. Most of their strategies come down to turning the energies of the student body away from the academic milieu altogether, to leaving the campus and taking the student activists to the factory gates, or into the "community," to distribute leaflets proclaiming the need for revolution. The Maoists epitomize this in the slogan "Serve the People."

Both of these orientations should be rejected as one-sided and sterile. The revolutionary youth vanguard, to be effective, must put forward a program that transcends the campus in its goal, but at the same time includes it; that connects student demands with the broader demands of the class struggle on a national and international scale; that shows students how their own demands relate to these bigger struggles, are an integral part of them, and can help to advance them. The program put forward by the revolutionary youth must tie together the long-range perspectives and daily work of a revolutionist in the school arena. The program put forward by the revolutionary youth is one that mobilizes for struggle around the basic issues of the world class struggle *and* the needs of the student population itself.

The student population is not homogeneous. Students come from varying class backgrounds, with widely differing interests and they are on many different levels politically. Their only homogeneity consists of their common position as students in a capitalist society and university — or a bureaucritically deformed workers state.

Many politically advanced students, in the course of struggles around diverse issues, come to comprehend the need to gain control over their education and educational institutions and to recognize that this goal can be fully satisfied only with the revolutionary transformation of society. But they puzzle over a way of formulating the objective so as to tie it in with the current struggles in society as a whole. How can the battles over prevailing educational conditions be linked with the desired goal of completely transforming society? It is difficult for them to see how their fight as students fits into the general fight against capitalism. This is a source of frustration

and of searches for shortcuts to the revolution which in turn breed opportunism and ultraleftism.

During the massive student protests in Yugoslavia in June 1968, the Belgrade students summarized their demands with the call, "For a Red University!" This formulation was very apt in their situation. They meant that Yugoslavia is supposed to have a socialist educational system but that actually it has been shaped to fit the interests of the ruling bureaucracy. Consequently the Yugoslav students face problems that are quite comparable to those faced by students in the capitalist countries. To solve these problems, they demanded that the Yugoslav educational system be transformed to what it ought to be — let the bureaucratic university give way to a "red" university.

This idea was also advanced by radical students in some of the capitalist countries and adapted to their situations.

"For a University that Serves the Working People — for a Red University!" With this basic orientation radical students seek to answer the questions: "What kind of education shall students get? Toward what ends should this education be directed? Who shall control the educational facilities? What layers in society should the educational institutions serve?"

The concept of the Red University means that the university ought to be transformed from a factory, producing robots, into an organizing center for anticapitalist activities, a powerhouse for revolutionary education, an arena for mobilizing youth in a struggle for the complete transformation of society.

The Red University concept as it has appeared on the campus up to this point, is a big advance over slogans which refer to the narrower goal of student-faculty control over the university. The struggle for autonomy and self-administration is only one aspect of a rounded program aimed at helping students to understand the role of the university under capitalist domination, to educate them in the movement to bring the broadest layers of this generation into the struggle for that revolution.

Included in the concept of the Red University is the need to counter the teaching of bourgeois ideology, which goes under the name of "education," whether in the field of sociology, philosophy, economics, psychology, or whatever. Revolutionary students must understand the need to confront the prestige and authority of the capitalist university and its normally procapitalist faculty on its own level of theory and ideology. They must fight against converting knowledge and its acquisition into a mystique, the concept that higher education is something reserved for a select and highly intelligent few, and not accessible or comprehensible to the working masses.

The university as an instrument in the class struggle — a Red University — is opposed to the liberal view of the university as a sanctuary of a privileged minority, holding aloof from the social and political controversies in the rest of society. The resources of the university should be made available to the exploited, the poor, and the op-



pressed. Students and faculty should have an absolute right to invite anyone they please to address them on any subjects they wish. They should be free to establish close ties with working-class organizations and parties, the minorities, and the popular masses, becoming a source of information and enlightenment for them.

The strategy of seeking to convert the capitalist university into a Red University has special application in reference to oppressed national minorities. The need for one or more leading centers of higher education has been felt at some stage by every powerful movement of an oppressed people for self-determination. In the struggle for national freedom in the epoch of the death agony of capitalism, a university shaped for the special needs of an oppressed nation serves as a symbol and an agency for developing national consciousness and national culture in a way most conducive to overcoming narrow nationalist limitations and giving the struggle an international perspective. For both democratic and socialist reasons, the demand for the establishment, extension, and improvement of such facilities under nationalist control must be fought for by the revolutionary vanguard.

