THE INTERNATIONALE

by

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"A foreigner to THEM (the upper classes) not to YOU, I hope. Though my English may not be pure, yet you will find it PLAIN English.

"No working man in England—nor in France, either, bye-the-bye,—ever treats me as a foreigner. With the greatest of pleasure I observed you to be free from that blasting curse, national prejudice and national pride, which after all means nothing but WHOLESALE SELFISHNESS—I observed you to sympathise with everyone who earnestly applies his powers to human progress—may he be an Englishman or not—to admire everything great and good, whether nursed on your native soil or not—I found you to be more than mere ENGLISHMEN, members of a single isolated nation, I found you to be MEN, members of the great and universal family of mankind, who know their interest and that of all the human race to be the same."

ENGELS "To the Working Classes of Great Britain", March 15, 1845: Introductory Dedication to the original edition of "The Condition of the Working Class in England", 1845: reprinted in Marx-Engels Gesamtausgabe, Vol. IV, p. 6

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PREFACE

One hundred years ago the First International or International Working Men's Association was founded. The guidance and leadership of Marx inspired its work throughout, and laid the foundations of the modern working class movement and international communism.

During this century international communism has advanced from a handful of tiny groups to embrace one third of mankind.

At the moment of this centenary stormy controversies are raging in the international communist movement, affecting even the relations of the most powerful socialist states, and bringing threats of splits.

At such a moment critics might judge it inappropriate to celebrate this centenary or speak of the advance of a century of international communism.

On the contrary. It is more appropriate than ever today to recall the record and the lessons of these hundred years. The most violent controversies, conflicts, crises, sharp turns, breaks and renewals have characterised this record of one hundred years. The path has been no easy broad road of automatic progress, but precipitous and arduous throughout, full of pitfalls and explosions and dangers of wrecking the whole caravan. But through it all the international communist movement has always emerged in the end, stronger and more united, to go forward to new triumphs.

Today more than ever it is necessary to learn the lessons of this record. The immediate outcome is never guaranteed. The

future of international communism depends on those who represent the international communist movement today, the generation inheriting the work of previous generations to hand on to those that follow. It depends on their consciousness, responsibility, and sense of the necessity of unity. The old motto of the working class holds: Unity is Strength. The old slogan of Marx in the *Communist Manifesto* still calls to us today: Workers of all countries! Unite!

In the modern world, with the speed of communications annihilating distance, and rendering the divisions of the old state barriers more and more manifestly incompatible with new requirements, and with the parallel technical advance of weapons making possible the destruction of the earth in the shortest space of time, the problem of internationalism—of international cooperation without domination of one nation by another—has become widely recognised as the key immediate problem of our era. Technically the transition to a world social order is becoming imperative. International communism led the way a century ago, at a time when the most enlightened thinkers of capitalist civilisation could only see as their ultimate "international" conception a free trade world (actually the breeding ground of monopoly and imperialism, with all the consequences of titanic imperialist rivalries and world wars). Communism showed the path to the solution of these problems through the elimination of the rivalries of private ownership and the achievement of an international community based on national freedom and social ownership, and advancing to a world communist society with the elimination of the state. International communism was able to present this solution, no longer as a vague aspiration for peace or world unity, but as a concrete movement, based on the working people in the living world, capable of expanding to embrace the whole world. At the same time, precisely because international communism is a concrete movement of people in the living world, and not some abstract ideal or blueprint for the future, the international communist movement seeks to tackle the present urgent problem, at a time when the ultimate solution is delayed and the menace of a new world conflict is apparent, by leading the way in presenting and fighting for the immediate aim of peaceful co-existence, to be achieved also now despite the continuance of the old social order over a

considerable part of the world and consequent difference of social systems, and giving time for the peoples to advance by their own will and according to their own conditions equally to national freedom and to a new social order based on social ownership.

It is in this deeper sense that, despite all the present difficulties, and in the midst of all the host of problems that beset mankind today, international communism is and remains the hope of the world. The epoch in which we live is the epoch of the transition of mankind from capitalism to socialism to advance to world communist society.

The present brief survey of a century of development on the occasion of this centenary lays no claim to original or profound historical research. It is no more than a very rapid and elementary sketch for the new reader. Many tangled questions are involved in the record, which are still the subject of controversy, and may become further cleared by future research or fuller evidence. The account here given cannot represent any final verdict on these disputed questions, still less any official viewpoint of the Communist Party in this country or communists elsewhere. It can be no more than the best judgement the writer can reach on the basis of the available evidence. There are bound to be errors, either of information or of judgement, for which the writer apologises in advance. But it is hoped that, until a further and more authoritative account becomes available, this brief survey may prove helpful for readers newly interested in communism, to increase their awareness of the record and achievement of a century of the international communist movement; to arouse among all those privileged to take part in the movement today just pride in its record; and on the basis of this record to strengthen, despite all the problems of the present phase, renewed and indomitable confidence in the future.

May Day, 1964 R.P.D.

CHAPTER I

WHAT IS INTERNATIONALISM?

"INTERNATIONALISM. International character or spirit; the principle of community of interests or action between different nations; *specifically* with capital *I.* doctrine or principles of the International Working Men's Association."

Oxford English Dictionary

"The Internationale" is the universally recognised song of the international working class and of international communism. Just as "the Marseillaise", the song of the French Revolution, became the widely recognised anthem of the democratic revolution and of national patriotism, so "the Internationale", also the product of a gifted French composer, and sprung from the French working-class movement, has become in the twentieth century the universally recognised anthem of the international working class and communism. But with this difference. The range of "the Marseillaise" has been mainly European. The range of "the Internationale" is world-wide.

In every country in the world "the Internationale" is known and sung and honoured, wherever working people are gathered together for the common aims of liberation, the ending of exploitation and all national and class oppression, and the building of socialist and communist society. Its refrain proudly proclaims:

"Tomorrow
The Internationale
Will be the human race."

Across all the barriers of language, nation, race and colour, the melody of this refrain will find comradeship in every country in the world. This is a new phenomenon in the history of mankind upon this planet.

1. HUMAN BROTHERHOOD

The tradition and aspiration of human brotherhood has deep roots in the memory and consciousness and instinctive feelings of all mankind. Although frustrated and strangled by the social and economic conditions in which we live, by the rat-race and beggar-my-neighbour economics and jungle law of capitalism, by imperialist oppression and barbarity, and by power politics, and by the cold war and the arms race, yet always, the deep feeling of human solidarity breaks through again and again in moments of emergency and common peril, of a natural disaster or shipwreck. The cruel laws of the rat-race and economic competition, or of the enforced mutual slaughter of millions against millions of other human beings who have never seen or known one another, cause deep unhappiness to those who find themselves compelled to obey and live according to these laws—to all save a tiny handful completely brutalised by the social conditions in which they have been brought up and which they have come to regard as the order of nature.

This instinct of human brotherhood may be regarded in one aspect as surviving from the era of primitive communism, before there was division of classes or private property or division of "mine" and "thine", when survival in the hard and precarious struggle against nature for a bare existence depended on solidarity. Echoes of this may be found in the universal legends of a lost "golden age" before "the fall". It was only after the loss of Eden that Cain raised his hand against Abel and slew him in a conflict over the possession of flocks and herds. Even in the fragmentary distorted remnants of primitive societies still scattered in remote places of the earth until recently explorers and researchers have been able to find traces of this code of social brotherhood within

the tribal community, even though this might be accompanied by wars between tribes.

Primitive communism was certainly no golden age. The conditions of life were harsh, poverty-stricken and superstition-ridden. Man, only recently emergent from the animal stage, through the development of tools, was still very helpless before nature. Then came the painful transitional period of class society, arising when the first advance of production beyond bare subsistence opened the way to the beginnings of private property and exploitation for the appropriation of surplus. This stimulated, however violent and cruel the means, the further advance of production. So the conditions came into existence which made it possible to move forward to a higher level. Today we have reached such a high stage of productive technique as to make more and more manifestly necessary the corresponding advance to a new stage of social classless organisation. Although the battle to end class society, for the victory of national liberation and socialism, has still to be won over the great part of the world, in the most advanced sector of the modern world man has already entered into the era of the beginnings of the transition to communist society, based on abundant production, the mastery of nature and the highest fulfilment of human beings.

Nevertheless, although the conditions of life of primitive communism were squalid and backward, there did exist in general in those early societies, corresponding to the low level of technique and absence of surplus, an elementary sense of social solidarity and brotherhood, which subsequent class society has done much, although not entirely, to destroy—until it could arise again in new and more advanced forms, as we shall see, in the modern working class and socialist movement.

A remarkable confirmation of this Marxist analysis of the early elementary sense of social brotherhood arising in these societies of low productive technique and absence of surplus was provided when the islanders of Tristan da Cunha, following the volcanic explosion of 1961, were transplanted to Britain and employed as wage-workers there until their return to their island in 1963. These islanders were no ancient primitive society. They were descendants of a handful of early

nineteenth century English sailors and soldiers. They spoke the English of the early nineteenth century like characters from Dickens. But the difficult conditions of maintaining life on their isolated rocky island home had found expression in a mainly subsistence economy with some analogies with primitive communism, and this has found reflection in a social consciousness completely at variance with the basic tenets of English property-owning society of capitalists and wage earners. The enlightened official mind in Britain had assumed that the marvels of English mid-twentieth century civilisation would leave them gasping with admiration and awe and the desire to remain. Instead, their one desire was to get back to their island home, despite volcanic destruction and possible further volcanic risks, away from what they regarded and openly described as a detestable form of society based on money and worry. Their explanations given to assiduous reporters were revealing. The disparity of wages was found incomprehensible:

"H'it h'aint fair. They's payin' me for one man's time. My time's wuth as much to me as h'anybody h'else's."
(interview, *Time*, July 20, 1962)

"We was like brothers and sisters. We never done had any crimes. We done never need any keys at home, does we? The doors was always open, we was all like brothers and sisters."
(interview, *Sunday Times*, August 19, 1962)

"There was no worry. There was always food on the island, fish in de sea. We did not have to worry about money."
(interview, *Daily Herald*, July 20, 1962)

Similarly the final verdict of their elected head man, William Repetto, before departure, in his answers to press questions on March 16, 1963:

"You never have crime on Tristan. You can go anywhere you like at night and lie down in the open. In Tristan there's no rent, no electricity. You get all your taters free, all your beef free, your fruit free. We ain't got to use money for it.

"England? In England it's money, money, money; worry, worry worry all the time."

In this confrontation (which might have been thought to have provided a unique opportunity for study of almost a laboratory case by serious theorists of the science of society) we can see, as by the operation of a magical time machine, a remote and accidentally arising partial expression of the outlook of early communism suddenly placed in the midst of late monopoly capitalism.

The great ancient religions, such as Hinduism, Buddhism and Confucianism, all reflected, even though under a cover of much subsequent dross, this sentiment of human brotherhood and the one-ness of all life—but in a passive rather than in an active sense, that is, as a spiritual belief and aspiration, alongside acceptance of existing social and political forms as an inevitable expression of the transient world.

The more recent—and unfortunately more bellicose and bloodthirsty—religions, such as Christianity and Islam, both deriving in part from Judaism, did also express some underlying conception of human brotherhood, though in a narrower sense, confined to believers, with relegation of unbelievers to damnation. Within the ranks of believers there was formal equality, irrespective of social status, race or colour, even though this was accompanied, as in all the religions, by practical acceptance of existing social institutions, such as slavery, with only the offer of consolation in the hope of a future life of bliss for believers (alongside torment for unbelievers) after death. This narrowing of the conception of brotherhood in the later religions to the ranks of believers, with ferocious crusading zeal (unknown in the older religions, such as Hinduism, Buddhism and Confucianism) against the unbelieving world found expression in the unexampled violence and barbarity of the wars between Christianity and Islam—only later surpassed in the modern era by the full flower of Western imperialist "Christian" civilisation in its colonial conquest and exploitation of the world and therefrom developing world wars.

Nevertheless, while the upper classes sought to use religion as an instrument to hold down the people with the justification of the existing social order of oppression as a supposed divine ordainment, or with the hope of a life hereafter as a consolation for their sufferings, the masses of the people sought again and again to find in the deep tradition of human brotherhood

enshrined at the heart of all the religions, the banner and inspiration of their revolt to change the existing social order. Buddhism arose and spread so rapidly as a revolt against the priestly hierarchy of Hinduism. The ceaseless Christian heretical sects, which were suppressed with such relentlessness in the mediaeval era, were the manifest expression of gathering and increasing social revolts from below, until they culminated in the Reformation, which was the preliminary stage of the bourgeois and democratic revolution.

But it was only in the era of the modern democratic, working-class and socialist movement that the conception of human brotherhood could take form and shape, no longer as an isolated and impotent spiritual aspiration or belief in the midst of a world of evil and injustice, but as a concrete and fully realisable social and political order to be achieved on earth in this life by scientifically directed human effort.

From this point increasing numbers of sincere religious-minded people, whether Christian, Jewish, Mohammedan, Hindu or Buddhist, who found their social inspiration in the religious conception of human brotherhood, could find the path of its realisation in unity with the democratic, working-class and socialist movement. These representatives have brought a significant current to swell the advancing tide of the modern socialist and communist movement.

When we consider the relatively modern conception of internationalism which has only reached its full definition and completion in international communism, we must never forget the deep underlying tradition of human brotherhood which has its roots in the conditions of human existence from very early times and which remains enshrined in the heart of so many ancient religions.

2. BOURGEOIS NATIONALISM AND INTERNATIONALISM.

The term "international" dates from the period of the modern democratic revolutions in the latter part of the eighteenth century. This is understandable, since only with the formation of the modern nations and nation-states arising from the development of capitalism could the conception of an "international" order arise.

The earliest example of the use of the term "international" is offered by the Oxford Dictionary from the old utilitarian

philosopher of the rising bourgeoisie, Jeremy Bentham, in 1780:

> "The law may be referred to the head of international jurisprudence. *Note:* the word 'international', it must be acknowledged, is a new one; though it is hoped sufficiently analogous and intelligible. It is calculated to express in a more significant way the branch of law which commonly goes by the name of the law of nations."
>
> (Jeremy Bentham, Princip. Legisl. XVII. 25)

The word is thus offered very tentatively as a new invention. Further, it is used only as a purely legal term, to refer to the legal relations between nation-states, or what previously used to be termed *jus gentium*, the law of the relations between peoples or communities.

In contrast to the arid legal limitation of Bentham's conception, the revolutionary fighters for democracy recognised a bond of brotherhood, reaching across countries, in their common cause and the common struggle against the holy alliance of tyrants. The Frenchman Lafayette fought in the American Revolution. The Englishman Thomas Paine, the immortal author of the *Rights of Man*, both played a foremost inspiring part in the American Revolution and was elected a Deputy for Calais to the Convention in the French Revolution. He died in exile and poverty on American soil, outlawed by the charge of high treason brought against him by the Government of Pitt.[1] It was Paine who declared in his *Rights of Man*:

> "My country is the world, and my religion is to do good."

This early revolutionary internationalist tradition of the first stages of democratic revolution could not be continued by the representatives of the victorious bourgeoisie, since their victory found expression in the establishment of the modern nation-states based on the single market dominated by a given bourgeois grouping, with mutually conflicting interests. Bourgeois nationalism became the expression of the larger

[1] Pitt "used to say", according to Lady Hester Stanhope, "that Tom Paine was quite in the right, but then he would add 'What am I to do? As things are, if I were to encourage Tom Paine's opinions, we should have a bloody revolution' ".

egoism of rival groups of exploiters. Hence the revolutionary internationalist tradition passed to communism.

For the victorious bourgeoisie the "international" conception remained on the level of the law of relations between states. Thus Hallam in his *History of Literature in* 1838 wrote of "the great system of international law".

The highest conception which the nineteenth century bourgeoisie could reach of a perspective of conciliation and peace between nations lay in the doctrine of Free Trade as the supposed panacea for establishing amicable and mutually profitable commercial relations between all nations. The Great Exhibition at the Crystal Palace in 1851 was the characteristic expression of this ideal. The subsequent exhibition of 1862 was officially called the "International Exhibition".

When liberal free trade capitalism developed to the stage of monopoly capitalism and imperialism, the term "international" in bourgeois usage began to take on a more sinister connotation to describe systems of joint colonial exploitation. Thus in 1882 the constitutional lawyer F. Dicey, wrote:

> "The internationalisation, if I may use the conception, of Egypt."

In 1883 the *Contemporary Review* in its June issue expressed

> "an earnest appeal to the Government at Berlin to unite with England in internationalising the Congo."

In 1884 the *Times* Weekly Edition of October 31 wrote of

> "questions affecting the internationalisation of the Congo, the Niger and other fields of commerce."

In 1885 the *Spectator* declared on May 30:

> "The Suez Canal must be internationalised."

And in 1888 Sir Charles Moncrieff wrote in the *Pall Mall Gazette* of September 11:

> "On a par with most of the others which internationalism has advised for the welfare of Egypt."

Thus the wheel has come full circle. The "internationalism" of the bourgeoisie has turned into its opposite, to become the system of destroying the national independence of other peoples.

3. COSMOPOLITANISM

It is in this connection that the conception of "cosmopolitanism" takes on its special significance in the era of imperialism.

Previously over the ages there were not a few cases where a sage or thinker would declare, to show his freedom from narrow local prejudices, that he regarded himself as "a citizen of the world". Plutarch relates how Socrates, when banished from Athens, said "I am not an Athenian or a Greek, but a citizen of the world." William Lloyd Garrison could declare in 1830 his Motto for his journal *The Liberator*, dedicated to the abolition of slavery in the United States: "Our country is the world; our countrymen are all mankind."

But when the further development of capitalism had passed from its early progressive era associated with the liberation of nations from colonial bondage in the American continent or monarchical bondage in Europe to the further extension of the world domination of the handful of victorious capitalist powers enslaving the rest of the world and destroying national freedom, then to profess indifference to the national liberation struggle of the dependent and oppressed peoples in the name of a supposed "higher" loyalty to the principle of "cosmopolitanism" becomes in practice identification with imperialism for the enslavement of nations.

For the citizen of an oppressed nation to profess "cosmopolitan" indifference to the national liberation struggle of his people is to be a slave and toady of the oppressors of his country. For a citizen of an imperialist oppressor country to proclaim "comsmopolitan" superiority to the liberation struggle of peoples oppressed by his country is equally to choose identity with imperialism on the side of slavery. Above all, for a socialist in an imperialist oppressor country to express himself as superior to "the obsolete nineteenth century national sentiments" of the nations oppressed by his imperialist rulers, and to describe this outlook as "international socialism" (save the mark), means in fact to unite with his imperialist rulers and to betray socialism.

In his controversies with Rosa Luxemburg and other Polish socialists over the question of Polish national self-determination (which they opposed as a reactionary slogan cutting across the fight for socialism), and in his comments on the significance of the Irish Easter Rising in 1916 (which many would-be socialists treated as a "putsch", while reformist and even some militant socialists in Britain proclaimed their amazement at the socialist Connolly sacrificing his life in a

mere national cause), Lenin clarified this question for those socialists who sought to counterpose the fight for "pure socialism" to the national struggle and who on this basis assumed an air of lofty contempt for "obsolete nineteenth century notions" of national independence and sovereignty.

"To imagine that a social revolution is conceivable without revolts by small nations in the colonies and in Europe, without the revolutionary outbursts of a section of the petty bourgeoisie with all its prejudices, without the movement of non-class-conscious proletarian and semi-proletarian masses against the oppression of the landlords, the church, the monarchy, foreign nations etc. —to imagine this means *repudiating social revolution.* Only those who imagine that in one place an army will line up and say, 'we are for socialism', and in another place another army will say, 'we are for imperialism', and that this will be the social revolution, only those who hold such a ridiculously pedantic opinion, could vilify the Irish Rebellion by calling it a 'putsch'.

"Whoever expects a 'pure' social revolution will *never* live to see it. Such a person pays lip service to revolution without understanding what revolution is."

(LENIN *Discussion on Self-Determination Summed Up*, 1916, Selected Works V p. 303)

Already in the nineteenth century Marx had poured scorn on this supposedly "supra-national" outlook of certain would-be very "revolutionary" representatives, French Proudhonists and some French socialists, including Lafargue, who had sought to dismiss nationality as an "antiquated" prejudice, and to concentrate on "the social question" to the exclusion of national issues. In the International Council of the First International in 1866 a discussion followed, which Marx describes:

"The representatives of 'Young France' (non-workers) came out with the announcement that all nationalities and even nations were 'antiquated prejudices'. . . . The whole world waits until the French are ripe for a social revolution. . . . Whoever encumbers the 'social' question with the 'superstitions' of the old world is a 'reactionary'.

"The English laughed very much when I began my speech by saying that our friend Lafargue and others, who had done away with nationalities, had spoken *'French'* to us, i.e. a language which nine tenths of the audience did not understand. I also suggested that by the negation of nationalities he appeared, quite unconsciously, to understand their absorption by the model French nation."

(MARX, letter to Engels, June 20, 1866)

Cosmopolitanism is the characteristic outlook of modern finance-capital, concealed behind a tawdry façade of nationalist-jingo slogans to deceive the people. Finance-capital recognises no national frontiers, seeks only the highest profit, penetrates and seeks to dominate every nation wherever it can reach. In the First World War the biggest combines and armaments trusts, at the same time as they fought (by proxy) with one another for the redivision of the world, secretly traded with one another and protected their interlocking interests to extract colossal profits from the business of the war. The same happened in the Second World War. Such cosmopolitanism has nothing in common with international socialism.

4. WORKING-CLASS INTERNATIONALISM

Wherein, Marx and Engels asked in their *Manifesto of the Communist Party* in 1848, do the Communists differ from other working-class parties? They gave the answer:

"The Communists are distinguished from the other working-class parties by this only:

(1) In the national struggles of the proletarians of the different countries they point out and bring to the front the common interests of the entire proletariat, independently of all nationality

(2) In the various stages of development which the struggle of the working-class against the bourgeoisie has to pass through, they always and everywhere represent the interests of the movement as a whole."

Thus the first distinguishing feature of Communism on which Marx and Engels lay stress is its international character. Indeed, the two distinguishing features described may be regarded as in fact one ("this only"): that the Communists represent the basic long-term interests of the whole working class, as against either sectionalism or national division.

In the preceding analysis we have seen how the early internationalism of the bourgeois-democratic revolution broke down once the bourgeoisie had won power. Just as the dreams of "liberty, equality and fraternity" dissolved in the reality of the bourgeois property state of class division, so the parallel dreams of the international alliance of the peoples against the tyrants dissolved in the reality of the bourgeois nation-states of competing traders, exploiters and colonialists. So far from ushering in an era of peace and friendship between the nations, as anticipated by the sponsors of the Great Exhibition of 1851, the victory of the bourgeoisie brought in its train the most destructive arms race, barbarous colonial wars and aggression all over the world, and finally world wars on a scale never before known.

Therefore the banner of international brotherhood could only be carried forward by the working class. For the working class had no separate interests, like the conflicting interests of rival exploiters. Only the emancipation of the working class can end the conflicts of rival property interests, bring the emancipation of all sections of the population oppressed by capitalist property relations, and, through the establishment of a social order based on common ownership of the means of production, finally end class society and open the way to the fulfilment of the age-old ideal of human brotherhood.

The internationalism of the working class does not arise fully formed and conscious in a single moment, but is only achieved through a long process of experience and successive struggles. On the other hand, the conditions of existence and struggle of the working class from the outset create the soil for the development of this internationalism from the most elementary beginnings.

From the outset, the workers in all countries, wherever they were exploited, had a common enemy, capital. That common enemy often combined against them, as in operations for strike-breaking, or in the use of low wages in one country as artillery to attack wages in another. If the workers sought to achieve political advance against their enemy and to move to political power, as was most powerfully demonstrated in the nineteenth century by the Paris Commune of 1871, the rival capitalist powers, which a moment before had been engaged in mutual war, laid aside their conflict to help one another

against the common class enemy. This was still more powerfully shown with the victory of the first socialist revolution in 1917 and the whole subsequent history. Therefore at every level, from the most elementary to the highest, international unity has always been and remains the vital interest of the working class.

But this internationalism of the working class brings in a new element which was not present in the generalised conception of the brotherhood of man expressed in the outlook of the early revolutionary democratic movement. What is now expressed is no longer the idealised brotherhood of abstract "man" in the existing class society, whose antagonism of exploiter and exploited has shattered the idealised vision. Such a future vision of the brotherhood of man can only be realised by the ending of class society and class exploitation. What is expressed in working-class internationalism is the international unity and cooperation of all who work against all who exploit their labour. This is a new feature. This internationalism of the working class extends to all who are oppressed by capital, equally to the colonial slaves, to the masses of the peasantry in dependent countries exploited by the big overseas combines, and to all the nations oppressed or dominated by imperialist rule or penetration.

The second new feature of working-class internationalism is that it represents, not only the aspiration of internationalism as an ideal or goal for the future, but its practice in the living present world—that is, practical solidarity of the working people against the exploiters, of the working class against capitalism, and of the alliance of the working class and oppressed nations against imperialism. This practical solidarity finds expression at every level. It finds expression at the basic and most elementary level through practical solidarity across countries in strikes, support from the workers in one country to the workers on strike in another country, resistance to black-legging or attempts of employers to organise strikebreaking or transit of black goods in relation to workers on strike in another country. It finds further expression in political cooperation, campaigns for the release of political prisoners in a country under an oppressive regime; against political repression, the colour bar or *apartheid*; and for support of national liberation

struggles. It reaches its highest level in joint struggle in the cause of the socialist revolution against counter-revolution.

The third new feature of working-class internationalism is that it leads the way forward, through the partial struggles, practical solidarity and partial victories of today, to the future fulfilment of internationalism as the realisable principle of world organisation on the basis of international socialism. International socialism does not represent the denial of national liberation and national sovereignty, which is the indispensable next stage from the preceding imperialist system of national enslavement, but is built on the foundation of ending equally national and class oppression and thereby ends the conflicts between rival groups of exploiters, which are presented as national conflicts, and opens the era of international cooperation along the common path of socialist construction and the transition to communism.

The first victory of the socialist revolution in Russia in 1917 brought also the national liberation of all the nations previously oppressed by Tsarism, with full recognition of the right of secession (carried out at once in the case of Finland, and as soon as possible in other cases), and annulment of the "unequal treaties" imposed by Tsarist imperialism, like every other imperialism, against a number of nominally independent, but in fact dependent, countries. From 1917 onwards, as Lenin repeatedly pointed out, the world socialist revolution comprised the unity and common action of three related fronts: the advance of the first socialist state; the struggle of the working class against capitalism; and the national liberation struggle of the oppressed peoples against colonialism. Following the victory of the joint struggle of the peoples against fascism; and the further victories of the socialist revolution, we have now reached the stage of a world system of socialism, extending over one-third of the world, and anticipating the future world order of international socialism, which will embrace the whole world.

The victory of international socialism will establish the foundation for the futher advance to international communist society, which will finally end the divisions between advanced and backward nations, and eventually all national divisions, leading, as communists foresee, to the fusion of nations in the

united humanity of the coming era. But this is music of the future.

The fourth distinctive feature of working-class internationalism is that it has consistently led and leads the fight for peace against the ever more destructive wars let loose by capitalism and by its modern phrase, imperialism. When the Franco-German War broke out in 1870 the General Council of the First International, uniting French and German sections, denounced the joint responsibility of the French and German Governments; Liebknecht and Bebel, the leaders of the German workers, were imprisoned for high treason; the French workers rose and established the Commune, the first victory of the working class. The Second International in successive resolutions called on the workers in all countries to struggle against the impending First World War. When the First World War broke out, and the test revealed the falling away of many leaders and sections, the Russian working class, under the leadership of the Bolshevik Party, fulfilled the resolutions of the International, in unity with sections in all countries faithful to the principles of internationalism; and as soon as the Russian workers had won the victory of their revolution in 1917, their first Decree was the Decree on Peace. Since then, the Soviet Union for close on half a century has been always in the vanguard in the fight for peace and disarmament; in their disarmament proposals in the nineteen-twenties; in their fight for the Peace Front during the nineteen-thirties, which could have stopped Hitler's aggression and prevented the Second World War; and in the modern period in the fight to end the cold war and for peaceful coexistence, and for the abolition of nuclear weapons and prevention of a third world war.

Such is the high theme of working-class internationalism, expressed in all these four distinctive features. When we consider the progress during the short span of a century and a quarter, from the handful of groups of the International Communist League of 1847-48, through the First International, the Second International and the Communist International, to the present world system of socialist states, comprising one-third of the world, with the international communist movement extending through all countries and the general advance of the working-class movement, we cannot but recognise a historical

development without parallel in the record of mankind.

Storms and ordeals there have been in plenty, strains and stresses, fallings by the wayside, partial breakdowns and resumed advance. But through it all the path has gone forward. Over this century and a quarter the principle of working-class internationalism, of international communism, has proved itself, and will further prove itself, as the indispensable principle to solve the problems of our epoch.

CHAPTER II

THE FORERUNNERS

"The Jacobin of 1793 has become the Communist of today."

KARL MARX, *Speech to the Democratic Association in Brussels, February* 22, 1848

Communism did not spring into existence ready-made from the inspiration of a genius. Lenin has traced the three component sources of Marxism or Communism: French Socialism, German philosophy and English political economy. The genius of Marx consisted in drawing together these threads and developing therefrom his all-embracing theory, which has become the guiding theory of the modern world.

Similarly the international communist movement did not arise as a coterie of disciples of an individual teacher or leader. Marx and Engels did not first write the *Communist Manifesto* and then found the Communist League to propagate its principles. They first became members of the Communist League (in its initial form as the Federation of the Just, which they helped to transform into the Communist League); and it was the Second Congress of the Communist League which instructed them to prepare the statement of its programme and principles, published in the following year as the *Manifesto of the Communist Party*.

1. ORIGINS FROM THE DEMOCRATIC REVOLUTION

The international communist movement developed in direct

line of descent from the left wing of the democratic revolution and the first beginnings of the working-class movement. The great democratic revolutions which ushered in the modern era, in England in the seventeenth century, and in the United States and France in the eighteenth century, were torn from the outset by the contradiction between the ideal aims for the ending of all privilege and the foundation of a new society of human liberty and brotherhood, and the reality of social inequality based on property which their limitations and presuppositions could not overcome.

This contradiction inevitably gave rise among the more militant elements to the demand to complete the revolution by following up the victorious political revolution with a social and economic revolution corresponding to the interests of the poor and establishing a new social order based on common ownership. In the English Revolution this found its fullest expression in the Levellers and the theories of Winstanley. In the French Revolution, at a more advanced stage of social development and class antagonisms, it found partial expression among the more radical left wing sections of the Jacobins, and its most consistent and conscious expression in the organisation led by Buonarroti and Babeuf, whose unsuccessful plan for insurrection, known to historians as the "Conspiracy of the Equals", was crushed by the young Napoleon in 1796, with the arrest and execution of its leaders. In neither case was there yet in existence the working class as a class to make possible the fulfilment of the programme.

The radical left wing of the Jacobins, represented by Hébert and Roux (the "Enragés") demanded a revolution in property relations, and sharply criticised the Democratic Constitution of 1793 and the more conservative democratic conceptions of Robespierre and St. Just upholding private property. Roux declared:

> "Freedom is only a delusion if one class is able to starve another, if the rich man through his monopoly has power of life and death over the poor. . . . The war which the rich wage against the poor is more terrible than the war which the foreigner wages against France. It is the bourgeoisie who have enriched themselves out of the revolution for four years."

Robespierre sent the Hébertists to the guillotine and thereby

signed his own death warrant at the hands of counter-revolution, whose victorious Thermidor followed as soon as the left had been struck down.

Babeuf and Buonarroti, who organised the "Union du Panthéon" with a considerable membership until its suppression by the Directory, represented a more consistent and conscious form of embryonic communism. The *Manifesto of the Equals* proclaimed: "Nature has given to every man an equal right to the enjoyment of all goods." Wiser then the Hébertists, they supported the Democratic Constitution of 1793 (which was never put in practice) as a step forward. They advocated a temporary revolutionary dictatorship, based on the workers, as a transition, during which all private property would be expropriated within a generation and pass into communal ownership, and the establishment of a democratic constitution in which labour would be compulsory for all, and only persons engaged in useful labour would have the right to vote. After the counter-revolutionary coup of Thermidor and the execution of the Jacobin leaders in 1794, the revolutionary section which had been organised in the legal "Union du Panthéon" had to move over to illegal organisation, and were joined in this by the remnants of the radical left wing of the Jacobins. It was this underground organisation, carrying forward the fight of the left wing of Jacobinism with a communist type of programme, and preparing for an armed insurrection to overthrow the counter-revolution and carry forward the revolution, which was betrayed to the police in 1796, and its leaders arrested and placed on trial as organisers of the "Conspiracy of the Equals", and sentenced to death or exile.

Marx paid high honour to Babeuf, and in the *Manifesto of the Communist Party* cited him at the head of the section on "Critical-Utopian Socialism and Communism" as having "given voice to the demands of the proletariat". Marx wrote of Babeuf in 1845:

> "The first appearance of a really effective communist party takes place during the progress of the bourgeois revolution at the moment when the constitutional monarchy is abolished. The most logical communists (in England, the Levellers, and in France, Babeuf, Buonarroti and so forth), are the first to stress social questions. In *Gracchus Babeuf et la Conjuration des Egaux* written

by Babeuf's friend and comrade, Buonarroti, (Englished by Bronterre O'Brien as *Buonarroti's History of Babeuf's Conspiracy for Equality*), we read how these republicans learned by experience that, even if such 'social questions' as monarchy versus republic could be settled, this would not solve one single 'social question' in the proletarian sense of the words."

(MARX, to Heinzen; Mehring, *Nachlass*)

Similarly Marx and Engels in the first joint exposition of their views wrote:

"The French Revolution brought forth ideas which led beyond the ideas of the entire old world system. The revolutionary movement which began in 1789 in *Cercle Social*, which in the middle of its course had as its chief representatives Leclerc and Roux, and which finally was temporarily defeated with Babeuf's conspiracy, brought forth the communist idea which Babeuf's friend Buonarroti re-introduced into France after the Revolution of 1830. This idea, consistently developed, is the idea of the new world system."

(MARX and ENGELS, *The Holy Family*, 1844, Chapter VI)

At the same time they warned against regarding Babeuf as a theoretician of communism. "To take Babeuf as the theoretical exponent of communism could only have entered the head of a Berlin schoolmaster." (Marx and Engels, *The German Ideology*, 1845-46, Section III).

Buonarroti, the associate of Babeuf, wrote his account of the "conspiracy" and its aims in his book published in 1828, which, as Marx mentioned, was translated by the Chartist leader Bronterre O'Brien and exercised its revolutionary influence among the left wing of Chartism. In Paris secret revolutionary organisation was carried forward after the 1830 Revolution, under the leadership of Blanqui, the disciple of Buonarroti, who had returned to Paris after the 1830 Revolution, and Barbès, through successive forms of the "Société des Familles" and the "Société des Saisons", culminating in the unsuccessful insurrection of 1839, following which Blanqui and Barbès were sentenced to death, commuted to life imprisonment. In close association with the "Société des Saisons" was the organisation of militant German refugees in Paris, the

"Federation of the Just" (the members of both organisations fought shoulder to shoulder in the 1839 rising), which subsequently took on an international character, was eventually joined by Marx and Engels, and became the Communist League.

Thus the international communist movement derives directly from the radical and embryonic communist left wing of the French Revolution and from the militant German emigration. But there were further strands went into its composition, drawing together elements especially from the then three leading countries of capitalism, England, France and Germany.

2. ENGLISH RADICAL AND WORKING CLASS INTERNATIONALISM

The revolutionary democratic movement in England had deep-rooted international traditions and connections. In the seventeenth century Milton had conducted his polemical championship of regicide in England against the denunciation of the counter-revolutionaries on the Continent. And when he composed his sonnet "On the late massacre in Piedmont" to call on the Lord to "avenge thy slaughter'd Saints whose bones lie scatter'd on the Alpine mountains" and to "forget not" and wreak vengeance on "the bloody Piedmontese", beneath the religious form was visible the sense of international solidarity of the revolution.

The French Revolution, which inspired Shelley, Byron, Burns and the youthful Wordsworth, led to the formation of the Corresponding Societies, which in their composition and spirit in the majority of centres constituted an elementary form of the beginnings of working-class organisation. The slogan of the French Revolution "War to the Palaces, Peace to the Huts!", and the spirit of the Carmagnole, won its echo in Britain. Indeed, the response was so widespread that the authorities acutely feared revolution in Britain. We have seen how Pitt, wiser than the servile sycophant of Tory patrons, Burke, admitted in private that "Paine was in the right", but deemed it his duty to suppress Paine for fear of revolution. The hideous counter-revolution of Pitt and Castlereagh strangled the revolt of the people of Britain, and organised the coalition with gold and arms to strangle the French Revolution.

Following the Napoleonic wars, with the industrial revolution in Britain and the growth for the first time of a numerous industrial working class in the towns, the radical movement in Britain took on a more and more directly working-class character. This was shown already in a preliminary stage with the Luddites and the battle of Peterloo, then in a more developed stage of organisation with early trade unionism, and finally in the first political working-class movement, Chartism.

With the many political refugees in Britain, international links and a keen sense of international solidarity characterised the radical and working-class movement from the outset. We have seen how Bronterre O'Brien translated Buonarroti's *History of Babeuf's Conspiracy for Equality*, and this became a revolutionist's handbook for the left wing of Chartism. The Democratic Association, founded in 1838 by the Chartist leader, Julian Harney, maintained close connections with the foreign refugees in London and the Chartist organ, the *Northern Star*, which was transferred to London in 1844, followed closely events abroad. In 1844 an organisation, the Fraternal Democrats, was formed by German, Polish and Italian refugees living in London. In 1845 these approached the Chartist leaders to join; and prominent Chartist leaders, including Ernest Jones, Cooper, Harney and others became members, and took thenceforth an active part.

The internationalist outlook of the Fraternal Democrats was expressed in its motto "All men are brothers". The programme laid down:

> "We declare that the earth with all its natural productions is the common property of all. . . . We declare that the present system of society, which permits idlers and schemers to monopolise the fruits of the earth and the productions of industry, and compels the working classes to labour for inadequate rewards, and even condemns them to social slavery, destitution and degradation, is essentially unjust."

On internationalism the programme stated:

> "Convinced . . . that national prejudices have been, in all ages, taken advantage of by the people's oppressors to set them tearing the throats of each other, when they should have been working together for their common good, this society repudiates the term 'Foreigner', no matter by or to whom applied. Our moral creed is to receive our fellow men, without regard to 'country', as members of one family, the human race; and citizens of one commonwealth—the world."

At a meeting organised by the Fraternal Democrats in 1847 to proclaim solidarity with the Portuguese rising Harney said:

> "The people are beginning to understand that foreign as well as domestic questions do affect them; that a blow struck at Liberty on the Tagus is an injury to the friends of Freedom on the Thames; that the success of Republicanism in France would be the doom of Tyranny in every other land; and the triumph of England's democratic Charter would be the salvation of the millions throughout Europe." (*Northern Star*, June 19, 1847)

In 1848 at a meeting in honour of the second anniversary of the Cracow rising Harney proclaimed the aim of a combined international victory of the European working class over the bourgeoisie:

> "But let the working men of Europe advance together and strike for their rights at one and the same time, and it will be seen that every tyrannical government and usurping class will have enough to do at home without attempting to assist other oppressors. The age of Democratic ascendancy has commenced . . . the rule of the bourgeoisie is doomed." (*Northern Star*, February 26, 1848)

From 1847 the Fraternal Democrats association was organised with a regular constitution of general secretary, an international executive and national secretaries for each nation, England (Harney), France, Germany, Poland, Italy, Switzerland and so on. The Marxist historian, Theodore Rothstein, has commented:

> "There can be no doubt whatever that this form of organisation, which was repeated in all subsequent similar organisations, served as the prototype of the International. Only seventeen years elapsed before the foundation of the latter, and throughout this period the traditions of the Fraternal Democrats remained in force."

(Theodore Rothstein, *Aus der Vorgeschichte der*

Internationale, Supplement to the *Neue Zeit*, October 31, 1913)

This was the second foundation on which the international communist movement was built.

3. GERMAN WORKERS' INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATION IN EUROPE

The third constituent element arose from the organisation of German emigrant workers in the capitals of Western Europe—organisations which often took on an international character.

Since we are not here considering the theoretical origins of Communism, we are not in this context referring to the German philosophical element in these origins (the development of Marxism from the critical dialectical method of Hegel), still less the scholastic absurdities on which Marx and Engels poured scorn in the *Communist Manifesto* under the title "German or 'True' Socialism":

> "It is well known how the monks wrote silly lives of Catholic Saints *over* the manuscripts on which the classical works of ancient heathendom had been written. The German *literati* reversed this process with the profane French literature. They wrote their philosophical nonsense beneath the French original. For instance, beneath the French criticism of the economic functions of money, they wrote 'Alienation of Humanity'."

What is important for the organisational origins of the international communist movement as an organised international movement is the role of the German emigrant workers' organisations in the European capitals, which often reflected the theoretical outlook of the German utopian worker-communist, Weitling, and in some cases drew in representatives of other nationalities.

This significant political role of the organisations of German refugees and workers in the European capitals, especially Paris, Brussels and London, arose, not only from the police persecution in Germany, but also from the traditional practice of the Wanderjahr or year of travel of the German craftsman-worker in completing the mastery of his trade. The principal trades were tailoring and carpentry. Engels has described the outlook of the craftsmen-workers of this epoch, in describing the character of the predominantly proletarian sections of the

membership of the Federation of the Just—the organisation which, originating in Paris, and then centred in London, eventually became the Communist League:

> "The proletarian part of the membership consisted entirely of manual workers. They were exploited by men who, even in the great metropolis, were nearly always small masters. The exploitation of large-scale tailoring, so-called 'confection', the transformation of the work into domestic industry on behalf of a great capitalist, was still in its infancy in the London of that epoch. The exploiter was a small master, and the workers in the trade lived in hopes of themselves becoming small masters. In addition, vestiges of the guild spirit still adhered to the German craftsmen. They were not as yet fully fledged proletarians, were only on the way to becoming members of the modern proletariat, were still hangers-on of the petty bourgeoisie, had not at that date become the direct opponents of the bourgeoisie, the large-scale capitalists. These craftsmen, to their eternal honour, instinctively foresaw the future development of their class, and, though not fully conscious of the fact, were pressing forward toward organising themselves as the party of the proletariat."

(Engels *On the History of the Communist League*, 1885)

The heroic character of the revolutionaries of this period was described by Engels when he wrote of Karl Schapper—the former university student of forestry who, after participating in the 1832 conspiracy led by George Buchner in Germany and the storming of the police station in Frankfurt-on-the-Main in 1833, fled abroad, joined Mazzini's forces in Savoy in 1834, built up organisation in Paris, fought in the 1839 insurrection alongside Blanqui, was arrested and expelled to London and there fulfilled a leading role in the organisation which became the Communist League. Engels wrote:

> "Built on a heroic scale, resolute and energetic by temperament, ever ready to risk life and limb, Schapper was the prototype of the professional revolutionist of the eighteen-thirties.... He was a man of genuine metal all through, and his services to the German working-class movement will never be forgotten."

This admiring reference of Engels in 1885 to Schapper as "the prototype of the professional revolutionist of the eighteen-thirties" is worth recalling today to destroy the current widely spread myth according to which the conception of the "professional revolutionary" is supposed to have been a peculiar invention of Lenin previously unknown to Marxism—however much Lenin may have developed the conception to meet modern conditions.

The organisation which eventually became the Communist League originated as a secret society of German refugees and workers in Paris, then the revolutionary centre of the world, founded as the Exiles' League in 1834, and reconstituted in 1836 by the more militant section as the Federation of the Just. At the outset, Engels says, the Federation was "a German outlyer of French working-class communism", and "in reality not much more than a German branch of the French secret societies"; and its members fought alongside the French revolutionaries in the rising of 1839. After its leaders, Schapper and Bauer, had been expelled to London, they joined forces with others there, including Joseph Moll, in building up the organisation and made London the new headquarters. There in 1834 Engels made their acquaintance: "they were the first proletarian revolutionists I had ever met."

With the establishment of the headquarters in London the Federation of the Just took on an international character. Branches or sections ("communes" or "huts") were established widely in Germany, France, Belgium, Switzerland (where Weitling, whose utopian communist theory Engels described as "the first stirring of an independent philosophy of the German proletariat", was active, with Becker and others) and other countries. In addition, the London headquarters became international in character.

> "No sooner was the centre of gravity transferred from Paris to London than a new phenomenon came to the fore. The Federation, from being a German organisation, gradually became transformed into an international affair. In addition to German and Swiss, persons of other nationalities to whom the German language could serve as a medium of communication, where to be found in the Federation: there were Scandinavians, Dutch, Hungarians, Bohemians, Southern Slavs; also there were Russians and Alsatians. In 1847 a British grenadier in full uniform was a regular attendant at the meetings."
>
> (Engels, ibid)

The motto on the membership card "All men are brothers" was translated in twenty languages. An open or public organisation was formed, the Communist Workers' Educational Association, within which the Federation functioned as a secret society, the former serving as a recruiting ground for the latter.

Marx and Engels, whose working partnership began from the summer of 1844, were in contact with the Federation, as they were with the Chartist leaders and the French revolutionary movement, but had initially refused in 1843 an invitation to become members of the Federation, since they were convinced of the necessity first to replace the confused utopian-communist theories and secret limited organisation by the scientific theory and methods which they were jointly developing. For this purpose they established an initial base and nucleus in Brussels, working with Wilhelm Wolff, Weydemeyer and others, and established the German Workers' Society of Brussels, with an organ the *Deutsche Brüsseler Zeitung*. The aim was from the outset international; and a Komunistisches Korrespondenzkommittee was established in Brussels, with a parallel committee in London, which was joined by Harney and others. The new theories made rapid headway; and by the spring of 1847 Moll on behalf of the Federation visited Marx in Brussels and Engels in Paris to negotiate with them an agreement that they should join the Federation, which could then consider reorganisation with a new programme corresponding to their conceptions. Marx and Engels agreed and became members of the Federation.

In the summer of 1847 the first Congress of the Federation was held in London, with Engels attending as the delegate from Paris and Wolff from Brussels. The reorganisation was carried through along the lines advocated by Marx and Engels:

> "The main theme for discussion was the question of reorganisation. Every vestige of its old mystical nature, the heritage of conspiratorial days, was now discarded. The Federation was organised into communes, circles,

leading circles, central committee and congress. It took the name of Communist League." (Engels, ibid.)

4. THE COMMUNIST LEAGUE

The Communist League was the first international organisation of the communist movement. Strictly speaking, the claim could be made that it should be correctly termed the First International. But this term has become associated with the International Working Men's Association of 1864; and it is true that the other was the first coming together of developing working-class movements, whereas the Communist League was still an association of small groups.

The Communist League existed from 1847 to 1852.

Its foundation congress in the summer of 1847 arose in the conditions described. The old motto of the Federation of the Just "All men are brothers" was replaced by the new motto "Workers of all countries, unite!". This slogan appeared already for the first time under the title of a new journal *Kommunistische Zeitschrift* published by the London members of the League in September, 1847. The Preamble to the Rules, drawn up by Marx for the first congress, remitted for discussion to the branches and sections, and finally adopted at the second congress later in the year, proclaimed the aim:

> "The aim of the League is the overthrow of the bourgeoisie, the rule of the proletariat, the abolition of the old bourgeois society based on class antagonisms and the foundation of a new society without classes and without private property."

The conditions of membership were laid down in the Rules, and included: "Revolutionary energy and zeal in propaganda", adherence to Communism; non-participation in other political societies, and duty to inform the competent League authority on membership of any other body; obedience to League decisions; not to disclose information of the internal life of the League. The organisation followed the principles of democratic centralism (all officials and committees to be elected and subject to recall, and subordination of lower organs to higher).

The decisive Second Congress of the League was held in London at the end of November and the beginning of

December, 1847, and was attended by Marx. In the debates, which are stated to have lasted ten days, Marx expounded the new theories; the proposed new principles were unanimously adopted; and Marx and Engels were commissioned to draw up a Manifesto along the lines agreed. This was done; and the *Manifesto of the Communist Party*, to give it its correct title, although since more familiarly known as the *Communist Manifesto* was first published in German in London in February, 1848, just before the outbreak of the February Revolution in France.

The *Communist Manifesto* remains the classic foundation document of the international communist movement. Twenty-five years later, in the 1872 Preface, Marx and Engels stated that "the general principles laid down in this Manifesto are, on the whole, as correct today as ever"; and that only the immediate demands and the current tactical relations to other parties and organisation are dated.[2]

In the revolutions and revolutionary struggles which shook Europe in 1848 and the immediately ensuring phase Marx and Engels and the principal members of the Communist League played an active part, whose record belongs to the history of the period. The Communist League did not directly play a part as an organisation; the break-up and prevention of functioning of its successive central committees, transferred from London to Brussels to Paris, by arrests and states of siege, are described in Engels' brief record.

By the autumn of 1849, with the ebb of the revolution, most of the members of the previous central committees and congresses, with the exception of those still in prison or killed, were able to meet again in London. The League was reorganised, and the *Address* of March, 1850, drafted by Marx and Engels, and a further classic document of Communism, especially for the relations of the democratic revolution and

[2] It is characteristic that in a Centenary Edition of the *Communist Manifesto* published by the Labour Party in 1948, with a lengthy and dreary conventional anti-communist Introduction by Harold Laski (Laski, 95 pages; Marx and Engels text, 64 pages), the official Foreword by the Labour Party pointed out that, while the general principles laid down in the Manifesto must be regarded as affected by changed conditions, "the detailed programme they put forward is of great interest to us" as closely parallel, in the opinion of this Foreword, to the policy of the Labour Government. Needless to say, the 1872 Preface of Marx and Engels was not reprinted in this edition.

the working-class revolution, was adopted and issued. But by 1850 divisions arose in the estimation of the situation in Europe. As London became the headquarters of the refugees from the defeated revolutions in Europe; the League was inundated with an influx of new adherents of varying outlooks, French Blanquists, Polish and Hungarian social revolutionaries, English Chartists. At the same time there were gathered in London the followers of Louis Blanc, Ledru-Rollin, Mazzini, Kossuth and others, all dreaming of forming Provisional Governments to lead victorious renewals of the revolution in their respective countries.

By the summer of 1850 Marx and Engels had reached a negative view of these too sanguine hopes of a rapid renewal of the revolution in Europe.

> "With this general prosperity, in which the productive forces of bourgeois society develop as luxuriantly as is at all possible within bourgeois relationships, *there can be no talk of a real revolution.*"
>
> (Marx and Engels, "Review of May to October, 1850", *Neue Rheinische Zeitung. Politisch-ökonomische Revue*, Nos. V and VI, Hamburg)

As shown in his other writings at the time (quoted in my *Problems of Contemporary History*, pp. 81-83), Marx by 1850 had developed the view that, with the world extension of capitalism, West Europe had become too narrow a basis for the world socialist revolution, and began to turn his attention increasingly during the eighteen-fifties and after, alongside his deeper study of the functioning of capitalist economy, which found a preliminary expression in the *Critique of Political Economy* in 1859, to developments in the United States, India, China and Russia.

This view met with resistance from the more ardent spirits, including some of the tried old fighters of the Communist League like Schapper and Willich. These disagreements led to a split. Marx moved the headquarters of the League to Cologne, where the programme of the League was revised in December, 1850, to meet the new conditions. The revised Rules read:

> (1) The object of the Communist League is the destruction of the old society by means of propaganda and the political struggle, in order to effect the mental, political and economic emancipation of the proletariat and to carry through the communist revolution. The League represents in the various stages of development through which the proletarian struggle has to pass the interests of the whole movement. It always seeks to rally round itself and to organise all revolutionary forces of the proletariat. It is secret and indissoluble until the proletarian revolution has achieved its object.
>
> (2) The conditions of membership are:
>
> (a) freedom from all religious ties; withdrawal from ecclesiastical associations;
>
> (b) insight into the conditions, development and ulterior aims of the proletarian movement;
>
> (c) abstention from all associations and partial movements whose objects are inimical or destructive to the object of the League;
>
> (d) capacity and zeal in propaganda, unflinching fidelity to our convictions, revolutionary energy;
>
> (e) strict secrecy in all League matters.

Propaganda was conducted from the Cologne headquarters until the arrest of the principal leaders there and the historic Cologne Communist Trial in November, 1852. Following this, it was decided to dissolve the League; and the separate organisation which the Schapper-Willich group had endeavoured to maintain came to an end also a few months later. The League had fulfilled its initiating role. The next stage required a further development of the working-class movement.

5. FROM THE COMMUNIST LEAGUE TO THE FIRST INTERNATIONAL

It would be a mistake to imagine that during the dozen years between the dissolution of the Communist League and the foundation of the First International, between 1852 and 1864, there was a cessation of international revolutionary solidarity or international working-class contacts. Despite unfavourable conditions following the victory of counter-revolution and seemingly triumphant expansion of capitalism, expression of international solidarity and attempts to create anew some type of international working-class organisation arose repeatedly during these years.

Already in 1850 the London workers had shown in unmistakable fashion their attitude to the counter-revolution

when the Austrian General Haynau, notorious for his bloody suppression of the workers, came to London. On being taken on a visit to Barclay and Perkins' brewery, he was seized by the draymen and his moustache cut off; he was dragged out from the dustbin, where he had sought to take refuge, and flogged through the streets—an incident any reference to which won applause thereafter at every popular meeting.

In 1854 the Chartist leader, Ernest Jones, took the initiative in the formation of a Welcome and Protest Committee to welcome the French revolutionary Barbès, liberated "from the dungeons of Napoleon", and protest against a proposed visit of Napoleon III. From this developed an International Committee under the presidency of Ernest Jones, with elected national secretaries for the English, the French, the Germans, the Poles, the Italians and the Spaniards.

Many demonstrations in support of international democratic solidarity were organised by the International Committee, either alone or in association with other bodies, between 1855 and 1860; their record will be found in Theodore Rothstein's *From Chartism to Labourism* (pp. 169-180). It is significant that the first demonstration in February, 1855, took place during the Crimean War in which Britain and France were ranged against Russia. Popular hostility to Tsarism as the bulwark of reaction in Europe brought a measure of support for the war, despite the parallel popular hostility to Napoleon and distrust of the British ruling class. But in the expression of progressive spokesmen a distinction was made between Tsarism and the Russian people. At this first demonstration in February 1855, summoned to commemorate the French Revolution of 1848, a resolution was adopted calling for an "alliance of the peoples" and "a conference of the representatives of all democracies" to establish a "permanent international committee consisting of representatives of all the democracies" for the purpose of "promoting the advent of the Democratic and Social Republic". This resolution was moved by the Englishman, Finlen, and seconded by the famous Russian democratic leader, Herzen. The chairman explained that this procedure in the midst of the Crimean War was adopted "in order to show their repudiation of national hatred", and that their fight against the despots should not be confused with one against the peoples oppressed by them. Thus already during the Crimean War was proclaimed and publicly demonstrated the principle of international fraternisation of the peoples in the midst of war between their governments. This principle of internationalism was further expressed, this time clearly on the basis of international working-class solidarity, by the parallel exchange of fraternal messages between the French and German sections of the International during the Franco-German war in 1870. It received a further historic expression during the Russo-Japanese war, when the Russian socialist leader, Plekhanov, and the Japanese socialist leader, Katayama, publicly embraced at the International Socialist Congress at Amsterdam in 1904. It received its highest expression with the Leninist tactic in the fight against the imperialist First World War—the tactic which led the way to the first victory of the socialist revolution.

Various proposals for some kind of permanent international organisation of the workers or working-class and democratic forces were made during these years. These proposals came from various sources and were often confused in character. In April, 1856, a deputation came to London from Paris, representing supporters of the very confused petty-bourgeois socialist, Proudhon, to propose the formation of a Universal League of Workers which would, in accordance with the recipe of Proudhon, painlessly eliminate capitalism by using the contributions of twenty million workers to found productive and distributive cooperatives. In May, 1856, the International Committee in London issued a Manifesto announcing a "plan" to enlarge its ranks "into an International Association, open to men of all countries, and which ought not to count only one International Committee in one of the towns of Europe, but International Committees in as many of the towns of the world as possible". In August, 1856, at a meeting held in London in honour of the French Revolution of 1792, convened by the International Committee in conjunction with the "Revolutionary Commune" (an organisation of French political refugees with communist sympathies in London) a resolution was adopted calling on the International Committee, the Revolutionary Commune, the Society of German Communists, the Society of English Chartists, the Society of Polish Socialists, and "all those who, without belonging to any of these societies, were eligible members of the International

Association" to enter into an alliance for cooperation in the common aim to achieve "the triumph of the universal democratic and social republic". Following this, the evidence indicates that an organisation described as the International Association came into existence and conducted some activities up to the beginning of the sixties.

Thus it was not a bolt from the blue, but the successor of a series of preceding efforts, when at a great popular demonstration held in St. Martin's Hall, London, on September 28, 1864, to commemorate the Polish revolt, a delegation of French workers put forward a proposal, which had already been discussed between French and British working-class representatives during the preceding year, for the foundation of an international working-class organisation with its headquarters in London, and a resolution was carried with enthusiasm establishing such an organisation. But this time the conditions were more fully prepared. This demonstration became the foundation of the First International.

CHAPTER III

THE FIRST INTERNATIONAL

"To conquer political power has therefore become the great duty of the working classes.... One element of success they possess—numbers; but numbers weigh only in the balance, if united by combination and led by knowledge."

INAUGURAL ADDRESS of the
First International, 1864.

Of course the true title was not "The First International". This arithmetical term, by which it is nowadays known, was only attached to it after the foundation of the Second International. Its official title was the International Working Men's Association (at first, in the foundation documents, "Working Men's International Association"). In general contemporary expression, equally of friends and of enemies, it was referred to as "the International".

The International Working Men's Association was founded in 1864, and reached its effective end in 1872, although it was not actually wound up then, but formally transferred to the United States for its headquarters, where it was finally dissolved in 1876.

1. FOUNDATION

The foundation at the St. Martin's Hall meeting in London on September 28, 1864, was the outcome of a series of preparatory steps during the preceding two years.

At the International Exhibition in London in August, 1862, an elected delegation of French trade union representatives (the trade unions were permitted under Napoleon III, although political organisation was forbidden) had met English trade union representatives and discussed the project of forming an international workers' organisation. Contact was maintained. In the following year this was brought to a higher level when the American Civil War and consequent cotton famine brought extreme hardship to the textile workers of Lancashire and also in France. The British ruling class openly sympathised with the slaveowners of the South, and sought to whip up popular feeling, on the basis of the suffering of the cotton workers, against the North. In vain. The Lancashire cotton workers, to their eternal honour, and the whole British working class and popular movement stood firmly by the North for the abolition of slavery. It was to this stand that Marx paid tribute when he wrote:

> "This is a new and brilliant proof of the indestructible excellence of the English popular masses: of that excellence which is the secret of England's greatness."
>
> (Marx, "A London Workers' Meeting", article in *Die Presse*, February 2, 1862)

Committees were formed and meetings held both in Britain and France in support of the cotton workers and the cause of the North, and also in support of the Polish insurrection of 1863.

In July, 1863, a demonstration was held in London in support of the Polish Insurrection, with the joint participation of French and English workers' leaders, who carried forward the contacts of the preceding year. On the initiative of the London Trades Council (there was not yet a Trades Union Congress) a joint meeting was held with the French representatives, and also with Polish and German workers' representatives, and a committee appointed to draw up an Address to the French workers proposing the holding of an international workers' congress.

The reply of the French workers was brought and read out by their delegation to the St. Martin's Hall meeting on September 28, 1864. The French representatives presented a plan for the formation of an international workers' organisation by the establishment of a central commission in London,

with representatives from the workers of all countries, and with sub-commissions in the capital cities of Europe, to draw up the constitution and rules and prepare an International Congress in the following year. This plan was accepted in a resolution unanimously adopted by the meeting:

> "The meeting, having heard the reply sent by our French brothers to our address, once more welcomes the French delegates, and as their plan is calculated to further unity among the workers, the meeting accepts the draft just read as the basis of an International Association."

The resolution was moved on behalf of the English delegation, seconded by the German workers' representative Eccarius, who had been nominated by Marx to attend the meeting on behalf of the German workers, and supported by the French, Polish, and Irish representatives. A Provisional Committee, which was empowered to increase its members by co-option, and subsequently became known as the General Council, was elected, including Karl Marx, who had been present as (in his own words) "a dumb figure on the platform".

It was Marx who drew up the Inaugural Address and Statutes which were adopted by the Provisional Committee and finally confirmed by the First Congress at Geneva in 1866.

2. COMPOSITION AND ORGANISATION

The First International represented in its composition a stage of development, corresponding to the considerable extension of capitalist industry in Western Europe by the third quarter of the nineteenth century, in advance of that which was possible at the time of the Communist League. The Communist League was an association of small groups of revolutionary workers and fighters, united by a common doctrine and a single leadership. The First International was able to draw together for the first time the beginning of the organised working-class movement as a whole, especially in Britain and France, and in varying degree in the other countries of Europe.

This advance in extent, as the first attempted organisation of the international working class as a united force, meant

that at this stage of historical development the association was composed of very varied elements in the different countries, corresponding to the character and stage of development of the working-class movement in each country, and representing different and often conflicting trends and theoretical outlooks.

Britain, as the metropolis of capitalism and the cradle of the organised movement, constituted the strongest section of the First International, whose headquarters were in London. Their representatives on the General Council were some of the principal progressive leaders of the craft unions of skilled workers and democratic working-class reform movements: men such as Applegarth and Cremer, of the Carpenters (but William Allan of the Engineers opposed affiliation), or Odger, Secretary of the London Trades Council. Their outlook was mainly that of reformist trade unionism; they were not revolutionaries; they attached importance to the International as a means of promoting international trade union solidarity, at the same time as they supported progressive democratic movements.

France was the second strongest section. Here the majority were supporters of the ideas of Proudhon, the very confused prophet of petty-bourgeois socialism, eventually anarchism, with whose theories Marx had dealt mercilessly in his *Poverty of Philosophy* in 1847 (in answer to Proudhon's *Philosophy of Poverty*). Proudhon opposed political action, political parties, strikes or class struggle, and advocated the painless supression of capitalism by the extension of proers' and consumers' cooperatives or "mutualist societies" with free credit through "people's banks". Proudhon himself died in 1865; and his supporters had begun to move away from some of his ideas by entering on some elementary forms of political action. But the influence of his theories was still strong among those who took part in the founding and leadership of the International: men such as Tolain, the engraver, who subsequently went over to the Versaillese against the Commune and was expelled from the International, or Varlin, the bookbinder, who became a member of the Commune and was shot by the Versaillese.

The other main influence among a minority of the French movement was that of Blanqui, the revolutionary communist

disciple of Babeuf and Buonarotti. Marx had over a decade previously signed a joint statement with Blanqui in support of the dictatorship of the proletariat. But the political conception of Blanqui was entirely concentrated on the isolated aim of the armed insurrection by a conspiratorial élite, opposed all reforms, and ignored the tasks of building up trade union and mass political parties of the working class.

In Germany the principal political influence among the workers at that time was that of Lassalle, who had founded his General Union of German Workers in 1863, and had thus led the way in the political organisation of the German working class. Lassalle had learned some of his ideas from Marx, though in a distorted form; but he mixed his very confused exposure of capitalism (e.g. his theory of the "iron law of wages", which Marx refuted, and which illiterate commentators today, including the late Strachey, still insist on attributing to Marx), with dangerous utopian schemes for government-subsidised cooperatives to replace capitalism. On this basis he entered into a flirtation and alliance with Bismarck, whose strategy was aimed to penetrate and disorganise the nascent labour movement. Lassalle himself was killed in the famous duel a month before the foundation of the International; and his followers in general abstained from participation on the alleged grounds that this would invite police persecution. Subsequently in 1869 the German Social-Democratic Workers' Party was founded at Eisenach under the leadership of Wilhelm Liebknecht and August Bebel, on the general basis of Marxism, and affiliated to the International.

Another influence indicating the elementary stage of development of the working-class movement at the time, especially in Spain and Italy, and to some extent in Switzerland and other countries, was that of Anarchism. The role of Bakunin, who was the principal representative of this trend, and his subsequent attempts to disrupt the International belong to its later history.

With this very varied and disparate composition and conflicting trends which went to make up the international at its foundation, a contemporary observer might well have concluded that the attempt would rapidly break down without result, like previous attempts. Indeed, only a very mature

theoretical and practical understanding of the conditions of development of the working-class movement, and of the actual situation within each country, could have possibly navigated the shoals and stormy waters without shipwreck, held the disparate forces together without collapsing into the alternative of meaningless compromises, and found a basis of common action. But such a theoretical and practical understanding was forthcoming to save the International and make it a permanent historical achievement. This was provided by the scientific theory of Marxism which found expression in the guiding leadership of Marx from the beginning to the end of the First International.

The organisation of the International was at the same time loose and centralised. This was its peculiar and distinctive character. Its membership was direct individual membership of the International in all countries, by individual membership card and subscription. Thus it was already the prototype of a single international working-class party. At the same time trade unions, cooperatives and all kinds of working-class organisations were affiliated, not to the International as such, but to its national sections or Central Committees in each country. Over all was the General Council, situated in London, with representatives from each country.

The Congress, which met annually, in 1866, 1867, 1868, 1869 and (after the conditions of the Franco-German War and Commune had compelled a delay) in 1872, was the supreme sovereign body, and expressed the democratic character of the International.