In Belgium the demand for Flemish universities in Flanders, notably at Louvain, won broad support amongst the Flemish-speaking population and a struggle over this issue even brought down a government cabinet in Belgium.

In the United States, owing to the rise of black nationalism as an increasingly strong force among the Afro-Americans, the Red University concept has appeared in the variation, "For a Black University!"

The insistence of black students upon greater access to higher education, upon control over the curricula, finances and professors in independent facilities where they can study their own culture and history, upon the inclusion of courses of particular interest to Afro-Americans, and upon opening the doors to "Third World" students has led to university

and high-school battles from one end of the country to the other. Backed up by direct actions involving both black and white students and faculty members, the actions aimed at forcing the school authorities to concede on these issues have exposed the determination of the white supremacist rulers to maintain control over their educational factories. These efforts have also awakened many students to the revolutionary implications of black nationalism and the lengths to which the capitalist class will go to oppose the Afro-American struggle for liberation.

As is shown by its origin, the call for a "Red University" is similarly applicable to student struggles in the Soviet bloc. The universities in the workers states have acted as prime centers for expressing grievances of the populace against the bureaucratic regimes. In their recent struggles, the Polish, Yugoslav, and Czechoslovak students have advanced concrete demands stemming not only from their own particular problems but also from those facing the entire working class and its allies. Prominent among these have been the call for political freedom, workers control of production, and an end to social inequalities.

In the colonial and semicolonial countries the concept of the Red University can readily be linked with the traditions of radicalism and the struggle to establish or to preserve university autonomy. There the students are now playing, as they have often done in the past, a role of first-rate importance in the struggle for revolutionary goals. They have undertaken actions that rapidly bring them into conflict with antidemocratic regimes, that soon involve issues going beyond the universities and lead to the mobilization of popular support among the workers, peasants, and other oppressed sectors of the people.

The battles engaged in by the radical students of Mexico, Brazil, Bolivia, Pakistan, India, Egypt, Mali, Turkey, and a number of comparable countries show how universal this pattern is.

## IV.

### A Program of Democratic and Transitional Demands

The universities and high schools are all the more important because of the size of the forces involved, their mood of combativity, the actual struggles they themselves initiate, their location in the big cities where the greatest potential forces for revolution are assembled, their ties to the workers, peasants and plebian sectors, and their readiness to include issues going far beyond immediate campus problems. In addition to all this, experience has repeatedly shown how valuable the universities and high schools are, both as testing grounds for the education and development of young radicals and as sources of recruitment to the revolutionary party.

An impressive example of the possibilities opened up by a correct policy is provided by the international campaign which was organized by student militants in a number of key countries in support of the South Vietnam National Liberation Front and its struggle against American imperialism. To launch the solidarity campaign, international connections in university circles were utilized. Through agitation and actions around this key issue,

hundreds of thousands of students became politicalized and radicalized. The attempts to organize large numbers of students in demonstrations on behalf of the Vietnamese revolution frequently posed the right of the students to use university facilities for ends that outraged the authorities, bringing the students into collision with them. Political issues were thus brought to the fore in sharp form. These confrontations in turn mobilized more students in the defense of their democratic rights and further intensified the struggle.

The validity of the political approach outlined in the founding document of the world Trotskyist movement, *The Death Agony of Capitalism and the Tasks of the Fourth International*, has received striking confirmation in the struggles involving the students. What is now required is to apply this approach in a better-planned and more thorough way, working out a set of democratic and transitional demands for application in this field as it stands today.

The student struggles cannot be isolated from, or counter-

posed to, the political issues arising out of the world class struggle as a whole. Neither can the struggle for the Red University be isolated from the task of building a "red" youth organization with links to a "red" Leninist party. Similarly, the program of democratic and transitional demands arising from the student struggles is organically linked to the rest of the transitional program as outlined in the founding document and developed since then. The program of demands for the student movement represents a concrete application of the general approach outlined in *The Death Agony of Capitalism and the Tasks of the Fourth International*.

The ultimate objective of the Fourth International is to link the student struggles with the struggles of the workers and national minorities at their present levels of development and orient them toward a combined drive for state power, bringing into the struggle all the forces opposed to the capitalist or bureaucratic regimes.

Proceeding from the existing state of development and level of consciousness of the students, these demands express their most urgent needs and grievances, directing them in the most effective way against the institutions and authorities that have come under fire from the students themselves. In mobilizing around such slogans, young militants can come to understand the validity of the transitional program as a whole and become educated to the necessity of a fundamental change in the entire capitalist system.

Because of the decay of the capitalist system and the erosion of democratic conquests, made in some instances almost two centuries ago, many of today's student struggles begin over the most elementary issues, such as the right of free speech. However, they tend to develop beyond this level quite rapidly, going beyond the campus, beyond the framework of democratic freedoms as conceived in the most revolutionary phases of capitalism in its rise, reaching into the economic area and bringing up problems that can actually be solved only under a socialist system. A clear understanding of this logical progression makes it possible to advance a consistent series of interlocking slogans that can readily be adjusted for particular situations. Above all, it facilitates the recognition of suitable slogans of this type originating from the ranks in combat.

A combined demand for free education and for a decent standard of living — to which everyone has a democratic right but which can be provided only in a socialist society that has overcome the limitations of the capitalist system — is offered in the following series of suggestions for students in orienting their actions:

- (1) A university education for everyone who wants one, the full expense to be underwritten by the government.
- (2) No maximum age limit on free education; no limitation on the number of years a person may continue in school, or resume school after dropping out, post-graduate studies included.
- (3) Decent housing for students.
- (4) An annual salary for all students adequate to their needs and safeguarded against inflation by automatic compensating increases.
- (5) Guaranteed jobs for students upon graduation.

In the struggle by students for control over their own education, the following list of "student power" demands

have been advanced to one degree or another in various universities internationally:

- (1) Abolish government-controlled student organizations. Recognize the right of students to organize and govern themselves according to their own free choice.
- (2) Joint control by students and faculty over the hiring and firing of faculty members and administration officials.
- (3) Let the students themselves democratically decide what subjects should be taught.
- (4) Abolish the powers of professors and administrators to arbitrarily penalize students.
- (5) Freedom of political association for students and professors.
- (6) The right to utilize university facilities to promote educational and cultural activities of direct interest to organizations of the working class, peasants, oppressed nationalities and plebian masses.

In the struggle for political freedom on the campus, some of the following slogans have become central issues in major confrontations:

- (1) University autonomy, to be won or to be kept inviolate.
- (2) Repeal of all laws infringing civil liberties. End the witch-hunt.
- (3) The police and all other repressive forces to be strictly banned from entering university grounds and buildings.
- (4) Dismiss all government officials responsible for victimizing students, workers, national minorities, political dissidents.
- (5) Dissolve the special police forces and secret political police.
- (6) Release all the political prisoners.
- (7) Abolish the censorship, whether official or "voluntary," of the press, radio, television, and the arts and sciences.

(8) For freedom of the press, freedom of association and organization, freedom of speech, assembly, petition, and travel, and the right to engage in demonstrations.

In student struggles directly involving national minorities, the fight for their rights comes sharply and specifically to the fore, as has been dramatically shown in the United States in relation to the struggle for black liberation. The issues arise most often around violations of democratic rights, or battles to establish them. They are not confined to the university level but extend throughout the educational system to the primary grades. Consequently struggles in this field immediately affect the oppressed communities as a whole to a much greater degree than is the case with majority groups, and the issues are more easily seen as involving much broader questions concerning the perspectives of a national minority in a decaying capitalist society. Because of this, the possibility of student struggles having catalytic effects in the minority communities deserves special attention.

The slogans in this field can be summarized in the following categories:

- (1) Recognition of the right of the oppressed national minority communities to control their own public affairs, including education from kindergarten up.
- (2) Representation of national minorities on all policy-making or policy-implementing bodies of the schools.

(3) Against racism and great-power chauvinism. For truthful teaching of the history and culture of oppressed national minorities in all schools, with periodic reviews by educational committees elected by the oppressed national minorities.

(4) Recognition of the unconditional right of a national minority to use its own language in the educational system.

(5) Unlimited government-financed educational training through postgraduate study for oppressed national minorities.

(6) Establishment of adequately financed, independent, university-level educational facilities under control of national minorities.

A special area of concern to students is the relationship between the school administration and the giant corporations and their government. For big business and the military, the university constitutes an indispensable recruiting ground. Linked with this is the role of the universities in highly questionable research projects undertaken in the "public interest." In connection with antiwar campaigns, where a natural connection is easily seen, important struggles have been initiated in this area. Typical slogans fall into the following sequence:

(1) End the ties between the university and the military.

(2) Abolish secret research by the university for the government.

(3) Abolish secret subversion by government agencies of student organizations.

(4) Expose the ties between university officials and big business by making public *all* investments, holdings, and contracted projects of the university and of all directors, trustees and administrators.