The General Council was the expression of the centralised leadership of the International; and its fearless leading political role was in marked contrast to the post office character of the International Socialist Bureau of the later Second International.

At the Basle Congress in 1869 Applegarth reported that in Britain there were 230 branches of the International with 95,000 members, and funds totalling £1,700. In Belgium there were stated to be 64,000 members. In Austria there were reported 13,350 members, despite legal prohibition. In France and other countries police persecution made reports of membership difficult. In all cases the statistics available could not of course be firmly checked. Occasions were reported

where, after a strike had received support from the International, all the members of the union involved were stated to have joined the International in a body.

In the Paris police prosecution of the French members of the International in June, 1870, the police prosecutor gave the figures of membership of the International as follows: France, 433,785; Switzerland, 45,000; Germany, 150,000; Austria-Hungary, 100,000; Great Britain, 80,000; Spain, 2,728. These statistics from police records can be treated with suitable reserve.

There is no doubt that the International aroused panic fears of the ruling class in all countries, not merely because of its proclaimed revolutionary aims to end capitalism and establish the political power of the working class, but because of the measure of solid support it had won, demonstrated also in elementary acts of practical working-class solidarity in strikes and immediate issues. "The International Working Men's Association," wrote Marx in 1867 (letter to S. Meyer, April 30, 1867), "has become a power in England, France, Switzerland and Belgium."

The role of the General Council in giving continuous political and practical international leadership was the key to this success of the International. The key to this leadership of the General Council—a voluntary and moral leadership, not "authoritarian", as Bakunin later falsely complained—was the continuous and tireless active role of Marx in its midst. Marx was offered in 1866 the position of President of the International, but declined and in the following year secured the abolition of this office and its replacement by the election of a chairman at each weekly meeting of the General Council. The Minutes of the General Council, now at last in process of publication in book form (Volume I, covering 1864-1866, was published in the English edition in 1963, and at the time of writing Volume II in the Russian edition has also been published) show this continuous active work and leadership of Marx on every issue, large and small—and incidentally once again give the lie to the hoary old legend of the "bookworm in the British Museum" without "contact with the real world". It is worthy of note that the publication of the highest theoretical work of Marx, Volume I of *Capital* in 1867 (the work "to which", as he wrote, "I have sacrificed health, hap-

piness and family") coincided with his highest activity in the political and practical leadership of the International, involving close contact and guidance in relation to the developing movement in a number of countries, and especially close association with all the activities of the labour movement in England.

3. BATTLES AND VICTORIES OF MARXISM AGAINST OPPOSING TRENDS

The First International was not only the first organisation and leadership of the international working class through all the economic and political issues of the eight years of its effective existence. It was also the battle ground where in the fire of debate at successive Congresses, as well as in the General Council and within the national sections, all the conflicting trends and theories within the working-class movement were tested and fought out, and where the supremacy of Marxism was established once and for all in the working-class movement. Thenceforward the subsequent Internationals (Second and Third) were built on the publicly proclaimed basis of Marxism.

Reviewing the experience in retrospect during the last period of the International Marx summarised this role:

"The International was founded in order to replace the socialist or semi-socialist sects by a real organisation of the working class for struggle. The original Rules and the Inaugural Address show this at a glance. On the other hand the International could not have maintained itself if the course of history had not already smashed sectarianism. The development of socialist sectarianism and that of the real working-class movement always stand in inverse ratio to each other. Sects are justified (historically) so long as the working class is not yet ripe for an independent historical movement. As soon as it has attained this maturity all sects are essentially reactionary. Nevertheless, what history exhibits everywhere was repeated in the history of the International. What is antiquated tries to re-establish itself and maintain its position within the newly acquired form.

"And the history of the International was a *continual struggle of the General Council* against the sects and amateur experiments which sought to assert themselves within the International against the real movement of the working class. The struggle was conducted at the *congresses*, but far more in the private negotiations between the General Council and the individual sections."

(Marx, letter to F. Bolte, November 23, 1871)

This was no easy task to accomplish. For, as has already been indicated, the initial forms of the working-class movement and of socialist or semi-socialist theories in the various countries were extremely different and confused. There is no more brilliant and enlightening demonstration of the theoretical and practical method of Marxism than the way in which Marx tackled the complex problems of this situation. It would have been contrary to the whole spirit of Marxism to have attempted to impose a ready-made doctrine like a dogma. The method of Marx was to draw out from the existing movement and its problems the elementary basis, in terms acceptable to them, of common agreement for common action, and then, out of the struggle and the needs of the struggle, to deepen the understanding and carry forward the approach to more fundamental problems, while waging relentless war against every sectarian trend and theoretical confusion which could retard and disrupt the movement.

In preparing the Inaugural Address which laid down the basic constitution and programme of the International, and set out the aim of the conquest of political power by the working class, Marx recognised, as he explained in a private letter to Engels, that it was no longer possible to use the old forthright language of the Communist League, if the support of the existing stage of the working-class movement as represented by the English trade union leaders was to be secured.

"It was very difficult to frame the thing so that our view should appear in a form acceptable from the present standpoint of the workers' movement. In a few weeks the same people will be holding meetings for the franchise with Bright and Cobden. It will take time before the reawakened movement allows the old boldness of speech. It will be necessary to be *fortiter in re, suaviter in modo*."[3]

(Marx, letter to Engels, November 4, 1864)

[3] Firm in substance, gentle in manner.

Similarly he noted in the same letter:

> "I was obliged to insert two phrases about 'duty' and 'right' into the Preamble to the Rules, ditto about 'truth, morality and justice', but these are placed in such a way that they can do no harm."

It is amazing how many foolish comments have been made about this profound and elementary statement. Some apologists have sought to explain it away as "ironic" or "jesting" ("half-jesting"—Cole). Others, hostile to Marxism, have sought to find in it the proof that Marxism (whose revolutionary morality is the most exacting morality that history has known, and has inspired the noblest examples of human behaviour on record) is "immoral" à la Nechaev, i.e. dismisses all conception of moral obligation or concern for justice or truth as a "bourgeois superstition" to be discarded in favour of a kind of nihilism. In reality, the statement is so clear and penetrating that it is a very illuminating guide to the Marxist approach. To a trained philosopher and historian like Marx the Mazzini type of chatter about some abstract eternal "right" and "duty" and "truth, morality and justice" outside classes and history must have been felt as repulsive balderdash (only too familiar as the smokescreen adopted by every rogue and swindler). Nevertheless, rather than let the main objective at this point be sidetracked by a general philosophical discussion, he was ready to put up with the necessity ("obliged") of swallowing the insertion of such phrases, provided the main class analysis and presentation of the aim of the working-class conquest of political power could be agreed, and the unwanted phrases were inserted "in such a way that they can do no harm".

This realist tactical line was illustrated when he wrote the programme for the London delegation to the First Congress at Geneva:

> "I deliberately restricted it to those points which allow of immediate agreement and concerted action by the workers, and give direct nourishment and impetus to the requirements of the class struggle and the organisation of the workers into a class."
>
> (Marx, letter to L. Kugelmann, October 9, 1866)

He described his method of progressively carrying forward the advance of theoretical understanding through the actual

experience, common struggle and discussions of the movement:

> "As the stage of development reached by different sections of workers in the same country and by the working class in different countries necessarily varies very much, the actual movement necessarily expresses itself in very diverse theoretical forms.
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> "The community of action which the International Working Men's Association called into being, the exchange of ideas by means of the different organs of the sections in all countries, and finally the direct discussions at the General Congresses will by degrees create for the general workers' movement its common theoretical programme also."
>
> (Marx, letter to Engels, March 5, 1869)

At the very outset Marx had the problem of countering the attempted direct influence of the bourgeoisie, of the bourgeois-democrats and republicans, who sought to make the new International an organ under their control. The first draft for the rules had been drawn up by a secretary of Mazzini, Major Wolff (later discovered to be a Bonapartist spy), and Marx found "the stuff" when he saw it "a crude compilation of Mazzini's". A draft programme had been prepared by an old Owenite manufacturer, Weston, "a very amiable and worthy man", but his draft "a programme of indescribable breadth and confusion" in the view of Marx. A draft "declaration of principles" had been prepared by the French emigrant Le Lubez, "in which Mazzini could be detected everywhere, the whole being crusted over with the vaguest tags of French socialism". After discussion in sub-committee (Marx wrote to Engels that he was "determined that if possible not one single line of the stuff should be allowed to stand") Marx secured agreement that he was given all the drafts to "edit". On this basis he wrote the entirely new Inaugural Address and Rules which were adopted unanimously "with great enthusiasm" by the whole General Council and subsequently confirmed by the Congress at Geneva. The Inaugural Address remains, alongside the *Communist Manifesto*, a permanent classic statement of the aims and principles of the working-class movement. During the first year there were still various attempts in different sections, particularly in France, and also

in Britain, by the bourgeois-liberal democrats to take the leadership out of the hands of the representatives of the working-class movement. But these attempts were defeated; the number of representatives of the working class in the General Council was increased; and by the latter part of 1865 most of the representatives of bourgeois-liberal democracy had withdrawn.

A more complex tactical problem was presented by the key role of the English Liberal trade union leaders who constituted the main representation and basis of strength of the General Council. London was the headquarters of the International; the English movement was the direct concern of the General Council; there was no intermediate separate committee for England. Marx always stressed the key importance of England for the International. Indeed, on one occasion he went so far as to write in a letter:

> "England, being the metropolis of capital, the power which has hitherto ruled the world market, is for the present the most important country for the workers' revolution, and moreover the *only* country in which the material conditions for this revolution have developed up to a certain degree of maturity. Therefore to hasten the social revolution in England is the most important object of the International Working Men's Association."
>
> (Marx, letter to S. Meyer and A. Vogt, April 9, 1870)

With this basic conception of the significance of capitalism and the working-class struggle in England in this epoch, and with this main weight of the English working-class movement in the composition of the International, it is evident that the key question for the success of the International was the achievement of cooperation with the English trade union and radical working-class representatives. The success of Marx in solving this problem, in developing close and active cooperation with the trade union and labour movement in England in the conditions of this period, despite all the obvious limitations of the leadership of the old aristocracy of labour, on the basis of plain common immediate interests for common action in the current economic and political struggle, without ever yielding on principle, but without raising unnecessary battles, is a lesson of permanent significance in Marxist strategy and tactics—and incidentally the answer to the

ignorant scribblers who still seek to perpetuate the hoary caricature of Marx as an "impossible cantankerous, opinionated and quarrelsome old gentleman".

Marx wrote:

> "We have succeeded in drawing into the movement the one really big workers' organisation, the English *Trades Unions*, which formerly concerned themselves *exclusively* with wage questions. With their help the English society which we founded for achieving *universal* suffrage (half of its Central Committee consists of workers —members of our Central Committee) held a monster meeting a few weeks ago at which only workers spoke. You can judge of the effect by the fact that the *Times* dealt with the meeting in leading articles in two consecutive issues."
>
> (Marx, letter to Kugelmann, January 15, 1866)

There is no doubt that the agitation of the Reform League, which was organised by the more progressive trade union leaders who were at the same time members of the General Council of the International, played an important part in winning the extension of the suffrage by the Act of 1867.

Trade union affiliation took place directly to the General Council of the International in Britain, since the General Council functioned as the committee for Britain. These affiliations included the Amalgamated Society of Engineers, with 35,000 members; the Operative Bricklayers; the Bootmakers (by decision of their Congress in March, 1866). By the time of the Geneva Congress in 1866 thirteen unions were reported by the General Council to be affiliated in Britain; and by the Lausanne Congress in 1867 another thirteen. The Trade Union Conference at Sheffield in 1865 carried a resolution recommending all unions represented at the Conference to affiliate to the International. The London Trades Council, the premier body prior to the foundation of the Trades Union Congress in 1868, carried a resolution in 1866 to establish an alliance with the International. In 1869 the newly formed Trades Union Congress urged all trade unions to affiliate to the International.

At the same time Marx had no illusions as to the limitations of the reformist leaders of the labour aristocracy, and sometime in his private letters expressed his frank opinion of their

character and role in no uncertain terms. And when it came finally to a basic battle of principle, over support of the Paris Commune, Marx had no hesitation in facing a break with them. Odger, the Secretary of the London Trades Council, and Lucraft publicly repudiated the *Address on the Civil War in France*, the magnificent defence of the Commune which was written by Marx and adopted and issued by the General Council, and resigned from the General Council on this issue. But Marx noted that "the other nineteen British members present acclaimed the Address" (*A Reply on the First International*, 1878).[4]

During the early years of the International the main polemical controversy had to be conducted with the theories of Proudhon which still to a considerable degree dominated the majority of the French workers' representatives. Intense battles had to be conducted at the Geneva Congress in 1866 and the Lausanne Congress in 1867 against the negative theories of Proudhon on the key questions of political action and working-class political power; the role of trade unions and strikes; labour legislation; and collective ownership. On all these issues victories were won. The supporters were able to win some successes by securing majorities at Geneva for the establishment by the International of a mutual credit bank (nothing came of this), and at Lausanne for their proposals in favour of people's banks and free worker credits. But on all the great issues the confusions of Proudhonism were exposed and defeated, and Marxism led a victorious fight for the essential elements of a working-class programme and working-class strategy. After Lausanne the influence of Proudhonism waned.

During the later years serious battles had to be conducted against the very unscrupulous offensive of anarchism, led by Bakunin and his Alliance, which sought to disrupt the International, first from outside, and then from within. This belongs to the record of the closing period.

[4] Marx's *Reply on the First International* was written in answer to a disgraceful falsification written by a right wing Labour leader and ex-member of the General Council, George Howell, under the title "History of the International Working Men's Association", in the *Nineteenth Century* of July, 1878. The Editor of *Nineteenth Century*, in accordance with the not unfamiliar tradition of the scrupulous ethics of anti-communist journalism in Britain, as elsewhere, refused to publish the authoritative reply by Marx giving the facts. The Reply was published in the *Secular Chronicle* in August, 1878, edited by Mrs. Harriet Law, earlier the only woman member of the General Council. It was reprinted for the first time in English in *Labour Monthly* of September, 1954.

4. CONGRESSES AND MAIN DECISIONS

Congresses of the International were held at Geneva in 1866; Lausanne in 1867; Brussels in 1868; Basle in 1869; a Conference in London in September, 1871; and the last effective Congress at the Hague in 1872.

During these Congresses all the great questions of the working-class movement were grappled with by the delegates. Intense polemical debates took place between rival trends and currents. Important debates also took place in the proceedings of the General Council, as well as many further discussions and assessments of controversial questions in the communications between the General Council and the national sections (there were periods when Marx had to grapple with all the correspondence single-handed).

Through all this procedure results and decisions were achieved which highlighted the path forward for the working class towards the aims of political power and the conquest of the means of production; for the development of working-class organisation; and for the tactics of the working-class movement on key questions of trade unionism and strikes; economic and political reforms and labour legislation; the national question; and war and peace. Not the whole programme of Marxism or socialism could be embodied in these decisions, since the movement was not yet ripe for majority agreement on all questions or on basic theory. Some decisions were adopted which reflected opposing views, and on which the supporters of the Marxist view were defeated. Such was the approval of the Proudhonist panaceas of mutualist credit associations and people's banks at Geneva and Lausanne. Similarly the Bakuninist nostrum (taken over from the Utopian Saint-Simon) for the legislative abolition of the right of inheritance as the supposed path to the "liquidation" of private property, was carried at the Basle Congress. This last was carried by majority vote against the reasoned statement of the General Council on this issue, which pointed out that the right of inheritance was the consequence and not the cause of the existing economic system, that its abolition could only follow on the general transformation of society with the

abolition of private ownership in the means of production, but that meanwhile transitional measures could be carried through such as an increase of legacy duties and restrictions of the right of bequest. The General Council resolution on this issue is a striking example of the patient care and reasoning with which Marxism dealt with even an obviously impracticable fancy nostrum; although in this case the majority of the delegates were swept away by the glitter of the fancy nostrum, and adopted it by thirty-two votes against nineteen votes for the General Council resolution.

However, these occasional decisions adopted in opposition to the outlook of Marxism, and reflecting backward or sectarian views, were in the main of secondary importance. The general body of the programme, principles and policy adopted by the First International remain a permanent treasure house, not of the complete exposition of Marxism, but of the elementary aims and guiding principles of the working-class movement. Some of the most important issues on which programmatic decisions of lasting historic significance were adopted may be noted:

(i) Aim of Working-Class Political Power for Social Emancipation.

The Inaugural Address, drawn up by Marx in 1864, and adopted by the General Council and confirmed by the Geneva Congress in 1866 as the basic programme of the International, laid down that "to conquer political power has become the great duty of the working class". The Preamble to the Rules, similarly drawn up by Marx, adopted and confirmed, further defined this aim:

> "That the emancipation of the working classes must be conquered by the working classes themselves; that the struggle for the emancipation of the working classes means not a struggle for class privileges and monopolies, but for equal rights and duties, and the abolition of all class rule;
>
> "That the economical subjection of the man of labour to the monopoliser of the means of labour, that is, the sources of life, lies at the bottom of servitude in all its forms, of all social misery, mental degradation and political dependence;
>
> "That the economical emancipation of the working classes is therefore the great end to which every political movement ought to be subordinate as a means."

(ii) Collective Ownership

The first concrete formulation on this question was adopted at the Lausanne Congress in 1867, when a resolution was adopted declaring that all means of transport and exchange should be taken over by the State, in order to destroy the monopoly of the great companies. An amendment was moved to add land nationalisation; but this was held over for consideration at the next Congress. At the Brussels Congress in 1868 the battle on common ownership was joined. The British and German delegates favoured complete collective ownership, both of the land and of the instruments of production. The French and Italians stood out for private ownership of the land. A special committee of nine prepared a resolution which advocated collective ownership of mines and quarries; railways; arable land and forests; roads, canals, telegraph and other means of communication. This was adopted by thirty votes to five, with fifteen abstentions. At the Basle Congress in 1869 this policy was again challenged by the French representatives on the question of land nationalisation. A special committee prepared two resolutions. The first

> "The Congress declares that society is entitled to abolish individual ownership of the soil and to make the land communal property"

was carried by fifty-four votes to four, with thirteen abstentions. The second

> "It declares, further, that it is essential today that the land should become communal property"

was carried by fifty-three to eight with ten abstentions. This outcome was universally recognised as expressing the victory of communism in the international working-class movement and the defeat of Proudhonism or other varieties of petty-bourgeois reformism.

(iii) Trade Unions and Strikes

One of the most important achievements of the First International was the clarification of the attitude to trade unionism and strikes. On the one hand, the English reformist trade union leaders saw the wage struggle as an end in itself within a permanent capitalist framework. On the other hand, the

disciples of Proudhon saw the trade unions mainly as a means for raising funds for mutual credit schemes, and looked with hostility on strikes, even boasting that the representatives of the International in France that is, the Proudhonists, had succeeded in frustrating plans for strikes.

At the Geneva Congress in 1866 a Report of the General Council, drafted by Marx, on "Trade Unions, their Past, Present and Future", was adopted, and remains a classic statement on this question.

"The trade unions, uniting the wage workers and putting an end to the mutual competition which weakens them, make it possible for them to escape from the unfavourable situation in which the units of labour power are placed in face of the concentrated force of capital. The immediate task of the trade unions is restricted to the needs of the daily struggle between labour and capital—in a word, to questions of wages and working hours. On the other hand, the trade unions involuntarily become *organising centres for the working class,* just as in the Middle Ages the communes and municipalities served as centres of organisation for the bourgeoisie. While, however, the trade unions are absolutely indispensable in the daily struggle between labour and capital, still more important is their other aspect as instruments *for transforming the system of wage-labour and for overthrowing the dictatorship of capital.*

"At the present time, the trade unions are too much concerned with the problems of the immediate struggle, and do not sufficiently recognise the necessity for grappling with the very foundations of the capitalist system. In this respect, however, there has already been a change for the better. . . . Henceforward the trade unions, in addition to carrying on the struggle against capitalist oppression, must consciously function as organising centres for the working class in its desire to achieve the sublime purpose of complete emancipation. The unions must support every social and political movement tending in this direction. Marching forward as the leaders, the champions, the representatives of the whole working class, they will attract to their side all the proletarians, even the most backward, even the agricultural workers."

The Brussels Congress in 1868 gave further consideration to the question of strikes, on the basis of written reports of the practical experience of the strike movement during the preceding years. The Congress concluded that, while strikes could not secure the complete enfranchisement of the workers, they were often necessary under the actual conditions of the struggle between labour and capital. It recommended the formation of trade unions in all trades which were not yet organised, and the federation of these unions in all trades both nationally and internationally. Delegates from the various trade unions federated in each locality should appoint delegates to form a council which would decide upon the opportuneness and legitimacy of any proposed strike.

The International not only dealt in principle with the question of trade unionism and strikes, but directly organised international solidarity. When employers in Britain imported workers from Belgium, Holland and France to break strikes of British workers, the General Council intervened directly with the imported workers to induce them to return, and the British unions compensated the imported for their loss of time after they had refused to act as scabs. Similarly, when the Paris bronze workers came on strike in 1867, the General Council appealed to British unions for support, and more than £1,000 was sent, leading to the victory of the Paris strikers. The reports of the General Council to successive Congresses give many instances of such organisation of practical international aid and solidarity. This led to the very rapid growth of the influence and high repute of the International among the workers of the various European countries, and also to some extent in the United States. It also contributed to the corresponding ferocious hatred and panic fear of the International among the employers and ruling class, whose press began to paint fantastic scare stories of the International as some sinister all-powerful organisation with vast funds (the finances were always pitiful[5]) and agents everywhere.

[5] "The Council in its published *Report to the Congress of Basle* (1869) ridicules the huge treasures with which the busy tongue of the European police and the wild imagination of the capitalist had endowed it. It says, 'If these people, though good Christians, had happened to live at the time of nascent Christianity, they would have hurried to a Roman bank there to pry into St. Paul's balance.'" (Marx, *A Reply in the First International*, 1878.)

(iv) Cooperatives

In view of the very wide prevalence at that time of theories of the transformation of society by means of cooperatives, put forward in varying forms by the followers of Proudhon in France, the followers of Lassalle in Germany, and by many Owenites and Cooperators in Britain, this question had to be considered by the International.

Already the Inaugural Address had made clear the position in principle. The Address emphasised "the value of these great social experiments" represented by the cooperative movement and cooperative factories as having "shown that production on a large scale, and in accord with the behest of modern science may be carried on without the existence of a class of masters employing a class of hands". At the same time the Address warned:

> "However excellent in principle, and however useful in practice, cooperative labour, if kept within the narrow circle of the casual efforts of private workmen, will never be able to arrest the growth in geometrical progression of monopoly, to free the masses, nor even to perceptibly lighten the burden of their miseries. It is perhaps for this very reason that plausible noblemen, philanthropic middle-class spouters, and even keen political economists, have all at once turned nauseously complimentary to the very cooperative labour system they had vainly tried to nip in the bud by deriding it as the Utopia of the dreamer, or stigmatising it as the sacrilege of the Socialist. To save the industrious masses, cooperative labour ought to be developed to national dimensions, and, consequently, to be fostered by national means. Yet the lords of land and the lords of privilege will always use their political privileges for the defence and perpetuation of their economical monopolies."

Hence the conclusion that the main task must be the conquest of political power by the working class.

The General Council's Report to the Geneva Congress in 1866 returned to this question. The Report trod the delicate ground with care. It began by pointing out that one of the tasks of the International must be to extend and unify the spontaneous movement of the working class without imposing on it any doctrinaire system. Hence the Congress should not

regard itself as "a specialist in cooperation" to lay down one particular system of cooperation, but should only clarify certain principles. Reaffirming the line of the Inaugural Address, the Report emphasised the positive value of "the cooperative movement" as "one of the forces transforming contemporary society, which is based on class antagonism"; and from this standpoint especially emphasised the importance of producers' cooperatives, urging that consumers' cooperatives should endeavour to advance to this level. At the same time the Report, adopted by the Congress, warned that

> "The cooperative movement is incompetent, by its own unaided powers, to achieve a transformation of the capitalist order of society. This transformation can only be effected by a general change in the whole social structure, which can be brought about in no other way than by the organised forces of society. That is why the workers must seize the administrative power, wresting it from the hands of the capitalists and the landlords."

(v) Labour Legislation

Sharp controversy existed on the question of labour protective legislation. Thus the supporters of Proudhon opposed legislation for the protection of women in industry on the grounds that the place of woman was in the home, and that women should not be employed in industry. Others criticised labour protective legislation on the grounds that this meant to mitigate and thereby perpetuate the existing capitalist system. The Geneva Congress in 1866, in accordance with the views of Marx on this question, followed up the emphatic declaration of the Inaugural Address that

> "The Ten Hours' Bill was not only a great practical success; it was the victory of a principle; it was the first time that in broad daylight the political economy of the middle class succumbed to the political economy of the working class."

The Congress endorsed the aims of the eight hour working day, and the regulation of the work of women and young people in industry (in the latter case to combine industrial training with general education). The Congress resolution declared that

> "by compelling the adoption of such laws, the working

class will not consolidate the ruling powers, but, on the contrary, it will be turning that power which is at present used against it, into its own instrument."

The resolution of the Geneva Congress is of especial importance for illuminating the revolutionary understanding of the fight for reforms.

(*vi*) *Necessity for an Independent Political Party of the Working Class.*

In the mortal battle which developed during the later years of the International against the anarchist views and disruptive activities of the followers of Bakunin, who denounced what they were pleased to call the "centralisation" and "authoritarianism" and "dictatorship" of the elected General Council, led by Marx, and advocated spontaneity from below, with no leading organ above, it became necessary to define the key role of the independent political party of the working class. This was done at the London Conference in 1871 and the Hague Congress in 1872. The London Conference laid down that (1) against the collective power of the propertied classes, the proletariat could only act as a class by forming itself into a distinct political party opposed to all the old political parties that had been formed by the propertied classes; (2) that this formation of a proletarian political party was an indispensable preliminary to the triumph of the social revolution and to the achievement of its supreme aim, the abolition of classes; and (3) that the union of working-class forces which had already been achieved by the industrial struggle, must also serve as a lever which the working masses could use in their struggle against the political power of the landlords and the capitalists.

The Hague Congress resolution of 1871 declared:

"In its fight against the collective forces of the possessing classes, the proletariat can only act as a class by organising its forces into an independent political party, working in opposition to all the old parties formed by the possessing classes. Such an organisation of the proletariat as a political party is indispensable in order to achieve the triumph of the social revolution, and above all, to attain its ultimate aim, the abolition of classes."

(*vii*) *National Question*

From the outset the First International consistently linked the working-class struggle for social emancipation with the national liberation struggle. The foundation of the International had taken place at the demonstration held in honour of the Polish uprising of 1863. This theme was continued in the Inaugural Address.

The General Council's Report to the Geneva Congress in 1866 proclaimed "the need for annulling Russian influence in Europe" (that is, the influence of Tsarist reaction as then the bulwark of reaction in Europe) "through enforcing the right of self-determination, and through the reconstitution of Poland upon democratic and social foundations."

Similarly in relation to Britain's rule over Ireland the initiative of Marx was tireless in rallying the General Council including the very moderate trade union leaders in Britain, on the side of the Irish national struggle. In 1866 the General Council sent a delegation to the Secretary of State for Ireland to protest against the outrages committed by the British forces of coercion. Numerous resolutions were adopted by the General Council, and in January, 1870, a confidential circular of the General Council was drawn up which brought out the key importance of the Irish national struggle for English working-class emancipation:

"It is the task of the International everywhere to put the conflict between England and Ireland in the foreground, and everywhere to side openly with Ireland. And it is the special task of the Central Council in London to awaken a consciousness in the English workers that for them the *national emancipation of Ireland* is no question of abstract justice or humanitarian sentiment, but the first condition of their own emancipation.

"These roughly are the main points of the Circular Letter, which thereby at the same time gave the raison d'être of the resolution of the Central Council on the Irish amnesty."

(Marx, letter to S. Meyer and A. Vogt, April 9, 1870)

(*viii*) *War and Peace and Foreign Policy.*

The era of the First International was an era of successive wars. During the first year of its existence the American Civil War was still raging. The troops of Napoleon III were engaged in Mexico. The victorious war of Prussia and Austria

over Denmark had secured the annexation of Schleswig-Holstein just after the foundation of the International. There followed the war of Prussia on Austria in 1866, and the Franco-German War of 1870-71. This is to leave out of account the normal colonial wars of the British and other imperialists, such as the war against the Maoris in New Zealand, the suppression of the Jamaican rising in 1867, the suppression of the Fenian rising in Ireland in the same year, or the British invasion of Ethiopia also in that year.

From the outset the International concerned itself with questions of war and foreign policy. In a famous passage the Inaugural Address declared:

> "If the emancipation of the working classes requires their fraternal concurrence, how are they to fulfil that great mission with a foreign policy in pursuit of criminal designs, playing upon national prejudices, and squandering in piratical wars the people's blood and treasure?"

Recent events, continued the Address, referring to the suppression of the Polish rising, and the endeavours of the rulers of Western Europe to intervene on the side of slavery in America, endeavours only defeated by the resistance of the English working class,

> "have taught the working classes the duty to master themselves the mysteries of international politics; to watch the diplomatic acts of their respective Governments; to counteract them, if necessary, by all means in their power; when unable to prevent, to combine in simultaneous denunciations, and to vindicate the simple laws of morals and justice, which ought to govern the relations of private individuals, as the rules paramount of the intercourse of nations.
>
> "The fight for such a foreign policy forms part of the general struggle for the emancipation of the working classes."

On the re-election of Abraham Lincoln as President the General Council in November, 1864, unanimously adopted a congratulatory message to him as "the single-minded son of the working class" in the battle against the "counter-revolution" of the South, and affirming that "from the commencement of the Titanic-American strife the working men of Europe felt instinctively that the star-spangled banner

carried the destiny of their class". Similarly after the assassination of Lincoln the General Council sent in May, 1865, a message to his successor, President Andrew Johnson, proclaiming the "universal outburst of popular feeling" against the "infamy" of the assassination, and looking forward to "the arduous work of political reconstruction and social regeneration" in the United States "to initiate the new era of the emancipation of labour".

The Geneva Congress in 1866, alongside the call for "the right of self-determination" in Europe, dealt with the question of the armed forces. The resolution called for the abolition of standing armies, and their replacement by a general arming of the people through people's militias, with a temporary transitional period of small standing armies for the purpose of training officers of the militia.

On the outbreak of the war between Prussia and Austria in 1866 the General Council published a resolution denouncing the war as a quarrel between two despots, with neither of whom the proletariat could have any sympathy. The working class must be permeated with one idea and with one will, to overthrow all the tyrants at a single blow, and to achieve its own complete emancipation.

The Lausanne Congress in 1867 adopted a resolution on the question of war and peace declaring:

> "That the burden of war is borne mainly by the working class, inasmuch as war does not only deprive the workers of the means of subsistence but compels them to shed one another's blood;
>
> "That armed peace paralyses the forces of production, asks of the workers nothing but useless labour, and scares production by the perpetual threat of war;
>
> "That peace, since it is the first requisite of general well-being, must be consolidated by a new order of things which shall no longer recognise in society the existence of two classes, one of which is exploited by the other."

On this basis the Congress sent a delegation to the Peace Congress about to be held at Geneva and pledged support "in any activities to achieve the abolition of standing armies and the maintenance of peace, the aim of the Association being to bring about with the utmost dispatch the emancipation of the working class and its liberation from the power and influence

of capital, and also to effect the formation of a confederation of free States throughout Europe".

On the question of bourgeois pacifism, represented by the League for Peace and Freedom, which organised the Geneva Congress, there was a difference at the outset. Marx had opposed the participation agreed at Lausanne, regarding the League as an attempted bourgeois alternative to the International, and source of confusion, and making clear that all individuals and organisations who wished to support the aims of internationalism and peace could join the International. By the following year the General Council had become convinced of the correctness of Marx's viewpoint, and the Brussels Congress in 1868 rejected an invitation from the League and invited its members to join the International.

By the time of the Brussels Congress in 1868 the war question was the first item on the agenda. The shadows of the Franco-German War were already gathering. The Congress adopted a resolution calling for working-class action to prevent the outbreak of war. This resolution declared:

"That, although the chief and persistent cause of war is a lack of economic equilibrium, and that therefore *nothing can put an end to war except social reorganisation*, nevertheless an auxilary cause of war is the arbitrary use of force which results from centralisation and from despotism;

"That therefore the peoples can henceforward lessen the frequency of war by opposing those who make war or declare war;

"That this right belongs especially to the working classes, who are almost exclusively subject to military service, and that they alone can give it a sanction;

"That they have, to this end, a practical, legitimate and immediately realisable method;

"That in fact social life cannot be carried on if production be suspended for a certain time; that it will therefore suffice that the producers should *cease producing* for them to put a stop to the enterprises of the personal and despotic governments;

"The Congress of the International Working Men's Association, assembled at Brussels, records its most emphatic protest against war;

"It invites all the sections of the Association in their respective countries, and also all working class societies, and all workers' groups of whatever kind, to take the most vigorous action to prevent a *war between the peoples, which today could not be considered anything else than a civil war*, seeing that, since it would be waged between the producers, it would only be a struggle between brothers and citizens;

"The Congress *urges the workers to cease work should war break out in their respective countries;*

"The Congress has sufficient confidence in the spirit of solidarity animating the workers of all lands, to hope that their support will not be wanting to this *war of peoples against war.*"

This most far-reaching and uncompromising resolution of the old First International breathes the spirit of the working-class fight against capitalist wars. The method proposed at that time was the then still untried formula of the general strike against war, which subsequent experience, as in the Franco-German war two years later, showed to be easier to proclaim in peacetime than to fulfil in the conditions of the outbreak of a major capitalist war. For this reason the later use of this formula in the debates of the Second International by would-be-fire-eaters like Gustave Hervé (who became with the outbreak of the war of 1914 a fire-eating chauvinist) turned into the brandishing of an empty formula in place of a serious political approach to the problem. The formulation presented by Lenin and Luxemburg in the debates of the Second International on the fight against war, and adopted by the Congresses of the Second International in 1907, 1910 and 1912, provided a more profound and realist approach to the problem of the working-class fight against war, which proved its efficacy and success in the victory of the Russian revolution.

Marx, who was not present at the Brussels Congress, had no illusions about the formula of the general strike against war, and made clear his realist view in a letter at the time to Eccarius, whom he regarded as the representative of his viewpoint at the Congress. He warned that the Congress would not be effectively representative, with dominantly French representation, and that therefore "decisions on general theoretical problems must be avoided".

"The public is of course mostly interested in the question of war. Lengthy declamations and high-flown phrases will not hurt here. The decision to be adopted on this question seems to be simply this: that the working class is not yet sufficiently organised to throw any substantial weight into the scales; that the Congress, however, protests in the name of the working class and denounces the instigators of the war; that a war between France and Germany is a civil war, ruinous for both countries and ruinous for Europe in general."

(Marx, letter to J. G. Eccarius and F. Lessner, September 10, 1868)

The correctness of this realist approach of Marx, in contrast to the rhetoric of the Brussels resolution, was proved in the outcome. The last Congress of the First International before the Franco-German War was held at Basle in 1869, a year before the outbreak of war. As chance would have it, the last Congress of the Second International before the war of 1914 was also held at Basle, in 1912. The next Congress of the First International was due to have been held in Paris in September, 1870. The next Congress of the Second International was due to have been held in Vienna in August, 1914. In each case the outbreak of war swept aside the arrangements for the impending Congress. But unlike the Second International, the First International met the stern test of war with honour.

5. THE FRANCO-GERMAN WAR AND THE COMMUNE

Already in 1867, as the shadows of the Franco-German war gathered, public messages were exchanged, from the Berlin workers to the Paris workers, and from the Paris workers to the Berlin workers, proclaiming solidarity against the threatening war.

On the very eve of the war within four days of its outbreak, the Paris section of the International sent an address, signed by all their leading members (including Tolain, one of the co-founders of the International, Eugene Pottier, subsequently the author of "L'Internationale", Camélinat and others), to the German workers proclaiming solidarity; "German Brothers! . . . war between us would be fratricidal." The Berlin section of the International sent their reply: "Inspired with fraternal

sentiments, we join hands with you. . . . We assure you that there is no trace of national hatred in our hearts." A Manifesto of the Paris Federation on July 12, 1870 denounced "the war cries of those who run no risks". The reply of the Berlin Federation proclaimed:

"With heart and with hand we endorse your proclamation. We solemnly declare that neither the beating of the drums, nor the thunder of the guns, nor victory, nor defeat, shall hinder our efforts to bring about a union of the proletarians of all lands."

Within four days of the outbreak of the war the General Council of the International issued on July 23 a manifesto, drafted by Marx, which laid the blame for the war jointly on Napoleon and the Prussian Government, and, while recognising that the war at the outset bore a defensive character for Germany (the facts of the forged Ems telegram designed to provoke the French declaration of war were not then known), warned the German workers against allowing it to become a war of conquest. In the midst of war the Manifesto proclaimed:

"At a time when official France and official Germany are engaged in a fratricidal war, the German and the French workers are exchanging peaceful and fraternal messages. This one great fact, unparalleled in history, justifies the hope of a brighter future."

All sections of the International responded in support of the anti-war Manifesto. In the North-German Reichstag Bebel and Wilhelm Liebknecht, the leaders of the German Social Democratic Party founded at Eisenach in the preceding year, and affiliated to the International, voted against the war credits, and were soon after prosecuted for high treason. On the other hand, the followers of Lassalle, organised in the Union of German Workers, which was not affiliated to the International, voted for the war credits. It is characteristic that the present-day extreme right-wing and anti-Marxist "Social Democratic Party" in West Germany should have in 1963 celebrated its centenary, thus claiming its descent from the organisation of the Bismarckian associate, Lassalle, and the Prussian social-patriots rather than Bebel and Liebknecht.

After the defeat of the French army at Sedan and the capitulation of Napoleon III, and following the proclamation of the

French Republic on September 4, the General Council on September 9 issued a further manifesto, drafted by Marx, which declared that "the Prussian war camarilla is determined to transform the war into a war of conquest", called on the German workers to oppose the annexation of Alsace and Lorraine, and warned that the forcible annexation of Alsace and Lorraine by Prussia would throw France into the arms of Tsarism and thus prepare the way for a new European war between Germany and a Franco-Russian alliance. Against this menace the manifesto called on the workers of all countries to rally:

> "Let the branches of the International Working Men's Association in all lands summon the working class to action. If they fail to fulfil this duty, if they remain passive, the present disastrous war will be merely the prelude to yet more murderous international conflicts, and everywhere the lords of war, land and capital will triumph anew over the workers. Long live the Republic."

In Germany already on September 5, the day after the proclamation of the French Republic, the Brunswick Committee of the Social-Democratic Party issued a manifesto, drafted by Marx, addressed to the German workers. This manifesto demanded an honourable peace with the French Republic, and called for working-class demonstrations throughout Germany to protest against the annexation of Alsace Lorraine from France. On September 9 the members of the committee were arrested, followed by arrests of social-democrats in other German towns; and Bebel and Wilhelm Liebknecht were tried for high treason and sentenced to two years confinement in a fortress.

In France, with the collapse of Napoleon, the Republic had been proclaimed on September 4, but under the leadership of the bourgeoisie, whose political and military representatives were more concerned (as in 1940) to defeat the internal enemy than to put up any resistance to the German armies. Varied attempts at working-class and radical revolt took place in Paris and the leading towns of France against the treachery of the bourgeoisie and for revolutionary aims. In Marseilles the town hall was held by the insurgents for four days from October 31 to November 4. All these attempts were crushed in blood. These attempts were mixed in character and leadership, in most cases led by the followers of Blanqui, who were especially strong in Paris (Blanqui, who had led the insurrection which held Paris for a few hours on October 31, was arrested on March 17, the day before the Commune, and was held prisoner all through the Commune, so that the Commune was, as Marx said, deprived of a head), and in some cases provoked by the anarchist followers of Bakunin. The General Council of the International in its manifesto of September 9 had warned the French workers against the "desperate folly" of premature attempts to overthrow the newly constituted bourgeois republic. At the same time the leaders of the Paris Federation of the International were active participants in the revolutionary vigilance councils of the twenty Paris districts and in the central republican committee which linked the councils of the twenty districts and acted as the focus of the revolutionary movement. When Thiers at the head of the bourgeois government surrendered besieged Paris to the Germans (who did not dare occupy more than a fraction of it, for fear of the resistance of the Paris workers and soldiers), and made his truce with the German High Command in order to organise the election of a reactionary "National Assembly" with a monarchist majority, the class confrontation between Thiers with his counter-revolutionary "National Assembly" and the mass of the Paris workers and 200,000 National Guards, who had elected their Central Committee, became inescapable. When Thiers sought to disarm the National Guard, the workers and people of Paris rose in unity with the resistance of the National Guard, and took over Paris. Thiers fled to Versailles, to organise the counter-revolution under the protection of the German troops. The Commune was proclaimed on March 18, 1871.

The Paris Commune was the first demonstration in history of working-class power, of the dictatorship of the proletariat. For six weeks the Paris workers held power, and blazed the trial for all the world to follow. When the revolution was crushed in blood, with thirty thousand shot (the "September massacres" of the French Revolution, which aroused such still echoing expressions of horror from the "civilised" world, numbered three hundred), with 45,000 more arrested, and masses deported or exiles and refugees, the example was set for the subsequent limitless brutality of the modern bourgeois

counter-revolution since 1917, the White Terror and fascism.

Marx and the International, irrespective of previous warnings against the dangers of a premature uprising, and irrespective of the many grave errors of revolutionary strategy on the part of the still confused and all too tolerant and dilatory leadership of the Commune, rallied without hesitation to the support and vindication of the Commune. The support of all sections in all countries was organised to give aid. Within two days of the fall of the Commune the General Council put out its immortal Manifesto in honour of the Commune and to expose for ever the lies of its traducers; one of the greatest and most inspiring of the works of Marx, *The Civil War in France*.

The International was neither the initiator, nor the leader of the Commune. Of the ninety-two members of the Commune, the elected leading organ after the bourgeoisie and counter-revolutionaries had departed to Versailles, only seventeen were members of the International. Tolain, who betrayed the Commune and fled to Versailles, was expelled from the International. The members of the International while occupied in the particular spheres of work of the Commune, mainly in the economic and social field, were not in the dominant leadership of the Commune. Among those who gave their lives for the Commune was Varlin. Many nationals from other countries, inspired by the principles of the International, took part in the Commune; and a special delegation sent by the International became a permanent delegation to the Commune.

In a deeper sense the Commune was, in the words of Engels, "the child of the International intellectually" (letter to Sorge, September 12, 1874). The aim of the political power of the working class, proclaimed by the International, here received its first practical demonstration. In the words of Marx:

> "The struggle of the working class with the capitalist class has, thanks to the Parisian fight, entered a new phase. However the affair may end, from this time we have attained a new starting-point and one of world wide historical significance."
>
> (Marx, letter to Kugelmann, April 17, 1871)

From the experience of the Commune, not only from its positive achievements, but also from its errors and weaknesses,

were drawn the lessons to point the way to the future victory of the working-class revolution. In the forefront were the two lessons. First, in the words of Marx, to make the task "no longer, as before to transfer the bureaucratic-military machine from one hand to the other, but to *smash* it" as "essential for every real people's revolution on the Continent" (Letter to Kugelmann, April 17, 1871). Second, the indispensable necessity of a revolutionary working-class party to lead the working-class revolution to victory, maintain it against its enemies, and carry forward the construction of socialism. This lesson was underlined in the resolution (given on page 66) of the ensuing London Conference of the International in 1871 and of the Hague Congress in 1872.

6. DIVISIONS AND DISSOLUTION

The Commune was the culmination and high point of the International. After its overthrow the disintegration began. Police persecution outlawed the International in most of the countries of Europe.

The coalition of the very varied and conflicting elements of the nascent working-class movement (the "naïve conjunction of all factions", as Engels described it, looking back in 1874), which had been held together by the genius and tactical skill of Marx during the eighteen-sixties, could not survive the shock of revolutionary events and testing.

On the one hand, the English trade union leaders, who had supported the International mainly as an instrument for practical trade union solidarity and as an organ for the expression of general democratic and peace sentiments, drew away after the Commune and proceeded to disassociate themselves from the spectre of continental revolution. It is true—and there is no more remarkable testimony to the eloquent persuasiveness and moral authority of Marx—that nineteen of the twenty-one English members of the General Council signed one of the greatest revolutionary documents of the century, the burning panegyric of the Commune and indictment of the counter-revolution, embodied in *The Civil War in France*. Only two, Odger and Lucraft, refused to sign and resigned from the International. But in practice after the Commune, and in face of the hysterical press campaign of denunciation which was whipped up, the "solid" respectable leaders of English trade

unionism dropped away from the International. In the end all but one of the English trade union leaders on the General Council resigned from it, and some of them set up a separate Federal Council for Britain apart from the General Council, though with its agreement.

On the other hand, the anarchists, who sought to present themselves as the supposedly ultra-revolutionary ultra-left "liberation" opposition to the "authoritarianism" and "dictatorship" of Marx, saw their moment of opportunity, with the weakening of working class support, the main cadres of the French movement destroyed or in prison, and police persecution crippling organisation everywhere, to pursue their intrigues for factionalism and disruption. Already Bakunin, the representative of anarchism, had characteristically at first refused to join the International, and instead joined the bourgeois League for Peace and Freedom, becoming a member of its executive committee. Breaking with this in 1868, he had then formed his own International Social Democratic Alliance, with a programme described by Marx as "a hash scraped together from the right and from the left". In 1869 he proposed that the Alliance should enter the International as an organised body, or its sections enter as organisations, and, when this was refused, promised to dissolve the Alliance and join as individuals. In practice, however, the organisation of the Alliance was maintained as a faction, and conflicts were already opened at the Basle Congress.

The main offensive of anarchism developed after the overthrow of the Commune and the offensive of counter-revolution had weakened the working-class basis and organisation of the International and thus rendered it more vulnerable to attack. The Alliance built up rival organisations in countries with more backward development of the working class, principally in Spain, Portugal, Italy and French-speaking Switzerland. The offensive was especially directed against the conception of working-class political party organisation, and against the rights and powers of the General Council as a central leadership. A preliminary Conference of the International was accordingly convened in London in September, 1871, to consider the new questions arising and prepare a Congress. The London Conference dealt with the question of the factional activities of the Alliance by recalling the

announcement of voluntary dissolution of the Alliance, and the decision of the Basle Congress giving the General Council the right to grant or refuse affiliation to any organisation, subject to appeal to a following Congress, and on this basis declared the question of the Alliance "settled". The most important political decision of the London Conference was the resolution setting out the necessity of an independent political party of the working class as indispensable for the victory of the social revolution. The Conference further decided that the next Congress should be held in the following year.

Bakunin and the anarchists challenged the decisions of the London Conference, and held a separate conference in Switzerland, constituting what was called the Jura Federation. In the name of the Jura Federation a circular was sent out to all organisations of the International. This circular consisted of a violent denunciation of the General Council and its leadership, obviously directed against Marx in particular, although the name of Marx was not mentioned. The General Council was accused of "authoritarianism" and "dictatorship"; imposing "orthodoxy" and treating dissident opinions as "heretical"; introducing "the authoritarian spirit" into the International; and seeking to transform the International into "a hierarchical organisation guided and governed by an executive". The General Council should only be "a correspondence and statistical bureau".

> "The unity which the Council is endeavouring to establish by means of centralisation and dictatorship, we shall realise by means of a free federation of autonomous groups. . . . How could we expect an equalitarian and free society to issue from an authoritarian organisation? Such a thing would be impossible. The International, that germ of the human society of the future, must be . . . a faithful representation of our principles of freedom and of federation; it must reject any principle which may tend towards authoritarianism and dictatorship."

The terms of the anarchist anti-communist language directed against Marx in his day, and exactly parallelled against Lenin in his day, are still familiar, even with identical repetition of the old nineteenth century "libertarian" catchwords, in some of the most recent would-be "left" and "new thinking" anti-communist quarters today.

The battle was joined at the Hague Congress in September, 1872—"a life-or-death matter for the International", in the words of Marx referring to the coming Congress in a letter to Sorge on June 21, 1872. Both Marx and Engels attended as delegates. The Congress showed the widest international representation of any Congress of the International, including delegates from branches in Australia and America. The conflict was already sharp over credentials. The Marxists, in the broad sense of supporters of political action and organisation of the working class and of effective powers of the General Council, were in a majority. The Bakuninists were in a minority.

Two issues were the centre of the battle. The first was democratic centralism or the powers of the General Council. "The General Council," said Sorge, speaking for the majority, "must be the General Staff of the Association." The Congress adopted amendments to the Rules to strengthen the powers of the General Council, including the right to suspend branches or federations, but with the right of appeal to the next Congress, and to strengthen internal discipline. This power of the General Council was, as Marx emphasised in the debate, not a physical power, but a moral one. In his speech to the rally in Amsterdam following the Congress Marx again emphasises this character of democratic centralisation as representing a moral authority:

> "Who but our enemies have any reason to feel suspicious of the powers of the General Council? Does it possess a bureaucracy? Does it command the services of an armed police force whereby it can force obedience? Is not its authority purely moral? When it comes to any declarations, does it not communicate these to the federations, and is it not the federations that are charged with carrying them out? Kings in such a position, kings without soldiers, policemen or officials, would be able to offer little resistance to the progress of the revolution, had they to rely solely upon moral influence and moral authority."

The second issue was political action and organisation of the working class. Here the Congress carried the weighty resolution on the necessity of an independent political party of the working class as the indispensable condition for the victory of the social revolution (the text of the key passage is given on p. 66).

On the question of Bakunin and the factional activities of the Alliance, the Congress appointed a committee of investigation, and on the report of the committee finding the charges proved and recommending expulsion of those responsible, carried the expulsion of Bakunin and his main associate, and warned the others.

Victory has thus been won for Marxism at the Hague Congress, though it had required a heavy battle. But in view of the altered conditions of the working-class movement, as already described, after the fall of the Commune, and the dangerous signs of weakened organisation and disintegration opening the way to attempts at factional disruption, to have attempted to continue the International in the old way would have played into the hands of the disrupters. Marx and Engels accordingly moved a resolution for the transfer of the General Council to New York, and for its members to be composed from members of the Federal Council for North America. The resolution was carried, against the opposition, not only of the Bakuninists, but also of the Blanquists who had supported the Marxists over the other issues, but who now withdrew from the Congress.

The transference to New York was in political reality, though not yet in form, the end of the First International. It is true that Marx and Engels entertained some hopes at first that the rapid development of capitalism and the working-class movement in North America might provide an effective basis for further growth, unimpeded by the anarchist confusions at the moment affecting some sections, mainly in Southern Europe. But these hopes were not fulfilled. An attempt was made to hold another Congress of the International at Geneva in 1877; but this was a failure. The anarchists attempted to form an Anarchist International, which held congresses, but gradually petered out. The history of the First International in the United States from 1872 to 1876 belongs really to the history of the American labour movement. In 1876, after a Congress of the International had been convened at Philadelphia, but only one foreign delegate, from the German Social-Democratic Party, had arrived, the General Council of the International was formally dissolved, the North

American Federal Council being commissioned to maintain the documents and international connections and convene a future International Congress if opportunity arose.

7. HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE OF THE FIRST INTERNATIONAL

The record and example of the First International, guided by the teaching and direct leadership of Marx, remains a permanent inspiration for the working-class movement. Its weaknesses sprang from the still elementary stage of the organised working-class movement. But the courage, initiative and leadership displayed on every issue arising in the world during those eight years of its effective existence, and the masterly definition of guiding principles on so many of the till then uncleared and hotly contested key questions of the economic and political struggle, the programmatic aims of working-class political power and collective ownership, tactical methods and the role of the trade unions and political party organisation, and democratic centralism, remain an immortal inheritance and treasurehouse for all subsequent development. Directly from the First International and its initial organisation and influence arose the main political working-class parties, based on the aim of socialism and guided by Marxist theory, of the subsequent period. From the First International derives the modern international working-class movement and modern communism.

Commenting on the transfer of the General Council to New York, Marx wrote in 1873:

> "As I view European conditions it is quite useful to let the formal organisation of the International recede into the background for the time being.... Events and the inevitable development and complication of things will of themselves see to it that the International shall rise again in improved form.... Furthermore it upsets the calculations of the Continental governments that the spectre of the International will fail to be of service to them during the impending reactionary crusade; besides, everywhere the bourgeoisie considers the spectre laid for good."
>
> (Marx, letter to Sorge, September 27, 1873)

Similar confidence in the future rebirth of the International in a new and strengthened form was expressed by Engels in 1874:

> "With your resignation the *old* International is anyhow entirely wound up and at an end.... Any further effort to galvanise it into new life would be folly and a waste of energy. For ten years the International dominated one side of European history—the side on which the future lies—and can look back upon its work with pride. But in its old form it has outlived its usefulness. I believe the next International—after Marx's writings have exercised their influence for some years—will be directly Communist and will proclaim precisely our principles."
>
> (Engels, letter to Sorge, September 12-17, 1874)

The immediately next International, the Second International, only partially fulfilled this prediction. Marxist theory was in principle accepted, but became increasingly corroded in the leading democratic parties of Western and Central Europe by reformism and revisionism, with the consequent collapse of 1914. The prediction of Engels of a future Communist International received its fulfilment forty-five years later with the foundation of the Communist International in 1919.

It is of interest to note that in March, 1870, a Russian section of the First International was founded in Geneva. The members of the Russian section of the First International nominated Karl Marx as their representative on the General Council, and at the same time sent Marx their programme and rules for approval. Marx wrote with amusement to Engels in 1870 that he had become "the representative of Young Russia". In the last days of the First International the links with the future had begun to appear.

CHAPTER IV

THE SECOND INTERNATIONAL

"The Second International (1889-1914) was an international organisation of the proletarian movement whose growth was in *breadth*, at the cost of a temporary fall in the revolutionary level, a temporary increase in the strength of opportunism, which in the end led to the disgraceful collapse of this International."

LENIN *The Third International and Its Place in History*. 1919.

Thirteen years passed between the end of the First International and the foundation of the Second. During these years Social-Democratic or socialist Parties on the general basis of Marxism developed in most of the countries of Europe and in a few outside Europe.

The First International had prepared the ground for this development. The parties in the leading countries developed from parties or groups already associated with the First International. The battles within the First International had clarified the essential principles of socialism and socialist tactics, and had established the supremacy of Marxism against the various rival theories which threatened confusion.

The German Social-Democratic Party was the oldest Social-Democratic Party, founded at Eisenach in 1869 under the direct inspiration of Marx and Engels, and already affiliated to the First International. For decades it was regarded as the model party, both as the guardian of Marxist theory (its

leading theorist, Kautsky, and organ *Die Neue Zeit* were regarded generally as the oracles of Marxism after the death of Engels until the First World War), and as the most successful electorally in winning mass support. Already by 1890 it obtained one and a half million votes, or one fifth of the total poll.

During the seventies Social-Democratic Parties were formed in Austria, Denmark, France, Holland, Hungary, Spain, Switzerland and the United States. During the eighties parties were formed in Belgium, Britain, Norway, Russia and Sweden. In other countries groups existed, or parties were in process of formation.

Thus by the end of the eighties conditions had ripened for the renewed establishment of a working-class International, on a broader representative basis, and with a general acceptance of the principles of Marxism by most of the constituent parties.

1. FOUNDATION CONGRESS

The aim of international socialist and working-class organisation was by no means dormant during these intervening years. In 1877 an International Socialist Unity Congress was held at Ghent, and a Federal Bureau was established, including Liebknecht and other veterans of the First International; and this organised a further Congress at Coire in Switzerland in 1881. But it was there decided that conditions were not yet ready for re-establishing a Socialist International. In 1888 an International Labour Conference was organised in London by the Trades Union Congress, but excluding socialist organisations. It became clear that Marxism would have to take the lead to establish international socialist organisation. The London Conference of 1888 adopted a decision for the convening of an International Labour Congress in Paris in 1889, to establish a permanent international labour organisation, excluding socialist bodies. This exclusion was laid down by the Trades Union Congress. Accordingly the Marxist parties took steps to convene an International Workers' Congress, including socialist organisations, to meet in Paris on the centenary of the storming of the Bastille, on July 14, 1889.

Thus the Foundation Congress of the Second International in Paris in 1889, organised by the Marxist Socialist Parties, was confronted by a rival reformist anti-Marxist international

gathering organised by the French "possibilists" or the reformist party led by Brousse. The Organising Commission for the Marxist Congress included Bebel and Liebknecht for the German Social-Democratic Party, Paul Lafargue for the Socialist Federation of France, and delegates from the Belgian, Dutch and Swiss parties, while William Morris for the Socialist League in Britain and delegates for the Danish party expressed agreement. The invitation to the Foundation Congress was signed by the representatives of sixteen countries, including from Britain William Morris, Tom Mann and Keir Hardie.

Some moves were made for unification of the two gatherings. Gompers, the anti-socialist leader of the American Federation of Labour sent greetings to both gatherings, and urged unification. Engels poured scorn on the proposals for amalgamation of the two Congresses, since he was convinced, as he wrote in a letter to Sorge on July 17, 1889, that it was more important to let the workers see which represented the real movement and which was a swindle, than to make a false show of unity. The moves for unification irrespective of principle came to nothing. Subsequent unity was achieved on the basis of the Marxist International, while the would-be "Possibilist" International never came to life.

The International Congress convened by Marxism was overwhelmingly stronger and more representative than the Possibilist gathering. The latter consisted mainly of French reformist followers of Brousse, with very weak and limited representation from outside France. The Marxist Congress was attended by 467 delegates from twenty countries.

For the representation from Britain, it is interesting to note that the Marxist Congress was attended by William Morris from the Socialist League, Eleanor Marx from the Hoxton Labour Association, and Keir Hardie on behalf of the Sheffield Socialist group (so entered in the official credentials report of the Congress; in the letter of invitation to the Congress Hardie had been entered as representing the Ayrshire Mineworkers' Union). Hyndman, on the other hand, the former Tory who had come to profess a kind of Marxism (though disowned by Marx) and founded the Social-Democratic Federation, but never freed himself from his basic Tory jingo outlook of a wealthy capitalist, characteristically attended

the Possibilist Congress of the opponents of Marxism.

The Foundation Congress was held in a revolutionary atmosphere. On the red banner behind the platform were inscribed the words: "Proletarians of all countries, let us unite!" On an emblazoned shield was inscribed the greeting of the French comrades:

> "In the name of the Paris of June, 1848, and of March, April and May, 1871, and of the France of Babeuf, Blanqui and Varlin, greetings to the socialist workers of both worlds!"

A further inscription proclaimed over the hall the slogan expressing the aims of the Congress:

> "Political and Economic Expropriation of the Capitalist Class! Socialisation of the Means of Production!"

Co-Chairmen of the Congress were Vaillant and Wilhelm Liebknecht. In his Chairman's address Vaillant declared that the Congress represented "one of the greatest events in the history of the peoples", and that it was the beginning of "a new era of conscious and systematic efforts to represent the rights of the oppressed, an era of systematic and united action on the part of the international proletariat for socialism".

Such were the high hopes with which the Second International opened.

The principal immediate decision of the Congress was to establish May Day as the international day of working-class demonstrations in all countries for the aims of the eight hour day and the other resolutions of the Congress. The text of this historic resolution ran:

> "A great manifestation will be organised on a fixed date, in such a way that simultaneously in all countries and in all towns on the same agreed day the workers will call upon the public authorities to reduce the working day by law to eight hours and to put the other resolutions of the Congress of Paris into effect.
>
> "In view of the fact that a similar manifestation has already been decided for May 1, 1890, by the American Federation of Labour at its Congress held at St. Louis in December, 1888, this date is adopted for the international manifestation.
>
> "The workers of the various countries will have to

accomplish the manifestation under the conditions imposed on them by the particular situation in each country."

The plain aim of this resolution was to establish on May Day a simultaneous international manifestation of working-class strength—which, if May Day fell on a working day, would mean a strike. However, the last paragraph was added on the request of the German Social-Democrats, who did not wish to risk a renewal of the Anti-Socialist Law, due to expire in 1890. The German party instructed their members not to strike on May Day, but to confine the celebration to meetings in the evenings; the British preferred the first Sunday in May. On the other hand, the French, Austrians, Hungarians and many others struck on May Day and demonstrated working-class solidarity and internationalism in the streets, often in face of considerable police brutality (in North France in 1891 ten were killed). A bitter controversy followed, echoes of which are still familiar today. Finally at the Third Congress at Zürich in 1893 a resolution was adopted which reaffirmed in principle the "duty" of the international strike on May 1, and added to the aim of the eight hour day the aim of "the social revolution" (revised to "social transformation" on the request of the Germans), but left the form of manifestation to be decided by each party for itself. This compromise on May Day, carried with the support of the Germans and British against the French, illustrated the subsequently familiar method of the Second International to combine revolutionary terms in principle with concessions to right-wing trends in practice.

2. BATTLE AGAINST ANARCHISM

The Second International was initially mixed in composition, including both political working-class and trade union organisations, and both socialist (revolutionary and reformist) and anarchist trends. The First Congress was officially called an "International Workers' Congress". The Fourth Congress in London in 1896 was officially called the "International Socialist Workers' and Trade Union Congress".

Trade union affiliation was formally recognised by the Zürich Congress in 1893, which laid down that "all trade unions shall be admitted to the Congress; also those socialist

parties and organisations which recognise the necessity of the organisations of the workers and of political action". This Congress was participated in by the Trades Union Congress Committee and Miners' Federation from Britain. At the London Congress in 1896, out of 476 members of the British delegation, 185 came from trade unions or from local trades and labour councils. It was not until 1901 that a separate international trade union conference was held at Copenhagen, and in 1903 an International Secretariat of National Trade Union Centres was established, which grew into the International Federation of Trade Unions in 1913.

This loose composition facilitated the disruptive role of anarchism during the early years of the Second International. We have already seen how anarchism disrupted the last phase of the First International. Although successive Congresses laid down the principles of political action and the aim of political power of the working class, to which the anarchists were in fact opposed, anarchist participation continued during the first seven years, both directly and through trade union representation.

Anarchism, reflecting the petty-bourgeois "libertarian" outlook of small property ground down by big capital, set the ultimate aim of communism, the elimination of any form of state or coercion, as an immediate aim. But the path to this ultimate aim lies through the working-class conquest of political power, or dictatorship of the proletariat, as the only power strong enough to break the resistance of big capital and its old state machine, expropriate the capitalists and establish the new social order. By opposing this, anarchism, under cover of "revolutionary" phrases, actually places itself on the side of counter-revolution, as the experience in Russia in 1917 showed.

Similarly anarchism, in the name of the same "revolutionary" principles, opposes political action in the conditions of capitalist society, that is, the building of political working-class parties, the struggle for immediate reforms, and the electoral struggle. This is to deny the necessity of preparing, during the pre-revolutionary relatively peaceful period, the political consciousness, action and organisation of the working class in order to be capable of conquering political power.

This necessary battle of Marxism against anarchism during

the early years of the Second International was described by Lenin in the following terms:

> *"In those days*, after the defeat of the Paris Commune, history made slow organisational and educational work the task of the day. Nothing else was possible. The anarchists were then (as they are now) fundamentally wrong, not only theoretically, but also economically and politically. The anarchists misjudged the character of the times, for they failed to understand the world situation: the workers of England corrupted by imperialist profits, the Commune defeated in Paris, the recent (1871) triumph of the bourgeois national movement in Germany, the age-long sleep of semi-feudal Russia.
>
> "Marx and Engels gauged the times accurately; they understood the international situation; they understood that the approach to the beginning of the social revolution must be *slow*."
>
> (Lenin, *The Tasks of the Proletariat in Our Revolution*, April, 1917)

Lenin did not fail to add that this principle of "slowness", appropriate to that period, was no eternal principle (like "the inevitability of gradualness") to apply to all periods, also after the opening of the revolutionary era. "Let us not," he warned, "imitate those sorry Marxists of whom Marx said: 'I have sown dragons and have reaped a harvest of fleas.'"

At the Zürich Congress in 1893 a specific resolution was adopted on the necessity of "political action", which was defined in very limited terms as meaning that "the working-class parties use or seek to win according to their strength the political rights and constitutional machinery for furthering the interests of the working class and the winning of political power". This definition was inadequate, and was strengthened at the next Congress; but it served to provide a line of demarcation from the anarchists. When this resolution was carried by a majority, the anarchists left the hall in protest. Engels, who was present at the last session of this Congress and made the closing speech, emphasised the necessity for an organisational separation from the anarchists.

This exclusion of the anarchists was accomplished at the London Congress in 1896. A resolution on political action laid down:

> "This Congress understands by political action all forms of the organised struggle for the conquest of political power, and the use of the constitutional and legal provisions in the state and municipalities by the working class for the aim of emancipation."

The resolution laid down the aim of "the international socialist republic", the necessity for independence of the working-class parties from the capitalist parties (opposed by the Fabians), and adopted demands for universal and equal suffrage, the second ballot, the initiative and referendum, and for the full right of self-dermination of all nations.

In the conditions of admission which were adopted it was laid down that "anarchists are excluded". This ended the direct representation of the anarchists, while in respect of the trade unions participation of the unions was made conditional on their recognition of the necessity for political and parliamentary activity.

This final settling of accounts with the anarchists was rendered less difficult because the fight for political action united equally the revolutionary Marxists and the reformists in one camp. But meanwhile the deeper battle between revolutionary Marxism and reformist, which had already revealed itself in preliminary forms at the earlier congresses during the eighteen-nineties, was now to develop and reach an increasingly critical character.

3. BATTLE AGAINST REVISIONISM

The battle of Marxism against revisionism constituted the main battle of theory, policy and tactics in the Second International.