(5) Abolish research of special interest to big business.

(6) No recruiting of personnel on the campus by the big corporations.

(7) Lower the voting age and the age limit on holding public office. Old enough to fight, old enough to vote, and to have a voice in deciding public affairs.

The permanent perspective of large armed forces in the capitalist countries, aimed against the colonial revolution and the workers states, and available for domestic repression, makes the following central demands important to student youth as well as working-class youth and youth of national minorities:

(1) Defend the democratic rights of all youth conscripted in the army. No restrictions on soldiers exercising their full citizenship rights.

(2) Abolish capitalist conscription.

In countries suffering totalitarian regimes as in Spain, South Africa and elsewhere, the universities have repeatedly demonstrated their importance as incubating centers of organized revolt. The experience in Spain is now particularly rich in showing how the efforts of students to break the grip of government-sponsored student organizations and to organize along independent lines parallel similar efforts by the working class and interlocks with them.

Here the campus struggle centers around a single broad demand: "For university autonomy!"

As already indicated, this can readily be formulated in particular slogans that grade into slogans transcending the struggle on the campus and connecting up with broader issues involving the workers, peasants, and plebian masses in the cities.

The situation is symmetrical to this in most of the workers states. Here the student struggle naturally follows the orientation of pointing up the contrast between the official socialist ideology and propaganda and the lack of anything resembling the socialist democracy which Lenin stood for and explained in *State and Revolution*. As shown in Poland, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, and the Soviet Union itself, the sequence of demands tends to go as follows:

(1) Freedom of discussion of philosophical, cultural, and scientific questions. The right to express a critical viewpoint.

(2) Freedom to discuss historical questions. Let the truth come out!

(3) Freedom to discuss current political issues.

(4) Abolish the censorship.

(5) For the right to organize and demonstrate.

(6) No political persecution. Let the public, including foreign observers, be admitted to all trials.

(7) Freedom of travel. No restrictions on sending representatives to visit youth organizations in other countries or in receiving their representatives on visits.

(8) Eliminate self-perpetuating social inequalities and the special privileges of the bureaucracy.

(9) Return to revolutionary internationalism.

(10) Solidarity with the struggles of the oppressed in other lands.

Youth radicalism is not restricted to college and university levels. It has widely permeated the high schools and in some places even the upper primary grades. High-school students in numerous countries have turned out by the thousands in the mobilizations against the Vietnam war and have been among their most enthusiastic and energetic supporters. The high-school students organized in CAL (Comites d'Action Lycéen) played a major role in the actions before, during and following the May-June 1968 events in France.

At a certain point in the development of every revolutionary youth organization, its ability to organize, lead and win over decisive layers of high-school youth becomes a key test. Revolutionary-socialist youth organizations must take the lead in organizing the secondary-school youth, fighting with them for their rights, and seeking to coordinate their activities with other sections of the anti-capitalist struggle. Scheduled to enter the higher institutions of learning or go in large numbers into the factories, these young activists will provide an invaluable ferment of militancy and socialist consciousness in both arenas.

To put forward and fight for such slogans and goals, to advance them in a way to take full advantage of openings and opportunities, requires a Marxist leadership that is politically alert, tactically flexible, and able to avoid falling into either opportunistic adaption to the student environment or into ultraleft sectarianism.

## V.

## The Revolutionary Youth Organization and the Party

The scope of the current student radicalization presents an unprecedented opening for expanding the influence and cadres of the parties of the Fourth International. Hundreds of thousands of young radicals, no longer intimidated by the poisonous propaganda of Stalinism, are ready to listen with open minds to the views of Trotskyism. Tens of thousands have already accepted large parts of the Trotskyist program. Their aversion to Stalinism and the Social Democracy makes it possible for an honest revolutionary alternative to gain ascendancy among decisive sections of the new radicals. Substantial numbers of them can be recruited fairly rapidly into the ranks of the Fourth International.

The experience of the world Trotskyist movement during the past few years has shown that its work among the youth can most effectively be carried forward through revolutionary-socialist youth organizations fraternally associated with the sections of the Fourth International but organizationally independent of them.

The Trotskyist forces in various countries vary greatly in size, and they are in different stages of growth and development. Different tactics will have to be used to reach the goal of constructing a revolutionary-socialist youth organization—including participation in other youth formations. But all such activity should be seen as a tactical step toward the construction of such an organization.

It is important to note that the social and political analysis of the student movement today and the world

situation in which it is developing shows the *objective* basis for such independent revolutionary socialist youth organization.

The independent youth organization can attract radicalizing young people, who have not yet made up their minds about joining any political party of the left, and who are not yet committed to the Bolshevik perspective of becoming lifetime revolutionists, but who are willing and ready to participate in a broad range of political actions together with the revolutionary party and its members. It can lead actions and take initiatives in the student movement in its own name. It can serve as a valuable training and testing ground for candidates for party cadre status, and make it easier for them to acquire the political and organizational experience and education required for serious revolutionary activity. Membership in the revolutionary-socialist youth organization enables young radicals to decide their own policies, organize their own actions, make their own mistakes, and learn their own lessons.

Their form of organization also has many advantages for the revolutionary party itself. It provides a reservoir for recruitment to the party. It helps prevent the party from acting as a youth organization and from lowering the norms of a Bolshevik organization on discipline, political maturity, and level of theoretical understanding to the less demanding levels of an organization agreeable to the youth.

## VI.

## The Tasks of the Fourth International Among the Youth

Three interrelated tasks are indicated by this analysis of the sweep of the radicalization of the youth. These are:

(1) To win the leadership of the radical youth in the spheres of both ideology and action.

(2) To build strong Marxist youth organizations.

(3) To draw new cadres from the youth to replenish the ranks and supply fresh energy to the leadership of the sections of the Fourth International.

The Trotskyist youth have greater possibilities of leading substantial forces in action than any other tendency in the radical movement. In several countries they have already proved capable of initiating and directing movements of considerable proportions and significance. One example is the worldwide campaign undertaken in defense of the Vietnam revolution. Another is the role played by the Jeunesse Communiste Révolutionnaire in the historic May-June 1968 days in France. A third is the ideological influence of the Fourth Internationalists in the movement led by the National Strike Council of the Mexican students.

No tendency can hope to root itself in and gain political leadership of the radical youth that does not fully and audaciously participate in the front ranks of its ongoing struggles, whatever shortcomings they may have. At certain points the youth movement can only progress through action, and the absence of action can condemn it to prolonged division and sterility. The Trotskyist youth must set the example in practice, as well as in theoretical concepts and political pronouncements.

However, there is an abundance of activism, of readiness to struggle and sacrifice among the ranks of youth. What is most lacking in the new generation is theoretical training, political clarity, and a correct line of struggle. This side of the revolutionary-socialist youth movement is of decisive importance for its further development. Growing recognition of this will become registered in the widening influence of Trotskyism. The superiority of the Trotskyist movement over its opponents and rivals comes from its sound Marxist foundations, its Bolshevik traditions, its programmatic comprehensiveness and correctness, its adherence to socialist internationalism. These

features likewise constitute its chief attraction to radicalizing youth.

While spreading the ideas of Trotskyism among the youth with whom they participate in united combat, the Fourth Internationalists must seek to construct a revolutionary Marxist youth organization that will systematically educate its members and followers in the methods, doctrines, and positions of the Trotskyist movement from its origins. All the results of activity among the youth can be jeopardized if the organizational requisite for this educational work is neglected.

Work among the youth is not an end in itself. It reaches fruition in the impetus given to the construction or reinforcement of the revolutionary parties that will be capable of leading the working class to victory. The sections of the Fourth International are as yet too small to lead the masses in their own name and under their own banner in a decisive struggle for power. Their work has a preparatory and predominantly propagandistic character involving limited actions.

Their task now is to win and educate decisive numbers of the radical youth in order to equip them for the greater task of winning leadership of the revolutionary elements among the working masses. To fulfill that function adequately, the youth recruits must thoroughly assimilate the organizational concepts of Bolshevism and its methods of constructing politically homogeneous and democratically centralized parties. The construction of such parties in the struggles that are erupting is the only means of overcoming the crisis of leadership which is the central contradiction of our epoch.

Government authorities the world over, whether in

the advanced capitalist powers, the workers states, or the colonial world, are becoming increasingly concerned over the unrest among their youth which is becoming more and more unmanageable. Their worries are justified. This rising generation has already manifested a tremendous potential for radical activity and a powerful will to change the status quo.

Whoever succeeds in winning the allegiance of the most intelligent and devoted activists among the rebel youth holds the key to the future. For they will play a major role in making history and deciding the destiny of mankind for the rest of the twentieth century.