Revisionism is a special form of reformism in the era of developing or fully developed imperialism when Marxism has become the recognised theory of the working-class movement.

Reformism in general was already long familiar as the expression of capitalist influence in the working class. The politics of reformism are the politics of adaptation to capitalism; denial of revolutionary aims; substitution of the fight for reforms, not as a path to the conquest of political power and the socialist revolution, but as an alternative to the socialist revolution; attempt to soften the class struggle, and belief in a harmonious progressively developing capitalism. Since the

facts of life contradict these smooth theories, the logic of reformism, whatever the initial subjective benevolent intentions of its exponents, leads them, in sharp moments of class struggle or catastrophic world events, to place themselves openly on the side of capitalism against the working class, and even to become the militant agents of capitalism for the betrayal or violent suppression of the working class.

All this is today an old story from the experience of Social-Democracy over the past half century. But in the early years of this century these approaching battles were being fought out on the theoretical field in the grand forum of the Second International.

Open reformism of the early style already dominated the British labour movement during the second half of the nineteenth century, in the form of the Liberal-Labour leadership of the old skilled trade unions, who did indeed to their credit take part in the First International, but broke away after the Paris Commune, and opposed socialism and independent working-class political action until the end of the century. This phenomenon reflected the position of Britain as the first capitalist world power, with vast colonial possessions and domination of the world market, and thus able to afford concessions to win over the upper sections of the working class and its leadership.

With the development of capitalism in the direction of increasing concentration, monopoly and towards imperialism in Britain during the last quarter of the nineteenth century, and with the rapid parallel development in the leading countries of Western Europe, especially Germany, France and Belgium, and in the United States, the same type of phenomenon of reformism or opportunism began to become marked in varying forms in all these countries. Thus it came about that in the most advanced capitalist countries, which first reached the objective conditions requiring the transition to socialism, and where the modern working-class movement first developed, the growth of opportunism in the upper sections and leadership of the labour movement retarded the fulfilment of the revolutionary task, and the world socialist revolution had to develop in a different way from the original anticipation (discarded by Marx after 1850) of its beginning in the most advanced industrial countries.

4. BEGINNING OF DISTORTION OF MARXISM

Already before their deaths Marx and Engels warned against the growth of petty-bourgeois reformist trends in German Social-Democracy. Marx wrote in 1877:

> "A rotten spirit is making itself felt in our Party in Germany, not so much among the masses as among the leaders (upper class and 'workers'). The compromise with the Lassalleans had led to a compromise with other half-way elements too; in Berlin (like Most) with Dühring and his 'admirers', but also with a whole gang of half-mature students and super-wise diplomaed doctors who want to give socialism a 'higher, idealistic' orientation, that is to say, to replace its materialistic basis (which demands serious objective study from anyone who tries to use it) by modern mythology with its goddesses of Justice, Liberty, Equality and Fraternity."
>
> (Marx, letter to Sorge, October 19, 1877)

Similarly Engels in 1885:

> "In a petty-bourgeois country like Germany the Party is bound to have also a *petty-bourgeois 'educated' Right wing*, which it shakes off at the decisive moment."
>
> (Engels, letter to Becker, June 15, 1885)

In a letter to Bernstein on June 5, 1884, Engels seriously discussed the necessity of a split in German Social-Democracy on basic questions of programme against the opportunist tendencies; he only advocated waiting with the split until the repeal of the Anti-Socialist Law, as until then the opportunist tendencies, assisted by police persecution of the militant working class fighters, might be able to secure the majority. In 1891 Engels' strong criticism of the weaknesses of the draft Erfurt Programme dealt specifically with the menace of opportunism and "the way opportunism is gaining ground in the Social-Democratic press":

> "What else can result from this than that the party may suddenly at the first critical moment prove helpless, that on decisive questions confusion and division will arise within the party because these questions had never been discussed?
>
> "The neglect of great fundamental considerations for the sake of the momentary interests of the day, this chase after momentary successes, and this race after them with-

QUOTE

out account of ultimate results, this sacrifice of the future movement for the present, is perhaps the result of 'honest' motives, but is and remains, none the less, opportunism, and 'honest' opportunism is perhaps more dangerous than any other."

This critique, sent from Engels to Kautsky in 1891, was withheld from publication until ten years later, when the revisionist offensive led by Bernstein was already in full blast.

On the eve of his death in 1895 Engels wrote his final warning in his famous Preface to Marx's *Class Struggles in France*. The Preface is dated March 6, 1895. Engels died on August 5, 1895. In this, his last writing for the international working class, Engels sketched out with a masterly hand the future of the revolutionary struggle in the contemporary conditions of advanced capitalism, the gradual massing of the workers' battalions through the forms of legality, leading up to the final struggle and the conquest of power. In dialectic fashion he analysed the two aspects of the revolutionary struggle, peaceful and non-peaceful, in the modern conditions in prospect at the beginning of the twentieth century. He showed how the old style of 1848 barricade insurrection was out of date:

"The newly built quarters of the large cities, erected since 1848, have been laid out in long, straight, wide streets, as if made for the effective use of cannons and rifles. The revolutionary would be mad who would of himself select the new working class districts of the north and east of Berlin for barricade struggle."

Immediately after this, as if anticipating the one-sided misuse that might be made of this passage by defeatists and legalists, he continued:

"Does this mean that in the future the street struggle has no role to play? Not at all. It only means that the conditions since 1848 are far more unfavourable for the insurrectionaries, far more favourable for the military. Accordingly, a street struggle can only be victorious, if this unfavourable nature of the situation is compensated for by other factors. Therefore it will more seldom come in the beginning of a great revolution than in its later developments, and must be undertaken with greater forces. These, however, will then probably, as in the great

French Revolution, on September 4 and on October 31 in Paris, prefer the method of open attack to the passive barricade tactics."

The accuracy of this prediction was brilliantly proved in the victory of the Bolshevik Revolution in 1917, with the eight months development of the revolution before the working-class conquest of power; the peaceful winning of a majority of the workers and mass support; in the trade unions, in the Soviets, in the elections in Petrograd and Moscow, in the Northern armies; the endeavour first for a peaceful transition if possible; and finally the rapid armed conquest of power with such overwhelming mass support as to be almost bloodless—the heavy costs in blood came afterwards in the defeating of the foreign-supported wars of intervention, consequent on the delay of the working-class revolution in the rest of Europe.

This Preface of Engels, giving his political testament to the working class for the new problems opening with the twentieth century, proved the litmus paper to reveal the dangerous inner weakening which increasingly affected and corrupted the majority of the leadership of Social-Democracy and the Second International during the imperialist era. The German Social-Democratic leadership, confronted with this Preface, carefully suppressed the key revolutionary passages in it, such as the one quoted above, and thus in the published version replaced the balanced picture of the relationship of peaceful and non-peaceful forms of struggle by a one-sided doctrine of the rejection of old-style barricade revolutionary tactics as out of date and consequent preaching of legality at all costs as the only future path. The meaning of the Preface was thus turned into the exact reverse of what Engels wrote.

The correct text of what Engels wrote, that is, the original manuscript, was in the possession of Bernstein, who after the death of Engels became the Father of Revisionism and utilised the falsified text to prove his case. When challenged by Kautsky four years later to produce the true text, which Kautsky, then fighting for Marxism, declared would blow up Bernstein's whole case, Bernstein refused to comply. In its mutilated form this falsified text was circulated by right-wing Social-Democracy for thirty years in every country in the world as "proof" that Marxism finally abandoned the conception of violent revolution as out of date. It was not until 1924,

after this lie had done its work for thirty years, that the true text was at last discovered and photographed by the Russian scholar Riazanov from the German Social-Democratic Party archives and published to the world by the Marx-Engels Institute in Moscow.

The effect of this veritable Ems forgery at the root of right-wing Social-Democracy was far-reaching. The Preface in its falsified form was circulated as the "Political Testament of Engels", and at the critical point of the advancing imperialist epoch opened the full floodgates to opportunist legalism. Bernstein made this falsified Preface of Engels the essential basis and starting point of his revisionist campaign, as set out in his book *Presuppositions of Socialism*, published in 1899, and translated into English as *Evolutionary Socialism*. The opposition of the Left was disorganised. The combined revolutionary and also military authority of Engels appeared too great to be contradicted. The effect can be traced through the whole utterances and line of the Marxist Left in German Social-Democracy, in the lack of clearness and certainty on the question of the state and the conquest of power. Even as late as 1918, at the Foundation Congress of the German Communist Party, Rosa Luxemburg could still declare, referring to this Engels Preface without awareness of its falsification:

> "I will not say that Engels, by this Preface, made himself a sharer in the guilt for the whole line of development in Germany; I will only say: Here is a classic document for the conception which was living in German Social-Democracy, or rather, which killed it."

The courage, clear-sightedness and tenacity of Lenin and the Bolsheviks in maintaining the line of revolutionary Marxism, including on the question of armed revolution, in the face of such "authoritative" falsification, stands out all the more powerfully.

Engels' fury at this falsification was extreme. Although in his last illness, he wrote at once to Kautsky on April 1, 1895:

> "To my amazement I see today in *Vorwärts* an extract from my Preface printed without my previous knowledge, and chopped up in such a fashion that I am made to appear a pacific worshipper of legality at any price. All the more I desire that the Preface be printed without abbreviation in the *Neue Zeit*, in order that this *shameful impression* shall be wiped out."

But the fuller text in *Neue Zeit* still appeared without the crucial passages, which were omitted, it was explained to Engels, for police reasons (although no steps were taken to explain privately the real views of Engels to the membership). Kautsky wrote later with regard to this omission that "the fault for this does not lie with Engels, but with German friends who compelled the omission of the conclusion as too revolutionary" (*Neue Zeit*, XVII, 2, 1899). On April 3, 1895 Engels wrote to Lafargue to express his anger that the extracts from his Preface had been used to make him appear "in support of peaceful and anti-violent tactics at any price", whereas "I preach those tactics only for the *Germany of today* and even then *with many reservations*. For France, Belgium, Italy, Austria such tactics could not be followed as a whole, and for Germany they could become inapplicable tomorrow."

With this symbolic direct distortion of Marxism by the then dominant leaders of Social-Democracy the new phase opened. Marx and Engels were dead. The last work of Marx, the merciless *Critique of the Gotha Programme* in 1875, had been withheld from publication for sixteen years by the German party authorities, and finally only published under the strong pressure of Engels. The last work of Engels, the Preface to the *Class Struggles in France* was directly falsified to produce an exactly opposite and counter-revolutionary meaning. The voices of Marx and Engels were silenced; the majority of the succeeding leaders of Social-Democracy were not strong enough to carry on their work, were even assisting to conceal and distort the teaching of Marxism, at first half-consciously through "honest" opportunism (in Engels' words), later, more and more consciously, until 1914 laid bare the fruit in open treachery. Thereafter, and especially after 1917, the direct role of anti-communist Social-Democracy became to slander and distort Marxism by gross, dishonest, deliberate misrepresentation. In the preliminary phase of this battle, which took the form of the theoretical battle against the revisionist offensive, the revolutionary Marxist Left in the old Second International were still in the process of gathering their forces. Imperialism was able to find the path open for it in the working-class movement, to divide the workers, to buy off

sections with concessions, to bribe and corrupt the leadership. Revisionism, Fabianism, Progressivism, Liberal-Labourism, Evolutionary Socialism, all rose to the surface upon this basis of social corruption, expressing it into political systems, and had their short-lived day. "The dance of all the dirt began."

5. FABIANISM AND REVISIONISM

Revisionism was the theoretical expression of this trend in the initial period of imperialism before the onset of the general crisis and before the beginning of the socialist revolution. The essence of Revisionism was the presentation of the approaching era of wars and revolutions as an era of increasing harmony and diminishing contradictions, making necessary the revision of Marxism as "obsolete" in the light of twentieth century conditions.

Revisionism in its time was seen as an ideological and political controversy of doctrines and tactics. Today historical experience has demonstrated its character as an expression of the illusions of the initial period of imperialism leading up to the First World War—when imperialism could still be seen by philistines and idiots as "progressive", "liberal", extending "social reforms", and even "pacific". In class terms it was an expression of certain social strata (mainly petty-bourgeois professional, civil servants, sections of the aristocracy of labour) closely connected with the process of imperialist corruption, and temporarily riding on the wave.

Fabianism was the characteristic British form of this trend and of these strata. Sidney Webb, its main founder, had gained his political experience as an official of the Colonial Office. Corresponding to the earlier development of British capitalism towards imperialism, Fabianism was the pioneer in this development. *Fabian Essays* was published in 1889, whereas Bernstein's book, which became the bible of Revisionism on the Continent, was not published until 1899. Bernstein in London had learned his ideas from Webb.

But Fabianism was honestly and openly anti-Marxist from the outset, and boasted of its main initial achievement, in the words of its Secretary and historian, to have "broken the spell of marxism in Britain". Fabianism openly based its theory on bourgeois econonomic theory. Fabianism openly accepted the framework of imperialism, and its publication "Fabianism and

the Empire" at the time of the South African War, affirming the objective superiority of large empires to small independent nations, made the term "Fabian Imperialism" a term of reproach also in all sections of the British labour movement (Ramsay MacDonald resigned in protest from the Fabian Society). The war of 1914 came as a complete shock to Fabianism; its leaders admitted that they had never given attention to what they called "international politics", that is, the real world. When the further development of world events, including the experience of successive Labour Governments and of the advance of Socialism in the Soviet Union, demonstrated by experience the bankruptcy of their original theories, the founders of Fabianism had the same sterling honesty to recognise this and in a final testament to place on record their recognition of the vindication of Marxist theory.[8]

On the Continent, where Marxism was the recognised basis of the socialist movement, the penetration of reformism, reflecting the influence of imperialism, could not at the outset take this openly anti-Marxist form. It had to be disguised as the "revision" of Marxism. Marxism was not out and out rejected. Only its ideas and theories and strategy and tactics were declared to be largely obsolete, rendered out of date by the contrary facts of contemporary capitalism, and therefore requiring a "revision" to accord with modern capitalism. This was the work of Bernstein, a former bank clerk, who had a certain authority as the literary executor in charge of, and in practice sitting on and largely suppressing, (just as Hyndman destroyed all the letters of Marx to himself) the remaining unpublished manuscripts and letters of Marx. Bernstein's book, *The Presuppositions of Socialism*, published in 1899, which in fact challenged all the basic theories of Marxism in the name of the supposed miracles of the new capitalism, aroused a storm of controversy in the international social-democratic movement.

Of course there were new facts revealing themselves in the

[8] "In the years before the Great War, and for some time afterwards, we did not foresee the collapse of Western civilisation ... Where we went hopelessly wrong was in ignoring Karl Marx's forecast of the eventual breakdown of the capitalist system ...

"In case I should not live to finish this autobiography, here is a short indication of the successive stages of our conversion to the Marxian theory of the historical development of profit-making capitalism." (Beatrice Webb, *Our Partnership* (Postscript), 1948.)

further development of capitalism in the early twentieth century, which were not present when Marx wrote *Capital* in 1867, and which required new theoretical treatment to carry forward the analysis of Marx to modern conditions. Such renewal is always necessary. Marxism is no dead dogma, but a living creative theory, whose strength is precisely the capacity to grapple with the new facts of the ever changing real world. Lenin accomplished this task for the new era of the first decade and half of the twentieth century in his *Imperialism*. In this work he showed the method of Marxism to understand and master new facts, neither by throwing the theory of Marxism overboard, nor by repeating mechanically old formulas as eternally sufficient, but by analysing the new facts in the light of Marxist theory and thereby drawing the necessary conclusions for the action of the working class and socialist movement. By the twentieth century capitalism had developed, through the further fulfilment of the laws of motion of capitalism laid bare by Marx, through the further process of concentration and centralisation, from the old nineteenth century free trade capitalism to monopoly capitalism. A handful of monopoly capitalist powers had partitioned the world, and on this basis were at the same ruthlessly exploiting the colonial peoples, the majority of mankind, and using a fragment of the spoils to corrupt an upper section of the working-class movement in the imperialist metropolitan countries. With the continuous accumulation and drive to expansion beating against the barriers of an already divided world, the imperialist powers were advancing to a new gigantic war for the redivision of the world. The class struggle and real contradictions were thus deepening, despite the show of reforms in the metropolitan countries. The era opening out was one of wars and revolutions.

Revisionism pursued the opposite method. Faced with the new facts of contemporary capitalism, Revisionism did not attempt to use the master tool of Marxist theory. Instead, Revisionism in practice threw Marxist theory overboard, and declared it out of date and disproved by the facts of the modern world. Revisionism challenged the labour theory of value; alleged that capital was not becoming more concentrated, as Marx had expected, but was becoming more widely spread; that contradictions and crises were diminishing; and that in consequence the goal of socialism had lost significance, and that the real task was to win continuously expanding reforms within the capitalist framework ("the goal is nothing; the movement is everything"). Thus Revisionism, under cover of a ceremonial obeisance to Marxism as a kind of antiquated tribal shibboleth, in practice repudiated all its essential teachings, and substituted—of course as the supposedly most "modern" wisdom of "new thinking"—the most antiquated and exploded liberal-reformist illusions.

6. MILLERANDISM

The battle within the Second International against the trends which eventually received articulate expression as Revisionism first developed, not around the theory of Bernstein which was still in process of formation, initially in a memorandum to the party congress in the latter part of 1898, but on the question of the participation of a socialist in a capitalist coalition government. This arose over the Dreyfus affair in France. The anti-democratic offensive of French reaction, anticipating some of the later characteristics of fascism, with the military caste as its spearhead and the vilest anti-semitism as its technique of propaganda, concentrated its attack on a Jewish military officer, Dreyfus, and by false evidence secured his conviction for treason. All democratic and progressive opinion in France and internationally fought against this infamous sentence, exposed the lies and forgeries on which it was based, thereby exposing the whole bloc of militarist and clerical reaction and its backers in the state apparatus, and eventually secured his release and by 1906 the quashing of the false charges. Many of the most distinguished progressive democratic representatives and writers in France, like Zola and Anatole France, took a foremost part in this fight.

It is evident that around this issue had developed a critical fight for democracy against the anti-democratic offensive of clerical-militarist reaction, of vital concern to the working class. Hence the interests of the working class manifestly required the most active vanguard role in cooperation with the broadest common front of all democratic forces on this issue, while at the same time maintaining the independence of the working class in order not to become the prisoner of bourgeois-liberal democracy. This type of tactical problem

later became familiar in the experience of the popular front against fascism. But the response at that time in the ranks of the socialist movement in France (which was divided into different parties prior to the unification in 1905) revealed the difficulties at that stage of the movement in attempting to solve the problem. On the one hand, Guesde, who was regarded as the leader of the Marxist section, adopted the type of wooden dummy attitude which so often caricatured Marxism in a number of Western countries during this period, and declared that the issue was only a quarrel between rival sections of the capitalist class and of no concern to the working class. On the other hand, Jaurès, who had come over from his liberal beginnings to socialism, and whose group of some thirty Radical deputies had been admitted into the Second International in 1894, threw all his passionate fervour into the united democratic fight; and, arising from this situation, a member of his group, Millerand, entered the Waldeck-Rousseau Cabinet in 1899—a Cabinet which also included Gallifet, the notorious butcher of the working-class heroes of the Commune. The police of Gallifet were presently engaged in the customary pursuit of shooting strikers.

A storm of controversy over "Millerandism" followed in the 1900 Congress of the Second International in Paris. Guesde upheld the principle of absolute rejection of socialist participation in capitalist governments. Jaurès defended the action of Millerand, and presented the case for participation, not only as necessary for the defence of democracy, but as a step on the path to socialism.

Finally a compromise resolution, formulated by Kautsky and moved by Vandervelde, was adopted by twenty-nine votes to nine. This resolution declared that the question of entry was a question of tactics and not of principle, but that a socialist should only enter a capitalist Ministry with the united approval of his party (Millerand had not consulted his party before entering), and should resign if the Ministry supported capital in an industrial dispute between capital and labour.

> "The entry of a single Socialist into a bourgeois Ministry cannot be regarded as the normal beginning for winning political power; it can never be anything but a temporary and exceptional makeshift in an emergency situation. Whether in any given instance such an emergency situation exists is a question of tactics and not of principle. The Congress does not have to decide that."

This resolution became known as "the indiarubber resolution"—that is, capable of being stretched in any direction desired. It represented the first major demonstration of the role of what became later known as the "Marxist Centre", represented by Kautsky, which combined the abstract form of a Marxist theoretical analysis with a practical evasion of the issue, thus in practice leaving the door open to the Right-Wing. Hence in its real significance it represented a victory for the emergent trend to the right (Jaurès and the Right rallied behind the resolution of Kautsky) and a defeat for the Left. The example of "socialists" hiving off to join Liberal Cabinets became a familiar feature of the ensuing period in France and Britain, with the role of Briand and Viviani in France or John Burns in Britain.

7. BERNSTEIN, KAUTSKY AND BOLSHEVISM

By the time of the Amsterdam Congress in 1904 the full theoretical debate on Revisionism or "Bernsteinism" was the centre of attention. At the Dresden Congress of the German Social-Democratic Party Bebel and Kautsky led the fight for the adoption of a resolution which explicitly condemned Revisionism:

> "The Congress most decisively condemns the Revisionist endeavours to change our hitherto consistently maintained and victorious tactics based on the class struggle. The Revisionists seek to replace the conquest of political power through the defeat of our opponents by a policy of meeting the existing order of things halfway. The consequences of such Revisionist tactics would be to transform our party from one working for the speediest possible transformation of the existing bourgeois order of society into a socialist order, that is a *revolutionary* party in the best sense of the word, into a party satisfied with merely reforming bourgeois society."

This resolution was carried by an overwhelming majority. Revisionism as a theory was thus routed and rejected. But the developing trends in practice continued and increased during the ensuing years. For the practical conclusion of the

resolution was not drawn. In the name of party unity the Revisionists were left free to continue to operate within the party. The proposal of Rosa Luxemburg for the exclusion of the Revisionists was opposed by Bebel and Kautsky and rejected.

In the same year as the Dresden Congress of German Social-Democracy took place the Second Congress of the Russian Social-Democratic Party. At this Congress the battle for revolutionary Marxism against the varied forms of Revisionism was not only fought and won on the theoretical field, but was carried to its practical conclusion. Bolshevism, representing revolutionary Marxism both in theory and in organisation, and led by Lenin, emerged as a separate trend organisationally distinct from Menshevism, and within a few years taking on the full character of a separate party. The split from reformism, which was never accomplished in the pre-1914 era in Western Social-Democracy, was accomplished in time in Russian Social-Democracy, and proved the indispensable basis for the victory of the socialist revolution.

At the Amsterdam Congress of the Second International in 1904 the battle against Revisionism was the centre of the agenda. The Dresden resolution was presented on behalf of German Social-Democracy and won general support from all sections of Marxism, equally from the Marxist Centre and the Marxist Left. The protagonists in the debate were Bebel and Jaurès. Jaurès met the charge of reformism with the claim that French Socialism had maintained the democratic republic and secular state, whereas German Social-Democracy, for all its claims to Marxist theoretical perfection and electoral successes, was hopelessly passive and helpless in an impotent Reichstag to end the autocracy of the Kaiser. Bebel, fresh from the German Social-Democratic electoral victory of 1903, winning 24 per cent of the votes, retorted that the French Republic was owed, not to the efforts of French Socialists and Republicans, but to Bismarck; and he indicted the French Republic for its failure to provide the French workers with social insurance or labour protective laws such as they had won in Germany, its taxation system with no honest income tax and resting on heavy indirect taxes on the workers' food, and its use of troops to suppress strikes and shoot down the strikers' leaders. In this confrontation of the

opposing outlooks of the leadership of the two major parties of Western Social-Democracy at that time (not so entirely opposing as might appear on the surface, for each was objectively proclaiming the positive features of "their own" state —the path which was to lead later to identification of their parties with it in the war) could be sensed already the overtones of the approach of 1914. The year 1904 was also the year of the formation of the Anglo-French Entente against the Triple Alliance of Germany, Austria-Hungary and Italy.

A compromise amendment omitting the explicit rejection of Revisionism was moved by Adler for Austria and Vandervelde for Belgium. This amendment won twenty-one votes against twenty-one, and thus fell to the ground. The Dresden resolution was finally adopted by twenty-five to five, with twelve abstentions.

Revisionism was thus condemned in theory and Marxism upheld by the International Socialist Congress. But the Revisionist trends in practice continued to extend in the majority of Social-Democratic Parties between 1904 and 1914. The victory of Marxism against Revisionism had been won by the combined strength of two distinct trends among the supporters of Marxism, whose difference was beginning to become apparent. The Marxist Centre, represented by Kautsky, fought for Marxist theory against Revisionism, but in the name of the supreme principle of party unity sought to find compromises in practice, and for this purpose tended increasingly to look for formulas which combined formal adherence to Marxist theory with loopholes for evasion in practice. The Marxist Left, represented consistently by Lenin and the Bolsheviks, and also to some extent, though less consistently and clearly, by Rosa Luxemburg and the Left in German Social-Democracy and other parties, fought alongside the Centre against revisionism, but combated the compromising trends, and in the case of Lenin and the Bolsheviks, recognised the necessity of a split with the reformists.

This division of trends among the anti-Revisionist supporters of Marxism was revealed when the Amsterdam Congress carried a resolution for a single socialist party in each country, and on this basis the International Socialist Bureau proposed to set up an arbitration commission under Bebel to solve the division between Bolsheviks and Mensheviks in the

Russian party. The Mensheviks accepted this proposal and nominated Kautsky and Klara Zetkin as their representatives. Lenin refused such intervention, declaring that this issue of principle could only be settled by a party congress. This attitude met with criticism also from representatives of the Left in other parties. Kautsky proclaimed that in this division his sympathies were with the Mensheviks, while Rosa Luxemburg came out against Lenin and the Bolsheviks. Among the general body of Social-Democracy at that time, also among the Left, there was no understanding yet of the principles of Bolshevism, which were eventually to prove the salvation of the international socialist movement in the coming ordeal.

8. OPENING OF THE ERA OF REVOLUTION

The main thesis of Revisionism had been to declare that the contradictions of contemporary capitalism in the twentieth century were growing less, and that consequently the old conceptions of class struggle and revolution were out of date. Scarcely had the grand debate of the Amsterdam Congress in 1904 routed Revisionism on the theoretical field than the Russian Revolution of 1905 proved the true character of the modern era in practice.

Already in 1900, in moving the resolution against militarism at the Paris Congress of the Second International, Rosa Luxemburg had offered the prediction:

> "It is becoming ever more probable that the downfall of the capitalist order will arise, not from an economic crisis, but from a political crisis brought about by world politics."

Lenin, writing in 1913 on "The Historical Destiny of the Doctrine of Karl Marx", defined three main periods of world history since the publication of the *Communist Manifesto* in 1848:

> "Subsequent world history clearly falls into three main periods: 1) from the Revolution of 1848 to the Paris Commune (1871); 2) from the Paris Commune to the Russian Revolution (1905); 3) since the Russian Revolution."

He concluded with a prediction which was soon to receive its powerful fulfilment:

> "Each of the three great periods of world history since the appearance of Marxism has brought Marxism new confirmation and new triumphs. But a still greater triumph awaits Marxism, as the doctrine of the proletariat, in the period of history that is now ensuing."

The Russian Revolution of 1905 was the opening of the modern revolutionary era. The upsurge of the whole population of a leading imperialist power, the formation of Soviets, the political general strike and the armed insurrection in Moscow opened new vistas before the international socialist movement. Here the role of the different classes and parties, and, above all, the rival tactics of Bolshevism and Menshevism were tried and tested on the anvil of revolution. 1905 was, in the words of Lenin, the "dress rehearsal" for the victorious socialist revolution of 1917.

The effects of the Russian Revolution of 1905 echoed round the world. Its influence sparked the Persian, Turkish and Chinese revolutions. In India it gave rise to the first mass movement under the banner of the boycott, stirring the hitherto placid waters of the Congress and splitting the "Extremists" from the "Moderates". In Austria the entire working class came out in a political general strike in October, 1905, organised by the Social-Democratic Party for the demand of universal suffrage; barricades went up in Prague; and when universal suffrage was finally conceded by the beginning of 1907, Social-Democratic representation increased from eleven to eighty-seven seats in parliament, with over a million votes. In Britain Toryism went down, after twenty years of rule, in the biggest landslide of its history, and the Labour Party emerged as a parliamentary force with thirty seats. It is true that almost all these seats were given to Labour by the Liberal Party on the basis of a secret pact between Ramsay MacDonald and the Liberal Chief Whip; but the emergence of Labour as a parliamentary force was recognised as a political phenomenon in the conditions of Britain, where a political labour movement had previously been declared impossible; and the shrewd old Tory leader, A. J. Balfour, noted that his emergence of Labour was a reflection of the Russian Revolution.

In 1908 the Labour Party was admitted into the Second International on the basis of a resolution drafted by Kautsky which declared that "the British Labour Party be admitted to International Socialist Congresses, because while

not expressly accepting the proletarian class struggle, in practice the Labour Party conducts this struggle and adopts its standpoint, inasmuch as the Party is organised independently of the bourgeois parties". Lenin presented an amendment to substitute the words "because it represents the first step on the part of the really proletarian organisations of Britain towards a conscious class policy and towards a socialist workers' Party". The confusion, and even element of double-dealing, arising from Kautsky's inadequate formulation was demonstrated when it was discovered that, while the German text of Kautsky declared that the Labour Party "adopts the standpoint of the class struggle", the English version published in Ramsay MacDonald's *Labour Leader*, presented this as "adopts the position of international socialism".

Following the Revolution of 1905, the question of the political mass strike dominated discussion in Social-Democratic circles. The Marxist Left, represented by Rosa Luxemburg and Liebknecht, conducted ardent propaganda for this revolutionary strategic conception. The right-wing, now strongly entrenched in the leadership of the trade unions in Germany, opposed. The Centre, represented by Bebel and Kautsky, took the halfway line which was adopted at the Jena Congress of the German Social-Democratic Party in September, 1905, recognising the general strike as a legitimate defensive weapon of the working class in the event of an attack on universal suffrage or the rights of working-class organisation. Subsequently at Mannheim in 1906 an agreement was reached between the Social-Democratic Central Committee and the Central Commission of the trade unions not to raise further the question of the general strike. This was in practice a capitulation to the increasingly right-wing trends of the trade union leadership. As a result of this slide to the right on the part of the centrist social-democratic leadership, the general strike became in the subsequent period up to 1914 increasingly a slogan of anarcho-syndicalism, and presented as a supposed revolutionary alternative to political action.

9. SECOND INTERNATIONAL AND COLONIALISM

At the same time other major political questions, reflecting the further advance of imperialism, colonialism and the drive

to war, came to dominate the discussions of international social-democracy during the years between 1905 and 1914.

Colonialism was in the forefront of the agenda at the Stuttgart Congress in 1907. Already at the Paris Congress in 1900 a resolution had been unanimously adopted calling on the parties to fight by every means the colonial expansionist policies of the capitalist powers and to assist the formation of socialist parties in the colonial and semi-colonial countries. This resolution was carried with unanimous enthusiasm at a time when the predatory South African war of British imperialism had aroused angry condemnation among all socialists. But within a few years the links of Revisionism with colonialism were to reveal themselves.

At the Stuttgart Congress in 1907 the majority of the Colonial Commission of the Congress, led by the Dutchman Van Kol, and supported by Bernstein, came out to denounce the negative anti-colonialism of previous Congresses and to advocate what they were pleased to call a "socialist colonial policy". This, it was explained, meant to recognise the historical inevitability of colonial empires, and to put forward concrete proposals for the improvement of the conditions of the natives and the development of the resources of the colonial territories for the benefit of the whole world. Against this surrender to colonialism, which was thus revealed as an integral part of the Revisionist offensive, the Marxists conducted the most vigorous fight, and, although in a minority on the Commission, won a majority in the full Congress by 127 votes to 108 for a resolution which condemned colonialism in uncompromising terms and exposed the hypocrisy of the supposed "civilising" mission:

> "Congress considers that capitalist colonial policy by its very essence leads to enslavement, forced labour and destruction of the native peoples in the colonial territories. The civilising mission proclaimed by capitalist society serves only as a cover for the greed for conquest and exploitation. Only socialist society will offer to all peoples the possibility to advance to full civilisation."

But it was significant that the minority view (majority on the Commission), proclaiming that "Congress does not on principle and for all time reject all colonial policy, which under a socialist regime can fulfil a civilising role", received so large

a vote. Even more significant was the line of division. The vote for a "socialist colonial policy" included the representatives of all the European colonial powers except Russia: that is, the majority in Britain[7] and France; and as a whole, Germany, Austria, Belgium, Holland, also Sweden and Denmark, and South Africa (a party of Whites only). The majority rejecting colonialism included Russia, Japan, the United States, and smaller European countries or those suffering national oppression. Here also could be seen ominous foreshadowings of 1914.

Closely linked in fact with the colonial issue was the major question which dominated the Stuttgart Congress and each succeeding Congress before 1914—the question of the fight against the ever more visibly threatening European war, and against militarism and the arms race, and the determination of the duty of international socialism in the event of war.

10. SOCIALISM AND WAR

From the outset the Congresses of the Second International were occupied with the problems of the fight against the menace of war, and against militarism and armaments. Within two years of the foundation of the Second International the Franco-Russian Alliance in 1891 foreshadowed the future war of 1914. The Congresses of 1891 and 1896 all carried resolutions for the fight against war and armaments. The resolution of the Zürich Congress in 1893 called on all socialist parliamentary representatives to vote against war credits, and adopted the demand for disarmament. Up to 1896 the anarchists were also represented in these Congresses, and from their side resolutions were moved for the general strike

[7] How completely the international socialist condemnation of colonialism was blandly dismissed as inapplicable to the British Empire by the British social imperialists was shown in the standard *History of Socialism* by Thomas Kirkup, revised by E. R. Pease, Secretary of the Fabian Society, in the edition published in 1913. Pease added in this edition a chapter on "The Modern International" in which he summarised the policy on colonialism as follows:

> "The majority at Congresses has without reserve condemned the system of establishing colonies in the tropics as merely an extension of the field of exploitation of the capitalist class. *This does not refer to the colonial system of England,* insofar as it consists in the development of self-governing communities; and the Congresses have perhaps hardly appreciated *the value to India of the peace, order and progress established there under British rule.*" (italics added).

Unflappable Mr. Fabian Pecksniff.

against war, as the supposed answer to the outbreak of war, but were rejected. This was the same proposal which had been adopted by the 1868 Congress of the First International, and whose illusory character had been exposed by Marx. Nevertheless, this proposal was still to have a long history (even after the First World War, in the mouths of reformists who had supported the imperialist war) as a supposedly "left" non-Marxist answer to the menace of war.

The Paris Congress in 1900 adopted a resolution, moved by Rosa Luxemburg, against militarism and colonialism, which exposed the roots of these and of war in capitalism, and set concrete tasks for the fight: first, to vote against all military and naval estimates or colonial expenditure; second, to train the youth in anti-militarism; third, for simultaneous demonstrations in all countries in the event of an international crisis developing. The resolution for the general strike against war was moved in a flamboyant speech by Aristide Briand, who was soon after to become notorious as an anti-socialist Prime Minister using troops against the workers; was opposed by the leader of the German trade unions, Legien, and was remitted for further study.

The Amsterdam Congress in 1904 took place in the midst of the Russo-Japanese war. A historic demonstration of international working-class solidarity against war was accomplished at this Congress when Plekhanov at the head of the Russian delegation and Sen Katayama at the head of the Japanese delegation joined hands in comradeship amid the applause of the entire Congress. Although Plekhanov failed ten years later, Katayama remained faithful to his pledges and became a member of the Executive Committee of the Communist International.

By the time of the Stuttgart Congress in 1907 the menace of a European war hung over the international situation. The crisis over Morocco in 1905, when the Kaiser made his demonstrative visit to Tangier and the French Foreign Minister, Delcassé, boasted that he had pledges of British military support, showed that the Anglo-French "Entente Cordiale" (which Jaurès had fulsomely praised as a burial of old enmities and a pledge of peace) was already a military alliance against Germany. The new Liberal Asquith-Grey-Haldane combination, entering office in January, 1906, after

the anti-Tory landslide, took over the military alliance inherited from the Tories and authorised Anglo-French military staff consultations without informing the rest of the Cabinet, still less parliament or the nation. The Anglo-German conflict, open since the German Navy Law of 1900 challenging British naval supremacy, now dominated the international situation. By 1907 the negotiation of the Anglo-Russian Treaty was completing the formation of the Triple Entente to confront the Triple Alliance. The outlines of the approaching war of 1914 were inescapable to all who followed international affairs.

Hence the question of war dominated the Stuttgart Congress. The debate and the four resolutions which were submitted revealed the extreme confusion of approach and uncertainty of the future course of action. Bebel for the German party presented the basic Marxist resolution, which provided the main text for the final resolution. This draft analysed in correct Marxist terms the inseparable connection of capitalism and war; the task of the working class to fight against war and armaments, and to refuse all financial support for such purposes; and to organise defence on a democratic basis by the substitution of a people's militia for standing armies. The draft called for all forms of working-class pressure and activity, allowing for "differences of national conditions, time and place", to avert threats of war and demand arbitration and disarmament. What to do in the event of the outbreak of war was less clear. The draft called on the parties to seek "to prevent its outbreak by using the means which seemed to them most effective, and, should it break out despite their efforts, to bring it rapidly to an end".

The resolution submitted by Jaurès and Vaillant for the French majority called for the use of all means, including the general strike and insurrection, in the fight against war, and simultaneously affirmed the duty of socialists to participate in national defence against aggression.

The resolution submitted by Guesde for the French minority offered the customary caricature of "Marxism" by declaring opposition to any special campaign against militarism, since militarism was only the product of capitalism, and that therefore campaigning against militarism or for peace would be a diversion from the essential task to destroy capitalism. At the end the generally accepted immediate measures, to vote

against military credits, for the shortening of the period of military service, and for the replacement of standing armies by a people's militia were included.

The fourth resolution, submitted by Hervé, repudiated "bourgeois and governmental patriotism", denounced all wars except for the establishment or maintenance of communism, and called on the working class to respond to any declaration of war by a military strike and insurrection. When the test of 1914 arrived, Hervé became a violent chauvinist.

Thus the inadequacy of the alternatives proposed was revealed, and was further underlined in the highly polemical exchanges of the debate. First, verbal Marxism, with a correct theoretical analysis, but extreme vagueness on the question of action. Second, national defencism, served with a flourish of revolutionary phrases. Third, ossified Marxism, ending in passivity. Fourth, the ultra-revolutionary phrase, meaning in practice nothing.

In this difficult situation which, alongside the universal intense emotional feeling against war, already in 1907 revealed the danger of bankruptcy in practice when the testing time should come, Lenin, in association with Rosa Luxemburg, came to the rescue. A sub-commission had been appointed to work over the four drafts and prepare an agreed resolution. Rosa Luxemburg was on this sub-commission. Lenin, in association with her, prepared certain amendments, which were also signed by Martov for the Mensheviks, to be moved on behalf of the Russian and Polish delegations. These amendments, while adapted to the general text of Bebel's resolution, despite its weaknesses, clarified and strengthened it in certain key passages, and at the end replaced the very vague final formulation with regard to practical action in Bebel's text by two sentences which set out an inescapably plain and clear directive of action for the entire international socialist movement in relation to the threatening European war. These two sentences, whose realist clarity (despite certain verbal softening insisted on by the German delegation for police reasons) bore all the unmistakable hallmark of Lenin's drafting, became the most famous decision of the Second International, known thereafter to all international socialists as their marching orders in the event of the onset of the impending European war. The two sentences ran:

> "If a war threatens to break out, it is the duty of the working class and of its parliamentary representatives in the countries involved to exert every effort to prevent the outbreak of war, using all the appropriate means, which naturally vary and rise according to the degree of sharpening of the class struggle and of the general political agitation.
>
> "Should war none the less break out, it is their duty to intervene to bring it promptly to an end, and to strive with all their energies to utilise the economic and political crisis brought about by the war in order to stir up politically the masses of the people and hasten the downfall of capitalist class rule."

The preamble of the resolution made clear that the reference was to "wars between capitalist states".

The resolution as amended, with the final Lenin-Luxemburg conclusion, was carried unanimously amid enthusiasm. It was confirmed and adopted anew, including the final section, at the subsequent Congresses at Copenhagen in 1910 and Basle in 1912. But this unanimity meant that the real divergences revealed in the debate, especially with regard to the question of national defence in an imperialist war, were never brought to an issue and cleared by a vote. The right-wing opportunists and revisionists, who by no means shared the viewpoint of the revolutionary Marxist formulation set out in the amended resolution, preferred to vote for it rather than challenge a division. Thus the policy of the International was in fact laid down and pledged by every party (also by the Labour Party at Copenhagen and Basle). But the real divergences were buried out of sight, only to burst out the more violently when the test of practice came.

At the Copenhagen Congress in 1910 the anti-war resolution, alongside a number of general peace proposals, repeated the operative last two sentences of the Stuttgart resolution. The familiar formula of the "general strike of workers, especially in the industries which supply the instruments of war" as the "particularly effective" method to "prevent and hinder war" was moved on behalf of the Labour Party and Independent Labour Party by Keir Hardie and on behalf of the French Socialist Party by Vaillant. The commission defeated this amendment by 119 to 58, and with the agreement of the movers the proposal was remitted for further study.

The years 1910-1914 saw a rapid acceleration of the advance towards the coming European war, at the same time as a rising tempo of working-class militancy and even semi-revolutionary struggle in many countries.

1911 was the year of the Agadir crisis which already brought the confrontation of the Triple Alliance and the Triple Entente close to the point of war, when the Kaiser sent a warship to Agadir to stake out his claims against France over Morocco, and when Lloyd George in his Mansion House speech gave the first public warning of the military alignment of Britain with France and Russia against Germany, and also of his own future war role. In the same year Italy went to war with Turkey for the conquest of Tripoli. The First Balkan War in 1912 and the Second Balkan War in 1913 were recognised on all sides as the prelude to the European War.

The Socialist Parties of Italy and of the Balkan countries stood by their internationalist pledges in their opposition to these wars.

Parallel with this headlong advance of imperialism towards general war the militancy of the working class soared to new heights in all countries. These years saw the great strike movement in Britain and the formation of the Triple Alliance of miners, railwaymen and transport workers with its implicit challenge to the capitalist state; in France the stormy struggles led by the C.G.T. (General Confederation of Labour) under strong influence of revolutionary syndicalist doctrines; in the United States the mass upsurge of the most exploited sections associated with the I.W.W. (Industrial Workers of the World). The German Social-Democratic Party won in the 1912 elections the record total of 4,250,000 votes, or 34.8 per cent of the total poll, with an increase of their representation from 43 seats to 110 in the Reichstag of 397 members. In Italy, Spain and Austria mass struggles led to clashes with the armed forces of the state. In Russia the Lena goldfields strike of 1912 opened a new revolutionary wave, which had reached a point by the eve of the war of 1914 when barricades were up in St. Petersburg.

It was in this developing situation that a special International Socialist Congress was held at Basle in 1912 for

the sole purpose of confronting the menace of the general European War, now visibly close after the First Balkan War.

The Manifesto of the Basle Congress analysed with precision the impending menace of a European war arising from an Austro-Serbian dispute, and emphasised the special responsibility of the working-class movement in Germany, France and Britain to prevent the "criminal madness" of "a war between the three great leading civilised peoples because of the Serbo-Austrian dispute". The Basle Manifesto reaffirmed the famous two sentences of the explicit revolutionary instructions in the event of the menace of outbreak of war, and during an imperialist war if the efforts to prevent it should fail, as already adopted in 1907 and 1910. The text of the Manifesto made still more explicit the revolutionary meaning of these instructions by recalling concrete historical examples of such action:

> "Let the governments not forget that, with the present situation of Europe and temper of the working class, they cannot unloose a war without danger to themselves. Let them remember that the Franco-German war was followed by the revolutionary outbreak of the Commune, and that the Russo-Japanese war set in motion the revolutionary forces of the peoples of the Russian Empire."

Nevertheless, this threat of revolution was simultaneously regarded as a guarantee of peace rather than as a call to action:

> "The fear of the ruling classes of a proletarian revolution as the sequel of a world war has proved to be a real guarantee of peace."

This optimistic sentiment failed to take into account the reverse truth that the fear of the ruling classes of the already developing revolutionary situation in Europe on the eve of 1914 had its influence in accelerating their decision to plunge into the desperate alternative of war as a supposed solution—a temporary solution, as it proved, in the short run, by setting the workers to mutual slaughter and submerging the Socialist International in a wave of chauvinist frenzy, but in the end none the less bringing the outcome of the opening of the world socialist revolution.

The words of the Basle Manifesto thus did in fact express the plainest pledge and call, unanimously adopted by all the

parties of the old Socialist International (including the Labour Party) for revolutionary action against the war and directed to the aim of the overthrow of capitalism, in the event of the outbreak of the impending imperialist world war of 1914, whose character was precisely and accurately described.

Nevertheless, the real situation within the majority of the leading parties and their leadership was far from corresponding to the words. The Basle Congress itself took on the character of a deeply emotional demonstration for peace rather than of a Congress for the preparation of action in the event of war. The delegates marched in procession to the Cathedral, by the invitation of the church authorities, and to the sound of the cathedral bells, to demonstrate for peace, headed by children robed in white and waving palm branches and mottos "It is more honourable to dry your tears than to shed streams of blood", while on a flower-wreathed waggonette a white-clad Queen of Peace was heralded by the emblem (drawn from the book of the famous pacifist authoress Bertha von Suttner) "Lay down your arms".

In the parliamentary political situation in the leading Western European countries, and in the upper ranks of the leadership of the labour movement in these countries, the opportunist trends, which had already been strongly visible in practice at the time of the controversy over revisionism, despite the rejection of the latter in theory, became still more entrenched, entered into conflict with the militancy of the working class, and even began to become entangled in the arms race and the preparation of the war. Opportunism was sliding towards chauvinism. In Britain the Labour Party, while maintaining criticism of the diplomacy of the Foreign Secretary Grey during the Liberal Government of 1906-1914, and of the increase of arms expenditure, was simultaneously in increasingly close unofficial coalition behind the Liberal Government of Asquith, Grey and Haldane, which was preparing the war. The Labour Party enthusiastically supported the "People's Budget" of Lloyd George which, under cover of taxing the rich and providing for some social reforms, was in fact at the same time—as Lloyd George later boasted—providing the cash for the vast expansion of the Navy. Blatchford and Hyndman, who had been the popularisers of socialist ideas, joined in the Big Navy agitation engineered by the

Tories. In 1913 the German Social-Democratic Party (by a close majority of eight in the parliamentary group) voted for the Military Taxation Bill, on the grounds that the bill placed the burden on the rich by direct taxation to provide for the vast increase in arms expenditure.

Thus the signs of the impending collapse of 1914 were not lacking beforehand.

The next Congress of the Socialist International was due to be held in Vienna in August, 1914. However, in August 1914, other business came on to the agenda of history and brought to an inglorious end the old Second International.

11. ACHIEVEMENT AND WEAKNESSES OF THE SECOND INTERNATIONAL

During the quarter of a century of its existence the positive achievement of the Second International found expression in the growth of an organised mass socialist movement, on the general basis of Marxist theory, in all European capitalist countries, and with parties affiliated also in the United States, Canada, Japan, the Argentine, South Africa (whites only) and Australia.

In contrast to the relatively limited groupings of the sections of the First International, the Social-Democratic Parties of the Second International comprised an aggregate membership of some four millions, with an aggregate parliamentary vote of twelve millions. The largest parties were the British Labour Party with over one and a half million affiliated members, and the German Social-Democratic Party with over one million individual members. Closely associated were the trade unions in these countries with over twelve million trade unionists affiliated to the International Federation of Trade Unions. The cooperative movement in the various countries had usually close associations with the social-democratic and trade union movement. There was also linked with the Second International a Women's International Council of Socialist and Labour Organisations, holding its own international conferences, with Klara Zetkin as Secretary, and a similar organisation for youth, with Willi Münzenberg as Secretary.

In contrast also to the pioneering battles of Marxism in the First International to establish recognition as the theory and outlook and tactical guide of the working-class movement,

and to defeat the openly opposing trends of the petty-bourgeois theories of Proudhon, anarchism or liberal trade unionism, Marxism in the Second International—after the early settling of accounts with anarchism—was in principle recognised by all the parties except the Labour Party as the accepted governing theory, even though under the mantle of that theoretical acceptance the majority practice moved increasingly in an opportunist direction. Nevertheless, under the aegis of the Second International a far-reaching work of education, propaganda and agitation in a socialist spirit and extending the influence of Marxism was conducted among the working class of the European countries and some countries outside Europe. This work, strengthened by the tireless fight of the left wing for revolutionary Marxism, helped to train a whole generation of cadres of the militant working-class movement, who were later to form the Communist Parties.

Thus the epoch of the Second International corresponded to the mainly peaceful legal development of the working-class movement in the leading European countries after the downfall of the Commune and up to 1914. Lenin showed (in the "Answer of the Communist International to the I.L.P." in 1920, drafted by Lenin) how the leadership of Marx and Engels in the second half of the nineteenth century pointed to this necessary task of preparatory work for future revolutionary struggles, to organising work, to the daily struggle, to mass work, to the building of legal parties and trade unions:

> "When after the failure of the revolution of '48 capitalism entered upon a period of further development, spreading and gaining new strength every day; when the idea of the direct seizure of power proved erroneous; Marx and Engels, boldly confronting the facts, indicated a method of preparing the working class for its future decisive revolutionary battles for power.
>
> "They pointed out to the working class that capitalism affords it the possibility of organisation and union, that it gives the advanced section of the working class the possibility of exercising its influence upon the backward sections, infusing into them the consciousness of class solidarity of all the oppressed; they demanded from the class-conscious workers that they should, without waiting

for the final and decisive battle, utilise every possibility which had been forced from the capitalists for the establishment of legal open Workers' Parties and for the organisation of Trade Unions, being guided by the principle that the working class will be able to utilise every capitalist crisis with the greater facility the greater its unity, organisations and class consciousness will be.

"They called upon the workers to fight for universal suffrage and democracy, in order that the masses might be able from the parliamentary tribune to tear the mask from every capitalist deceit, proving to the workers how every kind of transaction between the various sections of capitalism is made at the expense of the working class. They called upon the workers to make use of the conflicts arising between the various sections of the capitalist class in order to secure economic and social reforms which would tend to ameliorate the position of the working class, to strengthen it and afford it an opportunity of making progress in its struggle against capitalism.

"They called upon the working masses directly to take part in politics and to exercise direct pressure upon the bourgeoisie. They appealed to the working class never to forget that all this struggle for democracy, that all this struggle for reform, is only preparatory work whose aim is to strengthen the organisation and class-consciousness of the workers, and to prepare them for the epoch of decisive battles with capitalism."

But Lenin further showed in this same analysis how this guiding line of Marx and Engels in the second half of the nineteenth century for the necessary preparatory task of building up organisation and developing class-consciousness through partial struggles and the fight for democracy and economic and social reforms became misunderstood and distorted and falsified under the conditions of capitalist corruption in the imperialist period to opportunism:

"In the long process of the peaceful development of capitalism, the object of this preliminary struggle, of this organising period of struggle, was forgotten, the aim having become in the eyes of most of the leaders of the working class, and of a considerable number of the workers themselves, largely an aim in itself instead of a means."

From this arose the fundamental weaknesses of the Second International which led finally to its collapse in 1914.

First, the theoretical weakness. Despite the formal acceptance of Marxist theory, this acceptance took on increasingly the character of a verbal or formal acceptance, again and again evading rather than grappling with the real problems, smoothing over controversies under cover of ambiguous formulas (the notorious "indiarubber resolutions"), and thus peacefully co-existing with and even condoning opportunism in practice. Opportunism especially dominated the leading sections, parliamentary representatives and trade union official circles. The revolutionary Marxist Left conducted an active and tireless struggle, led by Lenin, Rosa Luxemburg and Karl Liebknecht, and often achieved important positive results, as in the famous Stuttgart-Copenhagen-Basle resolution—the most famous resolution of the Second International—on the task of socialists in relation to the impending European war. The clearest and most consistent expression of the Marxist Left in the Second International was represented by Bolshevism, which alone among the leading parties had broken also organisationally with opportunism in Russia, and was under constant pressure from the dominant leadership of the Second International, represented by Kautsky and Vandervelde (also supported by Trotsky and Rosa Luxemburg) to re-unite. Among the majority of the Left in the Second International there was not yet understanding of Bolshevism; the principle of maintaining party unity was in general regarded as paramount. The Marxist Centre, as it came to be called, led by Kautsky, occupied the dominant theoretical position in the Second International. The Marxist Centre fought sometimes alongside the Left to uphold the general principles of Marxism against the offensive of Revisionism, but in practice, in the name of unity cooperated with the Right-Wing, and thus sank more and more into the position of providing a "Marxist" façade for opportunism in practice.

The second main weakness of the Second International, corresponding to this political weakness, was in the sphere of organisation. Here there was a complete falling away from the principles of the First International. The General Council of the First International was a central international leadership of the working class, democratically elected, exercising

authority over national sections, and giving continuous leadership, not only on broad questions of principle hammered out at Congress or in the Council debates, but in the active struggles of the working class in the various countries and in the direct organisation of working class solidarity.

During the first eleven years of its existence the Second International was constituted only by the Congresses, without any organised centre of any kind. In 1900 the International Socialist Bureau was set up in Brussels, with a full-time secretary, and providing for a quarterly meeting of delegates from the affiliated sections. In practice the meetings of the Bureau tended to be annual. In the intervals the Belgian section provided an Executive of three members alongside the Secretary. Neither the Executive nor the Bureau attempted to fulfil any role of international leadership, nor had they any authority over the national parties. The centre took on the character of what was described as a "post office", or a technical secretarial centre for preparing Congresses, recording and publishing the decisions and proceedings, or transmitting correspondence. At the most it attempted a moral intervention in favour of socialist unity, where there was a division of parties in one country. In practice such intervention was only pursued with vigour against Bolshevism; and one of the last acts of the International Socialist Bureau, which had never intervened against the menacing trends of opportunism and chauvinism in the various parties, was to issue, on the eve of its own collapse, a peremptory demand to Lenin and the Bolshevik Party to amalgamate unconditionally with the Mensheviks. Thus the principle of socialist internationalism found no corresponding expression in the organisation of the Second International, which was in practice, despite formal common acceptance of Marxism and working class internationalism, a loose debating association of separate national parties each pursuing its own path. Such a situation left free play for the advance of nationalist and opportunist trends, and prepared the way for the collapse of 1914.

The third main weakness of the Second International, corresponding to the general phase of development of the organised working class movement during this period, was a certain narrowness of its basis of organisation and outlook, in that it was mainly based on the organised working class

of the leading imperialist countries in Europe and North America, and especially reflected the outlook of the leadership of the labour aristocracy in the Western European countries. While strongly worded resolutions were carried against colonialism (although by diminishing majorities, and with a growing section openly supporting a so-called "socialist colonial policy"), the revolutionary significance of the national liberation struggle in the extra-European countries oppressed by imperialism was not yet seen. Describing this weakness, Stalin later wrote:

> "Formerly, the national question was usually confined to a small group of questions chiefly affecting 'cultural' nationalities. The Irish, the Hungarians, the Poles, the Finns, the Serbs and several other nationalities in Europe made up the list of disfranchised nations in whose destinies the heroes of the Second International were interested. The countless millions of Asiatic and African peoples who were suffering under the yoke of national oppression in its crudest and most horrible form usually remained outside of their field of vision. They could not make up their minds to put white and black, 'cultured' and 'uncultured', on the same plane. Two or three meaningless noncommittal resolutions, which carefully evaded the question of colonial emancipation, were all the leaders of the Second International could boast of. Such duplicity and half measures with regard to the national question must now be regarded as a thing of the past. Leninism laid bare this shocking incongruity, tore down the wall between whites and blacks, between European and Asiatics, between the 'cultured' and 'uncultured' slaves of imperialism, and thus linked the national question with the question of the colonies."
>
> (Stalin, *Foundations of Leninism*, 1924)

Any review of the Second International needs accordingly to take into account both its positive achievements and the serious negative features which led to its downfall. Lenin summed up the significance of the stage represented by the Second International, in the development of the three successive Internationals, when he said:

> "The First International laid the foundation of the proletarian international struggle for Socialism.

"The period of the Second International was a period of preparation of the soil for the broad, the mass spread of the movement in a number of countries.

"The Third International gathered the fruits of the work of the Second International, discarded its opportunist, social-chauvinist, bourgeois and petty-bourgeois dross, and *has begun to realise* the dictatorship of the proletariat."

(Lenin, *The Third International and Its Place in History*, 1919)

But before this transition from the Second to the Third International could be fulfilled, the working class and all the peoples of the world had to pass through the searing experience of the First World War.

CHAPTER V

THE FIRST WORLD WAR

"If these men must die, would it not be better to die in their own country fighting for freedom for their class, and for the abolition of war, rather than to go forth to strange countries and be slaughtering and slaughtered by their brothers that tyrants and profiteers may live."

(JAMES CONNOLLY in the Glasgow *Forward*, August 15, 1914)

Contrary to the conventional myth, the First World War did not come as a bolt from the blue. The general staffs had elaborately prepared and planned its outlines for a quarter of a century, ever since the Franco-Russian Alliance of 1891. The arms magnates and the journalists in their pay had used every device, including wholesale lies and forgeries, to exacerbate the arms race and pile up ever more monstrous (and profitable) weapons of destruction. The diplomats had toiled assiduously to construct the rival alliances whose mutual threats and successive crises finally blazed into war. The innermost political circles in each country knew all that was preparing, and consciously concealed it from the public. The Socialist International had given the most explicit warning of its approach, and two years before its outbreak had even precisely predicted its starting point from an Austro-Serbian dispute.

Only in the subsequent nostalgic memoirs of ivory-tower dons and Fabian utopian dreamers, looking back on the

Edwardian era as a golden afternoon, and blind to the cruel realities of imperialism, did the war of 1914 appear as a sudden and startling interruption of their dreams.

But the immediate conditions of the outbreak of the war in 1914, as commonly in major historical events, went beyond the calculations of any single set of schemers, and represented the cumulative and collective outcome of all their schemes rather than any single will. The further outcome completely defeated all their calculations.

International socialism alone correctly anticipated both the character and the consequences of the First World War.

1. MARXISM AND THE FIRST WORLD WAR

Already on September 9, 1870, in the Manifesto of the First International after the collapse of Napoleon III at Sedan and the formation of the French Republic, Marx had warned that if Bismarck and the "Prussian war camarilla" went forward with the plan for the forcible annexation of Alsace and Lorraine to Prussia, the outcome would be to throw France into the arms of Tsarism and lead to a new European war between Germany and a Franco-Russian Alliance.

In 1889, as the moves towards the fulfilment of this prediction were becoming increasingly evident, Engels wrote with alarm of the prospect of the impending general European war as "the most terrible contingency" which "fills me with horror", and emphasised the importance for the international socialist movement to make every effort to fight for peace:

> "As for war, this represents in my view the most terrible contingency.... A war in which there will be ten to fifteen million combatants, an unheard of devastation, universal violent suppression of our movement, the recrudescence of chauvinism in every country, and at the end an enfeeblement ten times worse than after 1815, a period of reaction based on the exhaustion of all the peoples bled white—all that against what slender hope there is that this ferocious war results in revolution—this is what horrifies me. Above all in relation to our movement in Germany, which would be overwhelmed, crushed, stamped out by violence, whereas peace holds out almost certain victory."
>
> (Engels, letter to Paul Lafargue, March 25, 1889)

This first and deeply human expression of Engels, voicing his horror at the prospect of the world war of 1914, even though it might bring revolution, and proclaiming peace to be the vital interest of the international socialist movement, is the damning answer to the enemy calumnies which still dare to assert that Marxism staked its calculations on world war as the most favourable path to revolution.

In 1890 Engels wrote in the Russian socialist organ *Social Democrat* published by Plekhanov and Axelrod in Geneva, in an article entitled "The Foreign Policy of Russian Tsarism", that a Russian revolution would immediately do away with the danger of a world war; but that if the change in Russia were long delayed, Europe would slip down with ever increasing speed into the abyss of a world war of unexampled violence and universality.

In 1891, following the conclusion of the Franco-Russian Alliance, Engels wrote in an article on "Socialism in Germany" for the *Almanach du Parti Ouvrier*, republished in the *Neue Zeit* in 1892:

> "Peace guarantees the victory of the German Social-Democratic Party in some ten years or so. War brings it either victory in two or three years or complete ruination for at least fifteen to twenty years. Consequently the German Socialists would be mad to desire war, whereby they would stake everything on a single card instead of awaiting the certain triumph of peace."

Socialists could not wish for the victory of either group of powers in the threatening war;

> "No Socialist, whatever his nationality, can desire the triumph in war either of the present German Government or of the French bourgeois republic and least of all of the Tsar which would be equivalent to the enslavement of Europe."

Hence the importance of the fight for peace. War could delay the revolution; but the ultimate outcome would be the victory of the socialist revolution:

> "Therefore the socialists in all countries are for peace. If nevertheless war comes, then one thing is certain. *This war, where fifteen and twenty million armed men would slaughter one another and lay waste Europe as never before, this war must either bring about the immediate*

victory of Socialism or so shatter the old order of things from top to bottom, and leave behind such a heap of ruins, that the old capitalist society will become more impossible than ever before, and the social revolution, though it might be set back for ten or fifteen years, would, however, in this case also have to conquer and in so much the more speedy and thorough fashion."

In 1893, continuing the fight for peace, Engels brought to the front the question of disarmament in a series of articles in *Vorwärts* in February and March, 1893, under the title *Can Europe Disarm?* Tackling the problem of the already then rapidly increasing arms race and scale of armaments, he pointed out the danger that, if peace should begin to appear as almost more costly than war, war might come to be regarded, not as a terrible scourge, but as a saving crisis to end an impossible situation. Since he wished to do all in his power to prevent the "general war of annihilation", he deliberately limited his proposals to immediate measures for disarmament by "the gradual diminution of the term of military service by international agreement" and the "gradual abolition of the regular army" as measures capable of realisation also in the existing society by capitalist governments:

"It is my intention to show that these changes are possible at this moment. They can be made by the existing governments and in the existing political situation. That is the basis of my position: I limit myself to such proposals as any existing government can accept without endangering the security of its country."

Anticipating the concrete conditions of the war which threatened, Engels had already made a remarkable prediction in 1888:

"How things will turn out when it comes to war it is impossible to foresee. Attempts will no doubt be made to make it a sham war, but that will not be easy. If things turn out as we would like it, and this is very probable, then it will be a war of positions with varied success on the French frontier; a war of attack leading to the capture of the Polish fortresses on the Russian frontier; and a revolution in Petersburg, which will at once make the gentlemen who are conducting the war see everything in an entirely different light. One thing is certain: there will be no more quick decisions and triumphal marches either to Berlin or Paris."

(Engels, letter to W. Liebknecht, February 23, 1888)

This generalised anticipation over a quarter of a century before the event received very striking confirmation in the war of 1914 and its outcome; the halt of the German advance on Paris at the Marne; the transition of the war in the West to a "war of positions" or trench warfare; the advance of the German armies in the East; and eventually the revolution in Petrograd transforming the whole situation.

2. COLLAPSE OF THE SECOND INTERNATIONAL

Basing itself on the general theory of Marxism, the Socialist International in the Basle resolution of 1912, reaffirming the previous Stuttgart and Copenhagen resolutions, had defined with very precise accuracy the character of the impending European war, the opposing alliances, the secret treaties, the criminal aims of all the capitalist powers, and even specifying the prospective immediate occasion of the war in "the Austro-Serbian dispute". The resolution thus left no room for subsequent excuse that the war which broke out in 1914 was in any essential respect different from that which had been anticipated, and with regard to which all the parties had unanimously pledged themselves to pursue a policy of uncompromising opposition.

The Basle resolution no less emphatically proclaimed the absolute hostility of the international working class to such a war, which it would be "a crime" to support:

"The proletarians consider it a crime to fire at each other for the benefit of the capitalists' profits, the ambitions of dynasties or the greater glory of secret diplomatic treaties."

Further, in the terms of the universally accepted Lenin-Luxemburg amendment, the Basle resolution laid down explicitly the task and duty of international socialists and of all socialist parties in the event of the outbreak of this war to fight to bring it to an end and to exert all their efforts to utilise the crisis brought about by the war in order to arouse the masses of the people for the overthrow of capitalism.

These pledges were unanimously endorsed by all the

affiliated parties of the Second International, including the British Labour Party, the German Social-Democratic Party and the French Socialist Party, as well as the Bolshevik Party.

When the test came in August, 1914, the majority leadership of the dominant parties in the countries of Western and Central Europe involved in the conflict repudiated their pledges in practice, and joined up with their respective Governments in calling on the workers to slaughter one another. Opportunism thus became open chauvinism and betrayal. This was the collapse of the Second International.

The last meeting of the International Socialist Bureau took place in Brussels on July 29, 1914. The resolution adopted on behalf of "the representatives of all nations threatened with a world war" called on the workers in every country to increase their pressure on their governments for peace, and, in particular, "the International Socialist Bureau congratulates the Russian workers on their revolutionary attitude". At a mass demonstration organised by the Bureau in Brussels on July 30, Jaurès, representing France, spoke:

> "For the absolute masters the ground is undermined. If in the mechanical seduction and intoxication of first struggles they succeed in luring the masses, just as typhoid will finish the work of the shells and as death and misery will aid in striking down men, so the masses, sobered down and come to their senses, will turn towards the directing Germans, French, Russian, Italians, and will ask what reasons they can give for all these corpses. And then revolution freed from its chains, will say to them:
>
> 'Away and seek pardon from God and man'."