Insurgent students in a number of countries have already shown how their initiative in confronting the established powers can serve to stimulate struggle in other sectors of society. The young workers will be in the forefront of the movements to break the grip of the bureaucratic machines in the unions and will set an example for the older generation in their militancy and interest in revolutionary politics.

The Fourth International cannot afford to default in what is its central task today—winning and assimilating the best of the rebel youth. A good start has already been made in a number of countries. It is now imperative to build on these achievements. This requires better coordination of the activities of the youth groups of the different sections and closer collaboration on such projects as antiwar and defense campaigns, and the development of new openings for the movement internationally.

The aim is to enable the Fourth International to become the recognized voice, organizer, and leader of the youth, who are called upon to advance the world revolution.

# Motion on Work Among the Proletarian and Student Youth

(1) The Ninth World Congress reaffirms that work among both the proletarian and student youth is the central task the International must confront in the immediate period ahead.

(2) It calls on all its sections to mobilize their best forces to promote this work.

(3) The militants of the Fourth International must integrate themselves in the mass student and youth movements to become their best agitators, propagandists, and organizers.

(4) The fundamental importance given student and youth work must be reflected in the political publications of the world movement, such as *Quatrieme Internationale*.

These publications will systematically analyze the theoretical and practical problems arising from this new type of work of establishing a base among the youth.

(5) The document presented by the United Secretariat entitled "The World Youth Radicalization and the Tasks of the Fourth International" represents an initial contribution necessary to launch a discussion aimed at developing a more precise political line for our world movement.

(6) A platform for intervention in the youth movement, representing a synthesis of the different experiences of the sections, will be presented by the United Secretariat for adoption at the next International Executive Committee plenum.

# World Congress Greets Communist League

Dear Comrades,

The World Congress warmly welcomes the Ligue Communiste as the French section of the Fourth International.

The revolutionary upsurge of May 1968 in France, which you contributed so importantly to bringing about, has profoundly changed the political and social climate throughout capitalist Europe. For the first time in twenty years, this upsurge has put struggle to overthrow the capitalist system back on the immediate agenda in one of the fortresses of imperialism. It has helped to shake the apparent stability of bourgeois society in several other imperialist countries of Europe, speeding the development of a "pre-May" situation in these countries.

The revolutionary Marxists are convinced that what happened last year in France was not something exceptional but the beginning of a new revolutionary upsurge in all of capitalist Europe which will culminate in new explosions of an objectively revolutionary nature in a series of countries—and most of all in France itself.

You have already plunged into this process of renewing the drive of the socialist revolution in the imperialist countries. You have done so by the role that your members were able to play in the events of May and June 1968; by the way in which they responded to the Gaullist repression; by your success in launching a mass paper; by consolidating your influence in the high-school and university student milieu; by your systematic pioneering work among the workers. But most of all, you have become part of the process of renewing the revolutionary struggle by your conscious effort to build a revolutionary organization capable of capitalizing on the lessons which the vanguard of the French proletariat drew from the experience of May 1968.

You have shown the entire world that the new generation of revolutionists rising up today is no longer content simply to denounce the mistakes and betrayals of the traditional leaderships of the workers movement, nor to give advice to others. You have shown that this generation has gathered the strength and the needed dynamism to go forward at the head of a *section of the vanguard of the masses* and demonstrate the difference between a revolutionary policy and the reformist policy of the old leaderships.

This is the great contribution you were able to make toward strengthening the revolutionary movement on a world scale. This example is being studied and will be studied in many countries and on all continents. The revolutionary capital gained from your action will bring dividends to you and our whole movement for years to come.

The turn in the world situation, which we will discuss at our coming world congress, considerably increases the responsibilities of revolutionary Marxists throughout the world as well as the risks and the adverse pressures to

which they will be subjected. Lenin's teaching to unite our ranks tightly in a structure based on democratic centralism which dynamically combines revolutionary theory and practice, program and organization, on a national as well as international basis will prove more indispensable than ever as a guide for us in this period.

But this new rise in the world revolution, the beginning of which now confronts us, also increases the opportunities for the revolutionary Marxist movement beyond anything open to us in the past. Breakthroughs like the one you have just achieved in France are not only possible, they are inevitable in several countries, if the revolutionary Marxist militants are able to seize the opportunity offered them to play a leading role in the action of sections of the vanguard of the mass movement.

We are not yet on the eve of mass revolutionary parties and a mass revolutionary International. But we are on the eve of a qualitative transformation of the revolutionary movement. In several countries, the revolutionary movement is entering a very important stage on the road toward the creation of mass revolutionary parties and a mass International. And the decisions of your congress have contributed in an important way to speeding up this process on an international scale.

Dear Comrades,

You are faced today with an immense responsibility. You have an opportunity which has not existed for decades, an opportunity to create a large revolutionary organization in a highly industrialized country. You have a chance to spread revolutionary ideas widely among a working class faced objectively with a historic opportunity to take power and organize a workers state based on the democracy of workers councils, a system capable of exercising irresistible attraction to the proletariat of all the other imperialist countries. On the success or failure of your effort may depend the outcome of the revolutionary upsurge in Europe, the fate of tens of millions of workers.

By remaining faithful to the revolutionary program of Lenin and Trotsky, you can successfully carry out this task—exploiting every opportunity to popularize this revolutionary program, propagating it among the masses, and patiently and perseveringly developing worker cadres capable of winning the confidence of their shopmates in the factories.

The Fourth International and the revolutionary vanguard of the entire world are observing your course. They have confidence in your ability to fulfill your revolutionary mission. They are proud of you and recognize in you the image of their own future, of the communist future of all mankind.

Long live the Communist League, the vanguard of the future revolutionary party of the French proletariat!

Long live the French socialist revolution!

The Ninth World Congress of the Fourth International (Third Congress Since Reunification).

# 'Quatrieme Internationale' Editorial

[The following is a translation of an editorial which appeared in the May 1969 issue of *Quatrieme Internationale*. This was the first of two issues containing the French version of the main documents and reports of the recent world congress held by the Fourth International.]

\* \* \*

We have stressed on many occasions the turn in the world situation since May 1968 in France. After twenty years in which the world revolution was in fact virtually limited to the colonial or semicolonial countries and in which the burden of the struggle against capitalism was borne almost exclusively by the masses of the so-called Third World, a new period has opened up. This new period is marked essentially by two developments: the upsetting of the equilibrium in the capitalist countries of Western Europe and a tremendous crisis of leadership for American imperialism as a result of its failure in Vietnam and its mounting domestic difficulties; and also by an initial great mass thrust for proletarian democracy in the East European workers states, which has ushered in a period of crisis in that part of the world as well as in the USSR. Moreover, as a result of these conditions, the colonial revolution is able to draw renewed strength. It is obvious that we have entered a new stage. Since May 1968 literally a day has not passed without great demonstrations and confrontations occurring at some point on the globe.

If, in this new situation, we place special stress on the change that has occurred in Western Europe, it is not because of any nostalgia over the proletarian past of this part of the world. It is because this new upsurge of the working masses has an incomparably greater breadth than those in 1936 and 1943-1948. Above all, it is because this radicalization, for the first time, includes very explicitly a conscious and resolute antibureaucratic element, which cannot fail to contribute greatly to resolving the chief problem in winning the world socialist revolution—the creation of revolutionary Marxist leaderships on both the national and international scale. While in 1936 and 1943-1948 the ascent of the masses contained an implicit tendency to outdistance the old leaderships, this tendency did not in fact succeed in acquiring any definite consistency. What is more, these thrusts ended up under the control of the old leaderships and in the course of them these leaderships even increased their authority over the broad strata newly come to politics. The same is not true today. The most characteristic example is unquestionably that of the PCF [Parti Communiste Francais—French Communist party]. Its authority increased in 1936. It gained hegemony over the French working class in 1944 and thereafter never found itself outflanked to its left. In 1968, after several weeks of a general strike, the like of which the capitalist world had never seen, the PCF's authority and prestige were profoundly damaged. A major crisis is latent within its ranks. And for the first time a political force exists to its left

which, although still a minority and divided, is challenging it successfully and consolidating support among the youth in the factories, the high schools, and the universities.

The problem of a mass revolutionary Marxist international has arisen ever more acutely in recent years in every sector of the world revolution. The struggle against the Vietnam war has emphasized the need for a global strategy to counter the global policy of Washington. May 1968 highlighted the outmoded and reactionary character of the European national boundaries. The invasion of Czechoslovakia showed that political revolution in the workers states requires not only a struggle against the hegemony of the Soviet bureaucracy in the other workers states but also a struggle of the Soviet masses to overthrow the political regime of this bureaucracy. No struggle can have a purely national horizon. Every struggle raises international problems.

The needs of the world revolution, and first of all the need to provide it with an international mass leadership, are being blocked by the maneuvers of the bureaucracies of all types. But these bureaucracies are deeply divided among themselves. Their laboriously prepared attempt to hold an international conference which will commit them to practically nothing—the groundwork for which it took years to lay—represents their supreme effort to falsify the problem of international leadership. In can be said for a certainty that the needs of the world revolution will find no admittance there.