This declaration was received with a prolonged ovation, as the entire audience rose, waved their hats and applauded for more than five minutes.

This was the last declaration, with its renewal of the threat of revolution as the outcome of war, of the old International Socialist Bureau. Jaurès was murdered in Paris by French reaction on July 31. Bebel, the veteran leader of German Social-Democracy, who had voted against the war credits and had been prosecuted for treason and sentenced to ten years in the Franco-German war, had died in 1913. The leaders who succeeded them in France and Germany rushed into support

of their war governments. Lenin, for Russia, and the Bolshevik Party stood firm.

In Britain as late as August 2 a Trafalgar Square meeting was held, addressed by Arthur Henderson, Keir Hardie, George Lansbury and others, denouncing the war and demanding in the resolution adopted that "the Government of Great Britain should rigidly decline to engage in war". A Manifesto on August 3, signed by Henderson and Keir Hardie as British representatives on the International Socialist Bureau, called on the workers:

> "Hold vast demonstrations against war in every industrial centre. Compel those of the governing class and their press who are eager to commit you to cooperate with Russian despotism to keep silence and to respect the decision of the overwhelming majority of the people, who will have neither part nor lot in such infamy.... Workers, stand together for peace. Combine and conquer the militarist enemy and the self-seeking imperialists today, once and for all."

On August 4 the British Government issued its ultimatum to Germany, and by midnight was at war. The Labour Party immediately switched to support the Government for the war. The pretext in each case was the violation of Belgian neutrality and the obligation of Britain under the terms of the Treaty of Belgian neutrality. That this was a pretext was notorious, since the secret commitments had in practice been entered into the staff conversations over many years, while any obligation under the Belgian Treaty of Neutrality had been discounted by the Foreign Office.[8] Ramsay MacDonald, who

[8] "The liability undoubtedly exists as stated above, but whether we would be called upon to carry out our obligation and to vindicate the neutrality of Belgium in opposing its violation must necessarily depend upon our policy at the time and the circumstances of the moment. Supposing that France violated the neutrality of Belgium in a war against Germany, it is, under present circumstances, doubtful whether England or Russia would move a finger to maintain Belgian neutrality, while if the neutrality of Belgium were violated by Germany it is probable that the converse would be the case."

(Minute of Sir Charles Hardinge, Permanent Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, in 1908, reprinted in Gooch and Temperley, *British Documents of the Origin of the War*, Vol. VIII).

The comment of Sir Edward Grey on this minute was: "Sir C. Hardinge's reflection is to the point". According to Marshal Joffre's Memoirs, Anglo-French military conversations had already taken place in 1911 for the possible invasion of Belgium to "forestall a German aggression".

adopted a critical attitude with regard to the diplomacy leading up to the war, was replaced as Leader of the Labour Party by Henderson. Henderson and other Labour representatives entered the War Coalition Government in the following year. MacDonald at the head of the Independent Labour Party, while supporting the war recruiting campaign, continued a critical attitude on the diplomatic issues and urged peace by negotiations. The British Socialist Party, representing the Marxist Socialists, was for an initial period misrepresented by the extreme chauvinist Hyndman, until a delegate conference in 1916 was able to make effective the wishes of the membership, finish with Hyndman, and establish the British Socialist Party as the main organ of Marxist socialist opposition to the war.

Not all the official parties of the Second International in the countries involved in the First World War supported the war. The alignment of parties showed a contrasting picture.

The British Labour Party, the French Socialist Party, the German Social-Democratic Party, the Austrian Social Democratic Party, the Belgian Labour Party and the Australian and South African Labour Parties supported the war and their Governments. The British, French and Belgian leaders joined the capitalist war coalition Governments. In Australia the Labour Government was already in office and gave full support to the war.

The Russian Bolshevik Party and the Serbian Social-Democratic Party, as also the Hungarian Social-Democratic Party, stood by the principles of the International, opposed the war and conducted revolutionary agitation. The Mensheviks in Russia, after their deputies had initially joined with the Bolshevik deputies in voting against the war credits, moved over to accepting the slogan of "national defence"; the Socialist-Revolutionaries were divided, as were also the Mensheviks, between "internationalists" and "defencists".

As the war extended to additional countries, official parties which maintained opposition included the Bulgarian main Social-Democratic Labour Party (the so-called "Narrow" Socialists or historic organisation of Blagoev, Kolarov and Dimitrov); the Rumanian Social-Democratic Party, the Italian Socialist Party and the Socialist Party of the United States.

In all the parties where the majority leadership supported the imperialist war there were minority groups of varying degrees of strength who campaigned against this policy. The history of international socialism during the First World War is the history of the growth of this international socialist opposition to the war, alike in numbers and volume of mass support, and in the development of political clarity on the issues.

3. INTERNATIONAL SOCIALIST FIGHT AGAINST THE WAR

The decision of the leadership in the main parties of the belligerent countries in Western and Central Europe to support the war was in no case unanimous. Thus in the German Social-Democratic Party the decision to vote for the war credits on August 4 was reached only after sharp division in the parliamentary fraction; a right-wing group of thirty delivered an ultimatum proclaiming their intention to vote for the war credits in any case; the left-wing group of fifteen urged opposition; when the centre joined with the right-wing, the left accepted the decision in the name of party unity. By December 2, 1914, the gravity of the issue broke for the first time this rigidity of party discipline. Karl Liebknecht, to his eternal honour, the worthy son of a worthy father, cast a solitary vote against the war credits; fifteen other social-democratic deputies abstained. Here appeared in embryo form the three groupings which developed in the German socialist movement; the right-wing dominant leadership, fully committed to the imperialist war and the betrayal of international socialist principles; the minority group, which became voiced by Kautsky and later formed the Independent Socialist Party, expressing some critical reservations, but in practice covering up the right-wing with Marxist phrases; and the Spartacus Group of consistent international socialists, led by Karl Liebknecht, Rosa Luxemburg, Klara Zetkin and Franz Mehring, which later became the Communist Party.

Similar groupings and alignments could be traced in the various countries involved in the war.

From the outset a variety of efforts were made on behalf of various parties and sections in neutral countries to resume the shattered links of international socialist contact. After the invasion of Belgium the office of the International Socialist

Bureau was transferred to Holland, but in practice played no effective role. In September, 1914, an Italian-Swiss Conference was held at Lugano, which condemned the war as imperialist and expressed sympathy with the minority sections in the parties supporting the war. The Lugano Conference called for a convening of the International Socialist Bureau, but this was vetoed by Vandervelde as Chairman. In January, 1915, a Conference of the parties of Holland, Sweden, Norway and Denmark was held at Copenhagen, which discussed terms of peace and led to the formation of the Dutch-Scandinavian Committee to promote a common socialist approach to the question of negotiations.

These initiatives on the part of parties in neutral countries did not yet represent any step towards united action of socialists in the belligerent countries for the fight against the war. Separate conferences were also held of the parties in the countries of the Triple Entente and in the countries of the Central Powers to elaborate rival conceptions of war aims. Such conferences only revealed all the more sharply the real division.

The first international conference of socialists in the belligerent countries for the fight against the war was convened by the International Socialist Women's Bureau of the Second International, whose Secretary was Klara Zetkin, and was held at Berne in March, 1915. This was a historically significant conference, attended among others by Krupskaya in the Bolshevik delegation, as the first international anti-war conference of socialist representatives from the belligerent countries. In the following month an International Socialist Youth Conference, organised by the Secretary of the International Socialist Youth Bureau of the Second International, Willi Münzenberg, was also held in Berne.

The first general international socialist conference of opponents of the war was held at Zimmerwald in September, 1915. Whereas the Lugano and Copenhagen Conferences had been held with the official sanction and recognition of the moribund International Socialist Bureau, and the Women's and Youth Conferences had at any rate been convened through machinery inherited from the old Second International, the Zimmerwald Conference broke new ground as an unofficial international socialist conference convened

through the initiative of the Italian Socialist Party which had maintained its anti-war position in face of the decision of the Italian Government to enter the war. A joint meeting of Italian and Swiss socialists at Berne in July prepared the conference and issued invitations to all parties and groups known to be in sympathy.

The Zimmerwald Conference was attended by the official delegates of parties from seven countries: Italy, Russia (Bolsheviks, Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries), Poland, Lithuania, Latvia, Rumania and Bulgaria. From Britain the Independent Labour Party and British Socialist Party appointed delegates, but they were unable to obtain passports. Minority opposition groups were represented from France, Germany, and Holland; Sweden and Norway were represented through the Youth organisation; and the Swiss Party was unofficially represented.

At Zimmerwald a joint declaration was adopted by the French and German delegates, thus recalling the exchange of fraternal messages between the French and German sections of the First International during the Franco-German war. A general manifesto was adopted, proclaiming international working-class solidarity against imperialism. This was signed by all the delegates, including Ledebour and Hoffman for the Germans, Merrheim and Bourderon for the French, Lazzari and Modigliani for the Italians, and Lenin, Axelrod and Bobrov for the Russians.

A permanent "International Socialist Commission" was formed at Zimmerwald, which held together the parties concerned in an unofficial bloc, and received fresh affiliations. This Commission organised further conferences at Kienthal in April, 1916, and at Stockholm in September, 1917. Thus the basis of the new International had begun to develop.

The composition of the Zimmerwald grouping was initially very mixed, on a general anti-war platform. There were pacifist elements opposed on principle to all wars, which had found a home in the Independent Labour Party in Britain. There were all varieties of Centrism, ranging from the highly equivocal attitude of the parliamentarian MacDonald confined to criticism in the diplomatic sphere, to the Marxist phrases and confused line of the German Independents or the "neither victory nor defeat" slogan of Trotsky. On the left were the

consistent Marxist internationalists led by Lenin and the Bolshevik Party.

In this considerable confusion of the varied left socialist trends of criticism or opposition to the war it was Lenin and the Bolshevik Party who from the outset brought clarity on the complex theoretical issues and a firm strategic line for practice. This was accomplished especially by the resolution of the Central Committee of the Bolshevik Party "The War and Russian Social-Democracy", based on theses prepared by Lenin, and published in October, 1914, and by the subsequent activities of the Bolshevik representatives in all international gatherings along these lines.

While the bankruptcy of the Second International and the betrayal of their pledges by the majority leaders of the pro-war socialist parties was recognised by all serious socialists, the further questions were at the outset far less clear to the majority of socialist opponents of the war. The conception of the aim to revive the International Socialist Bureau and Second International was widely expressed. On the question of national defence, aggressive and defensive war, and the attitude of socialists to participation in the war there was especial confusion. In the pre-imperialist era Engels had spoken of the necessity of German socialists defending Germany in the event of a two-front war, or of French socialists defending France in the event of an attack by Germany; and these quotations were freely used by the pro-war socialists to justify their policy. Revolutionary agitation against the war was often side-tracked and replaced by discussion about peace aims or advocacy of a negotiated peace.

Lenin's analysis cut through this confusion. First, it showed the character of the war as an imperialist war, recalling the very precise definition of it already given by the Basle resolution. Second, it clarified the Marxist attitude to wars; the distinction between just and unjust wars; and the judgement of each war concretely, not on the basis of categories of aggressive or defensive wars or allegations who began it, but according to the class waging the war, and the policies and aims of the class waging the war. Third, the plea of "national defence" was thus exposed as a sophistical alias for imperialist aims in an imperialist war. This was not a question of indifference of socialists to national independence (the statements of

Engels made in 1891 immediately after the Franco-Russian Alliance, and partially modified by him in a supplementary note in 1892, belonged to the pre-imperialist era). In fact, in the imperialist world war of 1914, while the mass of the people were called on to fight and give their lives in the name of national defence, that is, to save their countries from invasion and subjugation, their rulers were in reality fighting for secret aims to fulfil colonial ambitions and redivide the world. The truth of Lenin's analysis was proved when the Bolshevik Revolution laid bare the archives of Tsarism and revealed to the world the secret treaties of the British, French and Russian Governments for expansionist ambitions and especially the domination of the Middle East as the real war aims. Fourth, the only practical revolutionary socialist fight against the war (in place of rhetorical denunciation of war in general or imperialist war in general) must be directed against "one's own" Government, for the defeat of "one's own" Government and the victory of the working-class revolution, as already precisely laid down in the Basle resolution, with its reference to the example of the Paris Commune—that is, to transform the imperialist war into civil war. As Karl Liebknecht proclaimed:

> "If the German Socialists, for instance, were to combat the English Government and the English Socialists the German Government, it would be a farce or something worse. He who does not attack the enemy imperialism represented by those who stand opposed to him face to face, but attacks those from whom he is far away, and who are not within his shooting range, and that even with the help and approbation of his own Government (i.e. those representatives of imperialism who are directly confronting him) is no socialist, but a miserable hack of the ruling class."

Fifth, the bankruptcy of the Second International was no mere temporary interruption of contact through the war, but was the consequence of the domination of opportunism in the main parties. Hence it was necessary to break with the bankrupt Second International, since continuance of unity with the opportunists would mean unity with the bourgeoisie, and to prepare the foundation of a new Third International on the basis of the principles of revolutionary socialist internationalism, of communism.

On this basis the practical tasks of socialists in the countries involved in the imperialist world war were declared to be: (1) unconditional refusal to vote for war credits, and immediate withdrawal of all socialists from bourgeois governments; (2) rejection of any agreement with the bourgeoisie and of "class peace"; (3) establishment of illegal organisations in countries where they did not exist and where work in legal organisations was difficult; (4) support of fraternisation by the soldiers at the front; (5) support for all revolutionary mass actions of the proletariat.

Already at the Zimmerwald Conference a Zimmerwald Left grouping of eight delegates was organised on the initiative of Lenin, and set up its own Bureau. The Zimmerwald Left issued a statement criticising the inadequacy of the manifesto adopted by the Conference, but joined in signing it as representing a first step in developing the international fight against the war.

When the second International Socialist Conference was held at Kienthal in Switzerland seven months later in April, 1916, the advance of the movement was revealed, not only in the growth of support, but in the more militant (though still confused) political formulations and in the strengthened position of the Zimmerwald Left. The Kienthal Conference was attended by forty-three delegates, including official representatives from the socialist parties of nine countries (Britain, Bulgaria, Italy, Poland, Portugal, Rumania, Russia, Switzerland and the United States). The Left, with Lenin leading the Bolshevik delegation, was still in a minority, with the adherence of twelve of the forty-three delegates; and their proposals for a draft resolution to set out clearly the aims of the transformation of the imperialist war into civil war and for the establishment of a new Third International were not accepted by the centrist majority. The resolutions adopted by the Conference did sharply criticise the International Socialist Bureau; combined repudiation of the pro-war socialists (described as "Social-Nationalists") with condemnation of "bourgeois pacifism"; called for "the conquest of political power and the ownership of capital by the people themselves; the real durable peace will be the fruit of triumphant socialism"; urged the intensification of the mass movement against reaction and the economic consequences of the war to culminate in the

supreme international struggle for the final triumph of the proletariat; and set the next objective for a united fight for an immediate armistice and "peace without annexations".

By the time of the third International Socialist Conference convened by the Zimmerwald Commission at Stockholm in September, 1917 (after the collapse of the projected Stockholm Conference summoned by the Dutch-Scandinavian Committee in consultation with the International Socialist Bureau for the summer of 1917), an entirely new situation had arisen with the development of the Russian Revolution.

4. BEGINNING OF THE WORLD SOCIALIST REVOLUTION

The conventional view that the beginning of the world socialist revolution in 1917 was caused by the First World War is a shallow and superficial analysis. We have seen that in the majority of European countries a semi-revolutionary situation was developing on the eve of 1914. The explosion of the contradictions of imperialism into the war of 1914 exposed the bankruptcy of the old social order and entry into the era of the general crisis of capitalism, and through its further consequences of deepening horror for the peoples eventually sharpened the conditions for revolutionary development. But the *first* effect of the outbreak of war in 1914 was to drown the revolution in a flood of chauvinism.

Already in 1886 Engels predicted this initial outcome of the outbreak of the threatened European war:

> "The bourgeois Republicans in France are in the same boat as the Tsar in Russia: they see revolution raising its head before their eyes and they see but one means of salvation: war. . . .
>
> "For my part, I believe that the decisive fact for us must be that the war, if war there be, will be made only with the purpose of preventing revolution. . . . Therefore I am for 'peace at any price' since it is not we who will pay the price."
>
> (Engels, letter to Paul Lafargue, October 25, 1886)

At the outset, with the dominant leadership of the main Social-Democratic Parties in the belligerent countries (outside Russia) failing in the hour of trial and joining up with "their" ruling class, the masses of the people entered into the war in a high tide of national patriotic ardour to defend, as

they believed, their countries or their ideals against the assault of a criminal enemy. They knew nothing of the secret imperialist intrigues which had led to the war, or the secret imperialist expansionist aims for which they were really being called upon to give their lives. This initial mood received characteristic poetic expression in the naïve ignorance of Rupert Brooke's "Now God be praised who has matched us with this hour".

The realities of war soon shattered these naïve illusions (save for the leader-writers snugly ensconced on the home front). The Christmas fraternisation on the Western Front in the first year of the war was a temporary manifestation of rank-and-file solidarity, which higher authority was concerned by every means to suppress. When the millions of soldiers, in place of the "hurrah" patriotism of the first days, found themselves condemned to limitless senseless mutual slaughter as they were dragged deeper and deeper down the dark, dirty, bloodstained unending tunnel of "war to the bitter end", and when the millions at home suffered increasing shortage while the profiteers made fortunes, the mood changed, not yet to revolutionary awakening, since the socialist leadership had failed the peoples in their hour of need, but to black moods of bitterness, resentment and angry tired hopelessness reflected also in the subsequent war poems, as of Owen and Sassoon.

The first revolt was the Easter Rising in Ireland. This was a national liberation revolt against British imperialism, not yet successful, but preparing future success. Within this national revolution the working class, through Connolly and the Irish Citizens' Army led by him, played its independent vanguard role in the common national front. The proclamation of the unity of the working-class struggle for socialism and the national liberation struggle against imperialism as the specific form of the world socialist revolution in the imperialist era was the great independent contribution of Connolly to Marxist theory, already before the teachings of Lenin, which clarified the whole question, were known in the Western working-class movement.

> "War waged by the oppressed nationalities against the oppressors, and the class war of the proletariat against capital . . . is *par excellence* the swiftest, safest and most peaceful form of constructive work the socialist can engage in."
>
> (James Connolly, speech to the Glasgow May Day demonstration, 1915)

With the insight of genius Connolly saw how the struggle in Ireland during the war could be the starting point to kindle all Europe:

> "Starting thus, Ireland may yet set the torch to a European conflagration that will not burn out until the last throne and the last capitalist bond and debenture will be shrivelled on the funeral pyre of the last war lord."

In the Easter Rising he made good his words.

Connolly, a wounded prisoner of war, was bound to a chair to be executed by decision of the British War Cabinet which included Henderson, Leader of the Labour Party. All the old-fashioned schools of socialism in Britain, not only on the right, but also on the left, failed to understand the meaning of his role and of his death, and thereby exposed their links, conscious or unconscious, to imperialism. The Labour Party, through Arthur Henderson, executed him. MacDonald and the I.L.P. denounced him as a "militarist". Tom Johnston and the left-wing Glasgow *Forward* proclaimed his action inexplicable: "it remains a mystery." A few days before his death the wounded Connolly, still conscious, asked for "any socialist papers" and said: "They will never understand why I am here." But there were those who understood. From afar Lenin understood, and castigated those who dared to denounce the Irish Rising as "a putsch":

> "To imagine that a social revolution is conceivable without revolts of small nations in the colonies and in Europe . . . to imagine that is only tantamount to repudiating social revolution.
>
> "The misfortune of the Irish is that they rose prematurely, when the European revolt of the proletariat has not yet matured. Capitalism is not so harmoniously built that the various springs of rebellion can immediately merge into one, of their own accord, without reverses and defeats."
>
> (Lenin, *The Results of the Discussion on Self-Determination*, 1916)

The Rising of 1916 was a forerunner of the victory of 1917.

The Russian Revolution of 1917, beginning with the overthrow of Tsarism in March, and culminating in the victory of working-class power and the socialist revolution in November, was the fulfilment of the predictions and teachings of Marx, Engels and Lenin. As Marx had predicted in the years before his death, the role of the revolutionary vanguard had passed to Russia. As Engels had predicted in 1888, in tracing the probable course of the future European War between a Franco-Russian Alliance and the Germany of the Kaiser, "revolution in Petersburg" would transform the whole situation. As Lenin had predicted in 1902, the task before the Russian working class was "more revolutionary than all the immediate tasks that confront the proletariat of any other country", namely, "the destruction of the most powerful bulwark, not only of European, but also of Asiatic reaction"; and the fulfilment of this task "places the Russian proletariat in the vanguard of the international revolutionary proletariat" (*"What Is To Be Done?"*).

The reason why the world socialist revolution began in Russia, and not, as Marx had originally anticipated prior to 1850, in Western Europe, lay in two decisive factors. First, the world system of imperialism broke initially at its weakest link, Russian imperialism, which was most economically and politically backward and vulnerable. Second, the subjective factor was ready: that is, within the backward social system of Russia the working class, concentrated in developed large-scale industry (larger-scale in general than the average in Western Europe), was more advanced in political consciousness and organisation than in Western Europe, through the role of the Bolshevik Party, under the leadership of Lenin, as the majority party of the working class, strongly based in the factories, and already obtaining the overwhelming majority of working-class votes (1,008,000 to 214,000) in the elections of workers' deputies to the Duma before the war.

The development of the Russian Revolution from the February Revolution (so called from the old calendar; on March 8 by the new) to the October Revolution (November 7 by the new) brilliantly confirmed and fulfilled the strategy and tactics outlined and developed by Lenin during the years 1900-1917, elaborated with further precision in the light of the experience of the 1905 revolution, and carried forward in

the conditions of the war and the first stage of the 1917 revolution through the Theses of April, 1917. The analysis of this classic development from the beginning of the bourgeois democratic revolution in March, 1917, belongs to the history of the Russian Revolution.

It is important to recognise that the revolution was from the outset a mass revolt from below. The strike movement had risen from 250,000 in January to 400,000 in February and March. The flashpoint was the International Women's Day demonstration on March 8, the day originally fixed by the International Women's Socialist Conference of the old Second International. The strike movement developed to the level of the political general strike, clashes with the police, and insurrection against Tsarism under the slogans "Down with the War!", "Down with Tsarism!" and "Give us Bread!". The political and organising leadership of the movement at each stage was the Bolshevik Party Committee in Petrograd. When the soldiers in increasing numbers began to respond to the call of the Bolshevik Party Committee for fraternisation, refused to fire upon the workers, and by March 12 the main body of the Petrograd garrison had come over to the workers, the fate of Tsarism was sealed. The bourgeois-liberal leaders of the type of Miliukov or the extreme right-wing chauvinist labour leaders of the type of Kerensky had no part in the action and victory of the first revolution of March, 1917, but only after their initial attempts to salvage Tsarism had failed, they proclaimed themselves a "Provisional Government" on the basis of their position in the Tsarist Duma. Thus this "Provisional Government" of bourgeois reaction was from the outset counterposed to the Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies, which was the real organ of the revolution. But since the revolution brought into participation for the first time tens of millions who had no previous political experience, the Bolsheviks were at the beginning in a minority in the Soviets. The leaders of the Menshevik and Socialist-Revolutionary Parties who dominated them in the early stages voluntarily surrendered power to the bourgeoisie and pledged support to the bourgeois Provisional Government, which was in fact maintaining the imperialist secret treaties and determined to prosecute the imperialist war.

From this situation arose the eight months of "dual power"

of the Provisional Government and of the Soviets. To the Bolshevik Party fell the task of first peacefully winning the support of the majority of the working class and the Soviets before the aim of Soviet power could be realised. This task was accomplished through eight months of complex political development, during which Kerensky and his Government sought to suppress the Bolshevik Party with arrests and rounding up of its leaders, denounced Lenin and the Bolsheviks as German agents, whipped up an imperialist war offensive, and installed the counter-revolutionary General Kornilov as Commander in Chief who proceeded to march on Petrograd with his so-called "Savage Division" to suppress the revolution. This attempted counter-revolutionary coup was defeated by the workers and peasants and their newly formed Red Guard detachments, organised through the leadership of the Bolsheviks, who simultaneously exposed the complicity of Kerensky in the attempted counter-revolutionary coup and led the fight for its defeat. All this experience helped to open the eyes of the masses. The Bolsheviks, refusing to be provoked into premature insurrection, by their tireless agitation, propaganda and organisation among the working people and the soldiers and in the Soviets, and by the demonstration of the justice and correctness of their political leadership at each stage and turn of the revolution, step by step won effective majority support for their policy and leadership.

By the autumn of 1917 the Bolsheviks had won more and more completely the overwhelming majority of the masses behind them, in Petrograd, Moscow and the big industrial centres, in the trade unions, in the Northern armies, in the Baltic fleet. The Bolsheviks won the majority in the Petrograd and Moscow Soviets by the beginning of September. At the "Democratic Conference" summoned by Kerensky in September, the trade union delegation, the Soviet delegation, and the national groups all voted overwhelmingly for the Bolshevik line. The Moscow municipal elections, which in July had shown 70 per cent of the votes for the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries, in September gave these only 18 per cent and 51 per cent to the Bolsheviks. Finally, the Second All-Russian Soviet Congress, elected from all over Russia under the auspices of the old right-wing Central Executive Committee, and meeting under their auspices on

November 7, showed: 390 Bolsheviks; 179 Left Social Revolutionaries (allied with the Bolsheviks); 35 Internationalist Mensheviks and only 51 Mensheviks and Right Socialist-Revolutionaries. Thus there was no question that by October the Bolsheviks had won decisive majority support among the masses, above all in the big centres. This was the basis of the Bolshevik Revolution, and of the completeness of the victory, on November 7. The final transfer of power was able to take place with such speed, apparent ease and virtual lack of resistance, because the majority support had been won through the long preceding process. The Bolshevik Revolution was, in fact, the most democratic revolution in history. It was also the most bloodless. The bloodshed and heavy armed struggles only came during the subsequent years through the interventionist wars, military plots and subsidised civil wars organised by Western imperialism.

5. REVOLUTION AND COUNTER-REVOLUTION IN EUROPE

All this complex political development of the Russian Revolution during the eight months of "dual power" culminating in the victory of the Bolshevik Revolution, was intertwined at each stage with the international situation and the rising development of the international revolutionary movement in the other European belligerent countries, and in the neutral countries, against the imperialist war. The mass demands which were the driving force of the Russian Revolution, and which found concrete expression in the programme of the Bolshevik Party, were the demands for peace, bread and land. Within the Soviets the struggle against the right-wing leadership which supported the Provisional Government of Kerensky and Miliukov developed in the forefront as a struggle against the imperialist war and for peace. The Petrograd Soviet adopted the slogan "No Annexations and No Indemnities", and called for an international conference of socialist parties to organise the fight for peace along these lines.

The effects in stimulating the movement within all the belligerent countries were far-reaching. In France the military revolts of the spring of 1917 were only with difficulty suppressed. In Germany the Social-Democratic Party split, with the formation of the centrist Independent Socialist Party

under Kautsky, Haase and Ledebour in April, 1917, alongside the illegal Spartacus Alliance led by Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg, which had been organised on the basis of the Spartacus Letters in 1916, and which participated as a grouping within the Independent Socialist Party. In July, 1917, the Reichstag adopted a resolution for a negotiated peace. In Britain the Leeds Convention for the formation of Workers' and Soldiers' Councils was organised by a wide range of left-wing elements in June, 1917. The general line of the centrist social-democratic leadership, and of some of the right-wing (although intensely opposed by the most extreme chauvinist right-wing) became to seek to divert the rising revolutionary ferment into the channels of a campaign for a negotiated peace. This proposition had already been presented by more far-seeing representatives of the bourgeoisie, as in the famous letter of the veteran Lord Lansdowne in November, 1916 (not published till a year later); the similar proposals of the Austrian Emperor Karl in the same month; the readiness of the Asquith Cabinet to negotiate in December, 1916, which led to its replacement by Lloyd George; President Wilson's "Peace Without Victory" speech in January, 1917; and the Austrian peace negotiations of the spring of 1917 with the accompanying Count Czernin memorandum ("the basis of my argument is the danger of revolution").

The Dutch-Scandinavian Committee, whose formation in 1915 has been described, in association with the derelict International Socialist Bureau of Camille Huysmans, proposed an international socialist conference on peace aims to be held in Stockholm in August, 1917. The Petrograd Soviet, still under Menshevik and Socialist-Revolutionary leadership, associated itself with this project. The Social-Democratic Parties in the countries of the Central Powers and the neutral countries supported this proposal, while those in the Entente countries were divided. The British Labour Party had been originally opposed; but after Henderson had visited Petrograd on an official mission and recognised the urgency of the situation, he came back and recommended participation, which was carried by a majority at a Special Labour Party Conference in August, 1917. Henderson was disowned by the War Cabinet, and resigned; but the Labour Party continued participation in the War Cabinet through Barnes. In the end nothing came

of the projected Stockholm Conference, since the Governments of the Entente countries refused passports. But a Conference of the Zimmerwald Left was held at Stockholm and adopted a decision for the formation of a new International.

The Russian socialist revolution of November, 1917, with the Peace Decree as its first decree, appealing to all the warring governments and peoples to end the bloodshed and make peace, transformed the situation. It was in response to an urgent appeal from the American envoy in Petrograd that President Wilson proclaimed in January, 1918, his famous Fourteen Points as a proposed basis for peace. To right-wing social-democracy, and to many of the Centre like Kautsky, the victory of the socialist revolution was an outrage and a disaster. Thus H. N. Brailsford (who was later to boast of his early support of the Russian socialist revolution) wrote at the time:

> "This month is likely to stand in our memories as the blackest of the war. It began with the disaster in Italy; that has been followed by a second Russian revolution."
>
> (H. N. Brailsford in the *Herald*—wartime weekly form of the *Daily Herald* November 17, 1917)

But to all militant workers, socialists and anti-war fighters this historic victory of the working people for peace and socialism brought new inspiration and confidence. In Germany throughout January and February, 1918, while the Brest-Litovsk negotiations were tearing the mask from German imperialism, a vast strike movement spread, with the formation of Workers' Councils in the principal towns. By June there were bread riots in Vienna.

Nevertheless, despite the growing unrest of the war-weary masses in Germany, France and Britain, reflected in the rising strike movement and military revolts, the more strongly organised ruling machine of imperialism in these countries, with the aid of the jingo social-democracy, was able to maintain control. Therefore the Brest Peace Treaty, the shameful annexationist "robbers' peace", had to be signed in March, 1918. The customary howl of denunciation followed from right-wing social-democracy and its associates in the Entente countries against Lenin's "betrayal" of socialism by signing a peace treaty with the robber German imperialism and receiving a German Ambassador in Moscow. The same Brails-

ford, already during the Brest negotiations, declared that the Bolsheviks had placed themselves "beyond the pale of international socialism". Indeed, there was sharp division within the Soviet leadership before signature. Trotsky fought Lenin on this issue, proffering as a substitute for signature the meaningless formula "Neither war nor peace"; the resultant delay lost Eastern Latvia and Estonia to imperialism, as the German armies advanced. Trotsky was supported by some "Left" Bolshevik leaders, Bucharin, Radek and others, and by the Left S.R.s. The latter withdrew from the Coalition Government in June, 1918, assassinated the German Ambassador, and attempted to stage a coup, but won no mass support.

Lenin and the Bolsheviks watched keenly for every sign of the advance of the working-class revolt in Central and Western Europe. They were confident that the Brest Treaty would be eventually wiped out by the German working class. But they did not count on any quick easy solution by the immediate advance of the world socialist revolution; hence their realist recognition of the necessity of signature. It is characteristic of the conventional anti-Marxist falsification of history that the viewpoint of the Left Communists and the Left S.R.s, to stake all on "revolutionary war" and the rapid spread of the socialist revolution in Central and Western Europe as the indispensable condition for the survival of the Russian revolution (the latter standpoint being also voiced by Trotsky), is now presented in every standard ill-formed account as the supposed viewpoint of Lenin and the Bolsheviks. Lenin made the position clear beyond the possibility of confusion when he wrote in January, 1918:

> "That the socialist revolution in Europe must come, and will come, is beyond doubt. All our hopes for the *final* victory of socialism are founded on this certainty and on this scientific prognosis. . . . But it would be a mistake to base the tactics of the Russian Socialist Government on an attempt to determine whether the European, and especially the German, socialist revolution will take place in the next six months (or some such brief period) or not. Inasmuch as it is quite impossible to determine this, all such attempts, objectively speaking, would be nothing but a blind gamble."
>
> (Lenin, *Theses on the Question of Immediate Conclusion of a Separate and Annexationist Peace,* January 7, 1918)

And again

> "Yes, we will see the international world revolution; but for the time being it is a very good fairy tale—I quite understand children liking beautiful fairy tales. But I ask, is it becoming for a serious revolutionary to believe fairy tales?"
>
> (Lenin, *Report on War and Peace to the Seventh Congress of the Russian Communist Party,* March 7, 1918)

Lenin's judgement, equally his confidence in the future advance of the revolution in Europe, and especially in Germany, and his refusal to base any calculations on its date, was justified by the event. The tide of revolution continued to rise in Germany and Central Europe. By October the Austro-Hungarian Empire was in collapse before the revolt of the nationalities alongside the insurgence of the working class. From the beginning of October the German imperialist rulers were suing for an armistice on the basis of President Wilson's Fourteen Points. The Western Powers delayed to haggle over terms of surrender, not understanding the speed with which the revolution was advancing. By October 28 the naval revolt at Kiel was followed by the establishment of the rule of the Workers' Council in Kiel on November 5. During the next days Workers' and Soldiers' Councils took over the principal towns of Germany. By November 9 the Kaiser fled. On November 11 the armistice was signed. The speed and extent of the revolution took the Western powers by surprise; right up to the last their general staffs were engaged in preparing elaborate plans for the campaigns of 1919.

The initial phase of the international socialist revolution thus brought an end to the war which imperialism had proved incapable of ending. The Russian revolution ended the war in the East. The German revolution ended the war in the West.

On the other hand, imperialism, with the aid of right-wing social-democracy, was able to crush the revolution in Central and Western Europe. In Germany power had in fact passed for the moment into the hands of the Workers' and Soldiers' Councils, and was so proclaimed by the Berlin Council. But

the leaders of right-wing social-democracy, who by the strength of traditional party discipline and organisation held the dominant official positions and voting majority in the First National Congress of Councils, had formed a Provisional Government composed equally of Majority and Independent Social Democrats. The right-wing social-democratic leaders united with the militarist officers and White Guards, whom they armed, to suppress the working-class revolution in blood, murder Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg, the leaders of the newly formed German Communist Party, and in the name of "democracy" restored the rule of the bourgeoisie in close alliance with the militarist counter-revolutionary armed formations which later developed to Nazism.

The world revolutionary wave which followed the First World War and the Russian revolution rose to great heights, but was nowhere finally victorious during these years except in the Soviet Union, where the leadership of Communism defeated every attempt at counter-revolution and intervention. These years witnessed a wide range of struggles of revolution and counter-revolution, of civil wars and interventionist wars, as well as national-liberation revolts throughout the colonial empires. Already before the end of the war British and German forces, nominally at war with one another, were cooperating in the Baltic against the working-class revolution. Interventionist wars were conducted by all the Western powers against the Soviet Union, with British, French, American and Japanese invasions on countless fronts; and with the organisation of sabotage, conspiracy and assassination (on August 30, 1918, Lenin was shot and heavily wounded by a Socialist-Revolutionary agent; although he fought his way to recovery and resumption of work, the consequences of this wounding were in great part responsible for his early death). Counter-revolutionary generals and brigands were armed and subsidised by the Western powers; and in their Cabinets right wing Social Democrats, Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries, sat in coalition with Tsarist officers and White Guards like Generals Kolchak and Denikin. In Finland, where the Socialist Party had a parliamentary majority, and the Bolsheviks had granted to Finland the independence refused by Kerensky, the German armed forces invaded in 1918 to assist the former Tsarist General Mannerheim and his White Guards

to crush the working-class socialist revolution; after the defeat of Germany the British took over the support of General Mannerheim and his White Terror, in which 30,000 workers were massacred. In Hungary a Soviet Republic in the spring of 1919, established by a completely peaceful transfer of power from Count Karolyi to a Communist-Socialist Coalition, endured for six weeks. Under the direction of the Entente Rumanian and Czechoslovak armies were sent in to destroy the workers' regime and establish the White Terror of General Horthy, with whom the right-wing Hungarian Social-Democratic Party drew up and signed a written treaty of alliance, which later became public knowledge. The international working class rallied to the support of the Soviet Union against the interventionist wars, with the French naval revolt in the Black Sea in 1919; the mutiny of the American soldiers and the unrest of the British soldiers at Archangel in the same year; and the British dockers' action, inspired by Harry Pollitt in May, 1920 to stop the supply of munitions to Poland for use against the Soviet Union, followed in August by the formation of Councils of Action (for which the Communist Party, a fortnight old, had issued a call responded to in mass meetings all over the country) by the entire labour movement to stop the wars of intervention.

Through all these vicissitudes the rule of capitalism was in the outcome saved and restored throughout Central and Western Europe thanks to the role of right-wing social-democracy. Communist Parties were still only in process of formation during this period. If the labour and socialist movement had been politically equipped and ready in leadership and organisation to rise to the heights of its opportunities during these critical years, if the working-class socialist revolution had been carried through in Germany alongside Russia, and probably in that case in most of Europe; there would have undoubtedly been a far happier future of rapid and harmonious development, equally for the Russian people, and for all the peoples of the rest of Europe. There would have been no fascism and no second world war.

The leaders of social-democracy preached to the workers that their path represented the alternative to the horrors and bloodshed of Bolshevism, and would lead through a peaceful evolutionary development of restored capitalism and rising

prosperity to the goal of socialism. But the real outcome was different from the picture they painted. The real outcome was the most devastating world economic crisis in capitalist history, the horror of fascism and nazism, and the infinite bloodshed and destruction of the Second World War. Ramsay MacDonald, Scheidemann and the other Western social-democratic leaders, in warning against the horrors of Bolshevism, had promised the peoples of Western and Central Europe that their path would bring socialism without bloodshed. The outcome for these peoples proved to be bloodshed without socialism. A heavy price had to be paid, not only by the working class in the Western European countries who had followed social-democratic leadership, but also by the Soviet people, who did not bear the guilt of fascism, but who had to bear the main brunt to destroy it and save the peoples of Europe and the world. The decades since the First World War have seen the working out of this experience. A bitter ordeal has had to be gone through by the peoples of Europe and the world in order to learn the lessons of Marxism-Leninism.

CHAPTER VI

THE TWO INTERNATIONALS

"I believe that the next International, after Marx's writings have exercised their influence for some years, will be directly Communist, and will proclaim precisely our principles."

ENGELS, letter to Sorge, September 12-17, 1874

This prediction of Engels, as often with the predictions of Marxism, took longer to fulfil than anticipated. The Second International, which came into existence sixteen years after he expressed this expectation, did indeed accept in general principle the theory of Marxism, but was far from "directly Communist", and sank into opportunism and ignominious collapse. It was only after the lesson of this experience had been drawn that the hope of Engels found fulfilment in the foundation of the Third or Communist International.

1. THE SPLIT IN THE WORKING CLASS

The split in the organised working-class movement, both internationally and within the leading capitalist countries, has now continued for half a century; and there is not yet any immediate prospect of its being healed.

This split did not originate from the war of 1914, although it only reached its public organised form since then. The split was not due to the physical rupture of contacts which accompanied war conditions and the collapse of the Second International. Lenin showed how the split arose from the consequences of imperialism, through the corruption of the

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greater part of the upper leadership and an upper section of the working class sharing in the crumbs of imperialist colonial exploitation, thereby developing a common interest of class cooperation with the ruling class against any militant mass revolt or colonial revolt, and sacrificing for the sake of this limited and temporary sectional advantage the interests of the working class as a whole, of the international working class and socialism.

Marx and Engels had already exposed this process in the conditions of Britain in the second half of the nineteenth century, where the establishment of Britain's world industrial and trading monopoly, alongside vast colonial possessions, had made it possible to suffocate the flaming spirit of working-class revolt expressed in Chartism and revolutionary trade unionism, and to replace it by the "respectable" relatively limited aims and methods of struggle of the skilled craft unions of the labour aristocracy, politically following in the wake of the capitalist Liberal Party. But with the development of imperialism as the general character of all advanced capitalism on a world scale by the beginning of the twentieth century, this process was carried very much further in all the leading imperialist countries and their immediate capitalist subsidiaries. The pickings of the opportunist upper leadership became very much more considerable, still more manifestly with the shift of war conditions (lucrative posts on government commissions, ministerial posts, appointments on nationalisation boards, business connections, etc.), leading to increasing integration with the capitalist state. At the same time class contradictions grew; the foundations of the old labour aristocracy began to crack with the advancing challenge of the organisation of the unskilled and the rising national-liberation struggle; and there was a simultaneous growth of working-class militancy directly struggling against the opportunist leadership and finding its political champion in revolutionary Marxism. Such was the developing situation within the international socialist and working-class movement from the beginning of the twentieth century, which reached its culmination and inevitable outcome with the collapse of the Second International on the outbreak of the war of 1914. The collapse of the Second International was not the beginning of the split, but rather, as Lenin said, the bursting of an abscess.

Up to 1914, however, it had been possible for all the opposing trends and sections, from the Fabians to the Bolsheviks, to be members of a single International. This was possible because the differences and divisions, however acute, were still differences and divisions in the realm of theory, of debate, of polemics, of tactics—vital theoretical and practical differences, but not yet direct and open differences of revolution and counter-revolution.

After 1914, however, after the opening of the general crisis of capitalism, after the direct coalition of the opportunist leadership with their rival capitalist masters, and still more after the beginning of the world socialist revolution, the differences and divisions were transferred to opposite sides of the barricades; and such formal organisational unity could no longer be possible.

When Henderson executed Connolly; when Scheidemann and Noske murdered Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg; when the Menshevik and Socialist-Revolutionary leaders united in the Cabinets of the White Guard Terrorists Kolchak and Denikin to make war on the Soviet revolution: to speak of unity in a single "socialist" organisation could only be a mockery.

A new International had to be formed to correspond to the era of the opening of the world socialist revolution.

2. FOUNDATION OF THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL

The Communist International or Third International was formally founded in March, 1919. In fact the aim of its foundation was already explicitly proclaimed by Lenin in November 1914, when he wrote:

> "Overwhelmed by opportunism, the Second International has died. Down with opportunism, and long live the Third International, purged of opportunism!"
>
> (Lenin, *Position and Tasks of the Socialist International*, November 1, 1914)

This aim was also officially proclaimed by the resolution of the Central Committee of the Bolshevik Party on the same date, which declared "Long live a proletarian International, freed from opportunism!"

After the opening of the Russian Revolution Lenin wrote in April, 1917, that the Russian party had now the duty to take

the initiative for the formation of the Third International:

> "We must take the initiative in creating a revolutionary International directed against the social-chauvinists and against the Centre."
>
> (Lenin, *The Tasks of the Proletariat in the Present Revolution*, April 20, 1917)

After the opening of the German revolution, and with the foundation of the German Communist Party from the former Spartacus League in December, 1918, the task became imperatively urgent, however great the difficulties of communication on account of the imperialist blockade. On January 24 the invitation to the Foundation Congress was sent out in the name of six Communist Parties (Russia, Poland, Hungary, Austria, Latvia and Finland), the Balkan Revolutionary Social Democratic Federation and an individual representative of the Socialist Labour Party of the United States. The invitation set out in summary form the proposed basis and principles of the new International, and was addressed to thirty-nine organisations or groups, including all Communist Parties, five Socialist or Social-Democratic Parties regarded as ranged with the left, and nineteen left minorities within socialist parties or militant industrial groupings.

Urgency was increased by the fact that the discredited leaders of the old Second International were planning to meet at Berne in February, 1919, in order to resurrect the old Second International. For this leadership, favoured by the Governments, there were none of the difficulties of coming together which faced the still developing revolutionary sections of the working-class movement in the conditions of the beginning of 1919.

The First Congress of the Communist International held at Moscow on March 4-7, 1919, had to be held under these extremely difficult practical conditions. It was attended by representatives of eleven Communist Parties (Armenia, Austria, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Russia and Ukraine); five Socialist or Social-Democratic Parties (Norway, Switzerland, the Swedish Left-Socialist Party, the Balkan Revolutionary Socialist Federation and an individual from the Socialist Labour Party of the United States); and three groupings, including the Left Zimmerwald Bureau (which was wound up and merged in

the Congress) and the Group of Oriental Nationalities in Russia: all with voting rights. In addition, there were observers without voting rights from a number of countries, including Britain (J. Fineberg of the British Socialist Party), Bulgaria, China, Czechoslovakia, France, Holland, Korea, Persia, Turkey and Yugoslavia.

This Congress launched the new International. At the outset there was some division whether to go forward at once or to wait, in view of the still fluid situation of the development of the left and emergence of Communist Parties in the majority of countries. The delegate of the German party had been originally mandated for delay on these grounds. But the argument of urgency, strongly emphasised by Lenin, prevailed. The resolution establishing the Communist International or Third International (both terms were used in the resolution) was carried with the abstention of the German delegate. The platform of the new International, its provisional constitution and organisation, and its "Appeal to the Workers of All Countries", which became known as the New Communist Manifesto, were adopted on behalf of all the parties and groups participating in the Congress.

The achievement of the First Congress was not only to found the new International, but to set out in clear and memorable terms the principles of revolutionary communism, carrying forward the theory of Marxism or communism in the era of the general crisis of capitalism and opening of the world socialist revolution; analyse the experience of the war and the international situation after the war; demonstrate the necessity of the break with social-chauvinism and centrism; clarify the basic questions of capitalist democracy and working-class dictatorship; proclaim the tasks ahead in this era of revolution; and lay down the provisional organisation of the Communist International (or "international communist party", as the Manifesto described it). The Congress appointed a provisional Executive Committee, consisting of representatives of the parties of seven countries or regions (Austria, Balkan Federation, Germany, Hungary, Russia, Scandinavia, Switzerland). This was to serve until the definitive constitution which was left for the Second Congress to draw up and adopt.

The term "Communist" was adopted in place of the term

"Social-Democrat" previously used in the period of the Second International. This change had been advocated by Lenin after the collapse of the Second International, on the grounds that this was the correct Marxist term which Marx and Engels always used to describe their position; Marx and Engels had explicitly condemned the term "Social-Democrat" as scientifically inaccurate, even though they had tolerated it in the Second International; since 1914 the term had become identified with the betrayal of socialism.

> "We must call ourselves a *Communist Party*—just as Marx and Engels called themselves. We must repeat that we are Marxists and that we take as our basis the *Communist Manifesto*, which has been perverted and betrayed by the Social-Democrats. . . .
>
> "The term 'Social-Democracy' is scientifically incorrect, as Marx frequently pointed out in particular, in the *Critique of the Gotha Programme* in 1875, and as Engels reaffirmed in a more popular form in 1894. . . . Democracy is one of the forms of the *state*, whereas we Marxists are opposed to *all and every kind* of state. . . . Our new state, *now in process of being* born, is *no longer* a state in the proper sense of the term, for in many parts of Russia these detachments of armed men are *the masses themselves*, the entire people. . . .
>
> "The majority of the 'Social-Democratic' leaders, of the 'Social-Democratic' parliamentarians, of the 'Social-Democratic' papers—and these are the *organs* for influencing the masses—have *deserted* Socialism, have *betrayed* Socialism and have gone over to the side of 'their' national bourgeoisie. The masses have been confused, led astray and deceived by *these* leaders. And are we to aid and abet that deception by retaining the old and antiquated Party name, which is as decayed as the Second International? . . .
>
> "It is time to cast off the soiled shirt and don a clean one."
>
> (Lenin, *The Tasks of the Proletariat in our Revolution*, 19: "A Scientifically Sound Name for Our Party that will Politically Help to Clarify Proletarian Class-Consciousness," April, 1917)

The Seventh Congress of the Bolshevik Party in March, 1918, had already adopted the new name "Russian Communist party (Bolsheviks)". Lenin, in his speech at the Congress advocating the change, declared that the name "Communist" was the only correct one to describe the aim:

> "In starting on socialist changes, we must clearly set before ourselves the goal to which they are directed in the final analysis, namely, the creation of a communist society."

3. EXTENDING AFFILIATIONS TO THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL

The formation of the Communist International aroused great enthusiasm and response in the working class and socialist movement in all countries. The extent of this response proved the correctness of the decision to go ahead with the launching of the International, despite the initial limited basis, in the confidence that its existence would prove a powerful centre of attraction and stimulate the development within each country.

This swing to join the Third International drew in its wake the majority of the leading parties of the old Second International, apart from the British Labour Party, the German Right-Wing Social Democrats, the Austrians, the Swedes, the Belgians and the Dutch. In some cases, with the ebb of the revolutionary tide, or by right-wing manipulation of the party machine, or through division over the principle of exclusion of the old discredited right-wing or centrist leadership, decisions of adhesion were subsequently reversed, and only a minority remained as the Communist Party. During 1919 decisions to join the Communist International were taken by a number of parties including the Italian Socialist Party; the Norwegian Labour Party; the Swedish Left-Socialist Party; the Swiss Socialist Party Conference (reversed by a referendum); the Hungarian Social-Democratic Party (which amalgamated with the Communists until the fall of the Soviet regime); the British Socialist Party; the Bulgarian main Social Democratic Party (the "Narrows"); the Greek Socialist Labour Party; the Socialist Labour Party of Yugoslavia; the International Socialist League of South Africa; the Japanese Socialist Party; the United States Socialist Party referendum majority (by 3,475 to 1,444, but resisted by the leadership); and left sections of minorities in parties dominated by the

right wing. The Czech Social-Democratic Congress majority in the summer of 1920 was for affiliation to the Communist International, but the Executive postponed the Congress to prevent the affiliation taking place; and the Czech Communist Party, representing the majority of the old Czech Social-Democratic Party, had in consequence to be formed at a Congress called independently. Various trade union organisations declared for affiliation, including the Spanish General Confederation of Labour, the Italian Syndicalist Union, and later in 1921 the South Wales Miners' Federation. In the key cases of France and Germany, the French Socialist Party decided to join at its Tours Congress in December, 1920, by a majority of 3,208 to 1,082, and became the French Communist Party (the defeated minority carrying on as the "Socialist Party"); and the German Independent Socialist Party, founded under the leadership of Kautsky, Haase and Ledebour in 1917, and with a membership of 850,000 in 1920, decided at its Halle Congress in October, 1920, to join by a majority of 237 to 156, and united with the Communist Party to form the United Communist Party of Germany.

4. FROM THE SECOND TO THE FOURTH CONGRESS OF THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONALE

By the time of the Second Congress in July and August, 1920, there were delegates from parties and organisations in forty-one countries, as well as consultative delegates from the French Socialists, German Independents and others. This rapid extension of support among a wide range of the old socialist parties, while it reflected the undoubted wave of enthusiasm for the new Communist International, also presented problems. For these parties, at the same time as conference or referendum votes truly expressed the desire of the rank and file to advance to the platform and policy of communism, were still the old social-democratic parties of the Second International, retaining in a number of leading cases the old right-wing or centrist leadership. However strong the mass desire to advance to the basis of communism, the tradition of unity, including the maintenance of an old existing leadership, despite ideological differences, was also strong. Some of the key leaders of these parties even expressed the view in private conversation (so L. O. Frossard, Secretary of

the French Socialist Party, in a talk with the present writer in the summer of 1920, when he anticipated the victory of the vote for the Third International at the coming Tours Congress in October) that the best thing to do was to let the tide flow and the affiliation take place to satisfy the emotional aspirations of the membership, but that Moscow could not exercise control from a distance, and that the practical working of the party would go on as before.

Lenin and the Second Congress of the Communist International cut the Gordian knot of this problem by a unique and drastic method. At the same time as the Statutes of the International were drawn up, and gave clear expression to the revolutionary aims, the practical obligations, and the basic principles of international discipline and democratic centralism, of the new International, carrying forward the traditions of the First, there were adopted at the same time the famous Twenty-One "Conditions of Admission to the Communist International". This document, noting the flood of applications of parties and groups of mixed character and leadership, moving from the bankrupt Second International and seeking to join the new International, and remarking that "the Communist International is becoming, to some extent, fashionable", focused attention on "the danger of dilution by unstable and irresolute elements which have not yet completely discarded the ideology of the Second International". This applied especially to some of the larger parties, where there was a majority of the membership adhering to communism, but where there continued a reformist, social-pacifist or centrist wing still influentially placed in the leadership. The fate of the Hungarian revolution had demonstrated the danger of this situation. Hence very precise conditions were laid down obligatory on all parties desiring to become communist parties: the break with reformism, social-pacifism and centrism, not only in words, but in practice, by the removal of all representatives of such trends from leading positions; strict control of parliamentary groups and the party press to be subordinate to the party; consistent activity in mass workers' organisations; fulfilment of precisely defined practical revolutionary tasks in every sphere, including active support of the national-liberation movement; unconditional support of any Soviet republic against counter-revolutionary forces; demo-

cratic centralism and iron discipline in organisation. The declaration explicitly named "notorious opportunists, such as Turati, Modigliani, Kautsky, Hilferding, Hilquit, Longuet, MacDonald, etc.", as ineligible "to appear as members of the Communist International. That could only lead to the Communist International becoming in many respects similar to the Second International, which has gone to pieces".

The response to these stringent conditions varied in the key larger parties from Western and Central Europe which had entered or were proposing to enter the Communist International. The French Socialist Party and the German Independents accepted the conditions. The Italian Socialist Party, which had been one of the earliest to affiliate in March, 1919, clung to its tradition of a united composite leadership including the right-wing Turati, and the Leghorn Congress in January, 1921, rejected the conditions by a vote of 92,029 for the centrist wing led by Serrati and 14,695 for the right wing, against 54,785 for the Communists, who thereon formed a separate Communist Party. The Norwegian Labour Party broke away in 1923 on the issue of refusal to accept international central direction.

The Statutes of the Communist International adopted at the Second Congress cited the rules of the First International and proclaimed the undertaking "to continue and to carry through to the end the great work begun by the First International Working Men's Association". In accordance with the declaration of the rules of the First International that "the emancipation of the workers is not a local, not a national, but an international problem", the Statutes of the new International sought to make a break with the loose and impotent federalism of the Second International which had ended in disaster, and to return to the principle and methods of "a strongly centralised organisation" as in the First International. "The Communist International must in fact and in deed be a single communist party of the entire world." Similarly in contrast to the Second International the new International must unite the working people of the entire world without distinction of colour or race:

> "The Communist International breaks once and for all with the traditions of the Second International, for whom in fact only white-skinned people existed. The task of the Communist International is to liberate the working people of the entire world. In its ranks the white, the yellow, and the black-skinned peoples—the working people of the entire world—are fraternally united."

The aim was proclaimed to establish "an international Soviet republic as a transitional stage to the complete abolition of the State".

The Second Congress was the most important initiating and creative Congress of the Communist International, in that it laid down, not only the constitution and rules, but set out and defined the basic theses, both of principle and of practical policy, of communism on all the great questions, not only of the general international situation, but also in each sphere of activity: parliamentarism; trade unionism and the factory; the agrarian question; the national and colonial question; the role of the communist party.

The Theses on the National and Colonial Question, which were drafted by Lenin, broke new ground in setting out the conception of the development of the international revolution against world imperialism on the basis of the "close alliance" of the Soviet Republic and working class in the advanced countries with the national-liberation movement of the oppressed peoples in all the subject countries of imperialism, and indicated the practical tasks of the communist parties to support the revolutionary liberation movement in these countries, at the same time as "rallying the constituent elements of the future proletarian parties".

In pursuance of these principles there was held at Baku in the month following the Second Congress, in September, 1920, the first Congress of the Peoples of the East, attended by 1,891 delegates, and setting up a Council of forty-seven members, representing twenty nationalities. A Communist University of Toilers of the East was set up in Moscow in 1921. During these and the following years Communist Parties were formed in the leading Asian countries: in Indonesia in 1920; in India, initially by émigrés in Tashkent, in 1920 or 1921: in China in 1921, developing from previous groups since 1918; in Japan in 1921, carrying forward from the old pre-1914 Socialist Party of Katayama, who continued on the Executive of the Communist International; and in the subsequent years in Burma, Malaya, Indochina, Korea and other countries.

In the trade union field the Red International of Labour Unions was formed in July, 1921, and claimed to have the affiliation of two fifths of world trade unionism in opposition to the reformist International Federation of Trade Unions reconstituted at Amsterdam in 1919 under right-wing leadership.

The Third Congress of the Communist International in July, 1921, met at a time when, as the resolution on the international situation recognised, the immediate post-war revolutionary offensive had met with defeats outside the Soviet Union and capitalism had succeeded to re-establish itself and was resuming the offensive. Hence the task became to concentrate on the new tactical tasks appropriate to this situation, defensive struggles, partial demands, patient work in mass organisations and immediate limited mass struggle, and the organisation of the newly formed communist parties to end the social-democratic traditions of organisation and become capable of fulfilling their revolutionary tasks of mass leadership. "A number of mass communist parties have been formed which, however, nowhere yet possess the actual leadership of the majority of the working class in real revolutionary struggle." The most important Theses of the Third Congress were those on Tactics and on Organisation; there were also theses on work among women, the cooperative movement, the young communist movement and the Red International of Labour Unions.

The key slogan of the Third Congress was: "To the Masses!" It had become necessary to combat various left sectarian and adventurist trends, illustrated in the "theory of the offensive" in Germany or anti-parliamentarism in Italy, or anarcho-syndicalist tendencies in France and Britain and opposition to working in reactionary trade unions. The Third Congress first put forward the conception of the "united front", or limited agreements for common action for immediate aims. This line was further developed in the Executive Directives on the United Front in December, 1921.

These first three Congresses of the Communist International were the decisive formative Congresses for the formation of the foundations of communist programme, policy and tactics, and the initial shaping and development of the newly formed communist parties on this basis. In all these three Congresses Lenin played the most direct active part and drafted many of the key documents.

By the time of the Fourth Congress in November, 1922, attended by delegations from sixty-two countries, Lenin was stricken in health, after his first stroke in May, 1922, and was only by iron will and at the cost of exhaustion able to give one Report on "Five Years of the Russian Revolution and Prospects of the World Revolution". This Report was the last public speech he was able to make to the international working-class movement, and in every passage threw memorable light on the perspective of the Russian and international situation. It was in the course of this Report that he laid his final main emphasis on the fulfilment of the Third Congress resolution on the organisation of Communist Parties as the key to the future success of the world revolution. Recognising the objection of "foreign comrades" that the resolution was "too Russian" and "unintelligible to foreigners", he suggested in his accustomed profoundly ironic fashion that the Russian people were of course very backward, and still learning to read and write, and that the Western comrades were far more advanced and "need something higher", but that the example of the Italian Fascisti (the Italian fascist coup of Mussolini had just taken place in October, 1922) might yet "render us a great service" by revealing to the "enlightened" Western comrades that they still needed to learn the elementary principles and practice of revolutionary organisation. These last warning words of Lenin to the international working class, with the immediate sensing of the significance of fascism as the testing of the Western movement, threw a searchlight on the whole character of the epoch in front.

5. RESURRECTION OF THE SECOND INTERNATIONAL

As soon as the war was over the right-wing leaders of the bankrupt Second International, who had joined up with their respective imperialist masters, and had reviled one another as the enemy and called on the workers to slaughter one another, now hastened to get together again on the basis of the common platform of hostility to the socialist revolution.

There was some initial difficulty in this resumption of association, since the mutual accusations on the basis of servility to their rival imperialist masters had been very violent, and sore feelings remained. The right-wing leaders of the Belgian Labour Party refused to participate in the initial Berne

Conference in 1919, on the ground that they could not meet in a common conference with the German Social-Democrats. The American Federation of Labour took the same attitude. Controversy over "war guilt" occupied a prominent place in the earlier conferences. A solution was eventually found on the basis of blaming everything on the vanished "old regime" in Germany, and regarding the abortive 1918 German revolution, in which the White Guard "Free Corps", armed by Social-Democracy, were slaughtering the militant workers and the most heroic leaders of the old Second International, as having satisfactorily wiped the slate clean. Community of hatred of communism covered a multitude of sins, and outweighed the differences of rival imperialist interests which the various right-wing social-democratic leaderships in fact represented.

The Berne Conference in February, 1919, was called by a Committee of right-wing social-democratic leaders (Henderson, Vandervelde, Albert Thomas) appointed during the war by the "Inter-Allied Labour and Socialist Conference", in March, 1918. This was a gathering of Entente Powers pro-war social-democratic representatives, and had no standing in relation to the old Second International. Thus the attempted resurrection of the Second International by right-wing social-democracy after the war had no claim to legitimacy in relation to the old Second International, save that the old secretary Camille Huysmans, continued to function.

The Berne Conference was mainly called to meet parallel to the Versailles Peace Conference and present demands on behalf of the organised labour movement with regard to the proposed League of Nations, territorial questions and an International Labour Charter. Invitations were sent both to socialist and to trade union organisations. In the case of Britain this was interpreted to mean the Labour Party and the Trades Union Congress to have the monopoly of representation, and to exclude the socialist parties (British Socialist Party, Independent Labour Party, Fabian Society) which had been directly affiliated to the old Second International from the early days before the Labour Party was affiliated, also after the Labour Party had been admitted in 1908. The Belgian and American Federation of Labour rejected the invitation, as explained, on the grounds of hostility to German Social-

Democracy. The parties associated with Zimmerwald, including the official parties of Italy, Switzerland, Serbia and Rumania refused to attend a conference called by pro-war representatives. Italy was only represented by the tiny reformist group of Bissolati and Bonomi, who had been expelled from the party already in 1912 for supporting the predatory war of Italian imperialism in Tripoli. Poland was only represented by Pilsudski's Polish Socialist Party, and not by the Polish Social-Democrats. Russia was "represented" by Mensheviks and Right-Wing Socialist-Revolutionaries who were allied with the White Guards, Tsarist officers and Western imperialists in making war on the Russian socialist revolution. The same applied to the "representatives" of Estonia, Latvia, Armenia and Georgia. On this basis the claimed representation of twenty-six countries was much narrower in practice. The main representation was in practice the British Labour Party and Germany, with the Dutch and Scandinavians, Austria and Spain, and temporarily France (shortly to affiliate to the Communist International).

The first Congress of the resurrected Second International was held at Geneva in July and August, 1920, with seventeen countries represented. By this time the French Socialist Party, the German Independents and the Spanish Socialist Party had withdrawn. The two major parties were the British Labour Party and the German Majority Social-Democratic Party. A resolution was drawn up on "The Political System of Socialism", expressing the thesis of parliamentary democracy versus dictatorship. Another resolution on "Socialisation" still expressed the paper aim of "ownership and control by the community of all the industries and services essential for the satisfaction of the people's needs"; the formal aim of socialism had not yet been explicitly abandoned, as was to happen later. The headquarters was transferred to London, where the secretariat could be run under the practical control of the Labour Party.

Thus the international working-class movement was presented with the confrontation of two opposing international organisations in place of the previous Second International: the Communist International, carrying forward the communist teachings of Marx and Engels and the First International in the era of the world socialist revolution; and the

right-wing social-democratic International, which claimed to represent a resurrection of the Second International.

6. THE "TWO-AND-A-HALF" INTERNATIONAL

During this initial phase a number of parties were still undecided, or sought to pursue a centrist line and to reconcile the opposing principles and Internationals. A Conference of parties and groups representing this standpoint was held at Vienna in February, 1921, and formed the "International Working Union of Socialist Parties", which during its short existence came to be generally known as the "Vienna Union" or "Two-and-a-Half International". The main participants were the Independent Labour Party from Britain; the French minority after the adhesion of the French Socialist Party to the Communist International; the minority from the German Independents after the adhesion of the latter to the Communist International; the Austrian Social-Democrats who had been the traditional representatives of the so-called "Austro-Marxism" or centrism (right-wing social-democracy under a cover of highly elaborate Marxist phrases); the Czech Social-Democrats, after the withdrawal of the communist majority; the Hungarian Social-Democrats after breaking the union with the Communist Party; and the Russian Menshevik and Right-Wing Socialist-Revolutionaries. The Vienna Union passed a resolution which sought to reconcile capitalist democracy and working-class dictatorship, parliament and soviets, in an all-inclusive synthesis, and called for an all-inclusive International with simultaneous autonomy and independence for each national section and binding decisions to be accepted voluntarily by all national sections.

The Vienna Union, which disclaimed the intention of being a separate International, was included in the Conference of the three Internationals in 1922, following the initiative of the Communist International for negotiations for a united front. After the failure of these negotiations, the Vienna Union passed out of the picture, and merged with the right-wing social-democratic International at the Hamburg Congress in May, 1923, to form the "Labour and Socialist International", with the headquarters continuing in London.

7. UNITED FRONT AND REJECTION OF THE UNITED FRONT

The bankruptcy of the pre-war Second International had made necessary the foundation of the new Communist International, purged of opportunism, as Engels had predicted would arise from the outcome of the prospective European war. But the indispensable break with opportunism was made with the aim, not to divide the working class, but to open the road for the unity of the working class on the basis of common class interests, without the disruptive role of the spokesmen and allies of capitalism within the labour movement.

As soon as the immediate post-war revolutionary upsurge had ended in defeat in Western and Central Europe, mainly because the grip of the old social-democratic leadership on the machine of the organised labour movement was still sufficiently strong to disorganise and paralyse every militant offensive of the workers, it was clear that a dangerous situation was developing of capitalist restoration and defensive struggles, in which the working class was in fact divided between reformist and revolutionary leadership. Therefore the urgent need became to find the means, even while the differences of principle and organisation remained, to make possible the common united action of the working class in the immediate struggle recognised by all sections of the working class, irrespective of ultimate outlook or division of organisation.

This was the conception of the United Front. The Communist International at its Third Congress in July, 1921, was the first to sense this need and take the initiative in putting forward this aim. The conception and method of fulfilment was further developed in the Executive statement on the United Front in December, 1921, and the joint manifesto "For the United Working Class Front!" addressed to the "workers of all countries" by the Communist International and Red International of Labour Unions in January, 1922.

In addition to encouraging the aim of united front agreements and action within each country, the Communist International made direct approaches to the other Internationals for joint action in relation to urgent current issues, against the white terror and persecution of workers in Spain and Yugoslavia, for Russian famine relief, and, in relation to the open-

ing of the Washington Conference, for unity against the menace of a new imperialist war. These approaches did not obtain any response. However, following this, the Vienna Union proposed a joint conference of the three Internationals.

The Conference of the Executives of the three Internationals met in the Reichstag in Berlin during April, 1922. The representation included many of the leading figures of the international communist and social-democratic movement. The delegation of the Communist International was led by Klara Zetkin, and included Radek, Bucharin, Frossard, Smeral and Katayama. The delegation of the Second International was led by Vandervelde, and included Ramsay MacDonald, Wels, Ernest Bevin, De Man and Camille Huysmans. The delegation of the Vienna Union was led by Friedrich Adler, and included Longuet, Bauer, Grimm and Martov.

The Communist representatives opened the proceedings by presenting their proposals for the convocation of an International Labour Conference to consider

1) defence against the capitalist offensive;
2) struggle against reaction;
3) preparation of the fight against new imperialist wars;
4) assistance in the reconstruction of the Russian Soviet Republic;
5) the Treaty of Versailles and the reconstruction of the devastated regions.

The representatives of the Second International replied by objecting to the raising of the question of the Treaty of Versailles as a proposal reflecting the interests of the capitalist Stinnes; proceeded to a denunciation of "Bolshevik imperialism"; and demanded, as a prior condition for agreeing to any conference, the fulfilment of a series of ultimatum demands for intervention in the internal affairs of the Soviet Union, including:

1) a Commission on Georgia, Armenia, the Ukraine and other states in the Soviet Federation, and their right of self-determination;
2) release of political prisoners in Soviet Russia;
3) the forty-seven Socialist-Revolutionaries under trial for terrorism and armed insurrection against the Soviet revolution to be given "rights of defence, under the control of International Socialism".

The contrast between the two sets of proposals is revealing.

The Communist representatives not unnaturally replied in the face of this onslaught (the opening statement of the Communists had been presented in the most restrained form with no word of polemical attack against Social-Democracy) that this zeal of the Second International for "self-determination" in the case of Georgia, Armenia and the Ukraine against the Soviet regime had never been expressed on their behalf against their subjection to Tsarist rule, nor did this zeal for "self-determination" make any reference to India, Egypt or the Congo; and that similarly the zeal for the release of political prisoners did not apparently extend to the thousands of Communist prisoners held in jail in Germany by Social-Democracy. But the Communists reiterated their view that an International Labour Conference, to be of value, should be devoted, not to recrimination, but to united working-class action against capitalism:

> "We propose a Conference for action: a Conference to decide what is to be done at this moment when capital is gathering together, not to reconstruct the world, but to plunder the whole world. What are we to do about unemployment? What are we to do about the wave of capitalist lock-outs? That is our programme. Do you want to discuss it? We are ready for discussion."

This approach did not please the representatives of the Second International, who insisted on their anti-Soviet ultimatum demands as the price for agreeing to any International Conference. The Communist delegation finally agreed to some of these extortionate demands (Commission on Georgia; no death sentences for the forty-seven S.R.s, and right to choose their own defenders, with attendance of representatives of the three Executives at the trial), which it accepted, as was made plain in a written declaration, "because of its desire to further, and not to obstruct, the slightest advance in the direction of the united front". On the basis of this concession from the Communist delegation agreement was reached in principle to convene an International Labour Conference at an unspecified date "as soon as possible", and to call for mass working-class demonstrations in April or on May Day.

1) for the eight-hour day;
2) for the struggle against unemployment;
3) for united action of the working class against the capitalist offensive;
4) for the Russian revolution, for starving Russia, for the resumption by all countries of political and economic relations with Russia;
5) for the re-establishment of the working-class front in every country and in the International.

A Commission of Nine was set up from the three Executives to prepare the International Conference.

Lenin sharply criticised the concessions made by the Communist delegation as unjustified:

"In my opinion our representatives were wrong in agreeing to the following two written conditions: first, that the Soviet Government does not apply the death penalty in the case of the forty-seven Socialist-Revolutionaries; second, that the Soviet Government permits representatives of the three Internationals to be present at the trials.

"These two conditions are neither more nor less than a political concession on the part of the revolutionary proletariat to the reactionary bourgeoisie. If anyone has any doubt of the correctness of this definition then, in order to remove the political hesitation of such a person it is sufficient to present the following questions: would the British or any other modern government permit representatives of the three Internationals to attend a trial of Irish workers charged with rebellion? Or the trial of the workers implicated in the recent rebellion in South Africa? Would the British or any other government, in such, or similar circumstances, agree to promise that they will not apply the death penalty to its political opponents?"

(Lenin, *We Have Paid too Much*, April 9, 1922. See Vol. X, p. 301, *Selected Works*)

But Lenin insisted that the concessions, once made and signed by the delegation on their behalf, must be scrupulously fulfilled. Vandervelde was allowed to appear for the defence of the Socialist-Revolutionary leaders, though he departed after he had found that he could not influence the Court; and the death sentences were not carried out on them.

Lenin's own view at this date on the necessity of the death sentence for political fomenters of disorganisation or counter-revolution in a critical phase had been expressed when he reported to the Eleventh Congress of the Russian Communist Party in March 1922, and described the indispensable importance of stern dicipline during the retreat (the retreat to which he referred being the phase of Nep or the New Economic Policy):

"When a real army is in retreat, machine guns are placed in the rear; and when an orderly retreat degenerates into a disorderly one, the command is given: 'Fire!' And quite right. . . .

"When a Menshevik says: 'You are now retreating; I have been in favour of retreating all the time. I agree with you, I am your man, let us retreat together,' we say in reply: 'For the public advocacy of Menshevism our revolutionary courts must pass sentence of death, otherwise they are not our courts, but God knows what.'

"They cannot understand this and exclaim: 'What dictatorial manners these people have!'. . . But had we listened to what they said we should have been unable to hold power for two months."

(Lenin, *Political Report to the Eleventh Congress of the Russian Communist Party (Bolsheviks)* March 27, 1922)

The fate of Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg (who from the most idealist revolutionary motives had mistakenly criticised the "dictatorial" and "authoritarian" character of Lenin's conception of the party and of the working-class dictatorship and had advocated more "libertarian" forms), as well as the fate of the Hungarian revolution, and subsequently the experience of the Spanish revolution and a hundred similar experiences have abundantly proved the justice of Lenin's stern judgement. "Had we listened to what they said, we should have been unable to hold power for two months."

The outcome of the meeting of the representatives of the three Internationals proved the justice of Lenin's criticism. The promised return for the concessions was never carried out. The Commission of Nine met in May, 1922, but broke up without result. The declaration of the Second International justify-

ing the breakdown made clear their opposition in principle to a united conference:

"The Second International cannot participate in any undertaking which would deceive the proletariat with a mere appearance of unity, while in reality the unity is only deception and a tactical manoeuvre, . . . The present position forces the Second International to emphasise as emphatically as possible the purely imperialist and capitilist attitude of the Soviet Government in Genoa."

Similarly MacDonald condemned "the ill-judged attempt to bring socialists and communists together without any preliminary effort to pave the way for the success of the project":

"So far from praising the promoters of such a crude project, they ought to be censured."

(J. Ramsay MacDonald, "The International Conference", *Daily Herald*, June 17, 1922)

The united front was thus rejected by Social-Democracy. The grave consequences were to make themselves felt in the subsequent years, as the way was opened for the advance of fascism.

CHAPTER VII

CAPITALIST STABILISATION AND THE PROSPECT OF WORLD SOCIALISM

"Genuine revolutionaries will perish (not that they will be defeated from outside, but that their internal affairs will collapse) only if—and they certainly will, if they do—they lose their sobriety of outlook and take it into their heads that 'the great, victorious, world revolution' can and must solve all problems in a revolutionary manner under all circumstances and in all spheres of action."

LENIN, *The Importance of Gold Now and After the Complete Victory of Socialism*, November, 1921.

In contrast to the utopian socialists, or to some of the enemy caricatures of supposedly "Marxist" revolutionary socialism, Marxism has always taught that the world socialist revolution can be no dream of a millenium or sudden conquest of power by the international working class, but can only constitute a prolonged and complex epoch, with many ups and downs, extending over many decades.

As far back as 1851 Marx wrote:

"We say to the workers: 'You will have to go through fifteen, twenty, fifty years of civil wars and international wars, not only in order to change existing conditions, but also in order to change yourselves and fit yourselves for the exercise of political power.'"

(Marx, *Revelations on the Communist Trial at Cologne*, 1851)

Similarly Lenin wrote:

"The transition from capitalism to socialism occupies an entire historical epoch."

(Lenin, *The Proletarian Revolution*, 1918)

And again:

"The socialist revolution cannot take place in any other form than that of an epoch, uniting the civil war of the proletariat against the bourgeoisie in the advanced countries with a whole series of democratic and revolutionary movements, including movements for national liberation, in the undeveloped, backward and oppressed nations. Why is this? Because capitalism develops unevenly."

(Lenin, *On a Caricature of Marxism and Imperialist Economism*, 1916)

This uneven development of the world socialist revolution, with zig-zags, with ups and downs, with variations in the tempo, as well as in the conditions in different countries, brings corresponding problems for the international working-class movement. As the first tumultuous revolutionary upsurge of 1917-1920 began to subside, and give place to victories of the imperialist old order outside the Soviet Union, the Third and Fourth Congresses of the Communist International in 1921 and 1922 were increasingly occupied, as indicated in the proposal for the united front already described, with the consequent problems for the working-class movement. A fight had to be conducted, not only against opportunism and centrism, but also against ultra-left would-be "revolutionary" trends which could only isolate, disrupt and destroy the vanguard. Lenin wrote his *Left-Wing Communism, An Infantile Disorder* in 1920. The task of the newly formed communist parties, it was again emphasised at these congresses, was to win the majority of the working class, and to develop their entire organisation and structure and methods of work to become capable of fulfilling the requirements of mass leadership, both in the immediate daily struggle, and for the future advance to the conquest of political power. Again and again it was emphasised at these congresses that the true communist is not he who only swims with the stream when it is rising to a high point, but the serious revolutionary who is capable of consistently carrying forward the daily, slogging, seemingly unrewarding tasks of the movement for years, and

for decades, if need be, while the tide is low, with inextinguishable confidence in the future victory, and with the ability to arouse that same confidence among those with whom he works.

1. EBB OF THE REVOLUTIONARY TIDE

By 1923 the successful maintenance or restoration of capitalist rule in Western and Central Europe had been completed, and the revolutionary wave after the First World War had ended in defeat outside the Soviet Union. In Britain Black Friday in April, 1921, had marked the turning point, with the collapse of the Triple Alliance and the full onslaught of the capitalist offensive; and by 1922 the Coalition Government of Lloyd George had given place to the first purely Conservative Government since the earliest years of the century. In Germany in the summer of 1923 a renewed revolutionary situation had flared up with the French occupation of the Ruhr and the inflation crisis; but at that time the leadership of the still recently formed Communist Party was not able to respond to the possibilities.

This ebb in the revolutionary tide did not mean that the general crisis of capitalism was solved, or that the revolutionary ferment did not continue to be manifested in major struggles or uprisings at one point or another during the following years. In Britain the working-class militancy which had been betrayed on Black Friday in 1921, won the engagement of Red Friday in 1925, leading on to the general strike in 1926, culminating in a renewed betrayal on a larger scale and a consequent heavy depression of the movement. 1927 saw the Vienna rising and the Indonesian revolt. 1925 to 1927 were the years of the sweeping advance of the Chinese national revolution up to the betrayal by the Kuomintang leadership represented by Chiang Kai Shek and the consequent transition to a new stage. The Meerut trial of 1928 revealed the advance of the Indian working class, followed by the mass national movement of civil disobedience of 1930-1932.

But what did follow the defeat of the working-class revolt in Western and Central Europe by 1923 was a measure of economic restoration and stabilisation of capitalism, mainly based on the direct economic-political intervention of the

wealthier and more powerful United States capitalism in Europe, through the Dawes Plan to regulate the German economy with the aid of massive dollar credits. This operation was accomplished through the agency of the MacDonald Labour Government in Britain and the Herriot Radical Government in France. The success of this operation was followed by the temporary return of Britain, now again under Conservative rule, to the gold standard in 1925, and the Locarno Treaties in the same year combining Britain, France, Belgium, Germany and Italy in a West European alliance, with the point obviously directed against the Soviet Union.

The Fifth Congress of the Communist International in 1924 analysed the character of this relative stabilisation of capitalism, and its political expression in some cases through social-democratic or radical-bourgeois governments, and in other cases through methods of fascism and suppression of the militant working class. The meeting of the Enlarged Executive in March and April, 1925, characterised the stabilisation as "partial, relative and temporary".

2. THE SOVIET UNION AND THE ADVANCE TO SOCIALISM

This period of setback of the international working-class movement also involved problems for the development of the Soviet revolution. The prolonged years of imperialist war, interventionist wars and civil wars had left a devastated economy. By 1920 the output of large-scale industry was barely one seventh of pre-war. If the working-class revolution had conquered also in an advanced industrial country like Germany, the tasks of reconstruction would have been by comparison easier. But, as Lenin insisted from the outset, already most notably in the controversy against Trotsky over the Brest Treaty, reality had to be faced, however distasteful, and the future of the Russian revolution could not be staked on assuming the date of the European revolution. In face of the delay of the working-class revolution in the rest of Europe, the path of reconstruction and of the advance to socialism would have to be found also in the conditions of the devastated Russian economy, with limited resources, and surrounded by a hostile capitalist world.

Before his death Lenin was able to give guidance on the path forward in these conditions. The first step was the transition from war communism to the New Economic Policy. The regime of war communism had been imposed by necessity, and had no place in the original plans of the Bolsheviks for the path of advance to reconstruction and socialism (outlined in Lenin's address of April 29, 1918, in "The Immediate Tasks of the Soviet Power"), which had contemplated a step-by-step transition following the establishment of working-class power in alliance with the peasantry. The hardships of the years of war communism, shortage, rationing and the requisitioning of the peasants' surplus gave rise to wide discontent among the backward sections, especially among the peasantry. So long as the menace of the restoration of the landlords by the White Guards and the Entente was imminent, the alliance of the working class and peasantry held firm to defeat it. Once this menace had been thrust back, the growth of discontent could endanger the alliance. The Kronstadt rising in March, 1921, spotlighted the danger. This rising was not of the famous revolutionary sailors of Kronstadt, who had already either given their lives or transferred to other fronts of the revolutionary battle, but of new politically inexperienced recruits from the peasantry. The slogan spread among them by the counter-revolutionary agents was "Soviets Without the Communist Party", thus revealing that support for Soviet power was too strongly entrenched among the masses to be directly challenged, and that the method had to be chosen of trying to undermine it by robbing it of its vanguard, the dynamo which alone could maintain it and make it effective, the Communist Party. In the same way the Hungarian counter-revolutionary attempt in 1956 at first spoke only of the "reform of communism", withdrawal from the socialist camp, and the like, and only later began to reveal openly its fascist aims.

Lenin and the Tenth Congress of the Russian Communist Party in March, 1921, were quick to respond to the emergency. At the same time as the Red Army, including delegates from the Tenth Congress who hastened straight to the field of battle, stormed the reputed impregnable Kronstadt fortress and crushed the rising, the Tenth Congress adopted the New Economic Policy. The New Economic Policy, or Nep as it came to be called, replaced the requisitioning of the peasants' surplus by the agricultural tax in kind, leaving them free to sell the remainder in the open market. The free market

of commodity relations, also for small traders and artisans, or small-scale capitalism was thus restored at the lower levels, but with the commanding heights of major industry, banking and the monopoly of foreign trade remaining in the hands of the workers' state. At the same time the Soviet Government offered the lease of enterprises as concessions to foreign capitalists, provided the Soviet labour code was observed. At the Genoa Conference in 1922 the Soviet Government offered to negotiate on the question of repayment of pre-war debts and compensation to expropriated foreign capitalists, and even to withdraw counter-claims for compensation for damage through the interventionist wars, if large-scale credits were agreed and aid in industrial reconstruction. These offers were not taken up by the Western capitalists, who preferred to see the workers' state having to struggle to develop industry from its own devastated resources and backward conditions with no outside aid and no treasurehouse of primary accumulation (like the colonial plunder of Asia and Africa, on the basis of which the Western capitalist industrial revolution was carried through).

Nep was, as Lenin said, a "retreat". But it was a controlled retreat in order to advance. Needless to say, the entire capitalist world and all the spokesmen of social-democracy joyfully proclaimed the bankruptcy of socialism and the return to capitalism.

> "It is a capitalist economy that we see rising again; a capitalist economy ruled by the new bourgeoisie, which supports itself upon the millions of peasant economy."
>
> (Otto Bauer, *The New Course in Soviet Russia*, Vienna, 1921)

All the customary denunciations were uttered by super-revolutionaries in the Western capitalist world, castigating Lenin and the leadership of the Russian Communist Party for their "surrender to capitalism", "surrender to imperialism", or "the purely imperialist and capitalist attitude of the Soviet Government at Genoa" (Declaration of the Second International in May, 1922, justifying their refusal of the united front).

Lenin and the Communist Party were well aware of the danger of the small capitalist elements released by Nep, especially the kulaks in the countryside, growing on the basis

of the free market and eventually challenging the proletarian state. But they saw Nep as a necessary stage of reconstruction, permitting the first recovery of the economy from war-time devastation, and involving at the same time continuous struggle between the socialist and capitalist elements. In this struggle the working class held the decisive levers of power through its control of the state and through its ownership of the main means of production, the land, the larger industrial enterprises, the banks and the monopoly of foreign trade. On this basis the working class would be able to lead the way in building large-scale industry and developing electrification. This in turn would prepare the conditions for the transition to large-scale cooperative agriculture in place of the domination of the kulak. Along this road would be achieved the successful advance of backward Russia to socialism, despite the delay of the revolution in the West.

Such was the vision set out by Lenin in the last years of his life. Already before the 1917 revolution he had indicated (in his article on *The United States of Europe Slogan* in 1915) that, in consequence of the uneven development of capitalism, "the victory of socialism is possible first in several or even in one capitalist country", and that "the victorious proletariat of that country" would "expropriate the capitalists and organise its own socialist production", and on this basis, having successfully established its own socialist production, would confront the capitalist world, "attracting to its cause the oppressed classes of other countries".

By 1922, at the Eleventh Congress in April, Lenin declared that the retreat had ended and the time had opened for the offensive against the capitalist elements and the mastering of all the tasks of building large-scale industry and the state organisation of trade as the next phase in the advance to socialism. In his final speeches and article he concentrated on this theme. In November, 1922, in his last public speech, before the Moscow Soviet, he said:

> "We have brought socialism into everyday life. Nep Russia will become Socialist Russia."

Similarly in one of his last articles, *On Cooperation*, in the beginning of 1923, he wrote that with "the power of the state over all large-scale means of production, the power of the state in the hands of the proletariat, the alliance of the proletariat

with the many millions of small and not very small peasants", and with the role of the cooperatives in the new phase, they had "all that is necessary in order to build complete socialist society".

This vision of Lenin is fulfilled today in the mighty Socialist Soviet Union, already the first industrial power in Europe and the second in the world, and with the near prospect approaching of outstripping also the United States. A far cry from the ruined backward Russia of 1920, when all the fainthearts like the Western socialistic novelist H. G. Wells could see only devastation and hopelessness, and Lenin's piercing vision could with confidence see the future.

Could the Soviet Union survive and successfully build socialism if the delay of the working-class revolution in Western Europe were to continue? Lenin examined this question in the last article that he wrote, in March, 1923, and gave his answer:

> "Shall we be able to hold on ... while the West European capitalist countries are consummating their development to socialism? But they are consummating it not as we formerly expected. They are not consummating it by the gradual 'maturing' of socialism, but by the exploitation of some countries by others, by the exploitation of the first of the countries to be vanquished in the imperialist war, combined with the exploitation of the whole of the East. On the other hand, precisely as a result of the first imperialist war, the East has been definitely drawn into the revolutionary movement, has been definitely drawn into the general maelstrom of the world revolutionary movement."

It was in the context of this analysis of the world situation, including the situation in Western Europe, that he made his famous prediction:

> "In the last analysis, the upshot of the struggle will be determined by the fact that Russia, India, China, etc., account for the overwhelming majority of the population of the globe. And it is precisely this majority that during the past few years has been drawn into the struggle for emancipation with extraordinary rapidity, so that in this respect there cannot be the slightest shadow of doubt what the final outcome of the world struggle will be. In this sense, the complete victory of socialism is fully and absolutely assured."
>
> (Lenin, *Better Fewer, But Better*, March 1923)

Thus in Lenin's view the perspective of the future advance of the Soviet Union and the world socialist revolution did not depend on the *prior* development of the working-class revolution in *Western* Europe. The victory of the working-class socialist revolution in Russia in 1917 was accelerating revolutionary development in the most vulnerable regions of imperialism, in China, India and other countries oppressed by imperialism, and thereby, alongside the key factor of the construction of socialism in the Soviet Union, changing the balance of forces in the world, undermining the foundations of the imperialist economic and political systems in the countries of Western Europe, with their reflection in the temporary dominance of reformism, and so preparing the conditions for the advance to socialism also in all Western countries. This perspective carried forward the similar perspective already indicated by Marx subsequent to 1850, and exposes the caricature presented by current capitalist and social democratic theorists as the supposed theme of "classical Marxism".

3. THE DEFEAT OF TROTSKYISM

Nevertheless, there was also in some circles of the Russian Communist Party a defeatist trend, a small minority group of miscellaneous opposition elements gathered around Trotsky, who echoed the Western capitalist and social-democratic scepticism about the possibility of building socialism in Russia, and who declared that this programme could not be fulfilled unless the working class won power in the advanced countries of Western Europe.

Trotsky was a brilliant orator and writer, a dynamically energetic mass agitator and leader and ruthless administrator; but in the political sphere wildly erratic, with a bigger bag of bumptious over-confident assertions and predictions all his life completely falsified by history than almost any other political leader, and with a venomous, almost pathological hatred of the basic principles of Lenin and Bolshevism, and the Communist Party, resulting in a long record of slander and disruption.

Before the revolution Trotsky fought Lenin continuously

during a long period of years over the basic questions of the Russian revolution, and especially over Lenin's conception of the party. "The whole structure of Leninism," he wrote in 1913, "is built up on lies and distortions, and contains the poisonous seed of its own decay" (Trotsky, letter to the Menshevik leader, Chkheidse, April, 1913). He found the outlook of Lenin an "evil-minded and morally repugnant" one, which "must be liquidated at the present moment at all costs, otherwise the party is threatened by moral and theoretical decay" (Trotsky, *Our Political Tasks*, 1906). Lenin in 1911 wrote of "Judas Trotsky"; described "men like Trotsky with his inflated phrases" as "the disease of our age"; found him "shameless and unprincipled" (*The New Faction of Conciliators or the Virtuous*, October, 1911) and in 1915 exposed "the inflated phraseology with which Trotsky always justifies opportunism". (*Defeat of "Our" Government in the Imperialist War*, July, 1915). It was not until the end of July, 1917, that Trotsky joined the Bolshevik Party, when his tiny group had no mass support. He was able to play an outstanding positive role in the Russian Socialist revolution during the initial years under the guidance of Lenin and the party. But even during these years he was repeatedly in conflict with Lenin on crucial issues, as over the Brest Treaty in 1918, when his bloc with the "Left Communists" (Bucharin, Radek and others) to defeat Lenin and prevent signature brought heavy losses to the revolution, and later over the trade union question. In 1921 his fight against Lenin for dictatorial anti-democratic methods in the trade unions, presented as a public opposition platform against Lenin's viewpoint, was accompanied, in the discussion preceding the Tenth Congress, by parallel opposition platforms of the "Workers' Opposition" (anarcho-syndicalist) and "Democratic Centralism" (for the right of factions inside the party). This situation led Lenin to move the resolution, adopted by the Tenth Congress in 1921, to ban henceforth "all groups formed on the basis of a particular platform" on pain of "unconditional and immediate expulsion". During the last year of Lenin's incapacitation through illness, Trotsky intensified his disruptive factional campaign, with his "Platform of the Forty Six" in October, 1923, circulated in defiance of the ban on factions, and published writings describing the alleged opportunist degeneration of the Old Bolshevik leaders

of the Communist Party as comparable to that of the leaders of the old Second International. All this belongs to the history of the Russian Communist Party, but had its international bearing as affecting the vanguard of the socialist revolution. The issue was brought before the Communist International, and the Fifth Congress in 1924 condemned the line of Trotsky and his groups as a petty-bourgeois deviation threatening the unity of the party and therefore threatening the rule of the working class in the Soviet Union.

After Lenin's death the offensive of Trotsky and his associates was developed on a major scale against the basic programme championed by Lenin before his death, accepted by the party, and championed by Stalin as spokesman of the party after the death of Lenin: the conception of the possibility of building socialism in the Soviet Union, despite the delay of the working-class revolution in the West. The platform of Trotsky condemned the conception of "socialism in one country" and falsely counterposed it to the world socialist revolution, presenting these as two supposedly contradictory alternatives between which a choice must be made. The Russian socialist revolution was supposed to be doomed unless the working class won power in Western Europe. This was in fact a continuance of the previous fight against Lenin over the Brest Treaty. As the battle developed, Trotsky was able to draw into association with him over this issue Zinoviev and Kamenev, the two waverers who had deserted on the eve of the Bolshevik revolution to divulge the plan of the insurrection to the enemy press, and whose expulsion Lenin had at that time consequently demanded. The controversy over the future of the socialist revolution became a key international issue.

Trotsky had already in the first decade of the twentieth century made clear his standpoint in opposition to that of Lenin on the future of the Russian revolution. Echoing, as in all his main conceptions beneath the cover of ultra-revolutionary phrases, the outlook of West European Social-Democracy and Menshevism, with its contempt for the backwardness of Russia and consequent scepticism of the possibility of a socialist revolution succeeding in Russia without the aid of the "advanced" West (not the outlook of Marx, who before his death recognised that the vanguard of revolution

had passed to Russia), he presented his theory in the name of a formula borrowed from Marx, "permanent revolution", but with a complete caricature of what Marx meant by this formula. In opposition to Lenin's theory of the democratic dictatorship of the working class and peasantry, representing the majority of the people, he counterposed to Tsarism as the direct alternative a Workers' Government, which after the defeat of Tsarism and the bourgeoisie with the aid of the peasantry would inevitably next come into conflict with the peasantry as a reactionary mass, and would in consequence be doomed to isolation and defeat unless the victory of the working-class revolution in Western Europe would come to the rescue:

> "In the absence of direct State support on the part of the European proletariat, the Russian working class will not be able to keep itself in power and to transform its temporary rule into a stable socialist dictatorship. There is no doubt about that."
>
> (Trotsky, *Our Revolution*, 1906)

In 1922 he repeated the same thesis:

> "A steady rise in socialist economy in Russia will not be possible until after the victory of the proletariat in the leading countries of Europe."
>
> (Trotsky, Epilogue to *Programme of Peace*, 1922)

To the careless non-Marxist reader this advocacy of the "world socialist revolution" or a West European socialist revolution as the alternative to the "narrow" "nationalist" "philistine" conception of "socialism in one country" might appear highly daring, "advanced", "revolutionary" and the true voice of what Fleet Street loves to call "classical Marxism". In fact it was the expression of defeatism; of lack of confidence in the powers of the Russian revolution; of black pessimism and hopelessness with regard to the prospect of the Russian revolution unless what Lenin ironically called the "fairy tale" with regard to the immediate situation in Western Europe were to come miraculously true; unless, that is, the guardian angel of the victorious West European working class establishing the dictatorship of the proletariat in advanced Western Europe were to come to the rescue. The really audacious, creative, revolutionary policy and perspective was that of Lenin, Stalin

and the Soviet Communist Party: to build socialism in the first base of the victorious working-class revolution, in spite of the delay of the working-class revolution in Western Europe; and through this triumphant construction of socialism to influence and stimulate the advance of the West European working class and the international revolution, as well as to create an impregnable fortress of the international socialist revolution. It was in this latest phase after Nep that Lenin wrote:

> "Now we are exerting our influence on the international revolution mainly by our economic policy. . . . The struggle has been transferred to this sphere on a world scale. If we fulfil this task, we shall have won on an international scale for certain and for all time."
>
> (Lenin, *Speech to the Tenth Conference of the Russian Communist Party*, May 28, 1921)

Already in 1920, when introducing the electrification programme, Lenin had said:

> "If Russia becomes covered by dense network of electric power stations and powerful technical installations, our communist economic development will become a model for the future socialist Europe and Asia."
>
> (Lenin, *Report to the Eighth Congress of Soviets*, December 22, 1920)

So far from the "state support on the part of the European proletariat" coming to the rescue of the otherwise doomed Russian revolution, as laid down by Trotsky to be the only path to salvation, it was the socialist power of the Soviet Union which had to come to the rescue of the West European working class crushed under the heel of fascism in consequence of having followed social-democratic leadership.

The defeatist opposition programme of Trotsky and of Zinoviev and Kamenev was rejected by the Soviet Communist Party and condemned by the Communist International. The last manifestation of the Trotsky-Zinoviev opposition bloc within the party was the "Platform of the Eighty Three" in 1927, which violated the ban on group platforms or fractions and led to their expulsion from the Central Committee. The voting throughout the party organisations showed 724,000 for the line of the Central Committee against 4,000 for the Trotsky-Zinoviev opposition bloc. Defeated within the party,

the Trotskyist faction, led by Trotsky, Zinoviev and Kamenev, attempted on the tenth anniversary of the socialist revolution to call directly on the masses in the streets with speeches and hostile posters against the leadership of the party and the Soviet Government. The call won no response; but the significance of this transition from inner-party factionalism to what was in fact, whatever the subjective intentions or grievances of those committing it, public anti-party and anti-Soviet incitement was unmistakable, and would have meant, if it could have won any mass support, the disruption of the Soviet regime and its replacement by civil war. Trotsky was expelled from the party, and later from the Soviet Union.

It was in this counter-revolutionary aspect that Trotskyism took on any significance in the international situation outside the Soviet Union during subsequent years. The issue was duly discussed in the international communist movement, and the Sixth Congress of the Communist International in 1928 unanimously rejected the appeal for re-instatement of the Trotsky group, characterising the group as "objectively an organ of struggle against the Soviet Power" and condemning "the counter-revolutionary political content of the Trotskyist platform". In practice no more than negligible and transient fragments of support were obtained by Trotskyism in a few countries. Some of these attempted to combine later in a so-called "Fourth International" in 1938, whose subsequent history was a history of feuds and schisms of grouplets.

The main international repercussion of Trotskyism was in Western capitalist circles which eagerly acclaimed and reproduced on a large scale for mass consumption the formulas about the bankruptcy of socialism in the Soviet Union, the restoration of capitalism, the degeneracy of the leadership, the betrayal of the revolution, Thermidor and the general theme of "the light that failed". Fleet Street during the subsequent years became full of Trotskyists who were "too revolutionary for the Communist Party", and who consequently found a home in lucrative editorial posts, from which they could pour out their venom against Communism and the Soviet Union as a betrayal of all the original ideals of Marxism and the revolution, thus simultaneously relieving their sensitive revolutionary consciences, shocked at the horrors of the Soviet Union and modern communism, and serving their millionaire

employers. Ultra-revolutionary phrases to cover an anti-Soviet and anti-communist content became the hallmark of Trotskyism during the middle decades of the twentieth century.

4. TOWARDS THE END OF RELATIVE STABILISATION

The Sixth Congress of the Communist International in 1928 gave the warning that the period of relative stabilisation of capitalism, analysed by the Fifth Congress in 1924, was now drawing to an end, and would give place to a new period, as a result of the forces let loose by the measure of restoration of capitalism, which would be characterised by extreme sharpening of economomic contradictions and crises, major political conflicts and the advance to war. The experience of the nineteen-thirties proved the truth of this prediction.

This was precisely the time when all the prophets of the Second International, and the established economic and political theorists and publicists of the capitalist world were celebrating the success of the restoration of capitalism, the elimination of economic crises, the conquest of poverty and unemployment, and the final disproof of Marxism and all revolutionary theories.

President Hoover proclaimed in 1928, on the very eve of the crash of 1929, that "the outlook for the world today is for the greatest era of expansion in history" (speech on July 27, 1928), and again that "unemployment in the sense of distress is finally disappearing; we in America today are nearer to the final triumph over poverty than ever before in the history of any land" (speech on August 11, 1928 accepting Republican renomination for President). Similarly the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* in its Fourteenth Edition, in a special editorial article under the heading "Capitalism", proclaimed the triumph of capitalism in ending the era of violent slumps and large-scale unemployment:

> "Capitalism is still accused of responsibility for avoidable unemployment, arising from periodic alternations of climaxes and depressions in trade activity, of 'booms' and 'slumps'. It is certain, however, that though there must always be some tidal movement of rise and fall, the former violence of these rhythms is now much abated in times of peace, owing to longer experience and fuller knowledge; to swifter information in every part of the globe of what

is happening in every other; to quicker transport, to better calculated control exercised by the great trusts and syndicates as indirectly by the great banking combinations and to the better adjustment altogether of supply and demand."

This judgement of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* was penned at the height of the boom in the summer of 1928, that is, at the same time as the Sixth Congress of the Communist International was making its opposite analysis of the growth of contradictions leading to the near approaching crash of stabilisation. Unfortunately for the reputation of the learned oracle of Western Anglo-American capitalism, the Fourteenth Edition was published in 1929, the year of the outbreak of the worst world economic crisis in the history of capitalism.

Social-Democracy, as always, repeated all the illusions of Western capitalism. The theorist of German Social-Democracy, Hilferding, stated at the Kiel Congress of his party at Kiel in 1927 that "we are in the period of capitalism which in the main has overcome the era of free competition and the sway of the blind laws of the market, and we are coming to a capitalist organisation of economy ... to organised economy", and that "organised capitalism in reality signifies the supersession, in principle, of the capitalist principle of free competition by the socialist principle of planned production". The conception of "organised capitalism" as equivalent to "socialist planned production", thereby superseding Marx, was thus no new discovery of Gaitskell, Harold Wilson or the younger Fabians after the Second World War, but was already the standard dogma of German Social-Democracy in the later nineteen-twenties during the boom on the eve of the world economic crisis and Nazism. Similarly Tarnov, the leading theorist of German trade unionism, declared at the Breslau Congress of the German Trade Union Federation:

"Marxism as a leading ideology of the working-class movement has outlived itself."

For "the first epoch" of capitalism, as he described it, "Marx and Engels were typical", but for modern capitalism "Ford is typical". Another theorist of German trade unionism, Naphthali, wrote:

"Cyclical development, under which there was a regular succession of prosperity and crisis, of which Marx and Engels wrote, applies to the period of early capitalism."

Yet another spokesman of German trade unionism proclaimed:

"One must not lose sight of the fact that the working class is a part of the capitalist system, the downfall of which system is its own downfall, and therefore the great historical duty of the working class is to obtain by means of the regulation of its place in that system the improvement of all social structure, which is again equivalent to the betterment of its own situation."

Nor were these illusions of blind faith in capitalism confined to German social-democracy. They were common to all the parties of the Second International in the period of capitalist stabilisation and boom preceding the crash. Welcoming the Bankers' Manifesto in 1926, Vandervelde, the leader of Belgian Social-Democracy, found that the outlook of finance-capital and of social-democracy was approximating:

"The language of the International of the Financiers is not very different from that of the Socialist International."

(Vandervelde, speech on October 29, 1926)

In Britain the same conceptions were spread by what became known as Mondism (so called from the joint talks of Sir Alfred Mond, representing the employers, and the General Council of the Trades Union Congress, initiated in 1928, for class co-operation) after the General Strike. The slogan of "Ford *versus* Marx" was popularised by the Independent Labour Party. Even as late as 1931 a belated younger theorist of the Labour Party was declaring:

"There are grounds for thinking that the situation is changing for the good. The wave of world revolution, on which the advance of communism is depending, has subsided. Capitalism has been successful up to a point in stabilising itself—though at the price of admitting into its structure socialist elements which will ultimately supersede it. . . . There is a good deal in the communist picture of a world in the grip of ineluctable conflict that is out of date."

(A. L. Rowse, *Politics and the Younger Generation*, 1931)

The writer argued that the most modern capitalist monopolies were showing an enlightened and benevolent tendency of scientific world organisation which held out the prospect of an ultimate "synthesis of common aims" with socialism. Unfortunately for the writer, he chose as his example of this progressive tendency of modern monopoly capitalism and potential ally with socialism—Kreuger:

> "It is noteworthy that one of the greatest and most progressive of modern finance corporations, the Swedish Kreuger and Toll Co., in a brilliant review of world conditions comes to conclusions not dissimilar.... When a great capitalist concern speaks in these terms, one seems to see a glimpse of the future in which the existing conflict between socialism and it is resolved in a synthesis of common aims."

The Preface of this book was dated 29 July, 1931. The collapse and exposure of Kreuger and his swindles, and Kreuger's own suicide, took place within eight months. A symbolic suicide.

In contrast to these illusions and false conceptions of the parties of the Second International during the period of capitalist stabilisation, the Communist International, which had already analysed the temporary and precarious character of the period of relative stabilisation, was able in 1928 at its Sixth Congress to predict the close approach of the end of the period of stabilisation, and the advent of a new period or "third period", following the first period of revolutionary upsurge after the war and the second period of relative stabilisation:

> "This third period, in which the contradiction between the growth of the productive forces and the contraction of markets becomes particularly accentuated, is inevitably giving rise to a fresh series of imperialist wars ... will inevitably lead—through the further development of the contradictions of capitalist stabilisation—to capitalist stabilisation becoming still more precarious, and to the severe intensification of the general crisis of capitalism. ... The development of the contradictions of capitalist stabilisation inevitably leads in the final analysis to the present 'stabilisation' period growing into a period of gigantic cataclysms."

It is not surprising that, when the crash followed in 1929 and spread out by 1931 to the most devastating world economic crisis on record, with fifty million unemployed, and the opening of the war offensive of Japanese imperialism in 1931, the United Senate Commission of Enquiry recalled the prediction of the Sixth Congress of the Communist International in the summer of 1928, made under what all Western capitalist and social-democratic observers had thought to be a clear sky, and gravely considered whether the world economic crisis might not possibly be a communist plot.

Once again the outlook of international communism or Marxism-Leninism was proved by the test of historical experience to be closer to reality than the outlook of the spokesmen of capitalism and social-democracy.

CHAPTER VIII

COMMUNISM, SOCIAL DEMOCRACY AND FASCISM

"Perhaps the Fascisti in Italy, for example, will render us a great service by explaining to the Italians that they are not yet sufficiently enlightened and that their country is not yet ensured against the Black-Hundreds. Perhaps this will be very beneficial."

LENIN, *Report to the Fourth Congress of the Communist International*, November 13, 1922.

The decade of the nineteen-thirties bore a distinctive character which has been universally recognised and unforgettably stamped in the conscious record of human experience. There were dark horrors in those years with the extending grip of fascism and the deepening descent into war through the complicity of the rulers of the West. But there was also great heroism in those years, and an upsurge of the popular movement in the struggle against fascism and to prevent the impending war. If victory was not won by the popular movement at that stage, if the war of fascism came despite all the efforts to avert it, nevertheless it was through the popular struggle of those years that the foundations were laid for the subsequent victory of the peoples of the world against fascism and the great advance which has followed.

1. DEFINITION OF FASCISM

Fascism as a term has come to be used to describe any form of reaction or counter-revolution, or even anything the speaker

dislikes. Some academic historians, with their customary lack of any sense of history, have sought to describe Plato's political theory of a slave-owning aristocracy holding property in common as a form of fascism. American senators, who fell over themselves with admiration of Mussolini and Hitler during the thirties, subsequently during the cold war phase sought to cash in on the popular hatred of fascism by describing communism as "red fascism". Of course the use of terms is anyone's free choice; there are no laws with sanctions. Anyone can describe communism as "red diabolism" or "red incest" if it helps to relieve their feelings.

However, fascism is in fact a definite historical phenomenon of a definite historical period and corresponding to specific conditions and characteristics which can be defined. Fascism arose as a special form of counter-revolution in the period of the general crisis of capitalism and following the opening of the world socialist revolution in 1917. The term was first used in Italy, where the revolutionary tide at the end of the First World War reached a high point, with the workers' occupation of the factories, and the mass Socialist Party temporarily adhering to the Communist International, but where the reformist leadership was finally able to dominate the majority of the working class and frustrate the revolution. The consequent situation of explosive disillusionment and frustration among wide sections was utilised to stage a mock "revolutionary" movement with "radical" slogans, which was in fact backed by the monarchy, the Army Command and the big industrialists, to preserve the old social order and deliver the most violent gangster offensive against the working-class organisations and democratic forms. Such was the classic first manifestation of fascism which was subsequently reproduced in varying forms in other countries.

Fascism is thus a form of counter-revolution. But not every counter-revolution is fascism. The conventional ideological anti-fascist interpretations of fascism see in fascism only the principle of "dictatorship" or "violence". This approach, which is the hallmark of the liberal and social-democratic schools of thought in relation to fascism sees fascism as the parallel extreme to communism, both being counterposed to liberal-capitalist democracy. Fascism is defined as "dictatorship from the right" in contrast to communism as "dictatorship

from the left". This line was expressed by the Labour Party manifesto of March, 1933, on "Democracy versus Dictatorship" to justify the Labour refusal of the united front against fascism.

This definition, however, which ignores class relations, will not stand up to analysis. "Dictatorships from the right" have existed for generations, and can exist in hundreds of forms, without constituting fascism. Tsarism was a "dictatorship from the right". But Tsarism was not fascism. The White Guard dictatorship of a Kolchak or a Denikin set up temporarily with Western subsidies and arms in regions of Russia after 1917 were "dictatorships of the right" (with social-democratic ministers participating); but they were not yet fascism. Fascism is certainly a reactionary dictatorship. But not every reactionary dictatorship is fascism. Fascism can only be defined in terms of class relations and the specific type of class situation in which it arises.

Fascism arose, not only in a specific historical period, in the period of the general crisis of capitalism and following the revolutionary upsurge at the end of the First World War, but also in a specific region: in capitalist Europe beyond the frontiers of the victorious socialist revolution in Russia; that is, in the countries of imperialism or closely linked with imperialism, and especially at first in the countries of Central and Southern Europe defeated in the First World War or most adversely affected by its consequences. It arose in countries racked by intense class contradictions, where there was a potential revolutionary situation, but where there was not yet a sufficiently developed revolutionary working-class leadership to be able to carry through a victorious socialist revolution; where the social-democratic leadership was able to maintain its hold on the majority of the working class to come to the rescue of capitalism and bar the road to the revolution, but in face of increasing working-class discontent; and where the discredited capitalist regime was able in consequence to utilise a motley array of demagogues, mouthing radical-sounding, chauvinist and racialist slogans, and in fact financed by big capital, in order to mobilise a reactionary "mass movement" of the most miscellaneous disillusioned and frustrated elements, mainly from the middle strata, but also from backward sections of the workers, to

make war on the organised working-class movement and thus prepare the way for the establishment of the terrorist dictatorship of the most aggressive and reactionary sections of big capital.

Klara Zetkin, the veteran leader of the old socialist movement, declared in a brilliant report on fascism at the Enlarged Executive of the Communist International in July, 1923, that "historically, fascism is the punishment of the proletariat in Western and Central Europe for failing to carry on the revolution begun in Russia". The same Executive gave a preliminary analysis of the character of fascism as seen in 1923:

> "Fascism is a characteristic phenomenon of decay, a reflection of the progressive dissolution of capitalist economy and of the disintegration of the bourgeois state.
>
> "Its strongest root is the fact that the imperialist war and the disruption of the capitalist economy which the war intensified and accelerated meant, for the broad strata of the petty and middle bourgeoisie, small peasants and the 'intelligentsia', in contrast to the hopes they cherished, the destruction of their former condition of life and especially their former security. The vague expectation which many in these social strata had of a radical social improvement, to be brought about by reformist socialism, have also been disappointed. The betrayal of the revolution by the reformist party and trade union leaders ... has led them to despair of socialism itself. The weakness of will, the fear of struggle shown by the way in which the overwhelming majority of the proletariat outside Soviet Russia tolerates this treachery, and under capitalist whips drudges to consolidate its own exploitation and enslavement, has robbed these small and middle bourgeois, as well as the intellectuals, brought into a state of ferment, of their belief in the working class as the mighty agent of a radical social transformation. They have been joined by many proletarian elements who, looking for and demanding action, feel dissatisfied with the behaviour of all political parties. Fascism also attracts the disappointed and declassed, the rootless in every social stratum, particularly ex-officers who have lost their occupation since the end of the war. This is particularly true of the defeated Central Powers. ...

"The old allegedly non-political apparatus of the bourgeois state no longer guarantees the bourgeoisie adequate security. They have set about creating special class-struggle troops against the proletariat. Fascism provides these troops."

Thus the distinctive character of fascism is not merely its counter-revolutionary role, but its method of organisation following the frustration of the socialist revolution, through the leadership and policy of social-democracy, to mobilise a special type of mass movement and semi-military army, initially outside the regular state machinery, composed of the most miscellaneous disillusioned and dissatisfied elements, in order to conduct an extra-legal war against the organised working-class movement and democracy, and finally, their initial job done, to be absorbed into the state machinery of the resulting fascist state.

Early embryonic forms of fascism in this specific sense can be traced in the White Guard counter-revolution in Finland in 1918 and in Hungary in 1919. In Finland, after the Socialist Party had won an absolute parliamentary majority in the election of 1916, reaction began to organise a special armed "Security Corps" outside the regular army and state machine. In self-defence the working class organised its Red Guards; and the civil war between these began by the end of 1917. With the aid of German troops the bourgeoisie won, and inaugurated the White Terror, in which "out of about 80,000 Red prisoners taken at the end of April, or subsequently arrested, more than 30,000 men and women are dead" (*Times*, February 11, 1919). Subsequently this "Security Corps" continued to be maintained in the Finnish state, also after the re-establishment of a measure of parliamentary democracy, as an extra-legal, yet officially recognised organisation.

It was in Italy, however, that the formal and conscious organisation of fascism first developed. Even in Italy the constitution of the fascist dictatorship went through a series of tentative stages during the initial years after the so-called "March on Rome" (conducted in fact by six Army generals; Mussolini arrived in a sleeping-car) in 1922, before reaching its completed form. Nazism in Germany revealed the fullest development of fascism in a highly advanced and industrialised Western state, where there had been the earliest and

strongest development of the organised social-democratic working-class movement in the world. The subsequent development of the Nazi dictatorship since 1933, with its elaborate apparatus of terror, pogroms, concentration camps, gas-chambers, extermination of millions and open drive to war for wholesale conquest and expansion horrified the peoples of the entire world—although not the multi-millionaire rulers of the West until to their amazement the sharp point was also turned against their own domination.

This special social composition of the mass army of fascism, as also of most of its agitators and leaders, from the most miscellaneous middle strata and declassed and rootless elements (the one case, in Britain, where a representative of the old landed aristocracy, Sir Oswald Mosley, Baronet, tried to found a fascist movement, ended in a conspicuous fiasco) led in the early stages to a considerable confusion on the class role of fascism. Fascism was widely described as a "revolution of the middle class" against both capitalism and the organised working-class movement. Certainly the fascists themselves loved to describe their doctrine as a "spiritual" doctrine of "the nation" above all classes. In their early agitational phase especially they would make much play with the professed aim of "socialism". German fascism called itself "National Socialism" (it was really Imperialist Anti-Socialism). The Nazi programme of Twenty Five Points, proclaimed "unalterable", contained such items as "abolition of unearned income"; "breaking of interest-slavery"; "nationalisation of all trusts"; "confiscation without compensation of land for communal purposes". Of course all this was subject to "interpretation". The "confiscation without compensation of land" was officially explained later as "directed in the first instance at the Jewish companies who speculate in land". With regard to the "breaking of interest-slavery" it was reported that when two earnest students and devotees of Nazism approached Goebbels for an explanation how it was to be done, they received the reply that the only "breaking" likely to take place would be of the heads of those who tried to understand it. Nevertheless, many gullible press journalists in the West, and also many of the reformist social-democratic leaders and organs swallowed this myth and peddled for a long time stories of the "socialist" and "anti-capitalist" character of fascism and Nazism. Thus

even after Hitler had come to power, the editorial of the *Daily Herald*, then the official organ of the Trades Union Congress and Labour Party, declared:

> "The 'National-Socialists', it is essential to remember, call themselves 'socialist' as well as 'national'. Their 'socialism' is not the socialism of the Labour Party, or that of any recognised Socialist Party in other countries. But in many ways it is a creed that is anathema to the big landlords, the big industrialists and the big financiers. And the Nazi leaders are bound to go forward with the 'socialist' side of their programme."
>
> (*Daily Herald*, editorial on "Hitler's May Day", May 2, 1933)

Thus Nazism in the view of the Labour Party was seen as almost a wing of socialism, a rather unorthodox variety of socialism, but "anathema to the big landlords, the big industrialists and the big financiers" (who, curiously enough, maintained it in funds and finally placed it in power).

This confusion on the class role of fascism will not stand up to the demonstration of inescapable facts. The fallacy arises from the confusion of the social composition of the membership of a party; or its ideological propaganda to win that membership, with its real class role which is determined by the class interests that it represents. Thus the Conservative Party assembles its millions of members and voters from the most diverse sections of the population, not merely from the handful of the upper class and the wealthy, but mainly from the salaried, small trading and other middle sections, and from millions of politically backward workers. The Conservative Party claims to represent "the nation" and be above classes. Nevertheless, the Conservative Party is in fact the party of big business, of the City, of the bankers, landlords and industrialists; all the rest is voting-fodder. Here the analysis of the real class role is relatively simpler, because of the public commanding positions are still held by the scions of the top landed and finance-capitalist aristocracy (Cabinets of Etonians), although the biggest monopoly interests remain in the background and supply the funds. But in a situation of extreme class contradictions and social convulsions as in Germany in the twenties the old type of German National Party of the Hugenbergs and the Hindenburgs would no longer suffice

to hold the masses, but could only prepare the way to hand over to the Hitlers and Goebbels and Goerings and Streichers, the lower-class rabble-rousers and gangsters as their nominees.

The real multi-millionaire interests which financed fascism, placed it in power, drew enormous profits from its power, and remained in possession of gigantic resultant profits and fortunes, long after the Hitlers, Goerings, Goebbels and Mussolinis had reached their dishonoured deaths, remained unmistakable. The financial backing of Hitler by big industry was already laid bare in the Hitler-Ludendorff trial of 1924 and in the Bavarian Diet Investigation Committee. "In later years the list of the alleged financial patrons of the National-Socialist movement became extremely long. Factory owners, managers, general counsel (syndici) were as thick as they might be on the subscription list of the Republican National Committee of the United States" (Mowrer, "Germany Puts the Clock Back", 1933). The Ruhr combines imposed a levy on every ton of coal to pay to the Nazis, and raised the price of coal to pay for this. For the Presidential election of 1932 alone Thyssen provided the Nazis with more than three million marks in a few days. Foreign supporters were stated to include Deterding, Kreuger and Ford. Paul Faure stated in the French Chamber of Deputies on February 11, 1932, that the foreign financial backers of the Nazis included the directors of the Czech Skoda armaments firm, controlled by Schneider-Creusot. The multi-millionaire Rothermere publicly proclaimed the *Daily Mail* to become an organ of Nazism and fascism. The open and avowed supporters of fascism in every country were the representatives of big capital, the Thyssens, Krupps, Monds, Deterdings and Owen Youngs.

Did the German multi-millionaires find themselves fooled and fleeced by the Nazis, in accordance with all the threats of confiscation and abolition of unearned income, after the latter had come to power with the aid of millionaire finance and anti-millionaire propaganda? On the contrary. The Thyssens and Krupps amassed bigger profits and fortunes than ever, through all the network of state regulation, "corporate systems", limitation of dividends and the rest of the parade of state monopoly capitalism, and had the additional advantage of prohibition of strikes, extermination of militant working-class leaders and abundant imported slave labour obtained

by the gangster wars. Between 1932 and 1939 the number of multi-millionaires in Germany increased by 180. When Alfred Krupp came over to the Western Allies in 1945 immediately after the fall and death of Hitler, he stated that his private fortune, as sole owner of the Krupp combine, was 160 million marks, on which he drew tax-free dividends of six per cent, or a tax-free income of nearly ten million marks a year. What subsequently happened, with the supposed expropriation of Thyssen and Krupp by the Western Allies, as a punishment for their crimes in accordance with the Potsdam Agreement, and their subsequent reinstatement in the West Germany of Adenauer and Erhard, so that they are once again richer than ever, is another story, which belongs to the record of the cold war after the Second World War.

After Hitler had come to power, and the full character of the Nazi dictatorship had been demonstrated, the Executive of the Communist International in 1933 gave the short definition, repeated by the Seventh Congress in 1935:

> "Fascism is the open terrorist dictatorship of the most reactionary, most chauvinist and most imperialist elements of finance-capital."

2. HOW FASCISM CAME TO POWER

The fascist offensive after the First World War raised the most acute problem for the entire international working class. This offensive required to be met by the fullest and most active combined and united strength of the whole international working class, irrespective of ideological differences. But this unity was not forthcoming in the most critical stages. After Hitler had come to power, the lesson of unity began to be learned for a period in France, with a consequent rebuff to the fascist offensive in that country (it was not until after the front in France had been opened by the right-wing generals to Hitler's unresisted military invasion that the Vichy fascist regime was installed, with the supporting vote of the majority of the Socialist Party deputies), and in Spain after the Asturian revolt, and partially in Britain by the mass of the labour movement successfully defeating Mosley, although the top Labour Party and Trade Union Congress leadership to the last opposed united resistance to Mosley. At the top unity was never achieved. Even after all the lessons of Italy, Germany,

Austria, France and Spain, to the last the Second International refused every approach of the Communist International for unity against fascism.

How did fascism come to power? Not by superior strength over the strength of the working class, nor by superior support of the majority of the population. Consider the crucial example of Germany, where Nazism brought such evils to the world. In the 1918 revolution Kautsky himself, the recognised theorist and spokesman of German Social-Democracy, admitted that the working class had won complete power through the Workers' and Soldiers' Councils and that the bourgeoisie was powerless:

> "In November, 1918, the revolution was the work of the proletariat alone. The proletariat won so all-powerful a position that the bourgeois elements at first did not dare to attempt any resistance."
>
> (Kautsky, Introduction to the Third Edition of *The Proletarian Revolution*, 1931)

How was this absolute power of the proletariat turned in fifteen years into its exact opposite—into the absolute power of the bourgeoisie and militarists and the absolute subjection of the working class? The answer to this question, in which is expressed the tragedy of the German revolution of 1918, is contained above all in the continued domination of the majority of the German working class by the extreme right-wing leadership of Social-Democracy. The German Social-Democratic leadership which had opposed the November revolution ("the imputation that Social-Democracy wanted or prepared the November revolution is a ridiculous, stupid lie of our opponents," affirmed Scheidemann, the leader of German Social-Democracy, in a libel suit in 1922), hastened to hand back the power to the bourgeoisie and dissolve the Workers' and Soldiers' Councils, armed the White Guard monarchist officers, shot down the militant workers and murdered the most famous and honoured working-class leaders, in order to restore capitalism in the name of "democracy". Thus the way was prepared for the reactionary offensive during the following fifteen years and the development of the extra-legal militarist and Nazi armed organisations. The final outcome was the Nazi dictatorship.

Even as late as the election of November, 1932, on the eve

of Hitler being placed in power, the combined working-class vote, Social-Democratic and Communist, amounting to 13,241,000 was greater than the Nazi vote of 11,729,000 (indeed, the fall of the Nazi vote by over two millions since the preceding election, and the consequent fear of impending disintegration of the Nazi party, was the main factor which led the ruling class, through President Hindenburg, to place Hitler in power from above, although the Nazis were a parliamentary minority and sinking in popular support). Yet to the last the German Social-Democratic leadership rejected the repeated appeals of the Communist Party of Germany addressed during this crucial final phase directly to the Social-Democratic Executive and to the Executive of the Trade Union Federation for a nation-wide united front against Nazism: in July, 1932, after the von Papen dictatorship had expelled the Social-Democratic Government of Prussia; in January 1933, after Hitler had been appointed Chancellor by Hindenburg (whose preceding election as President had been carried by the support of the Social-Democratic Party, which had proclaimed him the champion against Hitler); and a third time in March, 1933, after the burning of the Reichstag and the unloosing of full Nazi terror.

The German Social-Democratic leadership made the fatal mistake of refusing the united front with the Communists, who represented six million electors, against Nazism because they clung to the hope of reaching an accommodation with Hitler to continue as a tolerated Social-Democratic Party after the Communist Party was suppressed. Wels, as leader of the party, publicly resigned from the Executive of the Second International in protest against the spreading of "atrocity stories" by the latter against Hitler. The trade union leadership announced their readiness to cooperate with Nazism, proclaiming the Nazi "revolution" as a triumphant continuance of the 1918 revolution, and urging that the common enemy was Communism (*Sozial Demokratischer Pressedienst*, March 9, 1933). On this basis the trade union central leadership officially called on the workers to participate in Hitler's May Day. "The union leaders," declared the Labour *Daily Herald* on April 24, 1933, "have sealed their reconciliation with the new rulers of Germany." On May 17 the entire Social-Democratic Party in the Reichstag (while the Communist deputies

had been previously flung into prison) voted for the Nazi Government's resolution and joined in the unanimous acclamation of Hitler.

This subservience to Hitler proved as disastrous as the previous betrayal of the working-class revolution, which had paved the way for Hitler. "The Leiparts and the Grassmanns," declared Dr. Ley, the leader of the Nazi Labour Front, referring to the trade union leaders, "may profess their devotion to Hitler, but they are better in prison." On June 22 the Social-Democratic Party was banned. Thus the lesson was taught that, while the fascist offensive may begin against the communist vanguard, thereafter, if other sections acquiesce, joining in the hue-and-cry against communism, and thinking that they themselves will be immune, then the offensive will be turned against them, against social-democracy, against the liberals, and finally against all democracy. The only salvation lies in united resistance.

3. RESPONSIBILITY OF SOCIAL-DEMOCRACY

This same basic lesson, and the same role of the reformist leadership of social-democracy in disarming the working class, frustrating the working-class revolution for which the objective conditions were ripe after the First World War, building up reaction and turning the offensive against the militant workers, and thus opening the gates to fascism, could be illustrated in varying forms in the other countries where fascism came to power during this period.

Thus the decisive factor in the transition to fascism in an extending series of European countries during these inter-war years was the disorganisation of the working class through the role of the dominant social-democratic leadership, first by strangling the working-class revolution at the time when its victory was possible, and then by building up reaction in the name of "democracy", conducting the most active offensive, including a police offensive, against the militant section of the working class, and in the culminating phase by refusing the united front against fascism.

In the long-term historical perspective fascism was the consequence of the delay of the socialist revolution in Western and Central Europe after the First World War, when the whole objective situation called for the socialist revolution as

the only decisive solution and ever more visibly raised the issue of the working-class struggle for power, but when the working-class movement was not strong enough and ready, owing to being disorganised and paralysed by reformism, and thus let the initiative pass to capitalism. Fascism may be described as the abortion consequent on a miscarriage of the proletarian revolution.

In the short-term aspect, when the final crucial struggle developed, the victory of fascism was due to the refusal of the united working class and popular front to fight and defeat it.

Apologists of reformist social-democracy have sought to argue that fascism developed as the consequence of communism. "Reaction of the Left," according to the Labour Party Manifesto of 1933, "is displaced by triumphant reaction of the Right." Similarly the Conservative leader, Baldwin, declared: "Fascism is begotten of Communism out of civil discord. Whenever you get Communism and civil discord, you get Fascism" (House of Commons, November 23, 1933).

This picture is demonstrably contrary to the facts. Undoubtedly, the parallel advance of the forces of revolution and counter-revolution represents the two sides of the single process of the break-up of the old capitalist social order. The continuous inter-action of the opposing forces of revolution and counter-revolution was long ago described by Marx. But the inference attempted to be drawn from this that, if the working class follows communist policy and leadership, fascism will triumph, is the direct opposite of historical experience. Reality has shown the exact contrary. Where the majority of the working class has followed communist leadership (the Soviet Union), fascism was not able to appear—although it later caused plenty of trouble from outside, after reformism had allowed it to conquer elsewhere in Europe. But where, in conditions of social tension and crisis of the capitalist regime, the majority of the working class followed reformist social-democratic policy and leadership (Germany, Italy, Austria, etc.), there at a certain stage fascism grew and conquered. The strength of the working-class state built by communism proved in the final outcome the decisive factor for the defeat of fascism throughout Europe and on a world scale.

4. TACTICAL PROBLEMS AND SHORTCOMINGS OF THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNIST MOVEMENT

This is not to say that there were no faults on the side of the international communist movement during these critical years. The newly formed and developing Communist Parties, grown out of the shell of the old social-democratic traditions and the early pre-1914 manifold and often confused militant left working-class fight, had to find themselves and shape themselves in the midst of all the complex situations and struggles of the post-war years; were not yet masters of the situation even in those countries where they inherited from the outset a wide body of mass support; and had to pass through many sharp struggles of policy and leadership in the process of development.

After the basic platform of communism had been accepted, the task of successfully applying the principles of Marxism-Leninism to the concrete conditions of a particular country was not easily solved. In Germany, whose party, with its heroic fighting traditions, was long the premier Communist Party after the Russian party, the problems were exceptionally acute. One of the most original and successful of parties in finding the path of adaptation to national conditions was the Chinese Communist Party, which, after the initial factional difficulties had been overcome, found the way to combine its communist role with the broad stream of the national revolutionary struggle, and through the leadership of Mao Tse Tung and his associates brilliantly combined closeness to the people, manoeuvring flexibility and revolutionary discipline and audacity through the most varied vicissitudes to the final victory of the revolution.

The Communist International was the inspiration and guide of the newly formed Communist Parties during these early years, especially through the first three Congresses, which were directly guided by Lenin, and which elaborated the essential programme, principles and strategical, tactical and organisational lines of the international communist movement. These included the final guiding lines, worked out by Lenin during the latter part of 1921 and the beginning of 1922, as his last general contribution to the international movement before he had to withdraw from active participation (apart from his memorable last speech to the Fourth Con-

gress in November, 1922, when he gave the warning on fascism), setting out the aim of the united working-class front at all levels, including approaches between the two Internationals, as the essential strategical and tactical line in the new phase following the ebb of the revolutionary tide.

During the succeeding years the principle of centralised leadership by the International Executive, also in concrete questions of particular situations in particular countries, corresponding originally to the period of international revolutionary upsurge requiring an international general staff, and understandable also in reaction against the impotent "post office" principle of the old Second International of inglorious memory, became less appropriate in the increasingly varied, complex and rapidly changing conditions in the various countries, defeating the possibility of adequate and prompt analysis and judgement for action from a single international centre. Gradually this began to be recognised; and by the mid-thirties the Seventh Congress concentrated mainly on broad general lines of international significance for the united fight against fascism and war. Eventually, during the Second World War, with the maturity of a wide range of Communist Parties, and with the extreme variety of national conditions of the struggle, the Communist International was finally dissolved in 1943, not because its role was condemned, but because it had completed its function in the formation and development of the Communist Parties, and on the foundation of that successful fulfilment a new era of the international communist movement had opened.

During these formative years of the Communist Parties in the nineteen-twenties there took place, alongside heroic leadership of mass struggles, errors of tactics and direction in particular countries, normally corrected by the International Executive, but sometimes, especially during the later twenties, with some participation of the International Executive. From the initial heritage there were trends both to the right and to the left. There were errors of opportunism and passivity; of failure to respond promptly to decisive moments. There were errors of sectarianism and adventurism, of "theories of the offensive" of the advanced vanguard separately from the majority of the working class, or contempt for the use of parliament or hostility to the old reformist trade unions and desire

to form new unions as the instruments of revolution. Lenin at the time of the Second Congress wrote his *Left-Wing Communism* in 1920 to correct these errors, which he described as a "children's disease of communism".

After Lenin's death, with the further development of the relative capitalist stabilisation and consequent reformist illusions among wide sections of the workers, and as the right-wing leadership of the social-democratic parties became increasingly merged with the capitalist state machinery and intensified the fight against the communists and militant workers, not only with bans and verbal denunciations, but with the state coercive machinery and shooting, the justified anger and resentment of the communist workers and intensified ideological battle began to endanger the basic long-term tactical aim of the united front, proclaimed since 1921. This situation grew graver with the transition to the phase of the break-up of stabilisation, when the growth of working class discontent led to increasing state repressive measures by the social-democratic leadership and the consequent sharpening of the conflict between the two sections of the working-class movement, at the very moment when the advance of fascism was rendering more indispensable than ever the united working-class front and the utmost flexibility of tactics. Initial signs of some trends to sectarianism appeared in some of the formulations of the Sixth Congress in 1928, especially in its potentially misleading main slogan "Class Against Class", as also in some narrowness in the otherwise valuable treatment of the colonial question, the results of which caused some setback in the movement in India. But these trends went further in the immediately succeeding period.