These needs, however, are forcing a response and were expressed at the recent world congress held by the Fourth International. The documents and reports discussed and adopted by this congress are included in this issue of *Quatrieme Internationale*. We want to add here, very soberly and without exaggeration, the panorama of the Fourth International as it appeared to the some 100 participants in this congress—both the older cadres and the new, very young forces that have joined in recent years. The activities report could properly record an important role played by militants of the Fourth International in many decisive situations—in the campaigns in defense of the Vietnamese and Cuban revolutions; in defending militants persecuted by the bourgeoisie, such as Hugo Blanco and other Peruvian revolutionists, and the Mexican students; in defending militants persecuted by the bureaucracy, such as the Polish comrades Modzelewski and Kuroń; in supporting the Arab revolution, etc. . . It could also point to a considerable advance in the Trotskyist press and publications throughout the world and to the extraordinary extent of publications and republications of Trotsky's works in many languages and in countries where they had never appeared before. It noted particularly the intervention of the Trotskyist movement in the events of May 1968. And this intervention was expressed at the world congress itself by a change in the status of the French section, which is now represented by the Ligue Communiste [Com-

unist League], whose forces are many times larger and whose influence is incomparably greater than those of the former Trotskyist organization. We pointed out above how the PCF emerged from the crisis of May 1968 politically and organizationally diminished. Without wanting to exaggerate anything and without forgetting the road still ahead, we can point to the contrast between the consequences of May 1968 in France for the post-Stalinists and for the Trotskyist movement.

Alongside this striking success, the participants in the world congress showed that there have been gains almost everywhere, which, while less substantial, are nonetheless indications of developments that also promise advances for the Fourth International. The leading bodies of the International and its sections have experienced an influx of new blood from the young cadres who show the highest potential of the new generations which have set out on the road to the world socialist revolution.

The turn in the situation was shown not only in the changed composition and in the progress of the Trotskyist movement. The turn was affirmed not only in a general way at the congress but was examined very carefully in the thoroughgoing analyses that were in the best traditions of the movement. The debates, as in the past, gave force to the definition of the general tasks, highlighting the principal effect of this turn—that is the need to raise the level of the International to the higher plateau demanded by the new situation. The organization must no longer be satisfied with participating in mass struggles and getting its program known. It must strive to intervene, at least in some countries and in certain sectors of the struggle, to play a leading role. The major debates, at the congress, which were very lively, centered around the question of possible breakthroughs in and through action for the Trotskyist movement at certain points. Here we may express one regret. It is unfortunate that, for understandable reasons, we could not hold our discussions publicly. They would have given an incomparable example of workers democracy. It is this sort of democracy that the workers movement must win back from the old leaderships, which have become more and more ossified

in their attempt to maintain a futile and impossible status quo.

The discussions of each of the principal documents showed that for the first time in its history, after having tried unsuccessfully to stem the rise of Stalin and after seeing revolutionary reascents that failed to burst the bureaucratic straitjacket, the Fourth International has a chance to make breakthroughs in several sectors of the mass struggle. The debates showed that the Fourth International could score decisive successes in several still limited sectors by demonstrating the validity of its program no longer only through theoretical argument but in action. The world congress proved very aware of this new situation, of its implications, and of the perspectives it could open up leading toward the construction of a mass revolutionary Marxist international. It is evident that such a turn could not be effected simply by the vote of a congress, no matter how important an assembly. The present period will demand that the International, its sections, and the organizations associated politically with it, devote themselves on a day-to-day basis to making this turn a reality; it will require still closer ties among all sections of the movement.

There can be no question of commenting on the world congress documents in this brief introduction. The problems arising in course of time will enable us to return to these documents and illustrate them in articles in this magazine, and—we have no doubt—to enrich and clarify them. The congress is barely over and new events (the fall of de Gaulle, the elimination of Dubcek, etc.) have highlighted the turbulent and socially explosive character of the years we are living through.

Let us conclude by recalling that while for revolutionary Marxists the sum of all knowledge lies in action, this maxim is a thousand times truer than ever before in the present period. New young, ardent, combative forces are turning toward Trotskyism, toward the Fourth International. Not only was a renewal of the Fourth International outlined in the work of the World Congress, but a step forward was taken toward a victorious culmination of the whole period that opened with May 1968.

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