When the Prussian Social-Democratic Government of Braun and Severing prohibited the historic working-class demonstration on May Day in Berlin, and shot down the workers who dared to demonstrate, the Tenth Plenum of the Executive Committee of the Communist International in July, 1929, declared that social-democracy, in those countries where it was strongly established, had taken on the character of "social-fascism, which to an ever-increasing extent serves the bourgeoisie as an instrument for the paralysing of the activity of the masses in the struggle against the regime of fascist dictatorship". The use of the term was clearly intended

to parallel Lenin's use of the term "social-chauvinism" to describe the degeneration of the right-wing leadership of social-democracy during the First World War to identify with chauvinism. But there were flaws in the parallel which made its use harmful. It is true that certain sections of the social-democratic leadership in certain countries had reached very close links with fascism. The Hungarian Social-Democratic Party signed an official secret treaty on December 22, 1921, with the White Guard dictatorship pledging cooperation and support of "the Magyar standpoint" in return for legality, and thereafter served as an agency for passing on to the police reports of activities or of names of members of the illegal Communist Party.[9] The Chairman of the Belgian Labour Party, De Man (who in 1928 in a stirring address "Beyond Marxism" had called for "the substitution of the sentiment of justice as the basis of socialism in place of class interest" and had proclaimed "Marxism is dead! Long live socialism!") was later, after the invasion of Belgium, found to have been a Nazi agent; his last act in 1940 was to dissolve the Labour Party. Varjonen of Finland was a member of the fascist "Brotherhood in Arms" during the Second World War, preached a march of conquest and rapine "as far as the Urals", repeatedly visited Hitler Germany, and after the armistice became the Secretary of the Finnish Social-Democratic Party. The Braun-Severing Prussian Social-Democratic Government boasted in an official memorandum in 1932 that it had "caused more deaths on the Left than on the Right":

> "The Prussian Government is in a position with police-statistics to prove that police interference has caused more deaths on the Left than on the Right, and that police measures have caused more wounds on the Left than on the Right."
>
> (Braun-Severing Memorandum to President Hindenburg protesting against deposition, July 18, 1932)

Thus in respect of the most powerful extreme right-wing sections of social-democracy there was justification for saying that it was acting as a parallel instrument of the bourgeoisie, alongside fascism, for dealing blows against the militant working class and paralysing the working-class struggle against fascism.

Nevertheless, the use of this term was a political error. It gave an easy handle for the enemies of communism to spread wilful misunderstanding of the serious analysis intended, and to imply that it was meant to designate the millions of rank-and-file members of the social-democratic parties. Thereby the social-democratic workers were antagonised at the very moment when it was most important to dispel their prejudices and hostility and win their cooperation. A similar error was made over the question of the referendum to demand the resignation of the Braun-Severing Government and new elections in 1931. This referendum had first been proposed by the Nazis; and the German Communist Party had for this reason initially opposed voting for the demand for resignation. Subsequently the decision was adopted to reverse this policy and endeavour to take the initiative out of the hands of the Nazis by presenting the campaign for a "Red Referendum" to express the working-class protest against the reactionary policies of the Braun-Severing Government. This decision (which, according to Walter Ulbricht, who was Secretary of the Berlin Communist Party organisation at the time, in his subsequent report on the "Outline History of the German Working-Class Movement 1863-1963" given to the Central Committee of the Socialist Unity Party of Germany in 1963, was not a reflection of the judgement of the German Communist Party, but was "guided by Stalin's dogmatic and schematic ideas on the role of social-democracy . . . the expression 'social-fascism' was not invented in Karl-Liebknecht House either") again gave a handle to enemies to misrepresent the position of the German communists as supporting a referendum which had been originated by the Nazis. So also

[9] After the victory of the Hungarian anti-fascist revolution the following letter was found in the Hungarian police archives from Karoly Peyer, the General Secretary of the Hungarian Trade Union Federation and Chairman of the Hungarian Social-Democrat Party, sent on July 1, 1941 (the original of the letter is on display in the Museum of the Revolution in Budapest):

The Right Honourable Dr. Aladar Bodr,
Under-Secretary of State,
Budapest.

During the last few days individuals have repeatedly appeared at the premises of the trade unions under my leadership and attempted to persuade the workers present to commit various unlawful deeds. I have the honour to present with respect the reports I received.

Your sincere admirer,
PEYER KAROLY,
Member of Parliament,
General Secretary

a speech of a left Social-Democrat deputy, Breitscheid, advocating negotiations for a united front was not taken up, but dismissed as "a manoeuvre". Elaborate distinctions were made between the united front "from above" and "from below".

These undoubted negative aspects of serious tactical errors of the communist movement during these critical years, which it is easier to judge today in the light of fuller subsequent knowledge, should not for one moment obscure from view the foremost active, courageous, disciplined and devoted role of the communists in Germany and in every country throughout this period in the interests of the working class and against fascism. There can be no comparison of these tactical errors, committed within the context of a general line of tireless unyielding daily struggle in the working-class cause against capitalism and against fascism and reaction in every field, with the basic line of the right-wing social-democratic leadership of coalition with capitalism, governmental toleration of the fascist extra-legal para-military organisations, banning of the militant working-class defence organisations, and direction of the main offensive, including the police offensive, against the left. The tactical errors of the communists were errors of excess of zeal, of partisanship, of anger against social-democratic treachery: serious in their consequences, while they lasted, but springing from passionate devotion to the working-class cause temporarily outstripping cool political judgement. As soon as the increasing gravity of the fascist menace became manifest, the communists were the first to throw aside the previous errors, and urge without conditions, again and again from the summer of 1932 onwards, the united working-class front, both above and below, of social-democrats and communists, to halt the offensive of fascism. It was the social-democratic leadership which refused the united front.

Already in 1931 the German Communist Party made proposals to the Braun-Severing Social-Democratic Government in Prussia for cooperation on the basis of a joint programme against fascism and reaction. This was rejected. In 1932 a provisional agreement was reached between the Secretaries of the Berlin organisations, Franz Kuenstler, Secretary of the Berlin Social-Democratic organisation, and Walter Ulbricht, Secretary of the Berlin Communist organisation, for joint talks with a view to cooperation; but this was vetoed by the Social-

Democratic Party Executive. In July, 1932, the German Communist Party, after the dismissal of the Braun-Severing Government, put out its first direct proposal on a national scale to the Social-Democratic Executive and Trade Union Executive for a united working-class front. This was rejected. The Social-Democratic leadership under-rated and belittled the Nazi danger, seeing always the main enemy on the left. After the November, 1932, elections, with Hitler's loss of over two million votes, the social-democratic press spoke of "the final annihilation of Hitler". "One thing is now clear," wrote the leading Second International organ, the Vienna *Arbeiter-zeitung*, "Germany will not be fascist." "I think it is a safe prophecy," wrote the British Labour publicist, Harold Laski, in the *Daily Herald* on November 19, 1932, "that the Hitlerite movement has passed its apogee. . . . The day when they were a vital threat is gone." Only the Communists sounded the warning with regard to the election defeats of the Nazis: "However great the defeat of National-Socialism may have been, it would be criminally foolish to talk of the smashing up of the mass-movement of fascism" (*Communist International*, December 1, 1932). Similarly the Social-Democratic leadership followed the policy of "tolerating" Hitler to the point of favouring his coming into governmental position as a desirable development. Thus Severing declared in April, 1932: "The Social-Democratic Party is strongly inclined to see Herr Hitler's Nazis share the Governmental responsibility." And the party organ *Vorwärts* wrote in the same period: "It is a precept of political sagacity to allow the Nazis to come to power before they have become a majority." Only the Communists opposed this line and proclaimed in the same period (*Rote Fahne*, April 26, 1932): "We shall do everything to bar Hitler's way to Governmental power." But the Communists were unfortunately in a minority in the working class.

Once Hitler had come to power, and the full Nazi terror unloosed had at last opened the eyes of the world to the menace threatening all Europe and the world, the entire strength of the international communist movement was directed to the supreme aim to build up the united working-class front and united popular resistance to defeat the offensive of fascism and war. The heroic stand of Dimitrov on trial

in 1933 inspired all mankind. In France in 1934 the first success of united communist-socialist resistance to fascism was achieved. The Seventh Congress of the Communist International in 1935, through the trumpet voice of Dimitrov, sounded the call to all the working people in every country for unity to defeat fascism and war. The decade of the nineteen-thirties became the decade of the greatest popular movement of unity yet known, led by the communists everywhere, to check the advancing offensive of fascism and of war.

CHAPTER IX

THE UNITED FRONT AGAINST FASCISM AND WAR

"The Communist International puts no conditions for unity of action except one, and that an elementary condition acceptable for all workers, viz., that the unity of action be directed against fascism, against the offensive of capital, against the threat of war, against the class enemy. This is our condition."

GEORGI DIMITROV, Report to the Seventh Congress of the Communist International, August, 1935.

From 1933 onwards until the outbreak of the European war in 1939 the question of the united front against fascism and war dominated the situation of the international working-class movement, and was the crucial question for the outcome of the increasingly menacing world situation of the nineteen-thirties.

1. FASCIST WAR OFFENSIVE AND SOVIET PEACE POLICY

The victory of fascism in Central Europe reflected the sharpening of the crisis of capitalism and class contradictions after the world economic crisis and breakdown of the temporary stablisation of the twenties.

Simultaneously the sharpening of imperialist antagonisms led to a new increasingly open drive to war, local wars and aggressions, culminating in major war.

The distinctive feature of this drive to war during the nineteen-thirties was that it was spearheaded by the countries

of fascist dictatorship. Thus the offensive of fascism and war was inextricably linked, and the fight against both was equally linked.

Basically, the drive to a new world war during the nineteen-thirties reflected the same inherent drive of imperialism to war for the re-division of the world as during the period preceding 1914. But its form differed in that the dissatisfied imperialist powers, especially the defeated German imperialism, which were now most aggressively pressing for a re-division of the world had become the countries of fascist dictatorship. Hence the new war offensive took on the character of a fascist war offensive.

The imperialist powers in possession, on the other hand, which had been the main victor powers in the First World War, were inclined at first to see mainly the counter-revolutionary aspect of fascism, which they sought to stimulate and assist with all practical support, and even initially encouraged its aggression, not realising until too late that its point was also directed against themselves.

Alongside these changes within the balance of the capitalist world, the most important new feature of the international situation of the nineteen-thirties, in contrast to that preceding the First World War, was that it was no longer a single capitalist world. The first socialist state extended over one sixth of the land surface of the earth and united one twelfth of mankind. This new situation of the parallel existence of capitalism and socialism had already begun at the end of the First World War. But the new socialist state was then still very weak in terms of power, and had to win recognition in the diplomatic field of international relations (by the United States not until 1933). By the mid-thirties, however, the main construction of socialism had been completed; and this transformed the world situation.

In place of the derelict economy of 1920, which had fallen to one seventh the industrial level of even the former already backward and dependent Tsarist economy, there was now a major independent industrial power with collectivised agriculture, and a united people, masters of the resources of their country, and among whom class divisions had come to an end. The world economic crisis of capitalism, which ravaged every country of the capitalist world with an extent and

universality never before known, stopped at the frontiers of socialism. The impetuous rate of economic growth ascended ever more rapidly, while it descended in the capitalist world. The completion of the construction of socialism by the mid-thirties was registered in the new constitution of 1936 which, had not fascism intervened to bring harsh new requirements, had been intended to introduce the relaxation and further democratic extension that was in practice delayed in fulfilment until the later nineteen-fifties.

The triumph of socialist construction and industrialisation in the Soviet Union, and the consequent emergence of the Soviet Union as a major world power, meant that alongside the capitalist world powers there was now also a socialist world power as the main force on the side of peace. Fascism, which had developed as the terrorist weapon of monopoly capitalism against the communist movement, the organised working class and socialism, saw its supreme aim as the conquest and destruction of the first socialist state, and envisaged also in this direction its main field for expansion and limitless plunder and enslavement of a subject population. The fascist powers, Germany, Italy and Japan, organised themselves as an "Anti-Comintern Pact". This did not preclude their aim for the prior subordination or conquest of the Western European powers, who remained to the last fatally blind to the mortal danger confronting them.

The Soviet Union was now able to act in the forefront of world politics on the side of peace. The Soviet Union joined the League of Nations in 1934; proclaimed to the world from that forum the doctrine of "indivisible peace" and collective security against the fascist war offensive; signed treaties of mutual assistance with France and Czechoslovakia in 1935; stood by Spain, including the supply of arms and military advisers; offered to fight, if necessary, alone alongside Czechoslovakia in the hour of the Munich betrayal in 1938; strove to the last for agreement with the Western powers in order to bar the road to the Second World War; and only when the refusal of the Western powers made war inevitable, spiked the Munich Four Power Pact conspiracy against the Soviet Union by the Soviet-German Non-Agression Pact of 1939, and thereby, even though it had now to be the hard road of experience for Britain and France to learn the lesson, made

possible the future alliance which in the end won the victory over fascism.

2. THE FIGHT FOR THE UNITED FRONT AGAINST FASCISM AND WAR

Such was the complex international situation of the nineteen-thirties within which the international working-class movement had to find its path in the fight against fascism and war.

It was necessary to build up the united working-class front, with specific agreements between the social-democratic and communist parties as its core, against fascism and the offensive of fascism.

It was necessary to build up the broadest unity of all sections of the people, including the middle strata, all progressive supporters and the intellectuals, and all parties willing to participate in a broad popular front around the central pillar of working-class unity for resistance to the offensive of fascism.

It was necessary to combine the fight against the offensive of fascism within each country with the fight against the war offensive of fascism; for active support of the people of every country subjected to fascist aggression; for collective security against the fascist war offensive; for support of the peace policy of the Soviet Union; and for a peace alliance of states prepared to cooperate with the Soviet Union in making a stand against the fascist war offensive and preventing a second world war.

In the fight for these aims the international communist movement fulfilled its responsibilities with honour. The role of the international communist movement in all countries during these crucial years of the nineteen-thirties, in the fight for working-class and popular unity against the offensive of fascism and war, belongs to the historical record of these years.

The first volunteers and the first and heaviest casualities everywhere in the fight against fascism were the communists. Losses were heavy—long before the nations of the world had awoken to unite in the fight against fascism. In the fulfilment of this role the communist parties grew rapidly in all countries, both in numbers and in the respect and affection of the peoples.

The Seventh Congress of the Communist International in the summer of 1935 rose to the height of the challenge of this international situation, and charted the path forward for mankind in this hour of ordeal and danger. The Seventh Congress, with the report of Dimitrov on fascism and the struggle for the unity of the working class against fascism, and the report of Togliatti on the question of war, elaborated the lines for:

(1) the united working-class front against fascism, to include agreements between social-democratic and communist parties and trade unions, and also all workers' organisations, Catholic, syndicalist, anarchist or other;

(2) the united anti-fascist people's front, including the working peasants, urban petty bourgeoisie, intelligentsia and office employees;

(3) the united anti-imperialist people's front in colonial countries;

(4) the perspective, in conditions of political crisis and upsurge of the mass movement, of establishing a working class united front government or an anti-fascist people's front government, which would not yet be a government of working-class dictatorship, but would be prepared to put into effect decisive measures against fascism and reaction;

(5) the further perspective of advancing to a single united mass political party of the working class in every country on the basis of five indispensable conditions: (a) complete independence from the bourgeoisie; (b) prior achievement of united action of the working class; (c) recognition of the aim of overthrow of the rule of the bourgeoisie and establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat; (d) rejection of support of one's own bourgeoisie in imperialist war; (e) democratic centralism;

(6) the united people's front in the struggle for peace and against the instigators of war, with the specific naming of the main instigators of war at the given time as the fascist powers headed by Nazi Germany and Japan; for the defence of the U.S.S.R.; and for the support of national liberation struggles and wars of national liberation, including wars of peoples in a weak state attacked by a big imperialist power against such attack and for national independence.

The Seventh Congress was the last Congress of the Communist International. At this Congress the International,

representing now a very considerable development of the communist movement throughout the world, performed a high role in the fulfilment of its responsibility of leadership to the international working class and the peoples of the world to meet the new problems of the world situation.

3. POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE EXPERIENCES OF THE UNITED FRONT AND THE PEOPLE'S FRONT

The fulfilment of this broad strategic line indicated by the Seventh Congress of the Communist International, already initiated before the Seventh Congress (with the approach of the Communist International in March, 1933, to the Second International for a united front against fascism), and further developed and amplified after it, is bound up with the history of each party and of the working-class and popular movement within each country, as well as with the great campaigns conducted on an international scale.

In France in February, 1934, when the fascist armed formation *Croix de Feu* tried to repeat Hitler's conquest of power and marched on the Chamber of Deputies to remove the passive and inert Daladier bourgeois "left bloc" government, which promptly resigned to make way for the ultra-right Doumergue "Cabinet of National Concentration", the French working class immediately responded to the call of the Communist Party for a giant demonstration on February 9, which was held in the face of the government ban and the mobilisation of 40,000 troops and police to break it up, resulting in ten workers killed and many wounded. The united front swept forward. On February 12 the general strike, called by the revolutionary and reformist trade union leaderships, brought out four million workers. On July 14 the march of half a million in Paris was headed by the leaders of the Communist, Socialist and Radical-Socialist Parties. In July, 1934, the united front pact was signed between the Communist Party and the Socialist Party, followed by the first steps to the formation of the People's Front in October, and the unification of the trade union movement in the single Confederation of Labour, completed by the spring of 1936.

In the general election of April, 1936, the People's Front of the Communist, Socialist and Radical parties won an absolute majority, with the Communist representation increasing from

10 to 73 and the Socialist from 101 to 148. A Socialist and Radical coalition government was formed under the premiership of the weak-kneed reformist socialist Blum. This government did not include the Communists. Blum rapidly went back on the reforms introduced, and shamefully allowed himself to be used by the British Foreign Office to appear as the sponsor of the criminal "non-intervention" policy in 1936, by which the Spanish legal Republican Government was denied its right to arms, while German and Italian fascism poured in armies and arms for its overthrow. Finally he handed over in 1937 to the Radical leader Chautemps, and after a short second Ministry in 1938 to the Radical Daladier, who later became one of the criminals of Munich.

This experience showed both the strength and weakness of the united front and popular front. The strength, insofar as the mobilisation of the overwhelming majority of the people on this basis did in fact bar the road to fascism, so that fascism could only come to power in France under the heels of the invading Nazi armies. The weakness, insofar as the mobilisation and political consciousness of the mass movement was not yet sufficient to overcome the vacillations and treacheries of the reformist leadership.

In Austria in February, 1934, when Dollfuss established his fascist dictatorship, although the Social-Democratic leadership, as in Germany, counselled passivity and negotiation, and only the still weak Communist Party called for resistance, the social-democratic workers organised in the prohibited Defence Corps, entered into a united front in a number of localities, against the orders of their leaders, and embarked, again against the express orders of their leaders, on a heroic armed struggle which in Vienna held at bay the troops of the fascist Heimwehr for four days. Subsequently the Social-Democratic leader, Otto Bauer, admitted that, if the full strength of the working class had been mobilised, if a general strike had been called in time, and if the railwaymen had not continued in accordance with the orders of the reformist trade union leadership to run the trains and carry the troops of the fascist government to suppress the rising even at the height of the battle, the victory could have been won. Referring to the decisive moment of the opening of the crisis in March, 1933, when, according to Bauer, "the masses of the

workers were awaiting the signal for battle", he admitted in his subsequent review of the events: "At that time we might have won. But we shrank dismayed from the battle.... We postponed the fight, because we wanted to spare the country the disaster of a bloody civil war. The civil war, nevertheless, broke out eleven months later, but under conditions that were considerably less favourable to ourselves. It was a mistake—the most fatal of all our mistakes" (Otto Bauer, *The Rising of the Austrian Workers* published in English under the title *Austrian Democracy Under Fire*). Yet although this fatal role of the reformist social-democratic leadership made possible the victory of fascism, the united front armed struggle of the communist and many social democratic workers in those days of February, 1934, under the most difficult and disorganised conditions, to defeat fascism saved the honour of the Austrian working class and provided to that extent a contrast to the unhappy defeat without a battle of the German working class.

In Spain, following the democratic revolution of 1931 and the initial refusal by the Socialist Party of the united front proposals of the Communist Party, the revolutionary mass struggle of united action below flamed into the general strike and armed uprising in the Asturias in October, 1934, which held the government troops at bay for fifteen days and was only crushed with wholesale butchery and 30,000 arrests. By 1935, on the initiative of the Communist Party, the People's Front was organised, uniting the Communist and Socialist and Republican and other parties, as well as the Trade Union Federation and important regional organisations. The People's Front won the elections of February 1936, with an absolute majority of 253 seats against 218 for the remaining parties of the right and the centre. By July the fascist counter-revolutionary coup was launched under Franco and other generals, with the backing of all the forces of reaction and the direct guidance and leading role of the German and Italian fascist dictatorships providing troops, arms and bombing planes. The weak government of Republican and Socialist Ministers under the Republican Premier Azaña had ignored the warnings of the Communist Party on the counter-revolutionary plot and the necessity to remove the generals before they could stage their coup. Even after the coup the Azaña

Government remained passive and hesitant, until it was replaced in September by a new People's Front government under the trade union leader and left socialist, Caballero, and with the participation of two Communist Ministers. Then at last active resistance was organised, and the Republican army built up to counter the fascist armies.

The subsequent history of the Spanish war from 1936 to 1939 became the centre of the international situation during those years. Here were tried out the armies and weapons and strategic methods of German and Italian fascism for later use for the conquest of Europe. Here was revealed the infamy of the British and French rulers in strangling even the legal supply of arms to the legal democratic Spanish government, in violation of international law, and winking at (at first even pretending to deny) the pouring in of troops and arms by German and Italian fascism to invade Spain. The Labour Party conference was also mobilised in support of this policy in 1936 and by the time rank and file oposition compelled a reversal in the autumn of 1937, it was too late to reverse the disastrous consequences of the support of this policy during the initial crucial year. The Communist International appealed to the Second International for a united front in support of Spanish democracy against fascism. The Soviet Government fought in the forefront for the legal rights of the Spanish democratic government, and when this was denied, and the military intervention of the fascist powers continued with the connivance of the Western powers, gave practical support to Spanish democracy under attack. The Communist parties in all countries united with all progressive democrats, irrespective of party affiliation, to organise support for Spanish democracy against fascism. Anti-fascist volunteers from the widest range of countries fought alongside their Spanish comrades. The Spanish anti-fascist war was the opening stage in Europe of the international war of the peoples against fascism which finally reached its full range in June, 1941.

In Britain the rigid hostility of the top leadership of the Labour Party and Trades Union Congress to the united front could not prevent the rising mass movement of the widest sections of the people, with the vanguard role of the Communist Party, against fascism and for peace. The united mass movement fought the offensive of Mosley fascism to a stand-

still, despite the obvious connivance of the National Government, the police and the magistrates to seek to enforce acceptance of fascist gangster provocations by the people and to penalise anti-fascist resisters, and despite the repeated admonitions of the top leadership of the Labour Party and Trade Union Congress, along the same lines as the disastrous record of German Social-Democracy, calling for passivity of the people in face of fascist provocation to leave to the fascists unchallenged domination of the streets. The climax of this struggle was reached in 1936, when the loudly publicised march of Mosley's storm troopers through East London was stopped by the people of London, despite an unprecedented massing of police to force acceptance of the march. In January, 1937, a united front agreement was reached between the Communist Party, the Independent Labour Party and the Socialist League, the leaders of the latter body including Cripps of the Labour Party Executive. When the Labour Party ban led to the dissolution of the Socialist League, a campaign for the People's Front was opened by Cripps and Bevan of the Labour Party Executive, together with many prominent Labour, trade union and Liberal leaders, the Communist Party, and many progressive representatives concerned to stop the disastrous Chamberlain policy of "appeasement" of fascism. Cripps and Bevan were expelled from the Labour Party for their pains. The movement for peace against the fascist war offensive won very wide support. This was reflected in the International Peace Campaign, initiated in Britain, and organised in countries all over the world. A Peace Ballot organised under the auspices of the League of Nations Association won eleven million signatures; and six million of these declared support for collective security to include armed resistance, if necessary. The British Battalion of the International Brigade reached such wide support that Attlee, Leader of the Labour Party, was honoured to be invited to go out to Spain to greet the volunteers and accept the offer for a company of the Battalion to be named after him. When Foreign Minister Eden resigned in the spring of 1938 through disagreement with the policy of Chamberlain in relation to Mussolini, the resultant height of popular demonstration and demand for a change of government could have brought down Chamberlain, had not Citrine intervened

at the last moment on behalf of the Trades Union Congress and in practice saved him. The subsequent fight around Munich (which was only opposed at the time, and not after the event, by the Communist Party and the Communist representative in Parliament, William Gallacher) belongs to the history of the British political situation and the descent into the war.

In China, where the conditions arose for the realisation of the national anti-imperialist people's front envisaged by the Seventh Congress of the Communist International, the Communist Party, after the epic achievement of the Long March of 1934-35 and the establishment of the base of the liberated regions in Shensi, in 1936 proposed to Chiang Kai Shek the formation of a broad national front against the Japanese invaders. Chiang refused; but after his capture at the end of 1936, and the generous terms offered by the Chinese Communists, at length in 1937 the agreement for the united national front was signed. In practice Chiang and the clique around him by no means kept to the agreement, so that the brunt of the struggle against the Japanese invaders fell on the national movement and armies led by the Communists, while Chiang regarded the Communists and popular movement led by them as his main enemy and directed his main offensive against them. Thus during the succeeding years the Chinese Communists were continually faced with a struggle on two fronts, against the Japanese invaders and against the treacherous attacks of Chiang's forces. Nevertheless through all the vicissitudes and variations of this complex situation the Chinese Communist Party became established in the eyes of the people as the true representative of the national interests of the entire people, and the way was thereby prepared for the future victory of the Chinese People's Revolution.

The Communist International throughout these years directly took the initiative to approach the Second International for cooperation and joint action against fascism and the fascist war offensive. Such appeals were made in February, 1933, after Hitler came to power; in October, 1934, in support of the Asturias workers; in September, and again in October, 1935, against Mussolini's war on Ethiopia; in October, 1936, on behalf of Republican Spain; in June, 1937

(after the bombing of Almeria by a fascist squadron) again on behalf of Republican Spain.

The Second International opposed the united front and at first banned any agreement by affiliated parties with communist parties. After the official united front agreement of the French Socialist and Communist Parties the Second International had to lift this ban, and a minority declaration was published on behalf of a section on the Executive favouring the united front. In October, 1936, following the appeal of the Communist International for joint action in support of Republican Spain, a meeting of representatives did take place; but no agreement for joint action was reached. After the appeal of June, 1937, a meeting of representatives of the two Internationals took place in Annemasse, on which the workers placed great hopes; but no agreement for joint action or for mobilisation of the peoples for aid to Spain followed.

The record of these years thus revealed that, despite the heroic united mass struggles which took place, and the significant partial successes in the fight for the united front, the campaign for the united front against facism and against the fascist war offensive was not able to reach sufficient strength to be capable of preventing the Second World War. But it laid the foundations for the indomitable struggles of the resistance movements of the peoples in the countries overrun by fascism, and for the eventual world alliance of the peoples with the Soviet Union which made possible the final victory over the war bloc of fascism.

CHAPTER X

SOCIALIST ACHIEVEMENT AND PROBLEMS BEFORE THE SECOND WORLD WAR

"The historical dividing line between the forces of fascism, war and capitalism on the one hand, and the forces of peace, democracy and socialism on the other hand, is in fact becoming the attitude towards the Soviet Union, and not the formal attitude towards Soviet power and socialism in general, but the attitude to the Soviet Union which has carried on a real existence for twenty years."

GEORGI DIMITROV, *On the Twentieth Anniversary of the U.S.S.R.*, November 6, 1937.

The dangerous world situation, following the advent of Nazism to power in Germany and the development of the extending fascist war offensive, which brought so many critical problems for the international working-class movement, brought also new and grave problems for the first socialist state, the Soviet Union.

The decade of the nineteen-thirties was for the Soviet Union at once a period of high achievement and of serious negative features cutting across the proud record of achievement.

On the one hand, the decade saw gigantic advances. The building of socialism was completed. For the first time in history a socialist society now existed and functioned over one sixth of the earth. The strength of the Soviet Union was built up which was able to withstand and finally defeat the assault of Nazism.

On the other hand, the dangerous international situation found reflection in serious negative features. The pace of industrialisation and rearmament was forced forward at a harsh and relentless tempo to meet the dangerous international situation, with consequent limitation in garnering the fruits of socialism; vigilance against foreign agents and fascist penetration was accompanied by ruthless quelling of internal opposition or suspected opposition, to such a degree that large numbers of loyal Soviet citizens and devoted communists suffered unjustly; and in these emergency conditions dangerous violations of socialist legality and democracy took place.

Both the positive and the negative features of this period were closely associated with the leading role of Stalin as General Secretary of the Communist Party.

Any review of the record of this period and its problems belongs to the history of the Soviet Union. But the problems are inevitably bound up with the history of the international communist movement, since the Soviet Union was the fortress of socialism confronting fascism and the capitalist world, and every section of the international communist movement was engaged in the fight on behalf of the Soviet Union and its party, represented on an international scale by the political leadership of Stalin, against fascism and the pro-fascist "appeasers" and the apologists of the fascist fifth column or anti-Soviet slanderers.

Hence some of the features of this record need here to be taken into account, insofar as they are linked with the general problems of the international working-class movement and the international fight against fascism.

1. SOCIALISM VICTORIOUS AND THE PEACE POLICY OF THE SOVIET UNION.

The same decade which saw the ravages of the worst world economic crisis in capitalist history, and the placing of Nazi barbarism in power in the most developed industrial state of capitalist Europe saw the victorious completion of the construction of socialism in the Soviet Union.

The first Five Year Plan, which set the original example and precedent for hundreds of subsequent "five year plans" also in capitalist countries all over the world, was completed by

the beginning of 1933 ahead of time in four years and three months. The completion of this first Five Year Plan had successfully laid the foundations of socialist economy in the Soviet Union. By its achievement the Soviet Union had been converted from a backward agrarian country to a developed industrial country. By 1932 the volume of output of large-scale industry was already more than three times the level of 1913 and more than double the level of 1928. Vast new industrial enterprises had been established for the production of iron and steel, tractors, automobiles and aircraft. At the same time the completion of agricultural collectivisation, although it had been undoubtedly accompanied by excesses in forcing the pace, which became the target of criticism at the time, and by violence in expropriating the kulaks, as well as by heavy initial losses in livestock, did in fact achieve a qualitative change without precedent in history, the transition from ancient traditional petty peasant farming to a solidly based large-scale collective farm system, with state machine and tractor stations to supply up-to-date agricultural machinery.

In contrast to the fifty million unemployed in the capitalist world during the period of the first Five Year Plan, full employment was achieved for the first time in any country in the world, and the employment exchange buildings were transferred to other uses, as they were no longer needed.

The second Five Year Plan, initiated in 1933, and also fulfilled ahead of time, by April, 1937, completed the construction of socialist economy, equally in industry and agriculture, in the Soviet Union. By 1937 total industrial output was more than double the level of 1932 and eight times the level of 1913. Collective agriculture was firmly established, drawing in 93 per cent of peasant households, and equipped with 456,000 tractors and 129,000 combine-harvesters. The national income was more than doubled during the period of this plan; the wages and salaries fund increased two and a half times, distributed among less than one fifth more workers and employees; the money incomes of collective farms increased more than threefold. The number of students in higher educational institutions reached half a million.

With the completion of the construction of socialism the final elimination of the division of exploiting and exploited classes, and its replacement by the cooperation of friendly

classes, the working class, the peasantry and the intelligentsia, engaged jointly in building and carrying forward socialism, found expression in the new Socialist Constitution of 1936, which replaced the previous class weighting of the franchise to exclude exploiters and ensure the dominant position of the industrial working class, by equal universal suffrage, with the Soviets no longer indirectly elected, but directly elected by universal suffrage and the secret ballot.

Such was the developing socialist society which had to confront the hostility and menace of a capitalist world lurching into fascism and the fascist war offensive.

In the face of this offensive the Soviet Union was in the forefront of efforts for peace and disarmament throughout this period, and, as the fascist war offensive advanced, for collective resistance to halt fascist aggression and prevent a second world war. The record of the Soviet Union in this critical international situation was the counterpart of the parallel striving of the international working class and democratic movement, with the communist parties in the forefront, for the united front against fascism and war. This record found expression in the League of Nations, through the representative role of Litvinov; the proposals for disarmament; the aid to China against the Manchurian offensive of Japanese military fascism; the Franco-Soviet and Czech-Soviet Pacts; the aid to the Spanish Democratic Government against the German-Italian fascist aggression; the steadfast stand by Czechoslovakia at the time of the Munich betrayal; the ceaseless efforts, even up to the very latest point of danger, to achieve a Three-Power Mutual Security Agreement between Britain, France and the Soviet Union, which could have prevented the Second World War. All this has been briefly reviewed in the preceding chapter, and will be examined more fully in considering the prelude to the Second World War.

It is against this background of triumphant socialist achievement at home, and of pre-eminent sponsorship of the cause of peace and collective resistance to fascist aggression in the international field, that need to be seen the parallel unfavourable and unhappy developments in the internal situation which accompanied and marred this record.

In the face of the open threats of the fascist war offensive and its backers in the other Western imperialist countries, the

Soviet Union was under the necessity, alongside its efforts for peace and for a common front against fascist aggression, to build up its industrial and military strength to meet such an onslaught. This meant a forced pace of industrialisation, with special emphasis on military rearmament; and extreme security measures against enemy penetration. It was in this abnormal emergency situation, reflecting the dangerous international situation arising from the reactionary and war trends of the outside capitalist world, that the serious negative features developed in the internal situation in the Soviet Union.

2. REARMAMENT AND THE COSTS OF REARMAMENT

The conquest of Central Europe by fascism, with the extension of fascist dictatorships along all the Western borders of the Soviet Union, and especially the establishment of the Nazi militarist-terrorist dictatorship in Germany, with the openly proclaimed aim of a war of aggression and conquest for the destruction of the Soviet Union, and the unconcealed enthusiasm of reactionary ruling circles in the West for this project, constituted the gravest problem for the Soviet Union since the critical days of the civil war and wars of intervention.

Indeed, the problem and menace was in many respects graver than in those early days. In the wars of intervention the Western powers, with armies exhausted by four years of world war, affected by revolutionary sentiments, and conducting strikes and mutinies for rapid demobilisation, had not in fact the forces to be capable of successfully fulfilling their malignant wills. The solidarity of the Western working class, especially of the German working class through the revolution of 1918, was able to give practical help to the indomitable struggle of the Soviet people. Thus, although the Soviet armed power was at the outset in a condition of breakdown and disorganisation, and even after reorganisation had to fight with the most inadequate equipment, the revolution prevailed against all the efforts both of the vastly more powerful German imperialism and of the still more powerful Western imperialism. The wheelbarrow, as Lenin said, got by because the formidable high-powered locomotive engines threatening to overrun it were themselves locked in collision.

In the new situation the "wheelbarrow" would no longer be sufficient. Repeated schemes for renewed Western im-

perialist intervention, especially after Locarno and in the open provocation of 1927, came up against the obstacle every time that, so long as the power of the German working class remained unbroken, the base for a decisive war was insecure, since the *cordon sanitaire* of White Guard dictatorships established on the borders of the Soviet Union could not serve independently for a successful aggressive strategy, as the experiment to use Poland for the purpose in 1920 had shown. Hence the policy of Western reaction became first to smash the power of the German working class, and for this purpose the Nazi dictatorship was established in Germany with the aid of the Western powers, both by direct subsidies from Western finance-capital, and by deliberate connivance over the violations of the Versailles Treaty through the building up of illegal reactionary armed formations.

From this moment the problem confronting the Soviet Union was the prospect of an impending attack, no longer by some dispersed outlying forces of exhausted imperialist powers preoccupied with other problems, but by the full concentrated strength of the most advanced industrial and military power in Europe, with an elaborately organised internal counter-revolutionary discipline, and backed in practice by the ruling classes of the West.

Already before the final installation of Hitler in power, in 1931, with the advent of the world economic crisis ending stabilisation and bringing the prospect of a new era, as the Sixth Congress of the Communist International had predicted, of international collisions, Stalin had given explicit warning of the herculean task confronting the Soviet people to be prepared for such a major assault and war within a short space of years;

> "To slacken the pace means to fall behind. And the backward are always beaten. But we do not want to be beaten. . . . The history of old Russia is the history of defeats due to backwardness. She was beaten by the Mongol Khans. She was beaten by the Turkish beys. She was beaten by the Polish-Lithuanian squires. She was beaten by the Anglo-French capitalists. She was beaten by the Japanese barons. All beat her for her backwardness; for military backwardness; for cultural backwardness; for industrial backwardness; for agricultural backwardness. She was beaten because to beat her was profitable and could be done with impunity. . . .
>
> "Such is the law of capitalism—to beat the backward and the weak. The jungle law of capitalism. You are backward, you are weak, so you are wrong; hence you can be beaten and enslaved. You are mighty, so you are right; hence we must be wary of you. . . .
>
> "We are fifty to one hundred years behind the advanced countries. We must cover this distance in ten years. Either we do this or they will crush us."
>
> (J. V. Stalin, speech to the first All-Union Conference of Managers of Soviet Industry, February 4, 1931)

Ten years. That points forward to 1941. In 1941 the onslaught came of the most powerful military machine yet known, which had swept the French and British armies into headlong rout, an offensive delivered with 190 divisions, backed by all the resources of the whole Continental Europe outside the Soviet Union. No wonder the entire capitalist world counted on the collapse of the Soviet Union within a few weeks. Stalin's prediction of the date by which the Soviet Union would require to have accomplished an industrial and military advance with seven-league boots at a rate unparalleled in history during one decade, in order to be prepared for the coming onslaught and not be crushed, proved remarkably accurate.

The impossible was achieved during that decade—even though the cost was heavy. The heroism and sacrifice of the Soviet people during the nineteen-thirties paralleled the heroism and sacrifices of the revolution and the civil wars and interventionist wars, or of the great patriotic war which followed, in accomplishing against every obstacle this miracle of economic achievement and military rearmament, no less than in tireless vigilance to check every weakness, faintheartedness or attempted penetration by the enemy—even though the human cost was great, and heartbreaking self-inflicted injuries were also caused in the conditions of strain of this superhuman effort. But the miracle was achieved.

Other nations may have slept. The Soviet Union did not sleep. From the moment of Hitler's coming to power the Soviet Union understood the danger-signal and more than trebled its arms expenditure during the very next year,

nearly doubled it again in the next year, nearly doubled this increased figure yet again in the following year, and so on right up to the outbreak of war. Here is the table of Soviet rearmament preparation during these critical years:

SOVIET ARMS EXPENDITURE 1933-1939

	million roubles
1933	1,500
1934	5,000
1935	8,000
1936	14,800
1937	20,100
1938	27,000
1939	40,800

A multiplication by twenty-seven times during these seven years between 1933 and 1939. The Soviet Union did not sleep. Here was laid the foundation of the strength which was to save the world.

This does not mean that the military preparedness was adequate when the final shock of the Nazi assault came in June, 1941. The military higher command had been weakened by the purging of a number of outstanding generals and senior officers during the period of excesses of the security organs before the war. Although military units had been concentrated on the western frontier as a precaution against attack during the period 1939-41, and had been further reinforced after the signing of the neutrality treaty with Japan in April, 1941, on the eve of the Nazi offensive the intelligence reports of Nazi military concentration and manifest preparations for an offensive were discountenanced by Stalin as Commander-in-Chief on political grounds as a provocation designed to draw the Soviet Union into acts which would serve the Western imperialist aim of a German-Soviet conflict. Further, as often happens when a country after a period of relative absence of hostilities is suddenly launched into major war, there were found to be deficiencies of equipment and insufficient modern tanks and aircraft. It was only following the outbreak of hostilities, after key territories and industrial regions had been lost, that industry was fully mobilised and converted to war production. Nevertheless, it was the foundations of the war industries and rearmament laid during the

nineteen-thirties which made possible the further gigantic expansion and achievement during the war, so that, alongside the large and valuable supplies from the United States and Britain, no less than 96 per cent of the total of tanks, artillery, aircraft and other weapons of war used by the Soviet armed forces during the Second World War were supplied by Soviet industry.

But the cost was heavy. After the years of strain and shortage, after the seven years of imperialist war and civil wars and interventionist wars, after the painful rebuilding from the shattered foundations of the country's economy, after the back-breaking effort of the first Five Year Plan to begin large-scale industrialisation without any foreign aid or capital, and the harsh class strains of agricultural collectivisation, which ended forever the threat of a kulak revival of capitalism, but was pushed through at a forced pace in the ceaseless race against time, it was natural that there should have been a universal desire and expectation for some years of relief and relaxation and opportunity to enjoy the fruits of all these efforts and sacrifices. "Life is becoming more joyous," was the popular theme song which reflected the first signs of the new abundance following from the construction of socialism. In this spirit, too, the preparations had been put in hand for drawing up the new liberalising constitution, which was actually adopted in 1936, to remove many restrictions of the period of the battle of revolution and counter-revolution and correspond to the character of the new society without class divisions.

Across all these hopeful signs the black shadow of fascism swept from Western Europe. Fascism was not the fault of the Soviet people. Fascism was the guilty consequence of the political weakness, reformist illusions and spinelessness and direct betrayals by the social-democratic leadership of the working-class movement in the West, who had not only failed to win power themselves and end capitalism, but had let this hideous monster grow in their midst to threaten the world. But it was the Soviet people who had to pay most heavily, both in the war which followed, when they had to make the main sacrifices to destroy fascism, and in the harsh ordeals of the years of preparedness during the nineteen-thirties. In place of relaxation, there had to be new restrictions, forgo-

ing of many otherwise possible immediate material benefits, intensification of effort and sacrifice to be capable of confronting the new foul monster which capitalism had engendered.

3. EMERGENCY REGIME

Political emergency measures had also to be taken. Fascism boasted of having its "fifth column" in every country. The experience of the war, with its crop of Quislings in every country overrun by fascism, except the Soviet Union, proved the truth of this. In no country was fascism more concerned to build its fifth column than in the Soviet Union, the land of socialism, the main target of fascist aggressive aims and dreams of conquest. But in the Soviet Union alone fascism failed. As Lord Avon, then Anthony Eden, testified:

> "In all the territory that Hitler has overrun there is not one Russian Quisling."
>
> (Anthony Eden, broadcast, January 4, 1942)

Similarly Churchill:

> "Hitler had hoped to find Quislings, fifth columnists in the wide Soviet regions he overran. He looked for them, he searched for them, but he found none."
>
> (Winston Churchill, broadcast, February 16, 1942)

This does not mean that there were no weaklings, deserters or traitors in the population of the vast regions overrun by Nazism. But whereas in all the other occupied countries of Europe the Nazis were able to find leading political figures (Pétains, Lavals, Quislings etc.) to constitute collaborationist governments to serve them, in the case of the occupied Soviet territories they had to *import* Quislings from White émigré leaders who had taken refuge in Berlin eighteen to twenty years earlier, and could only recruit underlings from among Soviet prisoners or dispossessed kulaks.

This achievement was also won at a heavy cost. An emergency regime had to be established with some limitation of the normal democratic processes. To deal with the stream of spies and saboteurs and agents from the West, as well as with vulnerable elements of corruption or treachery within the country, the security organs had to be strengthened and their powers increased. Describing this background of the violations of legality which subsequently took place, following the murder of Kirov, alongside the successes of vigilance, the

Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union declared in its resolution of June, 1956:

> "This complicated international and internal situation demanded an iron discipline, a continuously growing vigilance and the strictest centralisation of leadership, which could not help but have a negative effect on the development of certain democratic forms. In the course of a fierce struggle against the whole world of imperialism our country had to submit to certain restrictions of democracy, justified by the logic of our people's struggle for socialism under circumstances of capitalist environment. But these restrictions were at that time regarded by the Party and the people as temporary, subject to removal as the Soviet state grew stronger and the forces of democracy and socialism developed the world over. The people consciously assumed these temporary sacrifices, seeing as they did new successes of the Soviet social system every day."

In the operation of such an emergency regime, and especially in the operation of security organs with powers, however indispensable for the maintenance of the socialist state in the midst of a hostile capitalist environment and ceaseless attempted penetration, there was always the risk of abuse of such powers by individuals and in particular cases, and therefore the necessity of ceaseless vigilance against such a risk. Lenin well understood this risk and the necessity of vigilance when he said:

> "It is not at all surprising to hear the activities of the Extraordinary Commissions attacked, not only by enemies, but often enough by friends too.... It is only natural that the mistakes of the Extraordinary Commissions strike the eye most.... People harp on individual mistakes the Extraordinary Commissions make, and raise a howl and lamentation over them.
>
> "We, however, say that we learn from our mistakes. In this field, as in all others, we say that we will learn by self-criticism. The root of the matter is not, of course, the personnel of the Extraordinary Commissions, but the nature of their functions, which demand determined, swift and, above all, unerring action. When I consider their function and see how they are attacked, I say that

this is all philistine and futile talk. It reminds me of Kautsky's homily on the dictatorship, which is tantamount to supporting the bourgeoisie. . . .

"That alien elements should try to worm their way into the Extraordinary Commissions is quite natural. With the help of self-criticism we shall get rid of them. The important thing for us is that the Extraordinary Commissions are directly exercising the dictatorship of the proletariat, and in that respect their services are inestimable."

(Lenin, *Combating Counter-Revolution and Sabotage*, speech to the staff of the All-Russian Extraordinary Commission, November 7, 1918)

With this understanding, equally of the indispensable importance of the work of the security organs and combating counter-revolution, and of the dangers of mistakes and abuses arising or "alien elements" trying to "worm their way in", Lenin placed in the key position of charge of these functions Dzerzhinsky, one of the noblest-hearted and most selfless of revolutionaries in the records of Communism. With the same deep understanding of the dangers inherent in such work Lenin took the initiative to ensure that those who were given the charge of fulfilling the functions of the special political police were simultaneously given the responsibility to look after orphan children.

This system worked effectively enough, whatever the faults, until the era of fascism, and subsequently of the initial intense phase of the cold war. But during this critical period, while the essential task continued to be effectively accomplished, as the outcome showed, much also was done which was grievously harmful and not justified by the emergency, and which reflected an abnormal phase of political functioning during this emergency period. Alongside the guilty many innocent also suffered, and were arrested and sentenced either to death or terms of imprisonment and exile in the camps, although in some cases they were only representatives of political dissent who were not guilty of criminal actions and therefore should not have been dealt with administratively, or in other cases were outstanding revolutionary fighters against whom no charge could be justified, and who have since been rehabilitated. How this state of affairs came about, and

why it was accepted at the time, in the belief that these measures were necessary, by the Soviet people, was examined subsequently in a ruthless analysis and self-criticism by the Communist Party of the Soviet Union at its Twentieth Congress in 1956 and later, although there is no doubt that much still remains to be cleared on the full record of the developments of this period.

4. THE ROLE OF STALIN

It is in the nature of the functioning of security organs and organs of counter-espionage, to some extent in all countries, but with sharper executive problems in a revolutionary regime for the protection of the revolution, where powers of immediate action may have to be assumed inappropriate for conditions of peacetime stability, that this functioning has to be in the main secret, and the chain of immediate control has to be narrow. Hence, unless the control is very strict, there is always the danger of misuse of powers by individuals for personal or factional reasons. The experience of the resistance movements in the Nazi-occupied countries of Europe, and their indispensable need to exercise very summary justice in the case of treachery, weakness or passing on of information, or even grave suspicion of the same, may afford some analogy in a non-Russian context. In these conditions the pivotal role and essential safeguard against abuse depends in the first place on the character of the man in charge at the top; and above him on the character, judgement and personality of the highest political chief, whether Head of Government or General Secretary, to whom he reports; and only ultimately on the Central Committee or governing political body. During this critical period all these essential safeguards failed to fulfil their function, that is, of combining the relentless execution of every measure necessary for the protection of the revolution with vigilance against abuses. It should be noted that this distortion of functioning did not take place during the period of Lenin, nor during the period of Stalin's earlier leadership. Thus it was not inevitable or inherent in the system. The distortion took place in the period of fascism and the fight against fascist penetration, and in the period of the initial most dangerous phase of the cold war and the fight against Western cold war penetration, until such time as the ending

of Western nuclear superiority made possible some relaxation of international tension.

During this period the chiefs of security, were no longer of the mould of a Dzerzhinsky, and were later adjudged criminally unworthy of their trust. But the key responsibility rested with the direct political control in the hands of the General Secretary; and this in turn depended on the character and personality of the General Secretary, J. V. Stalin, and the special position of authority he had come to occupy. It is important to note that there was no formal decision of any change in the constitution, either in respect of the government, or in respect of the party, to give Stalin this special authority. Initially he had earned it in practice by his record, proved capacity of political leadership in the most difficult conditions, and the consequent universal confidence placed in him. Thus at the outset Stalin's authority, which came to be in practice overriding in every sphere, was only based on his recognised higher political capacity and strength of leadership. But later this special authority was artifically and harmfully reinforced by gross violation of the normal provisions for the functioning and regular meeting of the higher democratic organs of the party, and by administrative and coercive measures which took on a criminally extreme character. Such was the abnormal situation which developed during this period of emergency calling for the greatest heights of leadership, and which the Twentieth Congress of the Soviet Communist Party subsequently analysed as the "cult of personality", finding therein the root cause of the evils which marred this period of heroic achievement of the Soviet people.

So it came about that the personal character and role of one individual leader became during this prolonged abnormal period of emergency a decisive historical factor, both for good and for evil.

Stalin was the foremost revolutionary political leader of the working class and socialism after the death of Lenin. Lenin's final letter of personal guidance, which was read to the delegates of the Thirteenth Congress after his death, singled out Stalin and Trotsky as the "two outstanding leaders in the Central Committee" of the Communist Party. His criticism of Trotsky referred to his record of "non-Bolshevism"—that is, a

political shortcoming. His criticism of Stalin found no political shortcoming, but pointed out that he was "too rude" and urged in consequence the transfer of the post of General Secretary to an alternative who would "differ from Comrade Stalin only by one advantage—namely, more tolerant, more loyal, more polite, and more attentive to comrades, less caprice, etc.". He added that this "may seem an insignificant trifle", but that "from the point of view of what I have written about the relations of Stalin and Trotsky, it is not a trifle, or it is such a trifle as may acquire decisive importance". Thus Lenin wished to see in the leading post held by Stalin one who would combine the political capacity of Stalin ("differ from Comrade Stalin only by one advantage") with the quality of being "more tolerant" to comrades. Unfortunately, after reviewing the principal "other members of the Central Committee", Zinoviev, Kamenev, Bukharin and Pyatakov, on all of whom he made severe strictures, he did not find it possible to make a positive alternative recommendation. Stalin offered his resignation from his post both to the Congress and to the Central Committee; but the Thirteenth Congress, according to the official account published in *Kommunist* in 1956, decided to retain him as Secretary, taking it that he would "be able to correct his shortcomings"; and the Central Committee elected by the Thirteenth Congress voted unanimously, including with the vote of Trotsky, to maintain Stalin as General Secretary.

During the subsequent critical years after the death of Lenin, Stalin fulfilled an outstanding role of revolutionary leadership of the party and the Soviet people in the collective fulfilment of the gigantic tasks of building the first socialist society in history; of industrialisation and agricultural collectivisation (here harsher aspects began to creep in); of rearmament against fascism, of the complex diplomacy to seek to build an alliance against the war offensive of fascism or, failing that, to prevent a world capitalist and fascist alliance for the destruction of the Soviet Union; of the supreme ordeal and triumph in the Second World War against fascism; and to meet the complex new problems of the international situation and requirements of rapid technological advance after the Second World War. At the same time the Communist Party, with the guidance of his leading role, carried forward in this way the

policies indicated by Lenin and routed the defeatist and disruptive offensives conducted by successive opposition factions associated with Trotsky, with Zinoviev and Kamenev, and later with Bukharin and Rykov. On the basis of this record of epic achievement of the Soviet people under the leadership of the Communist Party, with Stalin at its head, the confidence in Stalin's judgement and leadership, and the popularity and political authority of Stalin, reached an unparalleled high point, not only in the Soviet Union, but throughout the world. The name of Stalin became identified with the triumph of socialism and the heroic achievement of the Soviet people in the Second World War.

There is evidence that during the earlier years of this period Stalin paid heed to the warnings of Lenin. As late as the Fifteenth Congress at the end of 1927, even after Trotsky, Zinoviev and Kamenev had made their ill-fated attempt to incite the masses in the street against the Soviet government, and thereby incurred inevitable expulsion, Stalin came out to resist those who demanded strong measures against supporters of the opposition within the party, and in his report to the Congress warned against "introducing administrative methods in the party, and replacing the method of persuasion, which is of decisive importance for the party, by the method of administration". But subsequently he was carried away by his position of exceptional political authority to take on himself to an increasing extent personal decisions, or decisions with a very small inner group of the leadership, and to diminish the regular meeting and functioning of the democratic organs of the party. As the crisis years grew, and with them the manifest strain of his realisation, indicated in his speech of 1931 already quoted, of the superhuman efforts which would have to be made during the coming decade to meet the impending test of 1941; and above all, as the shadow of fascism darkened the horizon, and the investigations after the murder of Kirov began to reveal the extent of attempted enemy penetration real and suspected; all the passionate and ruthless revolutionary intensity of his character, derived from a lifetime of indomitable and for long illegal revolutionary activity, with the consequent training in universal suspicion and vigilance, manifested itself increasingly in relentless harshness to rout out and destroy the hidden enemy, who

began to be suspected everywhere. Lenin's warning proved justified. From this exceptional situation the cruel and harmful consequences followed, even at the same time as the giant tasks were successfully achieved.

5. TRIALS AND PURGES

The dangers of this combat in the dark against fascist fifth column penetration and real or suspected plots were illustrated in the case of the Army leaders, Marshal Tukhachevsky and others, who were executed after secret trials in the summer of 1937, and were alleged to have entered into treasonable communication with the fascist powers. The incriminating evidence had been passed on by President Benes of Czechoslovakia, who implicitly believed in its authenticity, as made clear in his Memoirs written after the war, in which he recorded:

> "In the middle of January, 1937, I received unofficial news from Berlin that the Prague conferences were considered to have failed; I was also very confidentially informed that Hitler was now carrying on other negotiations which, if successful, might have some effect on our affairs. We discovered from an unconscious slip of the tongue by Trauttmannsdorf that these 'other negotiations' were with the Soviet anti-Stalin conspirators—Marshal Tukhachevsky, Rykov and others. Hitler fully believed these moves would be successful and therefore for the time being had no further interest in pressing conclusions in our case. The whole European situation would truly have been altered had he succeeded in overturning the Soviet regime. But Stalin acted in time. I immediately informed Alexandrovsky, Soviet minister in Prague, about what I had learned."

Similarly Churchill in his *History of the Second World War* also believed in the truth of the evidence and the justification of the harsh measures taken: President Benes, Churchill writes, was advised that if he wished

> "to take advantage of the Fuehrer's offer he had better be quick, because events would shortly take place in Russia rendering any help he could give to Germany insignificant.
>
> "While Benes was pondering over this disturbing hint,

he became aware that communications were passing through the Soviet Embassy in Prague between important personages in Russia and the German Government. This was a part of the so-called military and Old-Guard Communist conspiracy to overthrow Stalin and introduce a new regime based on a pro-German policy. President Benes lost no time in communicating all he could find out to Stalin.

"Thereafter there followed the merciless, but perhaps not needless, military and political purge in Soviet Russia."

(Winston Churchill, *History of the Second World War*, Vol. II. pp. 125-6)

All this would indicate that the charges of treasonable communications, which might today sound incredible to modern readers unacquainted with the conditions of the nineteen-thirties, were not by any means regarded as incredible by leading and well-informed Western statesmen during those dark and dangerous days. Yet in the case of the military chiefs information has since become available, and has been officially announced in the Soviet Union, that the incriminating evidence, whose supposed authenticity convinced Benes, Churchill and Stalin, and led to the execution of the military chiefs, was in reality poisoned evidence concocted by the Nazi secret service in order to create disruption and disorganise the Soviet Army High Command. The costs of this were felt in 1941.

Thus a question mark hangs over the justification or otherwise of all the arrests, purges, trials and sentences of this period. Although an elaborate process of legal review has been conducted from 1953 onwards, and many partial results in particular cases have been published, as well as releases of survivors who were still in the camps, no completed record of conclusions has so far been available, giving comprehensive statistics of the numbers arrested, the numbers and types of sentences, and the subsequent findings, after review, of guilt or innocence. It may well be that in the nature of the conditions and records, and with the passage of time, such a final comprehensive review is no longer possible. This has left the ground free for the not inconsiderable band of hostile anti-Soviet commentators to produce endless contradictory surmises of astronomical numbers of millions alleged to have been sentenced. These surmises need to be regarded with some suspicion, not only because the factual basis is lacking, but because such a presumed mass scale of terror would have been incompatible with the overwhelming manifest popularity of the regime and unity of the regime and the people shown equally in the creative achievement of the thirties and in the gruelling ordeal of the war. Here was no cowed population as under Hitler, but a revolutionary people who had shown themselves capable of overthrowing the tyranny of Tsarism, hurling back the armies of the Entente, and finally routing the supposed invincible blitzkrieg of Hitler.

The complete contrast with the terror regime of Nazism was demonstrated by the experience of the war. When the Allied armies advanced into Nazi Germany, as soon as the official governing structure of Nazism fell, there was not a whimper of popular resistance. In the Soviet Union, wherever the Nazi armies advanced with unexampled terror, the people in the rear of the Soviet armies, so far from submitting, carried forward their fight for their Soviet regime in unvanquishable partisan warfare. All the records of the Nazi invaders now made available have revealed their amazement and bewilderment over the intractable problem with which they were faced, that here they found a unity between the people and regime which they had never before seen paralleled in the Western countries they had invaded.

From this the conclusion may be drawn that the heavy hand of the arrests and sentences during this period probably hit mainly a special section, that is, among a serious proportion of the leading and middle cadres of the apparatus in the bureaucracy and in the party. The direction of these blows may even have increased the confidence of the masses of the people in the leadership at the top and the role of Stalin, that there was no fear to deal, when necessary, even with those who might regard themselves as too big and important to be touched. Thus, as in other revolutionary periods, relentless executive action (though often unjustified) against prominent individuals suspected of counter-revolutionary aims or plots, so far from reflecting a general atmosphere of tyranny and enslavement, could be accompanied by a high level of mass

revolutionary enthusiasm and confidence in the leadership of the regime.

All this is no excuse for the evils, persecutions and injustices which took place, but only a help to understand how it was possible that, in the midst of such heroic socialist achievement of the entire socialist people, such evils could be tolerated, or accepted through belief in their necessity.

6. TROTSKYISM AND COUNTER-REVOLUTION

A complicating factor in the tangled story of this era was the political line promulgated during these critical years by Trotsky from outside the Soviet Union and the illegal or conspiratorial faction of his followers which he claimed to have organised inside the Soviet Union.

Whatever the final verdict of history on the public trials during 1936-38 of leading political figures, who were sentenced for alleged counter-revolutionary conspiracy in association with Trotsky (no re-assessment of these trials has so far been made in the course of the review of this period by the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, which alone has access to all the available information and evidence to reach a judgement), there can be no question of the actual political line which was put forward by Trotsky in his writings and given as his directive for his followers inside the Soviet Union. This line was for the violent overthrow of the Soviet Government, and openly calculated on an impending military defeat of the Soviet Union by Nazism as providing the opportunity.

The final verdict on the trials, whose validity is disputed by many living, will rest with future historians. Leaving this controversy aside, what can usefully be done is to assess the available evidence which is outside the sphere of dispute, entirely apart from the disputed evidence of the trials, on the political position taken by Trotskyism during this period. On this certain facts are indisputable from his own actions and published writings.

1) Since 1927, when, as already reported, Trotsky had attempted, after failing to win support in the party, to incite the non-party workers and masses in the street against the party leadership and Soviet government, he had already passed over in principle to counter-revolution, in the same

way as the Kronstadt rising was in fact counter-revolutionary, irrespective of the subjective intentions of the participants, save that in the case of Trotsky's attempt in 1927 there was not even a fragment of mass support.

2) Subsequently, developing his analysis of the Soviet regime which was building socialism as "Thermidor" or "Bonapartism", he adopted the position that the Soviet government would have to be overthrown by force:

> "The bureaucracy can be compelled to yield power into the hands of the proletarian vanguard only by force."
>
> (Trotsky, *The Soviet Union and the Fourth International*, 1933)

This, incidentally, is the same conclusion which Kautsky had proclaimed in 1930, when he published a book expressing the extreme anti-Soviet social-democratic viewpoint, that Bolshevism had degenerated into Bonapartism, and that the armed overthrow of the Soviet government should be supported by all socialists.

3) Following the victory of Nazism in Germany, Trotsky combined this advocacy of the violent overthrow of the Soviet government with the view that the coming war would lead to the inevitable defeat of the Soviet Union and collapse of the Soviet regime (failing a revolution in the West), and that this would create the conditions for the violent overthrow of the Soviet government:

> "Can we expect that the Soviet Union will come out of the coming great war without defeat? To this frankly posed question we will answer as frankly. If the war should remain only a war, the defeat of the Soviet Union would be inevitable. In a technical, economic and military sense imperialism is incomparably more strong. If it is not paralysed by revolution in the West, imperialism will sweep away the regime which issued from the October revolution."
>
> (Trotsky, *The Revolution Betrayed*, 1936, p. 216)

4) Within the context of this "inevitable defeat of the Soviet Union" by fascism and Western imperialism, Trotsky looked forward to this as only a "short episode" to be followed by the victory of his followers ("victory of the proletariat") over Europe as a whole in accordance with his theory of the "permanent revolution":

"Even a military defeat of the Soviet Union would be only a short episode, in case of a victory of the proletariat in other countries. And on the other hand, no military victory can save the inheritance of the October revolution if imperialism holds out in the rest of the world." (*ibid.*, pp. 219-220)

5) The violent overthrow of the Soviet government is defined as the key task of the organised "Soviet section of the Fourth International", that is, of the Trotskyist organisation in the Soviet Union:

"There is no peaceful outcome of this crisis. No devil ever yet voluntarily cut off his claws. The Soviet bureaucracy will not give up its positions without a fight. The development leads obviously to the road of revolution. . . . The bureaucracy can only be removed by a revolutionary force. And, as always, there will be fewer victims the more bold and decisive is the attack. To prepare this and stand at the head of the masses in a favourable historic situation—that is the task of the Soviet section of the Fourth International." (*ibid.* p. 271)

This was written in 1936, the year when the major public trials of the groups associated with Trotsky ("Soviet section of the Fourth International") began.

6) The existence of the illegal Trotskyist organisation in the Soviet Union at the time of the trials was testified by Trotsky when he wrote:

"The Fourth International possesses already today its strongest, most numerous and most hardened branch in the U.S.S.R."

(*Bulletin Oppozitsii*, February, 1936)

This was six months before the series of the three major trials of the leaders of the three main Trotskyist groups began.

Thus an examination of the available external evidence provided by Trotsky himself during the period of the trials, and disregarding the disputed evidence of the trials, would indicate that the actual political line of Trotskyism during this period was the establishment of an illegal organisation of "hardened" cadres within the Soviet Union for the purpose of the violent overthrow of the Soviet government; and speculation on the "inevitable" defeat of the Soviet Union by Nazism in an impending war, consequent collapse of the Soviet regime, and creation thereby of the conditions for the ultimate triumph of Trotskyism.

The conclusion accordingly to be drawn from the evidence provided by Trotsky himself in his own published writings does undoubtedly establish that the political line and organised activity of Trotskyism and its supporters inside the Soviet Union during this period did constitute counter-revolutionary conspiracy requiring the vigilance and counter-action of the security organs and courts of revolutionary justice. But from this acorn of Trotskyist or other organised counter-revolutionary conspiracy during this period, and attempted fascist fifth column penetration, a monstrous oak tree grew. Trotskyism provided the starting point and the pretext for the security organs to spread their net wholesale and carry through the most indiscriminate and indefensible arrests and sentences of thousands of innocent people, who at the most represented only some trend of political dissent and were wrongfully treated as "enemies of the people", and who in many cases were the unhappy victims of completely fabricated charges without being given any opportunity to clear themselves. Such was the black side of this period of Soviet history.

7. DRAWING THE BALANCE

Nevertheless, this black page in the history of the revolutionary movement should not for one moment obscure from the view the predominant and far more powerful positive character of this period, which was in fact an era of triumphant and heroic mass revolutionary achievement, equally in the building of socialism, the preparedness to resist the assault of fascism, and the final smashing of fascism in the supreme test of war.

Three essential considerations should be borne in mind.

First, even during the gravest period of violations of socialist legality and of proper democratic functioning of the higher party and administrative organs, not only was the basic socialist character maintained and strengthened, but the basic democratic life of Soviet democracy below, with mass participation in the running of affairs, on a scale unparalleled in any other state, continued and even flourished, as anyone visiting the Soviet Union during those years could see. The des-

cription by the Webbs of the Soviet system during these years as "multiform democracy" was not entirely a case of these hardbitten old experts in analysing political institutions having sand thrown in their eyes under cover of paper formulas, but a reflection of observation of practice. As explained already, the violations hit mainly the cadres of the apparatus.

"The crude violation of the standards of party life in the practical work of the central organisations at the time of the personality cult did not in the least paralyse the activities of the party and of the state as a whole, and did not change the social nature of Soviet socialist society.

"In spite of the personality cult, democratic principles continued to prevail in the Republican, Territorial, Regional and local party organisations which made up the foundation of the party and do the daily work or organisation and education among the masses of the people. Party meetings and conferences, reports and elections of party organs were regularly held locally.

"Extensive and varied work was also done locally by the Soviets of Workers' Deputies, the trade unions and the Young Communist League. The personality cult, naturally, impeded these activities and set obstacles in the path of the development of the creative initiative and of the active work of the masses of the people. But it could not check the onward march of society along the road to socialism, and could not change our socialist system."

(*The Twenty-Second Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union on the Abolition of the Cult of Personality, Pravda,* November 21, 1961)

Second, what went wrong was not inherent in socialism or in communism or in Soviet democracy, since it did not arise during the first decade and a half of its existence, but was an alien growth which arose in the era of fascism and in the extreme emergency conditions created by the necessities of the fight against fascism and against fascist penetration. But fascism was the consequence, not of any failings of the Soviet people, but of the failings of the Western working-class movement and democracy, which, in place of uniting with the socialist revolution, allowed the fascist monster to arise, proved incapable to combat it or prevent its expansion, and

finally had to turn to the help of the Soviet people and of the socialist state to destroy it. This consideration should certainly be in the minds of Western critics, especially Western liberal and social-democratic critics, who imagine they can assume airs of superiority to rebuke the Soviet people for these distortions, rather than themselves. Those who have not succeeded to carry through their socialist revolution, who still live under daily toll to the landlords and capitalists whom they have not yet been able to throw off their backs, should show a certain becoming modesty in laying down the law to those who have achieved their socialist revolution, however hard and painful the road.

Third, and most important of all, the great historical tasks set in this era, on which the future of mankind depended, were successfully accomplished, despite the costs. Socialism was built. Fascism did not succeed to penetrate the Soviet order, as it had penetrated every other social order. In the Soviet Union alone, as Eden and Churchill subsequently testified, Hitler was unable to build his fifth column or find a single Quisling in the regions overrun. It was the strength and valour and sacrifice of the united socialist people which, by the recognition of all, played the decisive part in the Second World War to destroy the power of fascism and save mankind from fascist slavery.

No great revolution has ever yet been a path of roses all the way. But whatever the incidental unhappy pages in the record, the Soviet people, by their vanguard role in carrying through the first victorious working-class revolution, in building the first socialist society, in confronting and breaking the fascist monster which threatened all peoples, and now in every sphere of social and cultural and scientific and educational advance on the pioneer path to communism, have performed a service in human history whose radiance will never be dimmed.

CHAPTER XI

THE SECOND WORLD WAR

"The experiences of the war, as the experiences of every crisis in history, of every great calamity and sudden turn in human life, dull and break one set of people, while they enlighten and harden others."

LENIN, *The Collapse of the Second International.*

When did the Second World War begin? Or end? Conventional history, with its still customary West European bias, dates the beginning of the Second World War from the moment when Britain and France declared war on Germany, in September, 1939. In fact, however, the fascist war offensive, which grew into the second world war, developed continuously from the Japanese assault on Manchuria in 1931. In this sense the true beginning might be thrown back to 1931. On the other hand, the West European regional war of 1939-40 did not become a world war until 1941, with the involvement of the great powers extending beyond Europe, of the Soviet Union, the United States and also Japan. In this sense all the successive phases which developed from 1931 to 1941 might be regarded as the prelude to the real world war which began in 1941.

Similarly conventional history is accustomed to date the ending of the war as VE day in May, 1945, when the fighting ended in Europe. Some supplement is allowed for the continuance of hostilities until VJ Day in August, 1945, when Japan surrendered. Yet even here it might be argued that the war in this region did not reach completion until the victory of

the Chinese People's Revolution in 1949. Further, from the standpoint of Neo-Nazism, as expressed by the West German Defence Minister Strauss in his speech at Santa Rosa in California on July 25, 1961: "For us the Second World War is not yet finished."

For present purposes we need not concern ourselves with this battle over dates. We can accept for current use the conventional dating of the Second World War from 1939 to 1945, provided it is understood that the fascist war offensive, which developed continuously from the Far East to Africa to Europe on an ascending scale, and the succeeding short-lived "phoney" war conducted by Britain and France in 1939-40—a kind of last fling of imperialist Munichism—were all only successive temporary phases in the unfolding of a larger historical conflict which reached its full scope in 1941.

1. PRELUDE OF THE SECOND WORLD WAR

The First World War was preceded by the Russo-Japanese war in 1905, the Italian war for the conquest of Tripoli in 1910, and the two Balkan wars of 1912 and 1913. The history of these, as well as the tense imperialist rivalries in Morocco, is bound up with the history of the antecedents of the First World War. But the prelude of the Second World War, expressed in the extending fascist war offensive of Germany, Italy and Japan in the Far East, Africa and Europe from 1931 to 1939, is far more intimately bound up with the Second World War than in the case of the local wars preceding the First World War.

The Second World War differed fundamentally from the first in one essential aspect which governed its whole character and development. This was that it took place in a world already divided between socialism and imperialism, with the first socialist state extending over one sixth of the globe and constituting a completely independent great power. The contradiction between imperialism and socialism was the governing contradiction of the international situation; and to this basic contradiction all other contradictions, including the ever more fiercely renewed inter-imperialist rivalries, were subordinated.

The defeated and prostrate German imperialism, chained and disarmed and sentenced to permament disarmament by

the victor powers' Versailles Treaty, was able within two decades to climb back to become once more the strongest and most formidably armed imperialist power in Europe and the world, by skilfully exploiting the basic contradiction between imperialism and socialism. From the outset the secret violation of the disarmament clauses of Versailles was winked at by the Anglo-French Commissioners of inspection and control on the grounds that this was essential for the battle against the menace of a communist revolution in Germany. Similarly the draconian imposition of economic spoliation of the already war-devastated Germany in the name of reparations by the terms of the Versailles Treaty was never in practice carried out, but was within a few years transformed into the opposite process of wholesale pouring in of dollar credits to rebuild a booming German capitalist economy—once again in the name of combatting the menace of communism. When the boom gave place to the crash of the world economic crisis, with mass unemployment and renewed menace of the working-class revolution in Germany, finance was once again poured out without limit, not only by German big bankers and industrialists, but also by the Anglo-French-American finance-capitalists to build up the national-chauvinist demagogy and anti-communist gangster storm-troopers of Hitler as the only salvation against the menace of a communist Germany. Finally, when Hitler was placed in power from above, because his mass support had begun to dissolve, and it had therefore become necessary to place state power in his gangster hands in order to smash the organised working class, the clauses of the Versailles Treaty were torn up by the Western powers in order to clear the way for the rearmament of Hitler, with financial and material support from the West, and diplomatic support to facilitate his extending aggression in Central Europe, because he had publicly pledged himself to lead the grand crusade for the destruction of the Soviet Union. Such was the path of development to the Second World War.

2. MYTHOLOGY OF "APPEASEMENT"

The victor powers of the First World War, the Western imperialist powers, Britain, France and the United States, which had originally dreamed through the Versailles Treaty

to have destroyed for ever the challenge of the rival German imperialism, had seized all its colonies and divided them up among themselves as booty, now found themselves also compelled to commit the most humiliating somersault in accordance with the requirements of the new major contradiction of the world situation, the contradiction between imperialism and socialism. This major contradiction had made out-dated their solemnly proclaimed pre-1917 intentions of the first imperialist world war. They themselves tore up the Versailles Treaty which they had imposed. They themselves led the way for the rearmament of German militarism which they had previously sworn would never again be allowed to raise its helmet.

Subsequent apologies and explanations are today offered by the statesmen and publicists of Anglo-French imperialism that this deliberate connivance and encouragement for the rearmament of German militarism and its aggressive expansion—oddly disguised by them under the phrase the "appeasement" of fascism, as if the object had been peace—was rendered necessary only because German military power was too great, while the peace-loving British and French peoples had foolishly disarmed and were at the mercy of pacifist illusions and unwilling to rearm. Therefore it is argued, time had to be won by the sagacious British and French statesmen to enable their countries to rearm against the German menace. All these "explanations" are, to put it frankly, balderdash. When Hitler came to power, Germany was disarmed save for the very limited home army permitted by Versailles and the still very weak illegal armed formations connived at by the Entente, but with no major armaments capable of conducting a modern war or confronting the power of the French army and the British navy. Hitler could have had the most megalomaniac dreams in the world; he would have been incapable of carrying them out without the direct connivance and assistance of Britain and France in the initial stages. The destruction of Versailles and rearmament of Germany was the deliberate policy of the leaders of British imperialism, and imposed by them on their weak-kneed colleagues in France, who were also at the mercy of the anti-communist obsession.

As soon as Hitler came to power, the green light for German rearmament was given by Britain when the British Prime

Minister, Ramsay MacDonald, hastened to Geneva to call for "justice for Germany", and to propose the immediate doubling of the German army and drastic reduction of the French army (described with sinister irony as the British "disarmament plan"), and then proceeded to Rome to draw up with Mussolini the project for the Four Power Pact or bloc of Hitler Mussolini, MacDonald and Daladier. Thus the way was prepared for the first open breach of Versailles by the reintroduction of conscription in Germany through the Military Law of March, 1935. Within ten days of the adoption of the Military Law the British Foreign Secretary, Simon, hastened to Berlin to meet Hitler "in the friendliest spirit" (in the words of the communiqué).

There followed immediately the Anglo-German Naval Agreement of June, 1935, which was the first Western official step to tear to shreds the Versailles disarmament provisions, prohibiting a German navy. The Anglo-German Naval Agreement of 1935 provided for the re-establishment of the German navy at 35 per cent of the strength of the British, then the strongest in the world, and for Germany to have 100 per cent equality with the British Empire in submarines. The special clause with regard to the submarines revealed the placid assumption that the submarines would of course be for use in the Baltic in accordance with Hitler's anti-Soviet plans. In fact, the submarines, so gaily presented by British Conservative statesmen to a disarmed Hitler, were used to sink British merchant shipping and kill British sailors all over the world, and brought Britain into mortal danger.

Even as late as the armed re-occupation of the Rhineland in 1936, when the German general staff wrung their hands and declared that, if Britain and France used their superior power to prevent this illegal step, Germany would not stand a chance, Hitler pledged them that in that case he would commit suicide, that is, recognise the game was up (as he did finally when the Soviet troops reached his bunker); but he reassured his alarmed generals that Britain and France would not use their superior power to resist. He proved correct; the French Ministers were bullied by the British imperialist rulers into acceptance; and France from that point disappeared as a power.

Thus the myth of "appeasement" as the supposed explanation of the policy of the British Conservative Government during the nineteen-thirties is a double lie. First, the lie that the connivance at German rearmament and aggression and destruction of Versailles, was an unwilling concession to German superior military power, in order to gain time for Britain to rearm. Second, the lie that the object of this policy of rebuilding the monster of German militarism was peace.

3. THE FIGHT FOR THE PEACE FRONT

Naturally this disastrous policy led to sharp divisions within British ruling circles. A section, while maintaining unchanged their hostility to communism, began eventually to realise (not in the initial stages, not at the time of the fatal step of the Anglo-German Naval Agreement, which passed through with very little challenge, nor in relation to the German-Italian invasion of Spain) that the menace of resurgent German imperialism was becoming the major immediate menace for Britain, outweighing for the moment the long-term contradiction of imperialism and socialism. This section was represented by Churchill in opposition to Baldwin and Neville Chamberlain. Churchill had been the main protagonist of anti-communism and the anti-Soviet interventionist wars; he had expressed ardent admiration both of Mussolini and of Hitler; he did not understand the deeper character of the fascist war offensive, as expressed in the German-Italian aggression in Spain, in relation to which he remained neutral. But he was genuinely hostile to German imperialism, and prepared even for temporary cooperation with the Soviet Union to check the menacing renewed German imperialist advance, which he understood earlier than most Conservatives, obsessed by their admiration for Hitler as their champion against communism and the Soviet Union, to be directed also against Britain.

The international working-class movement during this period had to operate in these conditions. It was necessary to take into account the specific character of the fascist war offensive, entirely different in significance from the local and regional wars preceding the First World War, and requiring to be resisted by full support of the just cause of the victims of fascist aggression. It was also necessary to take advantage of the opportunity provided by the division within the

ruling class in the non-fascist countries in order to broaden the front of resistance to fascist aggression. Hence the requirement of the situation of the nineteen-thirties was not only to build up the strongest possible united working-class front and popular front against the offensive of fascism and reaction within each country. The parallel and no less indispensable requirement was also to build up the broadest peace front, including those sections of the imperialists prepared to participate or campaign for similar objectives, for resistance to the fascist war offensive, and for the aim of a broad peace alliance of states, associating Britain and France with the Soviet Union, on the basis of collective security, through the League of Nations and also mutual assistance treaties, to bar the road to fascist aggression and thus prevent the Second World War.

Had such a peace front of states, specifically of Britain and France and Czechoslovakia with the Soviet Union, been built up in time, before Europe was surrendered to Hitler, and maintained with firmness and unity, it is universally recognised today that such a combination, with its overwhelming superior strength, would have been fully able to bar the road to Hitler's aggression, and thereby would have prevented the Second World War.

For this aim the Communist International and all communist parties, together with all progressive sections of the working class, including wide sections of the social-democratic parties, and all progressive democrats, and even some more far-sighted conservative elements, ceaselessly worked during these critical years. For this aim the Soviet Union and Soviet diplomacy tirelessly and patiently worked, as shown in the French-Soviet Mutual Assistance Treaty and the Czech-Soviet Mutual Assistance Treaty. But the rulers of British imperialism stood in the way; repeatedly refused a similar treaty with the Soviet Union; wrecked the Mutual Assistance Treaties of France and Czechoslovakia by bullying their weak rulers into repudiating their obligations and accepting surrender; and thereby made the Second World War inevitable.

The main responsibility for this disastrous policy, which opened the way for the Second World War of fascism against the peoples of the world, lay with the dominant rulers of

British imperialism in association with their satellites in France. But a heavy responsibility lay also with the rightwing leaders of social-democracy and of the Second International, who to the last opposed every approach of the Communist International and of the Communist parties for unity against the fascist war offensive. This applied most conspicuously over the war of Mussolini to conquer Ethiopia. The Labour Party leadership accepted at face value the hypocritical electoral promises of the Conservative Foreign Secretary Hoare to stand for collective security. As soon as the Conservatives had won the 1935 election on this basis, the notorious Hoare-Laval pact followed for the carving up of Ethiopia. Similarly in face of the German-Italian fascist offensive against Spanish democracy Blum at the head of the French Socialist Party and the Labour Party leadership at the Edinburgh Conference in 1936 supported the denial of the legal right of the Spanish democratic government to the supply of arms. Finally this total line was most disastrously exposed over the culminating test of Munich in 1938.

This role of the dominant leaders of imperialism, and of the right-wing leadership of social-democracy, in hindering the establishment of the peace front which could have prevented the Second World War, was facilitated in part by some confusion among some sincere left socialist sections during this period. These sections failed to understand the new situation created by the fascist war offensive, and its basic difference from the conditions preceding the First World War, and in consequence regarded with suspicion any proposals for support of collective security or for a peace alliance of Britain and France with the Soviet Union against Hitler as an attempt to entangle them in a "capitalist imperialist war".[10] The main

[10] An amusing illustration of these difficulties arose in the experience of the united front campaign for the Socialist League, Communist Party and Independent Labour Party in the early months of 1937. The formation of this united front was in fact a positive and significant expression of the advance of the progressive trends in the socialist and working-class movement during this critical phase. The united front programme extended to many questions of home politics and working class common action. However, it did not include the aim of the peace front, that is, of a united stand of Britain, France and the Soviet Union, through the League of Nations or a direct alliance, to check the aggression of Hitler, which was advocated by the Communist Party, since this objective was opposed by the Socialist League and the I.L.P. In the negotiations and weekly meetings of representatives of these bodies, with the Socialist League represented by Cripps and Bevan, the Independent Labour Party by Maxton and Brockway, and the

function also of the Trotskyist sections in the Western countries during this period was to promote such confusions, and in this way, in the name of the usual "ultra-revolutionary" principles, to disorganise the left and oppose the necessary united people's front, peace front and peace alliance against fascism.

4. MUNICH TEST

Munich proved the culminating decisive test of the alignment of forces on the road to the Second World War. Czechoslovakia, with its strongly fortified frontier confronting Germany, and its binding alliances with France and the Soviet Union for defence against aggression, represented the strategic bastion blocking the way to Hitler's further expansion in Europe. In May, 1938, Hitler made his first attempt and failed; the alliance stood firm, and the path was barred. As Generals Keitel and Jodl admitted at the Nuremburg trial after the war, there was no military possibility for Germany to break the Czechoslovak bastion if the alliance stood firm, since Germany had under fifty divisions to face simultaneously the forty Czechoslovak divisions, the one hundred French divisions and the far greater armed forces of the Soviet Union. The gate for Hitler could only be unlocked from within. This was the job of Neville Chamberlain at the head of the

Communist Party by Pollitt and the present writer, a stumbling bloc proved that Cripps was especially insistent, together with his Socialist League colleagues and the I.L.P., that the Communist Party must not try to drag the united front against fascism into support of a united peace front for collective security or alliance of Britain, France and the Soviet Union against Hitler, since any war arising from such an alliance would be a "capitalist imperialist war" which he, Cripps, and true socialists could never support. This objective had accordingly to be omitted from the programme of the united front; and the Communists had to campaign independently for this objective. Whenever the Communist Party in association with other supporters had held a major demonstration for this aim (one very large rally was held in the Empress Stadium with Lloyd George, Pollitt and other speakers), black looks and hard words would follow at the weekly meeting of the united front committee on the grounds that the Communist Party was trying to sully the "purity" of the working-class principles of Cripps and entangle him into support for a "capitalist imperialist war". The somersault duly followed in 1939 when Cripps supported the "phoney war" of Chamberlain and Daladier, as if it had been a war against Hitler, while the Communist Party, consistent to its principles exposed the truly imperialist hypocrisy of the "phoney war" of actual passivity in relation to Hitler and concentration on an anti-Soviet Offensive, and mobilised mass support as soon as the coalition, which it had been the first to advocate as the indispensable condition for the defeat of fascism, of the Western powers with the Soviet Union against Hitler, was realised.

British Government. For this purpose the Runciman Mission was sent to prepare the ground during the summer, and official propaganda began to be spread in Britain on the necessity to dismember Czechoslovakia and concede to Hitler his territorial demands in the name of "national" justice for the Sudeten Germans (a comic plea from the leaders of British imperialism holding at that time nearly a quarter of mankind in colonial subjection). A noisy display of war preparations was made by Hitler, and of parallel war preparations by Britain, with a distribution of gas masks to the population to create a psychology of war alarm. On this basis Chamberlain flew to Berchtesgaden to meet Hitler on September 15, and after a dramatic session in parliament with a production of a letter from Hitler at the last moment as representing a last hope of peace, flew to Munich and there on September 30 signed the shameful four-power pact of Hitler, Mussolini, Chamberlain and Daladier for the betrayal of Czechoslovakia. President Benes of Czechoslovakia was bullied into surrender. The Soviet Government made clear that, if Czechoslovakia resisted, the Soviet Union would fulfil its treaty pledges and stand by Czechoslovakia, even alone. The Communist Party of Czechoslovakia, representing the feeling of the mass of the people, stood firm for resistance. But Benes, subjected to the most brutal intimidation and threats by Chamberlain and Daladier, finally surrendered. The outcome was presented as a victory for "peace in our time", as Chamberlain proclaimed at the airport on his return, triumphantly waving a piece of paper signed by Hitler (who sneered, as soon as Chamberlain's back was turned: "This old gentleman has signed away the British Empire"). But within the inner ruling circles in Britain the explanation was whispered that, while a combined resistance of Britain, France and the Soviet Union with Czechoslovakia would have been fully capable in a military sense to check Hitler, the outcome would have been a communist Czechoslovakia, the collapse of Hitler and the prospect of a communist Germany.

Munich is today recalled as a day of shame and guilt in the history of Britain. Indeed, the anti-Soviet devotees of Munich have since sought to cash in on the popular hatred of Munich and justify their continuance of the same basic policy through the anti-Soviet "cold war" Nato alliance and renewed rearma-

ment of German militarism by declaring that "the lesson of Munich" must be learned, to "stand up to dictators". But at the time it was celebrated in the entire official press, including by the Labour Party organ, as by Blum in France, as a triumph of peace; and on October 3 the Labour Party leadership, which had already wished Chamberlain "Godspeed" on his way to Munich, refused to accept the proposition of a motion of censure on Chamberlain.

After Munich minority voices of opposition were heard, including Churchill. Indeed today, to judge from their present statements, all men in public life in Britain were really opposed to Munich, just as in the present West Germany of Adenauer and Erhart all men in public life were in reality secret opponents of Hitler, harboured Jews for protection in their households, and only took part in drafting the racial laws and similar suppressions as a cover for their secret and until now unknown opposition.

But at the time of Munich, while there was still time to prevent it, the only voice of opposition was that of the Communist Party. In the hysterical scene in parliament on September 28, when all the other parties joined in to acclaim Chamberlain on his prospective visit to Munich, and speeches in support of Chamberlain were made by the Labour Party leader, Attlee, the Liberal leader, Sinclair, the I.L.P. leader, Maxton and the pacifist Lansbury, only one voice of opposition was heard. It was not the voice of Churchill, who remained silent. It was the voice of the single Communist M.P., William Gallacher, who, having to shout to make himself heard above the din of acclamation, proclaimed: "I am no party to what is going on here. I object to the sacrifice of Czechoslovakia."

Similarly at the Fifteenth Congress of the Communist Party at Birmingham on September 16-19, 1938, immediately after Berchtesgaden and before Munich, the warning was sounded in the political report presented by Harry Pollitt. From the Congress platform on September 18 a speaker (the present writer) predicted, not only Munich, that under cover of the war crisis and deliberate spreading of a war scare the real aim of the Government was to prepare acceptance of the betrayal of Czechoslovakia as a supposed victory for peace, but also, looking further ahead to the consequence,

predicted "We stood Alone", that after the supposed victory for peace war between Britain and Hitler would come none the less, but under immeasurably worse conditions, with Britain fighting alone and without allies.[11]

5. SEQUEL OF MUNICH

Munich was the watershed. Thereafter war had in fact been made inevitable, although there were still flurries in the current sweeping to war; the mass movement rose still higher for the peace alliance with the Soviet Union which could have prevented the war; and the Soviet Union sought indefatigably to the last, even to the point of danger on the very eve of the war, to reach such an alliance with Britain and France. In May, 1939, Stalin took over the premiership; this was the sign that the hour of final decision and action was near. After Hitler's seizure of the remainder of Czechoslovakia, and the storm of popular disillusionment and anger which followed, Chamberlain sought to appease the popular demand for an alliance with the Soviet Union (newspaper polls showed 87 per cent for a British-Soviet alliance) by making an alliance and Treaty of Guarantee with fascist Poland and fascist Rumania. This was an empty and meaningless gesture, if it had been intended to constitute a military check to Hitler's expansion, as Lloyd George immediately pointed out, and as the outcome

[11] "No one who has followed the events of the past week can fail to see that the Government has been deliberately encouraging a certain war atmosphere, an atmosphere similar to that of 1914. The war crisis is real enough. The Government is playing a double game in this. It is using the war crisis to stage a deception. They are spreading everywhere a picture that the issue of war is the issue, that tomorrow we may find Britain, France and the Soviet Union at war with Germany. Speculation spreads as to what we will do then, and has also affected members of our party. Why is the Government concerned to spread this? Is it because they intend to make such a united stand? That is the last thing they mean to do if they can help it. If there were such a united stand that would mean not war but peace. But their aim is on this basis to smash the idea of the peace front by associating it in the minds of the people with war. Their aim is on this basis to put across their policy of breaking the peace front, betraying Czechoslovakia, betraying peace, and to put it across in such a way that it is received as a triumph for peace, that Chamberlain is the saviour of peace . . . .

"But if Chamberlain's policy, which will be celebrated as a policy of peace, goes through, then fascism, enormously strengthened in Europe, will at last be able to turn its forces upon the democracies, and the British people will then have to fight all the same, but under immeasurably worse conditions".

("*Report of the Fifteenth Congress of the Communist Party of Great Britain*", September 16-19, 1938; proceedings on September 18, 1938; pp. 90-92).

proved, unless it were accompanied by a military alliance with the Soviet Union. The probable real purpose was to incite the Polish fascists to resist, who would otherwise not have done so ("The only true word spoken by Hitler was when he said that, but for British intervention, Poland might have accepted these terms": Lord Lloyd, *The British Case*, 1939, p. 50), and thus ensure that Hitler's armies should sweep east to the borders of the Soviet Union. Finally under overwhelming popular pressure Chamberlain and Daladier at the last moment sent a very low-powered delegation by the slowest possible route to the Soviet Union to discuss the possibility of an alliance. The Soviet representatives, on the highest military level, pointed out that Hitler's offensive in Poland was now about to take place; that the offensive would be conducted with such and such forces along such and such routes; that the Soviet Union was ready to put such and such forces in the field at such and such points to withstand them; what were the Western powers prepared to do? The unhappy minor officials of the Anglo-French delegations explained that they were not empowered to discuss anything concrete of this nature; and the Polish fascists affirmed that they would never permit Soviet troops to come into Poland to defend Poland. It became evident that there was no serious approach from the Anglo-French side, the attention of whose governments was more concerned with the parallel Anglo-Nazi negotiations in progress; and that the moment of war was at hand, with Hitler's armies about to begin their march to the East, and with the menace of the Munichite four-power bloc against the Soviet Union coming into operation. The Soviet Union, having waited until the last moment of danger in order to strive to achieve the alliance with the western powers which it would have preferred as the best course for peace, acted promptly to meet the danger and signed the Non-Aggression Pact with Germany which the German Government had been offering for months.

The Soviet-German Non-Aggression Pact, the second best alternative after the peace alliance had been refused, smashed the Four-Power Pact combination of Munich. Within eleven days of the signing of the pact Britain and France, which had tolerated every Nazi aggression until then, declared war on Germany. Not for the sake of Danzig; much more had been

given away. Not for the defence of Poland; the sequel showed that no finger was stirred in defence of Poland. But against "the great apostasy" of Hitler, as Lord Lloyd called it in his official apologia *The British Case* (with a Preface by the Foreign Secretary, Lord Halifax), who had accepted all their gifts and support on the basis of promises to march against the Soviet Union, and now had bilked them and signed a non-aggression pact with the Soviet Union. Of course neither signatory to the Non-Aggression Pact was deceived for a moment into the belief that it was permament. But, since war had been made inevitable by Munich and the refusal of the peace alliance, the pact ensured that there would be no single counter-revolutionary bloc of the imperialist powers; that the war would open first between the imperialist powers; that the Soviet Union would gain further time to prepare for the inevitable onslaught; and that the division of the imperialist powers might then make possible, after the price of Munich had had to be paid, and the lesson learned the hard way, upon the bodies of the British and French peoples, the final fulfilment of the alliance of the Western powers and the Soviet Union which could alone make possible the destruction of the military power of fascism.

6. THE "PHONEY WAR"

At the Eighteenth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union in March, 1939, Stalin warned the British and French Governments that their Munichite policy of encouraging the Nazi war offensive, in the expectation that it would be directed against the Soviet Union, might turn into a dangerous fiasco for them, since the attack might first be directed to the West:

> "One might think that the districts of Czechoslovakia were yielded to Germany as the price of an undertaking to launch war on the Soviet Union, but that now the Germans are refusing to meet their bills and are sending them to Hades.
>
> "Far be it from me to moralise on the policy of non-intervention, to talk of treason, treachery and so on. It would be naïve to preach morals to people who recognise no human morality. Politics is politics, as the old case-hardened bourgeois diplomats say. It must be remarked,

however, that the big and dangerous political game started by the supporters of the policy of non-intervention may end in a serious fiasco for them."

This prediction proved correct. The offensive of Hitler, after he had taken the fullest advantage of the support and encouragement from the West, was first turned against the West, which under its corrupted Munichite politicians offered easier and more vulnerable spoils, in order to have all the advantages and additional resources from the conquest of Western Europe before embarking on his main war, the war against the more formidable opponent, the Soviet Union.

The declaration of war by Chamberlain and a reluctantly obedient Daladier on Hitler in September, 1939, was a diplomatic act, rather than a military act. Certainly the object was not the defence of Poland; no attempt was made to help Poland. The moment when the main German forces were concentrated in Poland, and only very weak German forces were left in the west, with an Anglo-French superiority of five to one, was the moment of opportunity for a decisive blow against Germany if that has been the objective. At the Nuremburg trial General Jodl admitted on behalf of the German general staff:

"Neither in 1937 nor in 1938 could Germany have withstood a concentric attack by France, Czechoslovakia and Poland with their war establishment of 190 divisions. If Germany did not collapse during the Polish campaign it was because the 110 French and British divisions opposed to 23 German divisions in the West were completely inactive." (*Times* report, June 5, 1946)

General Keitel at the Nuremburg trial put the position even more sharply:

"We soldiers always expected intervention by the Western powers during the Polish campaign, and were surprised when there were only slight skirmishes along the West wall, which was protected by only five divisions. A French attack during the Polish campaign would have met with no German resistance. But since they did not take place we no longer thought the Western powers would actively enter the war."

Similarly Hitler wrote to Mussolini on March 18, 1940, that Germany's position had been critical in September, 1939,

when there were only seven divisions in the West, and thus no possibility of resisting a French offensive if one had been launched (*Documents on German Foreign Policy 1918-1945*, Series D, Volume IX). The offensive was not launched. The British Ambassador in Paris, Duff-Cooper, boasted that they had discovered "a new way of making war, without casualties".

This was the "phoney war", or, as a *Times* editorial later described it:

"the period of sham war that led inevitably as it now seems to the collapse of 1940." (*Times* March 2, 1942)

The purpose of Chamberlain and Daladier in declaring war on Germany in September 1939, was thus not to make war on Germany, nor to defend Poland, but to exercise pressure on Germany in order to secure a shift in the regime or leadership of Nazism such as would annul the Non-Aggression Pact with the Soviet Union and cooperate with the West against the Soviet Union. Hitler, complained Lord Lloyd in the official statement of *The British Case* (oddly echoing Stalin's warning description of the dissatisfied customer who feels he has been bilked) had "falsely pretended to be the champion" of the West against the Soviet Union. This was the indictment. All other crimes and aggressions could be forgiven, but not making peace with the Soviet Union:

"However abominable his methods, however deceitful his diplomacy, however intolerant he might show himself of the rights of other European peoples, he still claimed to stand for something which was a common European interest, and which could therefore conceivably provide some day a basis for understanding with other nations equally determined not to sacrifice their traditional institutions and habits on the bloodstained altars of the World Revolution. The conclusion of the German-Soviet pact removed even this faint possibility of an honourable peace.

"... an alliance with the Communist dictator of the Kremlin... This was Herr Hitler's final apostasy."

(Lord Lloyd, *The British Case*, with approving Introduction by the Foreign Secretary, Lord Halifax, 1939)

The only barring of the road to the further advance of the

Nazi forces in Poland was provided by the armies of the Soviet Union, which, in accordance with the terms of the Non-Aggression agreement, re-occupied the regions of Western Byelorussia and Western Ukraine that the old Poland had robbed and annexed from Soviet Russia in the era of the interventionist wars. The Soviet armies stood on the so-called Curzon line, that is the line which the Allied Supreme Council in 1919 had adjudged to be the legitimate frontier of Russia. The positive helpfulness of this Soviet stand for the Western powers was recognised by Churchill and responsible Conservative organs at the time (although social-democratic expression took the opportunity only to indulge in a familiar volley of anti-Soviet abuse):

"The presence of a powerful Russian army on his Eastern frontier will immobilise a large part of Hitler's forces at a time when they are needed in the west."

(*Daily Telegraph*, September 18, 1939)

"That the Russian armies should stand on this line was clearly necessary for the safety of Russia against the Nazi menace. At any rate the line is there, and an Eastern Front has been created which Nazi Germany does not dare assail."

(Winston Churchill, broadcast, October 1, 1939)

Anglo-French strategy during this phase, in accordance with the Munichite policy, was concentrated, not on making war on Germany, but on developing a front against the Soviet Union. Attempts were made, both in Finland, and through Baku. During the winter of 1939-40 British and French Expeditionary Forces were equipped for dispatch to fight the Soviet Union in Finland. Three times as many British planes were sent to serve Finnish fascism against the Soviet Union (120 fighters and 24 bombers) as were three months later available for the British Expeditionary Force (50 fighters —Lord Gort on May 12, 1940) in the hour of extremity on the Western Front. According to Chamberlain's statement in parliament on March 19, 1940, in response to the Finnish Marshal Mannerheim's request for 30,000 men to be sent by May, no less than 100,000 "heavily armed and equipped" men had been ready to sail at the beginning of March in order to conduct the war against the Soviet Union. But the entirely unexpected and brilliant military feat of the Soviet Army in storming the supposedly impregnable Mannerheim Line (constructed under the direction of the British General Sir Walter Kirke) by March 11 threw all the Anglo-French plans into disarray.

Parallel with the passivity in relation to Germany, and the concentration on war measures against the Soviet Union, the opportunity of the "phoney war" was taken to institute the most active anti-communist drive in the Western countries, especially in France, where the Communist Party was declared illegal, and the Death Law carried against the communists, with the support of the socialist deputies.

7. COMMUNISM AND THE FIRST PHASE OF THE WAR

Such was the complex situation of the "phoney war" which the Communist Parties in the Western countries, the leaders of the fight against fascism and the fascist war offensive and against all the policies of Munichism, had to confront in order to determine the path of the working class and anti-fascist fight. It was not surprising that this complex and rapidly changing situation should give rise in this initial phase to sincerely held differences of opinion, estimation and tactical conclusions at different stages. At the outset, when the British and French governments declared war on Germany, the Communist Parties in the Western countries, as in Britain, France and the United States, while entertaining no illusions on the policy of Chamberlain and Daladier, sought to utilise the opportunity in order to develop it into a genuine fight against Hitler and fascism, at the same time as combatting the reactionary policies of Chamberlain and Daladier. Thus the statement of the British Party at the beginning of September, on the occasion of the declaration of war, called for "a struggle on two fronts"; that is, simultaneously against Hitler and against the policies of Chamberlain, and demanded the removal of the Chamberlain Government. Experience of the "phoney war" rapidly showed that this policy of the "struggle on two fronts" met with serious difficulties in practice, since support for the Government's war measures in the name of anti-fascist aims meant in practice, not any conduct of war against Hitler, but misuse of the anti-fascist sentiments of the people to conduct incitement and prepare war measures against the Soviet Union. Hence, when the Central Committee

of the British Communist Party met for the first time after the outbreak of war during the last week of September and was able to review the real situation of the "phoney war", a new statement of policy was adopted and published on October 2, corresponding to this situation, which exposed the hypocrisy of the anti-fascist pretensions of Chamberlain and Daladier and attacked the reactionary imperialist character of the type of war they were conducting as contrary to the interests of the people. The French Communist Party fearlessly carried forward its fight along similar lines, with its general secretary, Thorez, having to operate from illegality, in the face of every repression, and maintained its confidence among the people, as was shown by its leading role in the resistance movement when the real fight developed against Nazi occupation. The Communist International, in an analysis of the genesis of the war, showed the responsibility both of Nazism and of Munichism and said: "In this war the blame falls on all the capitalist governments, and primarily the ruling classes of the belligerent states."

By 1940 a new situation developed. The storming of the Mannerheim Line in March 1940 was a turning point of the war. The plans of the Anglo-French Munichite Governments to establish their anti-Soviet war front were smashed beyond repair. At the same time the dangerous opening on Leningrad through Finland was closed, and the road rendered thereby more difficult for the fulfilment of the further Nazi aim of the offensive against the Soviet Union. Under these conditions, Hitler and his generals determined to open the offensive for the conquest of Western Europe before attacking the Soviet Union. The successive assaults on Denmark, Norway, the Low Countries and France followed. The British Expeditionary Force was swept into the sea at Dunkirk; but according to the German Generals' subsequent account, Hitler's special orders halted any measures for its destruction, since Hitler still hoped to reach an agreement with Britain. In France the right wing and pro-fascist generals, who made no concealment of their view that they preferred Hitler to the Communists, opened the front, and let Hitler's blitzkrieg sweep through with scarcely a show of resistance. Peace was signed between Pétain and Hitler, and a satellite fascist regime under Pétain and the ex-Socialist, Laval, was established at Vichy by a vote of a National Assembly excluding the Communists and carrying the emergency powers for Pétain by 569 to 80. Of the 186 Deputies of the French Socialist Party, 110, or the majority, voted for the full powers for Pétain, 40 abstained or were absent, and 36 voted against. Thus the shameful record of the German Social-Democratic Party in the vote for Hitler on May 17, 1933, was repeated.

In this beginning of the real struggle against Nazism the French Communist Party led the way inside France, just as De Gaulle in exile led the struggle from outside France. In the first days of July 1940, the French Communist Party, dogged by the Vichy police and the Gestapo, launched its historic appeal for the resistance movement of the French people:

> "A great nation like ours will never become a nation of slaves . . . France with her glorious past will never kneel before a gang of lickspittles ready for any dirty work. It is with the people that the great hopes of national and social liberation lie. And it is around the working class, keen and self-sacrificing, full of confidence and courage, that there can be built the front of liberty and independence."

Around the vanguard leadership of the French Communist Party was built the resistance movement of the French people, with the participation of many patriotic sections of the widest political views. The French Communists, in the forefront of the struggle, including those killed in partisan warfare, executed in France, or deported and massacred in Nazi camps, lost 75,000 dead, and became known as *le Parti des fusillés*, "the Party of the executed"; that is, of those who gave their lives in the struggle against Nazism. This helped to give the French Communist Party during the years after the war its indestructible place of honour in the hearts of the French people, in the face of all cold war repression and campaigns, with a countinuing vote of one quarter of the people maintained under the most adverse conditions.

In Britain the collapse of the passive phase of the "phoney war" and the opening of Hitler's offensive to the West, also brought political change, but the beginning of change in the opposite direction to France. Chamberlain was replaced in May, following the fiasco of the expeditionary force sent to

Norway and Hitler's conquest of Norway, by Churchill as Premier, although Chamberlain and many of his prominent colleagues remained in the Cabinet of Churchill. The British Communist Party accordingly responded to the new situation and put forward as its immediate slogan the removal of the Munichite Ministers from the Government, while continuing its basic fight during this stage for the mobilisation of the people, conducted on a broad front through the People's Convention in the beginning of 1941, to establish a People's Government, which would repudiate imperialist aims, appeal to the German people against Hitler, and take all measures necessary to win an anti-fascist people's peace.

The replacement of Chamberlain by Churchill took place only just in time, since after the fall of France, Hitler's next objective was to secure the capitulation of Britain. For this purpose, bombing was conducted and threats proclaimed of the intention to invade, with an elaborate staging of conspicuous preparations for such an invasion (after the war admitted by the German military and naval chiefs under interrogation to have been a camouflage, "the greatest deception in the history of war" according to Admiral Raeder; "the proposed invasion of England was nonsense," was the statement of General Rundstedt; "we looked upon the whole thing as a sort of game . . . I have a feeling that the Führer never really wanted to invade England; he definitely hoped that England would make peace overtures").[12] Strategically the large-scale transport of troops across the Channel was not practicable, since Britain had command of the seas, unless air mastery could be established. Hence the importance of the Battle of Britain. In this critical situation the Soviet Union concentration of military and air force on Germany's eastern frontier immobilised, according to the subsequent German account, a serious proportion of Germany's Air Force. The valiant British Air Force was able to gain a hard-won victory. The British people faced without flinching the Nazi threats and bombing.

[12] There is some reason for judging that Churchill, although making the utmost play with the menace of a German invasion for the purpose of pepping up the morale of the population at home, and continuing talk of the invasion menace for years after it had any serious basis, was not entirely taken in by the deception; since at the most critical moment in the summer of 1940 he despatched Britain's best troops and main armour to the Middle East, which from the imperialist point of view was, of course, the main theatre of the war.

Anti-fascist popular sentiment rose ever higher in Britain, France and all the European countries threatened by Nazism, as also in the United States and beyond Europe. When Hitler delivered his offensive in the Balkans during the first half of 1941 preliminary to his offensive against the Soviet Union, his armies found themselves, after the collapse of the rotten fascist governments, confronted with an indomitable guerilla resistance of the peoples led by the Communist Parties, notably in Yugoslavia and in Greece.

Thus during the twelve months preceding June 1941, all the conditions were preparing for the transformation of the initial imperialist phase of the "phoney war", which had been opened in 1939, into a genuine war of the peoples against fascism.

Lenin had already during the First World War shown how a war can change its character at different stages, and specifically how an imperialist war could turn into a national war of liberation or a national war into an imperialist war:

> "The fundamental proposition of Marxist dialectics is that all boundaries in nature and society are conventional and mobile, that there is *not a single* phenomenon which cannot under certain circumstances be transformed into its opposite. A national war can be transformed into an imperialist war, and *vice versa*."
>
> (Lenin, *The Pamphlet by Junius*, August, 1916)

This penetrating observation was to receive powerful confirmation in the practical experience of the successive stages of the Second World War.

8. THE PEOPLES' WAR OF LIBERATION AGAINST FASCISM

June 22, 1941, the day of Hitler's offensive against the Soviet Union, and of the immediately following proclamation of the British-Soviet alliance by Churchill's broadcast later on the same day, was the decisive day of change on which the West European war broadened out into world war, and the war of imperialist governments become finally transformed into a war of the alliance of the peoples against fascism, with the parallel participation of imperialist and socialist governments in unity with the guerilla and resistance movements of the peoples, led by the Communist Parties, wherever Nazism extended its assault.

It is important to note that, while June 22, 1941, was the decisive turning point of the war, this transformation of the character of the war was not the sudden creation of the events of that momentous day. Indications had already been given to show how during the preceding twelve months, as the initial "phoney war" faded out in face of the Nazi offensive, and as the notorious profascist political leaders in the Western countries either passed over to direct collaboration or into general discredit, the conditions developed for the transformation of the war into a war of the peoples against fascism, with the communists in the vanguard in a whole series of countries.

On the other hand, the completion of the extension to full world war was not reached until December, 1941, with Pearl Harbour and the involvement of the United States of America and Japan. All Asia now became drawn into the war, as the ruthless offensive of Japanese fascism and militarism swept over the rotting bulwarks of British, French and Dutch colonialism in South East Asia; and once again it was the Communist Parties which led the anti-fascist liberation war of the peoples, after the colonial rulers had fled, in Burma, Malaya and Indonesia.

This transformation of the character of the war, expressed in the British-Soviet Alliance, which broadened into the American-British-Soviet Alliance, did not mean that the Munichite trends in the imperialist camp disappeared. Hopeful calculations for the mutual destruction of Germany and the Soviet Union continued. Thus Senator Truman, who later became President Truman of cold war notoriety, declared on June 24, 1941:

> "If we see Germany winning we ought to help Russia, and if Russia is winning we ought to help Germany, and in that way let them kill as many as possible."

Similar sentiments were promulgated by the British Minister, Moore-Brabazon, in a notorious indiscretion at a private meeting, according to the report of it made by the President of the Amalgamated Engineering Union to the Trades Union Congress and taken up with the Government, when he was alleged to have expressed the hope that Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union would destroy one another, leaving the British Empire on top. The leadership of some social-democratic

parties adopted the same viewpoint. Thus the German Social-Democratic Party Executive declared in July, 1941:

> "From the Arctic to the Black Sea the world's strongest armies are locked in battle. Should one of the two achieve a quick victory, that army would henceforth be irresistible on the continents of Europe and Asia. It is only by exhausting each other in prolonged struggle that the nations of the Continent can be relieved of oppression, and that the power of Anglo-American Democracy can become the dominant factor in shaping a new World Order."

In this situation it was the historic achievement and strength of realist statesmanship of Premier Churchill to have responded with such promptness to the opportunity of June 22, 1941, and proclaimed at once, irrespective of the sharpness of social and political differences, the principle of a British-Soviet military alliance as corresponding to the true interests of both peoples. The British-Soviet alliance, which had been spurned and publicly refused by Chamberlain even as late as April, 1939, was now, when the bitter consequences of that policy had been learned through the fall of France and the mortal danger of Britain, universally recognised as the rock of salvation.

At the same time it has to be noted that also in the strategic calculations of Churchill and of all the British military staffs and political leaders it was assumed that the Soviet Union would collapse within a few weeks. The Nazi blitzkrieg, which had destroyed the Polish army in a matter of days, and which had taken less than a month to send the French army, reputed the strongest in Europe, in headlong rout, and the British army hastily escaping from Dunkirk, would of course, it was assumed, go through an incompetent communist army (whose campaign in the Finnish winter war had been described by imaginative journalists at the time far from the front as a comic opera spectacle of imbecility and helplessness, revealing as Churchill had said at the time, how communism rots the soul of a nation and destroys its efficiency) like a knife through butter, in the favourite phrase then used. Three months was the maximum which optimists in British ruling class circles gave for the continued existence of the Soviet Union. The Nazi attack on the Soviet Union was universally represented

in official expression, not as an opportunity for action, but as a short "respite", a "lull", a welcome relief from air raids, an opportunity to rest and re-equip ("Chiefly, it has given us a lull to re-equip and to rest. . . . It has given us a valuable rest here": General Wavell in a press interview, *Times*, July 3, 1941). At the Atlantic Charter meeting of Churchill and Roosevelt in August, 1941, in response to every anxious question of Roosevelt as to the possibility of the Russians holding out, Churchill was emphatic in rejecting any such possibility.

"Every now and then, Father would throw in a question: 'The Russians?'

"'The Russians!' There was an edge of contempt in his voice, and then he seemed almost to catch himself. 'Of course they're much stronger than we ever dared hope. But no one can tell how much longer. . . .'

"'Then you don't think they'll be able to hold out?'

"'When Moscow falls. . . . As soon as the Germans are beyond the Caucasus. . . . When Russian resistance finally ceases. . . .'

"Always his answers were definite, unconditional. There were no 'ifs', there was little or no credence put in Russian resistance."

(Elliott Roosevelt, *As He Saw It*, 1946, p. 30)

Churchill and Roosevelt met in August, 1941, to discuss the terms to be established after the war. While the colossal Nazi forces were mauling the Soviet Union, for five months after the assault until the campaign in Libya in November, 1941, not a single British soldier (the Americans were not yet in the war) was in action against the Nazis on any front. Although the two-front war had always been the nightmare of German strategists, for three years the second front in the West was delayed. Thus the special Churchillian strategy of the formal, but relatively passive alliance with the Soviet Union, applauding the Soviet armies with the hightest rhetoric, and providing some assistance, but sparing in action on the Western side until the issue had been decided by the arduous effort of the Soviet armies, and then hurrying in to garner the fruits of victory, bore something of the character of a more subtle version of the basic strategic aim of Chamberlain, to promote a German-Soviet conflict with the maximum cost for both

powers, while holding the role of the Western powers in reserve to come in as final victors.

The Nazi blitzkrieg inflicted heavy losses and drove deep into the heart of the Soviet Union. The Nazi hordes had the advantage, not only of war experience, but of overwhelming numerical superiority, since they had behind them the 400 millions of enslaved Europe to provide the resources and man the war industries, as well as some armed forces, so that they could mobilise the greater part of German man-power for the armed forces. The Soviet Union, on the other hand, with a population of 175 millions, had to provide both for the war industries (96 per cent of Soviet armaments came from Soviet production) and the armies. Stalin informed Churchill at Potsdam that the Germans had mobilised 18 million men, apart from the industries, while the Russians had 12 million. The Nazi armies had also the initial advantage of surprise attack. Initial intelligence reports of Nazi troop concentrations and offensive preparations had been disregarded owing to political suspicions of the aims of hostile imperialist circles to promote a German-Soviet conflict; and in consequence Stalin as Commander-in-Chief had given instructions against any corresponding military concentration on the Soviet side, and warned against being led by provocations or incidents into major military operations. Further, the Soviet military command at the outset had been weakened by the preceding purge, before the war, of many outstanding generals and higher officers, who have since been rehabilitated. All this helped to facilitate the depth of the initial Nazi offensive thrust into Soviet territory.

The contrast between the First World War, when Germany had to fight on two fronts, and the Second World War, when the Nazis were left free to concentrate all their main forces on the Eastern front, was made by Stalin in his speech on the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Soviet Revolution delivered in Moscow on November 6, 1942. He said that in the First World War Germany had 220 divisions, of which 85 were on the Russian front, or, with allies, 127 divisions facing the Russian troops. In November, 1942, out of 256 German divisions 179 were fighting on the Soviet front, or with their allied forces, 240 divisions; the remainder were mainly on garrison duty in occupied Europe, while the British forces in North Africa

were engaging 4 German divisions and 11 Italian divisions.

Consequently the fight for the opening of the second front in the West became the key question of Western strategy; eventually the American military command also pressed for it, but met with considerable obstruction and delay in British official circles; the entire popular movement campaigned for this essential objective, and the communist parties played an active part in these campaigns.

The Soviet armies and people eventually drove back the Nazi invaders, but at heavy cost. The Anglo-American front in Western Europe was only opened in June, 1944, three years after the Nazi assault on the Soviet Union, when the Soviet armies had already routed the main Nazi armies ("torn the guts out of them," in Churchill's forceful phrase), and could have completed the victory alone. The purpose of this belated second front was thus no longer primarily to help the Soviet Union, but the essentially counter-revolutionary aim, explained by the British Ambassador Hoare to Franco earlier, to throw in at the last moment the numerous, heavily armed and unexhausted Anglo-American forces, after the maximum destruction and exhaustion of the Nazi and Soviet forces, to ensure the predominance of Anglo-American imperialism over as much as possible of Europe and prevent the anti-fascist popular revolution, arising from the resistance movements led by the Communist Parties in all Nazi-occupied Europe, extending over the whole of Europe.

9. SEEDS OF THE COLD WAR

As soon as the Soviet armies had begun to drive back the Nazi armies, following the pivotal victory of Stalingrad (with the encirclement and destruction of a German army of 300,000, and surrender of the Field-Marshal and main generals and 50,000 men), and the great offensives of the summer of 1942, the Western leaders realised that their original assumptions of the inevitable collapse of the Soviet Union were not going to be fulfilled. Accordingly by the autumn of 1942 new strategic calculations were begun by the West to prepare the cold war after the war, with Churchill's secret memorandum of October, 1942, for the future stand against "Russian barbarism" in Europe, and with the inauguration of the Manhattan Project or construction of the atom bomb in the United

States for the purpose, as the general in command of the project subsequently made clear was fully known to him at that time, of providing the decisive future weapon against the Soviet Union.[13] Thus the organisation of the cold war began in 1942.

The Nazi leaders, when they saw defeat staring them in the face, also laid down the future line for a defeated Germany to develop the closest cooperation with Anglo-American imperialism against the Soviet Union as the best way to rebuild German power. This line was explicitly laid down in the final statements of Goering, Goebbels and Admiral Doenitz, the successor of Hitler, and has been faithfully carried out by their heirs through Nato. Even after the opening of the second front in the West, the Nazi military chiefs still concentrated all their main forces and most stubborn resistance on the eastern front, and continually sought to reach accommodation with the Anglo-Americans on the West. However, the firm military agreements for the joint ending of the war and fixed lines of demarcation of the stationing of forces at the end of the war defeated these initial manoeuvres, although even here there was some confusion with the capitulation on the west taking place a day before the capitulation on the east.

Similarly with the ending of the war in the Far East against Japan in August, 1945, the same symptoms of the future were visible. Although the entry of the Soviet Union into the war had been fixed by agreement between the allies for August 8, and the destruction of the main Japanese armies in Manchuria by the Soviet armies was given in the final Japanese Cabinet minutes as the decisive factor compelling capitulation, the two American atom bombs were needlessly dropped

[13] "I must admit my thought rests primarily in Europe . . . It would be a measureless disaster if Russian barbarism overlaid the culture and independence of the ancient States of Europe."

(Winston Churchill, secret memorandum drawn up in October, 1942, and disclosed by Harold Macmillan at the Strasbourg "European" Conference in September, 1949.)

"I think it is important to state—I think it is well known—that there was never from about two weeks from the time I took charge of the Project any illusion on my part that Russia was the enemy and that the Project was conducted on that basis."

(U.S. General Groves, in charge of the "Manhattan Project", the code name for the atom bomb project, in his evidence given to a subsequent U.S. official enquiry and published in the report *In the Matter of J. Robert Oppenheimer*, U.S. Government Printing Office Washington, 1954.)

on Hiroshima and Nagasaki on August 6 and 9, not in order to ensure the defeat of Japan, which was already suing for peace, but to constitute, as Professor Blackett has shown, and as has since been widely recognised, the first act of the cold war to demonstrate the Anglo-American monopoly, which was expected to last for ten to fifteen years, of the "ultimate weapon" against the Soviet Union.

Thus dangerous signs of the future were visible even in the moment of the victory which was being won.

10. PEOPLES' VICTORY OVER FASCISM

The victory of the peoples of the world over the Axis bloc of the fascist powers, Germany, Italy and Japan, and their satellite fascist governments in a series of countries in Europe and Asia was a turning-point in world history. It opened the way for a new advance of the peoples everywhere. But the costs of this victory had been heavy for all the peoples involved.

The relative costs of the war revealed the strategy which had been followed. According to the official report of the United States Chief of Staff, General Marshall, his estimate of the total number of soldiers killed in the Second World War was: U.S.S.R., 7,500,000; Germany, 2,850,000; British Empire, 450,000 (of which the United Kingdom, 305,770); U.S.A., 295,904. These were heavy losses, far exceeding those of the First World War; and the level of civilian losses exceeded any comparison with the First World War. Three quarters of a million soldiers of the United States, Britain and the British Empire countries gave their lives in the common cause. At the same time it will be seen that the combined military losses of the entire British Empire and the United States in the war were less than one tenth those of the Soviet Union. The British official return for the numbers of soldiers killed from the British Empire was 353,652, including from the United Kingdom, 244,723. Britain also suffered civilian air raid deaths, amounting to 60,000, merchant shipping losses and some war damage. The United States suffered no war damage, and made gigantic profits from the war, while the lend-lease war aid to the allies was cut off abruptly as soon as the war ended. The Soviet Union civilian losses through the Nazi wholesale massacres, deportations, enslavement and extermination of

men, women and children in the Soviet territories occupied numbered over three million; indeed the full total of Soviet losses in the war, military and civilian, has been estimated by Western sources at 25 millions. Premier Khrushchov wrote to the Swedish Prime Minister in 1961: "The war against the Soviet Union swept away the lives of 20 million Soviet people." This total is reproduced in the *Statistical Yearbook* of the Statistical Department of the U.S.S.R. (1963 edition, p. 8). In addition, one third of Soviet territory and economic resources was devastated; 1,710 towns and 70,000 villages completely or partly destroyed; 6 million homes and buildings demolished; 31,800 industrial plants stripped; and 98,000 collective or state farms broken up and their livestock, amounting to 64 millions, destroyed or deported to Germany. From the Nazi-occupied countries the peoples, conducting the struggle through the resistance movements, not only contributed the heavy total of casualties from the partisan fighters or hostages shot on the spot, as well as whole villages like Oradour and Lidice razed to the ground, while their fascist rulers collaborated with the Nazis, but also lost millions deported and massacred in the concentration camps. No less terrible was the trail of rapine and deaths spread by the Japanese fascists and militarists in South East Asia, and the limitless sacrifices of the Chinese people in their long and arduous struggle against the Japanese invaders and home traitors.

The victory of the peoples of the world over fascism was thus won at a heavy cost. Nevertheless, it was the greatest victory of liberation since 1917. The alliance of the United States, Britain and the Soviet Union was the indispensable framework for the organisation of this victory, whatever the limitations and frictions arising from the special role of imperialist interests within the alliance. The Three-Power Summit Conferences of Roosevelt, Churchill and Stalin at Teheran in 1943 and Yalta in February, 1945, were signs of the new world conditions and of the new opportunities opening out, which, if fulfilled, could have brought a happier future for international relations during the years immediately after the war. The pledges then undertaken, for Three-Power cooperation in the United Nations to constitute the essential condition for the success of that organisation, and

for the banning of German rearmament, were in practice violated after the war by the Western powers who adopted instead the diplomacy and strategy of the cold war. Nevertheless, the lessons of the succeeding years, and of the harmful consequences of such violations, have driven home the necessity to return to the path of East-West cooperation and to guard against the menace of a new focus of war arising from the rearmament of German militarism.

1945 opened a new era in world history, with the greatest advance yet known of the peoples of the world, but at the same time with new and critical problems and dangers.

11. DISSOLUTION OF THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL

In the new conditions of the peoples' war of liberation against fascism, the international communist movement swept forward in scope, mass support and responsibility, and outgrew the old forms of organisation of the Communist International.

The initial role of the Communist International in the period of the international revolutionary upsurge following the First World War, to fulfil the function of a general staff of the international revolution, gave place to a different stage with the ebbing of the world revolutionary tide and the development of highly varied national situations. The role of the Communist International as guide and leader in the foundation and early growth of the communist parties, and in tackling the basic tactical problems of the newly formed parties, reached completion as the parties developed in maturity with the evolution of relatively stable and experienced leaderships. In the era of the extending offensive of fascism in the nineteen-thirties the Communist International fulfilled a new and all-important role of international leadership, demonstrated most conspicuously through the Seventh Congress, in leading the way for development of unity of the working class and the peoples against the offensive of fascism and war.

But once the war of liberation of the peoples against fascism had opened out, and the coalition of states of varying social composition for victory in this war had been formed, and when the communist parties in a number of countries had become the principal parties in their countries, were leading

the national struggle of their peoples, and on the way to becoming the governments of their countries the old form of organisation of a single directing centre was no longer appropriate to meet the complexity of these conditions or the national responsibilities confronting the various parties.

Therefore in June, 1943, the Communist International was dissolved, on the basis of a resolution adopted by the Presidium of the Executive in May, submitted to all the parties and agreed by all the parties.

The resolution stated:

> "Long before the war it became more and more clear that, with increasing complications in internal and international relations of various countries, any sort of international centre would encounter insuperable obstacles in solving the problems facing the movement in each separate country. . . .
>
> "The whole development of events in the last quarter of a century and the experience accumulated by the Communist International has convincingly shown that the organisational form of uniting workers chosen by the First Congress of the Communist International answered conditions of the first stages of the working-class movement, but it has been outgrown by the growth of this and by the complications of its problems in separate countries and has even become a drag on the further strengthening of the national working-class parties."

The resolution recalled that the Seventh Congress had already emphasised the need for "great flexibility and independence of its sections" and that the Executive Committee should "make a rule of avoiding interference in the internal organisational affairs of the Communist Parties".

In reaching this decision the resolution recalled the example of Marx and the First International:

> "Guided by the judgement of the founders of Marxism-Leninism, Communists have never been supporters of the conservation of international forms that have outlived themselves. They have always subordinated forms of organisation of the working-class movement, and methods of working such organisations, to the fundamental political interest of the working-class movement as a whole, to peculiarities of the concrete historical situation and

to problems immediately resulting from this situation.

"They remember the example of the great Marx, who united foremost workers in the ranks of the International Working Men's Association, and when the First International had fulfilled its historical task of laying the foundations for the development of working-class parties in the countries of Europe and America, and, as a result of the matured situation creating mass national working-class parties, dissolved the First International, as this form of organisation no longer corresponded to the tasks confronting it."

The decision was further stated to be based on "taking into account the growth and the political maturity of Communist parties and their leading cadres in separate countries".

This decision for a change in forms of organisation did not mean any change from the basic principles of communist internationalism which continued and continues with full force as indispensable guiding principles for all communists and communist parties in judging national situations. The removal of external organisational forms of expression of international communist unity and discipline only increases the importance of the voluntary self-discipline of all communists and communist parties in maintaining unity, cooperation and common understanding between communist parties and fidelity to the obligations of international working-class solidarity. The subsequent period has shown the practical problems arising in finding under the new conditions the best forms of association and cooperation to maintain and ensure this essential free and voluntary unity of the international communist movement. The communists in all countries, leading the struggle of the masses of the people in their countries and faithful to that responsibility, and working in widely varied conditions and with different concrete tasks, are united by their common revolutionary understanding and theory, the theory of Marxism-Leninism, by indestructible international working-class solidarity, and by their common devotion to the aims of the working class, of the interests of the people, of peace and of socialism. The coming era of the greatest advance of the international communist movement was simultaneously to bring the severest testing of the fulfilment of these principles in the new world conditions.

CHAPTER XII

THE WORLD SYSTEM OF SOCIALISM

"The world communist movement has become the most influential political force of our time."

Statement of the World Meeting of 81 Communist and Workers' Parties, November, 1960.

The two decades since the close of the Second World War have seen the greatest advance of international communism throughout the world. In place of a single socialist state, extending to one twelfth of mankind, there had developed a wide array of socialist states, led by communist parties, and composed of one third of mankind. National liberation from imperialism, defined by Lenin as since 1917 an integral part of the world socialist revolution, has swept forward, dealing shattering blows to the chains of colonialism and leading to the establishment of an extending range of new independent states over the greater part of the former colonial territories, even though the battle against colonialism in old and new forms continues tense. The balance of the world has changed. The superiority of the socialist economic system has been demonstrated with a rate of advance bringing into close view the prospect of the output of the socialist world exceeding the output of the capitalist world. The achievements of socialism in the spheres of science, technology, education and all-round social provision for the advancement of the people have created a profound impression also in the non-socialist world.

This does not mean that the problems are ended or the road forward henceforth smooth. On the contrary, the imperialist

powers during this period have sought to organise the most elaborate counter-offensive, through all the apparatus of the cold war with its armed outposts spread in every continent, against the advance of socialism and national liberation. While the initial imperialist dreams of nuclear monopoly and supremacy as the ultimate weapon of power against socialism have been exploded, the subsequent nuclear arms race has reflected the still precarious and dangerous stage of international relations. In the sphere of relations between the new socialist states, and within the international communist movement new problems have arisen, and sharp controversies, which clamour for solution. This era of triumphant advance is not yet the era of final triumph.

In any record of the development of the international communist and working-class movement this modern period has outgrown the old forms of specific international organisations whose history and achievements can be narrated and reviewed. The old Communist International is dissolved since 1943. The so-called "Socialist International", mainly of West European social-democracy, is of little political importance, and has long repudiated any connection with Marxism or working-class socialism. This situation does not mean that the international working-class movement and the fight for socialism and communism has grown weaker. It means that the movement has so branched out and grown as to become coincident with the history of our times. Any record of its development would therefore have to be a complete history of the modern world and the various countries during the past two decades. All that can usefully be attempted here is to add a few brief notes on these newer developments.

1. CHANGE IN THE BALANCE OF THE WORLD

At the Seventeenth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union in 1934, when Hitler had newly come to power, and Western reactionary circles were publicly speculating on a war led by Nazi Germany and Japanese militarism against the Soviet Union, the Political Report of the Central Committee, delivered by Stalin, sounded the warning:

> "The bourgeoisie need have no doubt that the numerous friends of the working class of the U.S.S.R., in Europe and in Asia, will do their best to strike a blow in the rear at their oppressors who start a criminal war against the fatherland of the working class of all countries. And let not Messieurs the bourgeoisie blame us if some of the governments so near and dear to them, which today rule happily 'by the grace of God', are missing on the morrow after such a war.... It can hardly be doubted that a second war against the U.S.S.R. will lead to the complete defeat of the aggressors, to revolution in a number of countries in Europe and in Asia, and to the destruction of the bourgeois-landlord governments in these countries."

The truth of this prediction was proved in the sequel of the Second World War. And sure enough, the spokesmen of Western capitalism have indeed sought to "blame" the Soviet Union, as predicted, for the fall of the Fascist dictatorships "so near and dear to them" in Eastern Europe and their replacement by socialist states.

From 1917 until the end of the Second World War, that is, for nearly three decades there was only one socialist state, the Russian Federation of Soviet Socialist Republics, which became the Union of Soviet Socialist republics. The Soviet Union extended over one sixth of the land surface of the globe, and comprised one twelfth of the human race. Beginning from the utmost devastation and backwardness, the first socialist state had to struggle forward in the midst of a hostile capitalist environment, interventionist wars, ceaseless provocations and aggressions and organisation of economic blockades. Nevertheless, on the basis of socialism the Soviet Union overcame this devastation and backwardness, and was able to emerge within two decades, at a rate of advance never before paralleled, as a foremost industrial and military power, just in time to withstand the shock of the assault of fascism, to smash the power of fascism, and thereby to save the world from fascist slavery and open the greatest era of liberation in human history.

Following the victory over fascism in 1945, the consequent emergence into public political life of the anti-fascist popular resistance movements in the countries overrun by fascism, the advance of the international communist movement and the leading role of the communist parties in the popular resistance movements, and the parallel advance of national liberation

against imperialism, there have come into existence an extending series of socialist states led by communist parties. At the time of writing (1964) there were fourteen socialist states: the Soviet Union in Europe and Asia; eight others in Europe (Albania, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, the German Democratic Republic, Hungary, Poland, Rumania and Yugoslavia; four in Asia, the Chinese People's Republic and the Korean, Mongolian and Vietnam People's Republics; and one in (or, more strictly, adjoining) the American continent, the Republic of Cuba. In addition a number of the newly independent states have proclaimed the aim of socialism; and while in some cases this label has been used to cover reactionary social conditions, in others significant progressive developments have taken place, with increasing influence of the ideas and principles of Marxism-Leninism.

2. PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY AND SOCIALISM IN EUROPE

The forms of advance to socialism have varied according to the different conditions. In Europe the overthrow of the fascist dictatorships, following the advance of the Soviet armies, led to the formation of governments of people's democracy, based on the democratic anti-fascist parties which had participated in the struggle against fascism. While these carried through democratic social, economic and agrarian reforms, expropriating the great landowners and industrialists who had backed the fascist dictatorships or collaborated with the fascist invaders, there was no question of the immediate establishment of socialism, and the communist party or Marxist workers' party was not at the outset the leading party in all these countries. The preceding background led to varying conditions. In Bulgaria, where the Communist Party had a long tradition of mass popular support and leadership of the people's struggle; in Yugoslavia, where the partisan forces led by the communists had engaged considerable Nazi forces; in Rumania, where the partisans led by the communists had been able to complete the liberation of Bucharest before the arrival of the Soviet armed forces; or in Czechoslovakia, where the Communist Party had been formed from the outset from the majority of the old Social-Democratic Party of the Second International, and had emerged as the largest party from the first elections after the expulsion of the Nazis: in all these

countries the leading role of the communist parties at the head of the national anti-fascist liberation movement of the people was recognised and effective from the beginning. Hungary had been from the outset one of the strongest bases of support in the foundation of the Communist International; and the Hungarian working class, with the communists at their head, had led the way in 1919 to establish the first Soviet Republic outside the Soviet Union—a Soviet Republic which was only overthrown, not by the Hungarian people, but by the invasion of foreign armies. But during the subsequent quarter of a century of fascist dictatorship the prolonged White terror (alongside the signed treaty of the dictator Horthy with the Hungarian Social-Democratic Party) had exterminated a heavy proportion of the leaders of the old illegal party. In consequence the Hungarian Workers' Party had to a large extent to be built up anew; and in the first elections the Smallholders' Party (behind whose mask reaction hid) secured the largest vote of any single party. In Poland the many outstanding Marxist leaders had from early days played an outstanding part in the international working-class movement, although often, owing to the conditions of partitioned Poland prior to the First World War, in other parties, as Rosa Luxemburg in the German party and Dzerzhinsky in the Russian party. Here also fascist dictatorship had caused heavy losses. The background conditions at the time of liberation, with a predominantly Catholic population, and the remains of strong nationalist anti-Russian traditions, dating from the time of Tsarism, but which had been deliberately carried forward and fostered by the Pilsudski type of national-socialism and the fascist rulers, created special problems which required patient and skilful leadership from the Polish United Workers' Party.

In Czechoslovakia the decisive turning point in the advance to socialism took place with the defeat of the attempted reactionary coup in February, 1948. In the 1946 parliamentary general election the Communist Party had won 38.1 per cent of the votes, and the Social-Democrats 12.1 per cent, so that the Communist and Social-Democrats had just over half the total vote and representation, and the bourgeois parties just under half. A coalition ministry was formed of all the parties on the basis of this representation, with the Communist leader, Gottwald, as Premier. In February, 1948, with

the prospect of the Communist Party winning 51 per cent of the votes (its confidently declared aim) at the approaching general election, the bourgeois Ministers sought to stage a crisis by simultaneously resigning, expecting President Benes on this basis to install a "caretaker" Cabinet of high officials to displace the Communist Prime Minister and conduct the election. But the entire united working class came out with a gigantic mass general strike (2½ million workers and employees, or, in proportion to population, equivalent to 10 millions in Britain), in a one hour token general strike, and mass demonstrations all over the country, in support of their parliamentary majority and government. Premier Gottwald refused to resign, and held on with his coalition Communist and Social-Democrat Ministry and parliamentary majority. President Benes had no choice but to accept the situation. This victory of the working class in defeating an attempted reactionary coup (which in fact followed on the previous similar United States actions to break up the post-war coalition governments in France, Belgium, Italy and other countries in 1947, and secure the exclusion of the Communist Ministers) was oddly described by Western official propagandists as "the rape of Czechoslovakia by Russia", although there was not a single Russian soldier in Czechoslovakia and the action of the working class was taken in defence of the programme for which they had returned a parliamentary majority at elections freely participated in by all parties, including the bourgeois reactionary parties. Indeed, it would be closer to reality to describe it as the first example of a peaceful transition to socialism by a united working class returning and supporting a parliamentary majority and defeating the assault of reaction without a civil war. Subsequently the Western official propagandists have even sought to refer to the victory of the working class in Czechoslovakia in 1948 as the initial cause and justification of the Western cold war, which had in fact been planned by the Western strategists, as previously shown, already in 1942.

In Germany, which had been the focus of Nazism, a special situation existed. The provisions of the inter-allied war agreements and of the Potsdam Treaty had called for the destruction of all military and fascist organisations and the establishment of a united democratic disarmed Germany

after a temporary phase of four-power military control to carry through these provisions. The Communists and social-democrats in the resistance movement, which had been maintained inside Germany throughout the whole period of the Nazi regime in spite of all the terror and ceaseless heavy losses,[14] had vowed to learn the lesson of the victory of Hitler and rebuild their parties after Hitler's downfall as a single united working-class party. The Western powers, however, were determined once again to rebuild the dominance of the same reactionary industrialists in Western Germany who had installed Hitler and sustained his power, and to rearm German militarism once again under Hitler's generals, regarding this as the indispensable safeguard against the spectre of a working-class revolution in Germany, and thus repeating their disastrous error of between the wars. Hence they sabotaged the fulfilment of the inter-allied agreements and Potsdam; built up the three Western zones as a single economic-political entity; bilked on the payment of the reparations agreed from West Germany, which was already gorged with Nazi loot, to the plundered and devastated Soviet Union, and instead poured colossal dollar subsidies and supplies into West Germany; vetoed the unification of the communists and social-democrats, ordering them to remain two separate parties (after which the communist party was banned); and finally proclaimed a West German State in 1949, and followed this up by provision for its rearmament and inclusion in the Western military bloc of Nato.

In consequence of this policy in the West, the agreements for wiping out the remains of Nazism and militarism and of the big industrialist interests supporting them were only carried out in East Germany. Here, in the heart of the old Junkerism which had been the scourge of Europe for generations, its very basis in the large landed estates was destroyed for all time (a service which should have made every nation in Europe thankful, instead of rewarding this service by non-recognition); the properties of the big industrialists were taken over; the communist and social-democratic parties united to

[14] Allen Dulles reported to the United States Government in 1944: "There exists in Germany a Communist Central Committee which directs and co-ordinates communist activities in Germany . . . The drift to the extreme left has assumed stupendous proportions and steadily gains momentum": (Allen Dulles, *Germany's Underground*, New York, 1947).

form the Socialist Unity Party. Only after the illegal West German state ("German Federal Republic") was founded, the German Democratic Republic was founded in the east. On the basis of fulfilment of the inter-allied agreements and Potsdam the German Democratic Republic was in reality the only legal German successor state. From the outset the leaders of the German Democratic Republic and the Soviet representatives strove for a united Germany. Even as late as 1954, on the eve of the fatal step of West German rearmament, the Soviet Union made a final approach to the Western powers in a Note proposing free democratic elections throughout Germany under international supervision to establish a united democratic disarmed Germany not attached to any military bloc; but at the same time they warned that if a rearmed Western Germany were established in a Western military bloc, then this would close the door thereafter to German reunification. The Western powers, however, including the West German social-democratic leaders, deliberately preferred and chose the division of Germany, in order to secure the rearmament of West Germany as a part of Nato, since the dominant aggressive elements among them calculated on this basis to have the superior military power eventually to force the annexation of the German Democratic Republic to their State of the Krupps and the Thyssens, as well as to fulfil the further expansionist aims (described as recovering the "lost territories" formerly ruled by Hitler) at the expense of Poland and Czechoslovakia.

This policy of the Western powers to repudiate their Potsdam pledges, and to promote the restoration of the old Hitlerite reactionary industrialist and military forces, and even neo-Nazism, in West Germany, meant that the working-class anti-fascist leadership in East Germany and subsequently the German Democratic Republic had the most difficult task to fulfil of any leadership in the countries which had been freed from the fascist yoke. They had to operate in the impoverished eastern section of their country, deprived of the main industrial and richer regions; in the original home and centre of Junkerism and Prussian militarism; and to find the cadres and re-educate a population where most of the bravest working class and democratic fighters had been exterminated, and Nazi indoctrination had been driven in by every means for twelve years. They were subjected to the

ceaseless harassment of saboteurs and agents organised in scores of counter-revolutionary agencies stationed in West Berlin and maintained with lavish American subsidies (as indeed the whole of the artificial entity of "West Berlin" was maintained by colossal subsidies from the West to the tune of £100 million a year), and operating easily across the open frontier of the streets of Berlin until the building of the wall in 1961. For the fulfilment of the task of political, social and economic reconstruction under these conditions tribute must be paid to the working-class leadership of the German Democratic Republic, including the cream of the old German socialist leadership who had survived, represented by Walter Ulbricht, the secretary of the party and Chairman of the Council of State, who had been the associate of Karl Liebknecht in the fight against German militarism under the Kaiser before 1914, and in the old Spartacus League during the First World War, and so right through the fight against Hitler to the days of the German Democratic Republic.

Thus the forms and stages of development of the new states of people's democracy, and the process of advance to the building of socialism, differed according to the different conditions in the various countries of Eastern Europe. Nothing could be a more fantastic parody of the truth than the conventional story offered by Western official propagandists that the regimes of people's democracy in Eastern Europe were artificial satellite creations of the Soviet armies. This parody comes with ill grace from the representatives of those Western powers who in the period between the wars installed, maintained, financed and armed the most brutal fascist dictatorships against the peoples in the countries of Eastern Europe, without a hint of dissatisfaction with their anti-democratic practices. It is certainly true that those fascist dictatorships backed finally by the Nazi military machine, could only be overthrown by the power of Soviet arms, and not by internal factors alone. It is no matter for surprise that, after repression and White terror, the anti-fascist democratic parties were initially weak in some of the countries which had been subjected to a prolonged fascist regime, and that consequently the coalition governments of anti-fascist democratic parties, formed in accordance with the principles of the "Declaration on Europe" agreed between the allies for the sequel to the

fascist regime, had an initially difficult task and situation in these countries, although in other countries, as indicated, their mass basis was strong from the outset. But indeed it would be nearer the truth, although also only a half-truth, to say that the old social order was only restored in other parts of Europe as far as the writ of the Anglo-American armies ran.

It is probable that, so far as internal conditions went, had there been no Anglo-American imperialist intervention, the fall of fascism would have been followed over the greater part of Europe by regimes of popular democracy, that is, coalition governments of communist, social-democratic and other anti-fascist democratic representatives from the resistance movement, excluding the fascists and collaborators and their parties, and with the communist parties in the leading role, and carrying through far-reaching democratic political, social and economic reforms to strike at the basis of the big finance-capitalist interests which had maintained fascism. But the conditions in Western Europe during the closing phase of the war were complicated by the fact that, while the democratic anti-fascist popular movement had reached a high degree of maturity, with the manifest leading role of the communist parties in France and Italy, the overthrow of the Nazi satellite collaborationist regime of Pétain in France or of the fascist regime of Mussolini in Italy took place at a time when the main overriding task was still the military defeat of Nazism, and the responsibility of the democratic anti-fascist movements therefore required the fullest cooperation with the Anglo-American armies, whatever the justified suspicions which might be held of the ulterior aims of the reactionary sections of the Western ruling class. The true feelings of the people were shown immediately after the defeat of Nazism, when it was precisely in Western Europe, in France and Italy, that the communist parties emerged in the elections held after the war as the recognised strongest parties of the working class and the people. Indeed, coalition governments on this basis were initially formed in France, Italy and other West European countries. Within a couple of years, however, by 1947 American influence, economic and financial (later also with military occupation) was brought to bear to secure the exclusion of the communists and thus pave the way for the return of reaction.

3. THE STRUGGLE AGAINST COUNTER-REVOLUTION

The victorious establishment of the regimes of people's democracy in the countries of Eastern Europe, replacing the previous fascist tyrannies and domination by the big landlords and militarists, opened a new era of popular social, economic and political advance in these countries. This does not mean the path was smooth and easy, or that there were no defects and shortcomings in the countries of the new regime of people's democracy in the countries of Eastern Europe. The new anti-fascist political representatives taking over responsibility for their countries were in the main without previous government experience. Trained personnel for all the manifold tasks was in very short supply, since such previous training as had been available for the few had been bound up with the fascist regime. There were still not inconsiderable sections of the population who had been part of the official apparatus of fascism, or expropriated large landowners or industrialists or former White Guard officers, filled with hostility to the new regimes and ready for desperate ventures. There was ceaseless infiltration of agents and incitement from the West, as well as smuggling in of money and arms, to promote sabotage and insurrections. In the combat against these enemy forces during the earlier years of these regimes, some of the same defects which had characterised the later years of Stalin's leadership in the Soviet Union were reflected.

Western agencies were not slow to take advantage of any such defects, popular grievances, or moments of instability during the correction of defects, in order to exploit these opportunities to stage attempts at armed forays by their agents, which had in fact no relation to popular feeling or the popular movement, but which were presented to outside public opinion by Western propaganda as supposed uprisings of the people. The first example of this technique was in Berlin in 1953, where a strike of building workers over work norms and rates on June 16 had been peacefully settled with concession of the just demands of the building workers, and then on the next day the Western agencies, having received reports of the strike on June 16, organised an armed foray of their agents on June 17, which had to be dealt with by the Soviet armed forces and was then presented to Western public opinion as a supposed uprising of the Berlin working people.

In 1956 a new stage of positive and fruitful advance opened in all the socialist countries, as throughout the international communist movement, following the Twentieth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, which made decisive correction of the shortcomings and distortions which had arisen during the last two decades of the period of Stalin's leading role, broke many dogmatic shackles and opened a new perspective for the future. This rectification proved of vital importance in its outcome, not only in the Soviet Union, but in opening the way for corresponding advance in the countries of people's democracy in Eastern and Central Europe. At the same time, during the first phase immediately after the Twentieth Congress, the sharpness of the correction, which appeared more sudden and abrupt in countries outside than inside the Soviet Union, where it had been prepared during the preceding years, brought some trends of instability in some sections, affecting weaker elements. The steeled and experienced revolutionary Soviet people were able to take the sharp turn without disturbance, and swept forward along the path of triumphant new advance opened up by this correction. But in the new and still relatively less experienced regimes of popular democracy (as also in some of the parties in the countries of the capitalist world) the shock of the revelation of previous evils, the opening to critics and hostile elements, and the process of necessary self-criticism and reform, found reflection in a measure of instability and difficult political situations in certain countries, especially in the countries where fascism had previously been strongly entrenched, in Poland and Hungary. In Poland the difficulties were overcome by the strength, unity and skilful leadership of the party under the guidance of Gomulka, who had himself suffered under the preceding repression, as well as by the mass popular understanding, and also among the conservative nationalist elements traditionally far from friendly to communism or the Soviet Union, that the maintenance of the independence of Poland and the Oder-Neisse frontier against the open aggressive aims of resurgent German militarism in West Germany depended on the alliance with the Soviet Union.

In Hungary, on the other hand, a temporary breakdown of the functioning of the party happened, and the Western

agents were able to organise a short-lived counter-revolutionary armed putsch. The correction of the faults of the preceding regime under the leadership of Rakosi (who had a previous record without equal as a fearless fighter of the revolutionary working-class movement from before the First World War, had taken part in the first Hungarian Soviet Government, and had become an international legend with his fifteen years of imprisonment under the dictator Horthy, but had in this later period of political leadership developed trends similar to those of the later period of Stalin); the exposure of the monstrous fabrication of the trial of Rajk; the beginning of the correction of other injustices and arbitrary bureaucratic practices, and the resistance of some of the more rigid elements of the older official apparatus: all this led to a situation of general popular ferment and justified demands for reforms and extended democratisation. This created an atmosphere in which it was easy for the hostile elements, ex-fascists and Western agents to operate. The special danger arose from the fact that in this situation the party became demobilised. The party had been too rapidly expanded from a handful to one million, or one in ten of the population within a few years, therefore without adequate concern for its composition and leaving an easy road for the entry of hostile elements. In the conditions of unrest the hostile conspirators were easily able to mix with, and pose as the genuine serious critics, especially among the younger intellectuals, and secure key positions in the apparatus, mainly in the press and on the radio, and to some extent in the police.

These were the conditions under which on October 23, 1956, a peaceful popular mass demonstration was used by the counter-revolutionaries to begin armed violence (their allegation was that hidden police had fired first). The Central Committee of the party met that night at once and took three decisions; (1) to arm the workers; (2) to carry out prompt measures against the armed counter-revolutionary fomenters of disorder; (3) to invite, if necessary, the fraternal aid of the Soviet armed forces in order the more speedily to restore peace and order. These decisions were voted unanimously, including by Imre Nagy, who was known to be the representative of a right-wing revisionist grouping in the Central Committee. In order to demonstrate to the people the unity of the Central

Committee and the party it was agreed that Nagy should become Prime Minister to carry out these decisions.

What was not known at the time was that Nagy was already conspiratorially linked with the counter-revolution, and had circulated secret illegal literature advocating destruction of the regime of people's democracy and the association of Hungary with the Western powers. Once installed as Prime Minister, Nagy sabotaged the fulfilment of the decisions of the Central Committee, which he had only accepted in order to become installed as Prime Minister. He refused to arm the workers—the key to any successful popular struggle against an armed counter-revolutionary coup. When the workers of a factory in Budapest, which had been invaded by a handful of armed counter-revolutionary terrorists, including the son of the former factory owner and a former White Guard officer, who had then constituted themselves a "Revolutionary Workers' Council", had telephoned urgently to the Budapest Chief of Police for arms to deal with the bandits, the Chief of Police, who was a Nagy man, had replied on no account to take to arms but to use only methods of reason with the armed invaders. Nagy on his personal authority countermanded the orders to capture the counter-revolutionary headquarters. Nagy replaced the democratic functioning of the Council of Ministers by establishing a small "Cabinet" of himself and a few associates and proclaiming unconstitutional decisions on this basis. On October 30 he proclaimed the dissolution of the Hungarian Workers' Party. On November 2 he reorganised his Cabinet to consist of a majority of anti-Communist representatives, including representatives of the Social-Democratic and Smallholders' Parties. Equally in violation of the Constitution and his Prime Minister's oath he unilaterally announced the withdrawal of Hungary from the Warsaw Mutual Defence Pact of socialist states, without authorisation either from his Council of Ministers or the National Assembly. Directives were sent out to the party organisations and through the party central press organ not to oppose the counter-revolution, which was described as a great national revolution, and to obey the spurious "Revolutionary Workers' Councils". In consequence the party and the workers were thrown into confusion.

In this difficult situation the party had to be reconstituted,

on a basis freed equally from the rigid bureaucratic elements associated with the regime of Rakosi and from the wavering and treacherous elements. This was accomplished under the leadership of Janos Kadar, who had himself suffered from the repression under Rakosi. Meanwhile the counter-revolutionary fascist forces, encouraged by the confusion of the party, now came into the open, threw off the mask of professed aims only for the so-called democratic reform of communism, began to proclaim their real aims with Cardinal Mindzsenty's broadcast for the repudiation of socialism and the restoration of the privileges of the Church and the old property owners, and instituted a gruesome orgy of White Terror, with pogroms of Jews, torture and massacre of veteran socialist workers, public burning of the red flag and Marxist literature and other similar familiar phenomena of Hitlerism. Accordingly on November 4, in response to the request of the Workers' and Peasants' Government led by Kadar, the Soviet armed forces moved in to stop the orgy and prevent the restoration of fascism in the heart of Central Europe, with all the consequences which would have flowed from such a restoration, as already experienced in the period preceding the Second World War. This intervention of the Soviet armed forces on November 4, which was in fact delayed until the mounting White terror made such intervention an inevitable necessity, not only saved the Hungarian people from fascism, but saved all the peoples of Europe, although the danger still remains from the hotbed of neo-Nazism in West Germany.

The unhappy events in Hungary in November, 1956, were the only example, during the close on two decades since 1945, in all the eight countries of people's democracy in Eastern Europe, of even a temporary success of the Western agents and hostile elements in promoting even a short-lived counter-revolutionary coup. In view of the stormy previous history of this region, the hostile survivals from the preceding fascist dictatorships, and the ceaseless activity of Western agents, this is a considerable testimony to the popular support of the new regimes and the advance to socialism. After 1956 the stability of the socialist regime in Hungary, which had learned from the previous mistakes, was further safeguarded against a similar future attempt at a counter-revolutionary putsch by the arming of the workers, with the formation of the

voluntary factory workers' armed detachments in the factories, while the democratic economic and social advance in the subsequent years and rise of standards has been testified to by observers of all political outlooks.

4. THE CHINESE PEOPLE'S REVOLUTION

The formation and development of the new socialist states in Asia has taken place under very different conditions from those of Europe, just as the emergence of the first socialist state on the American continent has taken place again in new conditions.

The victory of the Chinese People's Revolution in 1949 represents the greatest sweep forward of the world socialist revolution since 1917—the second greatest working-class socialist revolution after the Russian socialist revolution. This victory brought one quarter of mankind, the most numerous nation in the world, into the array of socialist states. It changed for all time the balance of the world. It disproved for all time the hoary fallacy that Marxism was only a European doctrine for European conditions. It exercised and continues to exercise a tremendous awakening and inspiring influence for all the peoples of Asia, Africa and Latin America subjected to imperialist domination and exploitation and still engaged in the struggle against imperialism. As Lenin foretold in his last article already in 1923, the victory of the Chinese socialist revolution alongside the Russian socialist revolution has made the future of world socialism assured. And this irrespective of any temporary tactical differences which may have arisen in the present phase.

The Chinese national democratic revolution opened in 1911, and was seen by Lenin as part of the upsurge following the 1905 Russian revolution (Persian revolution in 1907, and Turkish in 1908). This democratic revolution of the Chinese people was conducted equally against the decaying feudal-bureaucratic Manchu Empire, which was incapable of protecting the people from imperialism, and against the dominant imperialist overlords who ruled directly the treaty ports along the coasts and therefrom maintained their octopus grip for the exploitation of the whole of China. The imperialists sought to strangle the democratic revolution by backing reactionary warlords who feuded with one another. After the Russian revolution of 1917 the national democratic

struggle of the Chinese people swept forward anew. Sun Yat-sen, its leader and the Father of the Chinese revolution, the original President of the Chinese Republic in the 1911 revolution, and the founder of the Kuomintang as the organ of the national democratic revolution, after 1917 looked with enthusiasm to Lenin and Soviet Russia as the inspiration and guide for future advance. From the Soviet Union came volunteers to fight alongside the Chinese patriots and political and military advisers. On March 11, 1925, the day before his death, Sun Yat-sen wrote his final testament of guidance for the future in a letter to the Central Executive Committee of the U.S.S.R.:

> "While I lie here in a malady against which men are powerless, my thoughts are turned towards you and towards the fate of my Party and my country.
>
> "You are at the head of the Union of Free Republics—that heritage left to the oppressed peoples of the world by the immortal Lenin. With the aid of that heritage the victims of imperialism will inevitably achieve emancipation from that international regime whose foundations have been rooted for ages in slavery, wars and injustice. . . .
>
> "With this object I have instructed the Party to be in constant touch with you. I firmly believe in the continuance of the support which you have hitherto accorded to my country.
>
> "Taking my leave of you, dear comrades, I want to express the hope that the day will soon come when the U.S.S.R. will welcome a friend and ally in a mighty, free China, and that our two united countries will march hand in hand in the great struggle for the emancipation of the oppressed peoples of the world."

The Communist Party of China, which was formed in 1921, thus sprang from the midst of the already existing national armed revolution against imperialism and feudalism, and was formed by the most advanced younger vanguard representatives of the national revolutionary movement, who had won inspiration from the Russian socialist revolution and sought to find in Marxism-Leninism the solution of the problems of the Chinese people. The salvos of the October revolution, as Mao Tse-tung said, brought Communism to China.

"The Russians carried out the October revolution and created the first socialist state in the world. . . . All mankind, including the Chinese, then viewed the Russians differently. Then, and then only, did those Chinese working in the sphere of ideology enter a completely new era. The Chinese discovered the universal truth of Marxism-Leninism which is applicable everywhere, and the face of China changed. The Chinese acquired Marxism as a result of its application by the Russians. Before the October revolution the Chinese did not know who Lenin and Stalin were; nor did they know of Marx and Engels. The salvos of the October revolution brought us Marxism-Leninism. . . . The conclusion reached was that we must advance along the path taken by the Russians."

(Mao Tse-tung, *The Dictatorship of People's Democracy*, July, 1949)

When the right-wing leadership of the national bourgeoisie, represented by Chiang Kai-shek, in control of the Kuomintang went over to imperialism in 1927 and betrayed the revolution, turning the Kuomintang into an instrument of reaction and capitulation to imperialism, it was the Chinese Communist Party which carried forward the leadership of the struggle of the Chinese people. Through twenty-two years of epic struggle, against the Western imperialist overlords, against the Japanese imperialist invaders, and against the reactionary comprador and bureaucratic clique associated with Chiang Kai-shek (in the latter case with alternations of united front and struggle, in view of the claims of the latter still to represent the national cause) a difficult path was trodden with infinite vicissitudes to the final victory of the Chinese People's Republic in October 1949. This victory was made possible both by international and internal factors. It was made possible by the development of the new world situation and the advance of socialism following the victory over fascism in 1945, and especially by the role of the Soviet armies in destroying the Japanese armies in Manchuria and thereby throwing open key regions and vast supplies of arms and materials for the Chinese liberation forces, as well as by manifold further forms of Soviet aid and cooperation.

"Had there been no Soviet Union, had there been no

victory in the anti-fascist Second World War, had Japanese imperialism not been defeated (which is especially important for us), had there been no People's Democracies in Europe, had there been no growing struggle of the oppressed countries of the East, had there been no struggle of the masses in the United States, Britain, France, Germany, Italy, Japan and other capitalist countries against the ruling reactionary cliques—had none of these factors existed, then the pressure of the international reactionary forces would, of course, have been much stronger than it is today. Would we have been able to achieve victory in these circumstances? Of course not."

(Mao Tse-tung, *The Dictatorship of People's Democracy*, July, 1949)

The victory of the Chinese People's Revolution was at the same time made possible through the indomitable and skilful political, strategic and tactical leadership of the Communist Party, the discipline of the Red Army and the closeness to the masses of the people. Therefore the support of the people went to the Communists and not to the reactionary Kuomintang, despite the massive external imperialist support for the latter. The United States General Stilwell, American military representative to China in 1942, noted in his private diary the contrast between the Kuomintang and the Communist Party:

"I judge Kuomintang and Communist Party by what I saw:

"Kuomintang: corruption, neglect, chaos economy, taxes, words and deeds. Hoarding, black market, trading with enemy.

"Communist Programme . . . reduce taxes, rents, interest. Raise production and standard of living. Participate in government. Practise what they preach."

(*The Stilwell Papers*, General Joseph W. Stilwell, arranged and edited by T. H. White, New York, 1948)

The victory of the People's Republic was the victory of a united national front of the four classes, the working class, the peasantry, the urban petty-bourgeoisie and the national bourgeoisie, under the leadership of the Communist Party,

the political organ of the working class. This provided the basis for the completion of the democratic anti-feudal anti-imperialist revolution, and the advance to the construction of socialism. During the decade and a half since then a gigantic record of construction and achievement has been fulfilled, transforming the conditions of life for one quarter of mankind, and, alongside the example of the Soviet Union, helping to inspire the way forward for the host of nations emerging from imperialist bondage with still backward colonial or semi-colonial economy.

Just as British imperialism had been the main imperialist power and oppressor in China in the nineteenth century and up to the Second World War, and Japanese imperialism had sought to take over this role between the wars and during the Second World War, United States imperialism took over after the second world war. The American imperialists sought to strangle the Chinese people's revolution by pouring out masses of arms and billions of dollars for the support of Chiang Kai-shek. When Chiang Kai-shek was driven out by the Chinese people, the United States government continued to maintain his satellite regime and army under cover of American naval guns and planes, and supplied by American finance, on the island of Taiwan; concentrated American warships and planes against the coasts of China; and spoke confidently of the reconquest of China in the name of Chiang Kai-shek. With the final victory of the Chinese people's armies in China in 1949, a massive invasion of Korea which could serve as a jumping off ground against China, was launched in 1950 by American and other imperialists armies; but Chinese volunteers stood by the Korean people, and after three years of war the American commanders had to agree to an armistice. Nevertheless, the United States continued to refuse to recognise China, and to block the Chinese Government's rights in the United Nations.

5. KOREA—VIETNAM—CUBA

The Korean People's Republic developed out of the struggle against Japanese imperialism and after its downfall. When the Japanese were driven out of Korea, people's committees were formed all over Korea, and a Congress of People's Committees at Seoul on September 5, 1945, constituted the Korean

People's Republic. Two days later, however, the American General Hodges and troops landed, and began to dissolve the people's committees; as this gave rise to the danger of a clash with the Soviet troops in the north, a temporary dividing line was agreed on the 38th parallel. Thus the People's Republic was confined to the North; while in the South the United States imported a Korean who had been resident forty years in the United States, Synghman Rhee, to be imposed as virtual dictator in South Korea. The programme of the People's Republic was for peaceful re-unification, and they sent peace missions for this purpose to Rhee, who promptly put them in prison. The programme of Rhee was for the "March to the North", that is, the military conquest of North Korea with the aid of American arms. When the United States finally gave the green light to Rhee to go ahead, with the visit of Dulles and Acheson to Rhee in Korea in mid-June, 1950, as their declarations on that visit plainly revealed, and Rhee's army began the invasion of North Korea, its collapse was immediate and the North Korean People's Army was met with a universal welcome by the people of South Korea. Hence the United States and other imperialists had to fight with their own troops, under cover of an illegal use of the United Nations flag (since a decision of the Security Council for action required the concurrence of the five permanent powers, and the Soviet Union had been absent as a gesture of solidarity with the Chinese People's Republic in protest against its exclusion). A prolonged war followed which finally ended in an armistice in June, 1953, with a very similar line of division of North and South. Provision was made for unification by free elections; but every proposal for this was blocked by South Korea, that is, by the United States. Thus up to the present the Korean People's Republic has had to fulfil its impressive achievement of reconstruction and building of socialism only in the North; while in the South a succession of corrupt U.S.-financed military dictators have followed one another with bewildering rapidity.

The Democratic Republic of Vietnam arose in the struggle against French imperialist rule, with the national front led by the long established Communist Party. The French imperialists, after pouring in large forces and with American financial aid, were finally defeated at Dien Bien Phu. At the

Geneva Conference which followed in 1954 partition was here also imposed as the price of peace; and in the South the French puppet Emperor Bao Dai was succeeded by American puppets, first Diem, and then a bewildering succession of other American-backed military dictators. Here also the armistice agreement of 1954 had provided for peaceful re-unification through free elections, as well as for the withdrawal of all foreign interventionist troops. The United States consistently violated these provisions declaring that it did not recognise the Geneva Agreement (Britain and China were the Co-Chairmen at Geneva responsible for the execution of the agreement, but Britain refused to act, or even protest at the American violations). The United States conducted war against the people in South Vietnam; and by 1964 had 16,000 American troops operating in South Vietnam. Thus once again the socialist achievement of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, despite support by the entire Vietnam people, has so far had to be confined to the north.

The latest newcomer to the array of socialist states, the Republic of Cuba, also reached this outcome along its own path and in an original fashion. The Communist Party of Cuba (Popular Socialist Party), constituted from the Marxist sections of the old People's Socialist Party after the First World War, had a long record of struggle against the American imperialist domination of Cuba. The national revolutionary movement, founded under the leadership of Fidel Castro on July 26, 1953, and known as the July 26 movement, conducted a first unsuccessful rising in 1953, and an invasion and establishment of a guerilla base in 1956. By 1958 a united front agreement was reached, together with an understanding with the Communist Party for common action; a general stike of the workers accompanied the guerilla military action; and by January 1, 1959, Batista fled. The Provisional Government of the Cuban people's Republic, led by Fidel Castro, first carried through the measures of the democratic revolution, including expropriation of the big landowners and of the satellites of American imperialism. As the American monopoly interests replied with successive blows, economic and political, aimed to sabotage the Cuban revolution and reduce the Cuban people to submission, successive counter-measures followed, involving the nationalisation of American monopoly

assets, and the revolution moved increasingly in the direction of socialist reorganisation. United States imperialism was determined to destroy the Cuban revolution. In 1961 the invasion organised, financed and armed by American imperialism ended in a fiasco in face of the Cuban people's resistance at the Bay of Pigs. In a famous proclamation in December 1961, Castro announced his full support of Marxism-Leninism, and the inauguration of steps to merge the three Cuban revolutionary groups (26 July Movement, the Revolutionary Directorate and the P.S.P. or Communist Party) into a single party or United Party of the Socialist Revolution on the basis of Marxism-Leninism. The United States prepared an overwhelmingly powerful direct invasion to crush Cuba in the autumn of 1962; but the support of the Soviet Union, which had already provided the Cuban people with massive arms and material support to resist American attacks, met the new threat by installing in Cuba nuclear missiles capable of holding at bay the threat of an invasion, and only withdrawing them when the invasion was called off. This skilful strategy saved simultaneously Cuban independence and world peace, at a time when the dangerous aggressive threats of American imperialism had brought within view the possibility of a world nuclear war.

The hostility of American imperialism to the Cuban revolution has continued, with the maintenance of a ferocious economic blockade, and attempted bullying of other nations by sanctions on their shipping to prevent trade with Cuba; nor has the threat of invasion been abandoned. Nevertheless, the experience of 1962 has made these threats more difficult to fulfil; and the Cuban Republic has won increasing international support.

6. NATIONAL LIBERATION AND SOCIALISM

The success in checking the plans for the American invasion of Cuba in 1962 (following the previous experience of the successful halting of the Anglo-American invasion of Egypt in 1956) has demonstrated and brought into sharp general consciousness the new balance of the world.

A stage has been reached when even small, weak and relatively isolated states have been able to march along the road of independent political and economic development in

the direction of socialism, and to defy the threats of the most formidable imperialist powers, thanks to the strength and support, both strategic and economic, as well as diplomatic, of the countries of the socialist world, and, especially and most decisively, of the Soviet Union.

The victories and advance of the socialist revolution have preceded and made possible the victories and advance of national liberation in the modern world. Prior to 1917 every national liberation revolt was crushed without mercy by the superior power of imperialism. "Whatever happens, we have got the Gatling gun, and they have not." With 1917 the first victories of national liberation were won by the Central Asian peoples previously subject to Tsarism and now, in unity with the victory of the Russian working class, winning their national independence. The victory of the Soviet Union and the coalition of the peoples against Nazism and fascism in 1945 swept this advance forward. Imperialism was weakened in the world, and the hitherto subject peoples could advance. By 1947 the Indian people won the initial stage of dominion status, even though imperialism still retained at the outset some hold through the retention of a British Governor-General and British military command of the armed forces, as well as through the effects of partition and the continuing possession of key economic assets and resources. The victory of the Chinese People's Republic in 1949 was the new landmark, taking one quarter of the world out of the grip of imperialism, and further inspiring the advance of all the subject peoples. By 1950 the Republic of India was proclaimed; and the Republic of Indonesia, whose sovereign independence had been recognised at the end of 1949, threw off the final shackles of the Round Table agreements with Holland by 1956. At Bandung in 1955 the Afro-Asian states proclaimed adherence to the policy of "non-alignment", that is, refusal to enter into the imperialist military blocs, such as Cento and Seato, in which the imperialist powers were endeavouring to entangle them (there were no proposals from the Socialist states for the organisation of military blocs of the newly independent nations so that "non-alignment" meant in practice resistance to Western imperialism). In 1956 Egypt successfully withstood the Anglo-French-Israeli assault of the Suez war.

In 1958 the Iraq revolution threw out the puppet monarchy installed by British imperialism. During the ensuing years the African peoples have been advancing at an accelerating pace in the establishment of independent states, with the aim of fulfilling the aim of All-African unity in place of the imperialist system of fragmentation, although hard core bases of colonialism and racialism have still to be overcome in South Africa, the Portuguese colonies and Southern Rhodesia, and Congo has been the object of shameful imperialist aggression also after the recognition of independence.

When Lenin wrote his thesis on the national and colonial question for the Second Congress of the Communist International in 1920, the colonies, semi-colonies and dominions and dependencies accounted for 72.2 per cent of the territory and 69.2 per cent of the population of the world. In 1963 only 7.7 per cent of the world's area and 1.7 per cent of its population remained under direct colonial domination.

This picture of change by no means implies that the struggle against colonialism has ended. Not only have the most intense battles continued against the remaining centres of the old colonialism or the rule of reactionary imperialist puppets and dictators, as in Southern and Central Africa, parts of Eastern and South East Asia, or the Gulf states in the Middle East, and some Latin American states. In addition, imperialism has worked to develop its methods of what has been called the new colonialism or "neo-colonialism", that is, to maintain and even extend its hold over the newly independent states, by indirect political influence, by strategic arrangements and bases, or by far-reaching economic domination and penetration, sometimes concealed in the form of "aid". Some of the most ferocious wars of imperialism have been conducted after independence against the newly independent states, as in the case of the Suez war against Egypt.

In this continuous struggle of the exploited nations against imperialism, both before and after the winning of state independence, the cooperation and support of the socialist world, both in the direct confrontation of diplomatic and strategic strength to counterbalance the threats of imperialism, in the supply of arms where necessary to the national liberation movements fighting for freedom or newly independent states resisting entanglement with imperialist

military blocs, and in material aid to assist in the development of indpendent non-colonial economies, has been the decisive factor to make possible the victories won. This has been recognised by the leaders of the national liberation movement in country after country:

"Without the existence of the Soviet Union the socialist revolution in Cuba would not have been possible."
(Fidel Castro)

"The Soviet Union proved to be the only great power which from the very beginning supported the people of the Congo in their struggle."
(Patrice Lumumba)

"Were it not for the existence of the Soviet Union, the movement for freedom from colonial oppression in Africa would have felt the full force of brutal suppression."
(Kwame Nkrumah)

Thus has been brought into being the alliance of socialism and national liberation, drawing into cooperation the majority of mankind, already foreshadowed by Marx and Engels in the preliminary conditions of the nineteenth century, and designated by Lenin in the period of imperialism and of the general crisis of capitalism as the path of victory of the world socialist revolution. The alliance of the socialist countries, the national liberation movements and newly independent countries, and the working class and supporters of peace in the imperialist countries, constitute a mighty political force in the modern world in the cause of peace, national independence and social advance, opening the way to the transition to socialism in an extending number of countries.

The newly independent countries have entered on the task of economic and social reconstruction to end the poverty and backwardness of the old dependent colonial economy, which existed to supply raw material resources, produced on the basis of cheap colonial living standards for the profits of the overseas monopolies, to the imperialist industrialised countries in exchange for high priced industrial goods. For this purpose they seek to build independent balanced economies, to take over the resources of their countries owned by foreign monopolies, and to develop industrialisation. For the newly independent countries the aim of economic independence is recognised as bound up with the extension of nationalisation,

both for taking over the resources owned by the overseas monopolies, and for the state development of power plants and new industries. Thus the Third All-African People's Conference in 1961, in its resolution on Neo-Colonialism set the aim:

"The nationalisation of the main plantations, banks, transport, and industrial enterprises which belong to organisations of imperialism."

This battle for winning the economic resources of their countries out of the hands of imperialism meets with fierce resistance from the monopoly interests of imperialism. Iran's nationalisation of the oil industry in 1951 led to prolonged crisis (Herbert Morrison sent gunboats to dominate Abadan) and the eventual replacement of the government of the national bourgeoisie, represented by Mossadeq, through a military coup organised by imperialism. Similarly, Egypt's nationalisation of the Suez Canal was met with aggressive war and invasion by British and French imperialism and their Israeli vassal. Indonesian measures of nationalisation of former Dutch assets had to be carried through against intense hostile action by the Dutch monopoly interests. The taking over of United States monopoly resources in Cuba was followed by the violent anti-Cuba campaign of the United States. The British war since 1963 for "Malaysia", the artificial puppet state invented by British imperialism, represented a war to maintain possession of British rubber, tin and oil interests in that region.

On the other hand, this struggle of the newly independent states for economic independence, and to extend nationalisation and industrialisation meets with full sympathy and practical support from the socialist countries.

Thus the advance of the newly independent states in their struggle to complete their political and economic independence moves along paths which are in fact helping to prepare the conditions for the transition to socialism. This does not mean that the conditions are necessarily ripe in the majority of these countries, either in the stage of economic development or of internal class relations, for the immediate construction of a socialist economy. In the majority of these countries the task is still to complete the democratic anti-feudal anti-imperialist revolution, to carry through land reform, to promote

industrialisation, to complete political and economic independence. This aim has been described in the Statement of the eighty-one Communist Parties in 1960 as the aim of bringing into being states of "independent national democracy":

> "In the present situation favourable domestic and international conditions arise in many countries for the establishment of an independent national democracy, that is, a state which (1) consistently upholds its political and economic independence; (2) fights against imperialism and its military blocs, against military bases on its territory; (3) a state which fights against the new forms of colonialism and the penetration of imperialist capital; (4) a state which rejects dictatorial and despotic methods of government; (5) a state in which the people are ensured broad democratic rights and freedoms (freedom of speech, press, assembly, demonstrations, establishment of political parties and social organisations), and the opportunity to work for the enactment of an agrarian reform and other democratic and social changes, and for participation in shaping government policy."

It is evident that progress along these lines is in fact preparing the conditions, economic and political, for the transition to socialism. Such a transition to socialism may develop in further new and original forms, as the example of Cuba has already indicated, in the newly independent countries in Africa and elsewhere. In many of these countries there are not yet communist parties, and, in consequence of the inherited conditions of colonial economy, the working class is not numerically large. In some of these countries the tendency has been for the unity of the national front against imperialism to be expressed in a single party of the national movement, with express exclusion of the existence of other parties. Such a single party formation, while differences of classes still exist, can be reactionary, but can also in certain cases fulfil a progressive role at a given stage in a given concrete situation of the national liberation movement, according to its content, programme, closeness with the masses of the people, and freedom for the role of the working class and Marxism within it. In some cases, while the single party is maintained as the expression of the unity of the national front, the influence of the ideas and principles of Marxism-Leninism and its representatives is able to play a significant role within the united national front; and, while the independent role of the working class and Marxism-Leninism is in fact always essential both for the full success of the present national struggle and for the future of complete social liberation, the possibility may exist in favourable conditions for such a single party to develop in the direction of a party based on Marxism-Leninism and conducting the transition to socialism. The experience of the coming period will throw further light on these questions.

7. SUCCESSES AND PROBLEMS

Thus the development of the world situation in the modern era during the two decades since the end of the Second World War has shown the enormous advance of socialism and national liberation over the greater part of the world. The most intensive and often violent efforts of imperialism and counter-revolution, organised through the forms of the cold war, sectional military alliances, colossal rearmament, the planting of bases and troops all over the world, and the conduct of ceaseless overseas local and regional wars, have been unable to check this advance.

In the course of these struggles the alliance of socialism and national liberation, of the whole anti-imperialist camp and camp of peace, has become strengthened. This change in the balance of the world, and the increasing economic, productive, scientific and technological strength of the socialist countries, together with the breakdown of the Western imperialist initial assumptions of nuclear monopoly or superiority, has compelled significant sections of the leaders of imperialism to take account of the objective facts of the new situation and consider the possible necessity of serious "East-West" negotiations, that is, between the leaders of socialism and imperialism. These trends within the ruling circles of imperialism are still hesitant, and subject to continuous attack by the more aggressive sections. Two abortive Summit Conferences took place, as a result of overwhelming popular demand, in 1955 and 1960; in the latter case the most aggressive American military-espionage agencies had to intervene violently, with the shocking incident of the U2 plane flying over the centre of the Soviet Union (and with the even more shocking sequel involving the American President in

public lying and endorsement of aggression) to wreck the conference and prevent it taking place. Nevertheless, the pressure towards some relaxation of international tension, corresponding to the new balance of world forces, has gone forward. Notable landmarks were the outcome of the Carribean crisis in 1962, with the final American withdrawal from the planned invasion of Cuba originally scheduled for that autumn; and the preliminary joint agreement in the sphere of nuclear armaments with the Partial Test Ban Treaty of 1963, initiated by U.S.-Soviet negotiations, and eventually signed by over one hundred States. President Kennedy's peace speech of June, 1963, urging Americans to reconsider the whole policy of the cold war and prepare for a change of policy, was followed by the murder of Kennedy, under circumstances throwing a highly dubious light on the notoriously peculiar role of the secret police and intelligence services in the United States, in November, 1963. Thus the issues are still in the balance. But with the pressure of public opinion in all countries, and the continuously increasing shift in the alignment of world strength on the side of the advancing peoples, the new conditions have brought into view the possibility of achieving the aim of peaceful co-existence.

The victory of socialism has now taken place in a wide range of countries embracing over one third of mankind. The forms of the advance to socialism have shown great variety in the different countries in accordance with national and historical conditions of the people's struggle. But all have demonstrated the fulfilment of the basic principles of Marxism-Leninism governing the conditions for the successful transition to socialism: the leading role of the working class and its party on the basis of Marxism-Leninism; the alliance of the working class with the peasantry and other sections of the working people; the establishment of the rule of the working class and its party guiding the broad alliance of the people; the expropriation of the capitalists and public ownership of the main means of production; planned economy and the raising of the standards of living and social and cultural standards.

The successes of socialist construction have been demonstrated in practice by the record of achievement of the socialist countries during these years. The Twenty-Second

Congress of the Communist party of the Soviet Union reported the following picture of the relative growth of industrial production in the socialist and capitalist countries measured on the base of 1937 as 100:

Year	*Socialist Countries*	*Capitalist Countries*
1937	100	100
1955	362	199
1956	404	208
1958	521	210
1960	681	244

Thus the industrial output of the socialist countries in 1960 was 6.8 times greater than in 1937, while the capitalist countries had increased theirs by less than 2.5 times. The socialist countries' share in world industrial production rose from 27 per cent in 1955 to over one third in 1960.

The Soviet Union, which had already completed the construction of socialism before the Second World War has entered on the first stages of the transition to communism. Soviet economists have anticipated that Soviet industrial production will outstrip that of the United States within a short space of years, and that the socialist countries will account for more than half of the world's gross industrial product. At the same time agricultural production has increased in varying degrees above the pre-war levels in all these countries. In the provision of education, social services or the number of doctors in proportion to population the superiority has become so conspicuous as to arouse anxious concern in the capitalist countries and successive announcements of crash programmes to endeavour to overtake the lag.

All this vast range of achievement and sweeping advance of socialism and communism in the modern era does not mean that there are not still many formidable problems to be solved.

First, the international situation, although revealing significant advances in the endeavours for relaxation of tensions and for peaceful co-existence, is still dangerous. The strategy of the cold war; the threat of nuclear war; the arms race which has shot up to astronomical levels; the ceaseless local and regional wars and armed aggressions of imperialism in all parts of the world, so that there has not been a single day of peace in the world since the end of the Second World War; all these

create a situation of potential explosion, place heavy burdens on the peoples of all countries, and block social progress. Hence the fight for peace, and specifically in present conditions for the ending of the cold war and peaceful co-existence of socialism and capitalism; for the banning and destruction of nuclear weapons; and for general and complete disarmament, has become the central immediate issue of the modern international situation, of vital concern to the people of all countries, both the socialist and the non-socialist countries. Towards these aims the efforts of the Soviet Union and of all the socialist countries, as of all communist parties, and of a very wide range of supporters of peace all over the world, have been ceaselessly directed.

Second, there are all the varied home problems of economic and social construction; defects and shortcomings to be overcome; the problem of agriculture and raising agricultural productivity;[15] shortages still in the supply of many types of

[15] An ironic sidelight on the present stage of the relative economic development and the rate of growth of the most advanced Western capitalism and of socialism is that in the most recent period the acknowledged current problems of agriculture in the socialist countries have led Western apologists of capitalism to boast that, while in the rate of industrial growth socialism may be outstripping capitalism, Western capitalism is wonderful and triumphantly ahead in the sphere of agriculture and able to supply the industrialised socialist world with food-stuffs. In reality the agriculture of the most advanced capitalist countries is maintained on an artificial basis of colossal subsidies running into hundreds of millions of pounds a year.

UNITED STATES. "The U.S. agricultural budget now amounts to $2,200 per farm, while total farm income is only $3,500 per farm." (H. S. Houthaker, Department of Economics, Harvard University, *Economist*, June 8, 1963.)

GREAT BRITAIN. "In 1961-62 the sum paid in direct price support to British farmers represented over half of their whole estimated net income for the year. If other forms of subsidy are included, the total came to 83 per cent." (*Times*, February 27, 1963.)

WESTERN GERMANY. "The Federal Government's subsidies (to agriculture) this year amount to nearly DM 2,500m (about £223 million). Five years ago the total figure was DM 1,200m (about £107 million)." (*Times*, June 12, 1963.)

To complete the fantastic picture of Western capitalist agricultural success and prosperity, the United States Government simultaneously spends vast sums to store the unsaleable surplus agricultural products and induce farmers to reduce the land under cultivation, so that the vast U.S. Department of Agriculture (a building almost competing with the Pentagon in size) has been described as a schizophrenic institution, one half of which pours out the money of the taxpayers to persuade farmers to grow more, while the other half pours out money of the taxpayers to persuade farmers to grow less. While there is plenty to be learned by the socialist countries from capitalism in technique, and not least in the sphere of agriculture, the anarchy of capitalist production is no model for socialism.

goods; the tasks of combating bureaucracy and developing the best forms of combining the further extension of democratic participation in the running of industry with overall planning; as well as the lively controversies in the cultural sphere.

Third, with the existence of now a wide range of socialist states, there are the problems of developing the best forms of economic and political cooperation between the socialist states so as to combine national sovereignty and independence with unity for the defence of socialism and peace, combined economic planning, and loyalty to the principles of proletarian internationalism. This problem has come to the forefront in the recent period, with the differences publicly expressed in the sphere of various questions of state relations between the Chinese People's Republic and the U.S.S.R. In a less sharp form particular questions have also arisen in the course of planning for the aim of economic co-ordination of development of the socialist countries of Eastern Europe.

Fourth, in the sphere of the international communist movement, very sharp and critical questions have arisen in the recent period. Now that there is no longer a single international communist organisation, the essential task is to find the best means to combine the independence and equality of all communist parties with the indispensable unity of the international communist movement and fidelity to the principles of Marxism-Leninism. The 1957 and 1960 Meetings of Communist and Workers' Parties represented an attempt to find common ground; and indeed unanimity was expressed at the time by all the parties represented on the statements finally adopted. Nevertheless, the sequel has shown that the questions in this sphere have continued acute and have even reached a dangerous point.

All these are problems which now clamour for solution in the coming period.

CHAPTER XIII

INTERNATIONAL COMMUNIST CONFERENCES AND RELATIONS

"To bring about real solidarity of the working class, of all working people and the whole of progressive mankind, of the freedom-loving and peace-loving forces of the world, it is necessary above all to promote the unity of the Communist and Workers' Parties, to foster solidarity between the Communist and Workers' Parties of all countries."

Declaration of the 1957 International Communist Conference.

Since the dissolution of the Communist International in 1943 the growth of the communist parties all over the world has swept forward without any fixed or continuous form of international organisation to express their international unity. The resolution unanimously agreed by all parties in 1943 explained why the form of organisation appropriate to the earlier period of foundation and development of the parties, the form of a centralised international organisation and single international leadership, composed of representatives from the parties, was no longer appropriate or useful, when the parties had grown to mass parties, playing a foremost role or leading their peoples in a number of countries, and when the variety of differing national conditions and complex political situations in the various countries could not be handled from any single international leading centre, but required to be judged and handled by the developed communist political leadership on the spot within each country.

I. NEW CONDITIONS—NEW PROBLEMS

The justice of the estimation expressed in the resolution dissolving the Communist International was shown in the outcome. Once the foundations had been laid by the work of the Communist International up to 1943, the greatest advance of the international communist movement and of communist parties has taken place during the past two decades since its dissolution. As anticipated in the resolution of 1943, the communist parties have developed as leaders of their peoples in a number of countries. Some have become governing parties, organs of working-class political power for the construction of socialism, in a wide series of countries beyond the Soviet Union, so that in socialist states embracing one third of mankind communist parties hold the key political responsibility within the conditions of working-class power or socialism to guide the future of their peoples. At the same time within the diminished number of remaining capitalist countries communist parties have grown in numbers and in membership. On the eve of the Second World War the communist parties in the capitalist countries had a membership estimated at 1,724,000. In 1946 the figure was estimated at 5,000,000, although the number of capitalist countries had decreased. By the time of the 1960 Meeting of Communist and Workers' Parties there were eighty-one parties with a membership of 36 millions. Today there are communist parties in some ninety countries in the world, with close on 45 million members.

This is a new situation. The absence of a formal unified structure or single international organisation of communist parties does not mean that the necessity of international communist unity in principle and in practice is any less. On the contrary, the need for such unity is all the greater, in a period of parallel existence of a series of socialist states, as well as in face of the new problems raised by the changed balance of the world situation, and also in view of the increased diversity of conditions and extreme variety of stages of development of the various communist parties, some of relatively new formation.

Consequently the problem of the modern phase has become to find the best means of combining the essential unity of international outlook, general strategic and tactical orienta-

tion and practical action, which is the hallmark of Marxism-Leninism and the indispensable conditions for the strength and further advance of the international communist movement, with the no less essential principle of the independence and equality of all communist parties and of all socialist states.

This problem is not so insoluble as its abstract formulation might make it appear. For the principles of Marxism-Leninism provide a common approach, on the basis of which it is possible to reach agreed solutions. Indeed, even where current controversies within the international communist movement are at the moment most acute, the broad outlines of the analysis of the modern world situation and of the main objectives to be pursued were in principle agreed or stated to be agreed at the 1960 Meeting of all parties, and the differences tend to turn on the weighting of particular factors or the tactical conclusions to be drawn. Since the world situation is in fact ceaselessly moving and changing, and Marxism-Leninism is no fixed dogma, but a living and creative theory whose cardinal character is the capacity to judge and respond to a changing situation, there is no occasion for surprise that there should arise from time to time differences of opinion among communists on the estimation of new factors in a situation or on the tactical course to pursue. Hence contact and interchange is important in order to endeavour to resolve such differences and reach common ground, or sufficient common ground to ensure united action.

Such contacts and interchange are already and have always been normal in the relations of communist parties through the exchange of fraternal delegates at congresses, special visits of delegations or conferences of neighbouring communist parties on problems common to their area or sphere of operations. At the same time occasions arise, especially after sharp changes in the general international situation, when some form of international conference becomes necessary to estimate the new world situation, resolve differences, and endeavour to reach common tactical conclusions. Since there is now, following the dissolution of the out-dated and no longer suitable form of the old Communist International, no longer any formal structure of international organisation, there is no automatic machinery for this purpose. Steps have been taken, according as needs have arisen. The past two decades have seen various

steps taken to meet the need, although the problem is not yet solved, and further developments may in consequence still follow to promote the aim of international cooperation.

2. THE FIGHT AGAINST THE COLD WAR

During the years immediately after the close of the Second World War the international situation was characterised, alongside the advance of socialism and national liberation, by the cold war offensive of Western imperialist reaction to endeavour to halt and reverse this advance, "roll back the frontiers of communism," "liberate" the new socialist countries in Eastern Europe, and even, in some of the more extreme expressions, conquer and occupy the Soviet Union.

The first official proclamation of the cold war was made in the Fulton speech of Winston Churchill, under the presiding chairmanship of President Truman who had seen and approved the speech, in the spring of 1946. The first formulation in terms of state relations was the announcement of the Truman Doctrine in the spring of 1947, to bring Greece and Turkey within the military orbit of the United States, and proclaiming the right of the United States to intervene in any country in the world to ensure the maintenance of governments approved by it. This was followed by the Marshall Plan offensive in Western Europe to bring down the coalition governments of communist, social-democratic and other party representatives, which had sprung from the resistance movements, and exclude communists from the government in the countries of Western Europe. The attempted coup in Czechoslovakia in the spring of 1948 to conduct a similar operation there was defeated by the united resistance of the working class. In 1949 followed the formation of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation or Western military alliance, led by the United States, with the point openly directed against the Soviet Union and socialist countries—a direct violation of the United Nations Charter prohibiting sectional military organisations except against the menace of renewed aggression by Germany or Japan. In 1950 the decision was announced for the rearmament of Western Germany—also in violation of Potsdam and the wartime agreements of the allies.

The strategic foundation of the cold war offensive was the assumption of the maintenance of the Western nuclear

monopoly and supremacy for the next ten or fifteen years, during which period after the necessary military preparations had been carried through in Western Europe, the Middle East and elsewhere, and a chain of nuclear bases established to encircle the Soviet Union, at the moment judged appropriate the "showdown" with the Soviet Union envisaged in the Fulton speech could take place. The aim to carry forward the offensive and "liberate" the people's democracies in Eastern Europe (that is, restore in those countries the old regime, whose previous fascist dictatorships had caused no offence to the American, British or French millionaires) was openly proclaimed. The prospect of a triumphant third world war against communism was during this period the common theme of prominent American generals and publicists and many Western statesmen, and was extensively popularised in such publications as the *Collier's Magazine* special issue in 1951 depicting an American G.I. bestriding an Occupied Moscow.[16]

To meet this offensive, it was essential that the parties in the countries most directly threatened, that is, the parties in the Soviet Union and in the people's democracies of Eastern Europe, and also in France and Italy, where the American offensive had driven the communists out of the government, should be prepared, on the alert and in close touch. Accordingly in September, 1947, a conference was held in Poland of representatives of nine parties, from the Soviet Union, six People's Democracies in Europe (Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Poland, Rumania, Yugoslavia), and France and Italy. The Conference published a manifesto, and set up an Information Bureau for "the organisation of an exchange of experiences between parties, and, in case of necessity, coordination of their activities on the basis of mutual agreement". The headquarters of the Bureau was stationed initially in Belgrade, later moved to Bucharest. A journal of the Bureau was established under the title. *For a Lasting Peace, For a People's Democracy.*

[16] This special issue of *Collier's Magazine* on October 27, 1951 (circulation, 4¼ millions), had on the cover the heading *"Russia's Defeat and Occupation 1952-1960"*, alongside the picture of an American soldier with his helmet labelled "Occupation Forces" bestriding a map of the U.S.S.R. The map on the cover depicted Moscow as "Occupation Headquarters" and gave Leningrad the Tsarist name of Petrograd. Many distinguished contributors, including J. B. Priestley, participated in this number, which drew imaginative and jubilant pictures of the supposed imminent American occupation of Moscow.

The manifesto adopted by the nine-party conference analysed the new features of the world situation after the Second World War, and, in particular, the character of the reactionary offensive conducted by United States and British imperialism against democratic and socialist advance in the world and for the aims of world expansion. In this way a revision of alliances had arisen. In place of the wartime three-power alliance of the United States, Britain and the Soviet Union against the fascist Axis of Germany and Japan, the United States and Britain were now allied against the Soviet Union and the countries of new democracy, and were rebuilding Germany and Japan, as in the pre-Munich period, to serve this aim. So arose in the world situation of 1947 the confrontation of two camps. In place of the wartime division between the fascist and anti-fascist camp the division was now between the democratic anti-imperialist camp and the imperialist anti-democratic camp.

In this situation the task of the communist parties was stated to be to foster the unity of all democratic and patriotic forces, and to stand in the forefront of the fight of their peoples for national independence and sovereignty against domination by American imperialism, for democracy and for peace:

> "There is a great task awaiting the communist parties, that of preserving freedom and peace.... They must grasp in their hands the banner of national independence and sovereignty in their own countries. If the communist parties stand fast on their posts, if they refuse to be intimidated and blackmailed, if they courageously guard the democracy, national sovereignty, independence and self-determination of their countries, if they know how to fight against attempts at the economic and political subjugation of their countries and place themselves at the head of all the forces ready to defend the cause of national honour and independence, then and then only no plans to subjugate the countries of Europe and Asia can succeed."

With regard to the very noisy threats of a new war, or third world war for the destruction of communism, which were being freely spread at this time with large-scale publicity by the more aggressive sections of American imperialism and its satellites, the nine-party conference threw cold water on these

sanguinary expectations, and expressed confidence in the power of the peoples to maintain peace:

> 'One should realise that between the imperialist desire to unleash a new war and the possibility of organising a war there exists a tremendous distance.
>
> "The nations of the world do not want war. The forces who align themselves with peace are so numerous and powerful that if they defend hard and without flinching the cause of peace, if they show perseverance and grit, then the plans of the aggressors are doomed to bankruptcy."

This clear analysis of the international situation in 1947, and confident and inspiring lead to the communist parties and peoples of the world to stand firm for national independence, democracy and peace against the economic and political interventionist offensive and expansionist aims of American imperialism and its satellites was the main contribution of the nine-party conference which founded the Information Bureau. The cool-headed prediction that the very widely proclaimed plans at that time for a triumphant third world war in the near future against communism would not in fact be easily realised, and that the peoples would prove capable of maintaining peace against these war threats, was once again proved justified, as with so many of the basic predictions of Marxism, by the outcome shown in the events of the ensuing decade. The danger of a third world war has not vanished. But the peoples have proved successful so far to keep the threat at bay; and the international communist meetings of 1957 and 1960 have been able to carry forward this basic conception of the communist fight for peace to a new and still more advanced stage.

The formation of the Communist Information Bureau was universally treated by the Western capitalist and social-democratic politicians and press as the resurrection of the Communist International. This vision of a spectre paid more tribute to their fears than to their intelligence. Certainly the analysis of the international situation by the nine-power conference was of value for all parties, as for the working-class, democratic and peace movements in all countries. The periodical organ established, and printed in a variety of languages, was of use to make available information and reports

of the activities of parties. But the conditions of the Communist International were vanished and belonged to a past era. In the words of *Pravda* on October 10, 1947, deriding these hallucinations of "warmongers frightened to death":

> "The establishment of an information bureau by no means signifies the restoration of a global communist organisation with a centralised leadership, such as the Communist International represented at the time....
>
> "The Communist International, which played a positive role in the cause of educating leaders of the working class, has long become a past stage in the history of the development of the international working-class movement. To return to the Communist International now would mean to go back, not forward."

In practice the Information Bureau held only two more regular meetings, although the journal continued to be published. The Bureau became involved in the differences with Yugoslavia. The last recorded meeting of the Bureau was in 1949. Its winding up was announced in May, 1956.

By that time new conditions had arisen for the advance of the international communist movement.

3. TOWARDS A NEW PERSPECTIVE

The basic assumption of the cold war strategy of the Western imperialists was as has been already explained, that the maintenance of Western nuclear monopoly or decisive superiority for the next decade and a half after the Second World War, in face of a Soviet Union economically prostrate from war devastation and denied aid or reparations, would give them time to make their necessary preparations, and build up their world system of anti-Soviet military alliances and nuclear bases, before then choosing their moment to launch their "showdown" predicted at Fulton, from a superior "position of strength", and either ensure capitulation or a triumphant third world war.

This assumption proved erroneous. The Western nuclear monopoly was broken, and Soviet economy rebuilt and carried to a high level of scientific and technological equality, and even superiority in some fields, with the West, within the incredibly short space of time of a few years. The foundations

of the cold war strategy were thus broken, even though its prejudices and preconceptions still lingered on during succeeding years. But the conditions opening out a new perspective for the world had been achieved.

This great achievement was not easily won.

During the first years after the Second World War the immediate launching of the cold war offensive by the Western powers; the extreme war devastation of the Soviet Union and Eastern European countries, on a scale without parallel in history, accompanied by the immediate stopping of lend-lease and refusal of Western aid to the country which had made the greatest sacrifices for the common victory; and the Anglo-American brandishing of the atom bomb and nuclear monopoly as the supposed ultimate weapon of power for Anglo-American domination of the world and for an approaching "showdown" to compel Soviet capitulation to Anglo-American terms: all this meant that after the cruel losses and ordeals of the Second World War there could be no immediate prospect of relaxation for the Soviet people. The heavy strain which had had to be faced in the first building of socialism on the foundation of a backward and derelict economy; which had had to be intensified still further during the evil days of fascism to achieve the impossible and advance within the space of one decade from backwardness to the strength of a foremost industrial and military power capable of meeting and smashing the fascist assault; which had reached a pitch of heroism, sacrifice and endurance without equal during the Second World War: this strain had still to be carried forward now at an extreme tempo to be prepared to meet the Anglo-American cold war offensive, rebuild the shattered economy, and break in a short time the Western nuclear monopoly before the threatened third world war could be launched.

Once again the impossible was accomplished. The shattered economy was rebuilt in record time. At the outset, sometimes from holes in the ground in the most heavily devastated regions, the people had to rebuild their homes in the over 71,000 towns and villages razed by the Nazis, rendering 25,000,000 homeless; to construct anew the 31,000 factories and 40,000 miles of railway lines which had been destroyed; to build anew 40,000 hospitals and clinics and 84,000 schools which had been demolished or damaged; more slowly, to

begin to restore the 98,000 farms whose livestock had been looted. By 1948 the pre-war level of industrial output had been restored. At the same time, even at the cost of their own urgent needs, the Soviet people gave lavish aid to the new people's democracies to build and equip industrial enterprises, and, following the victory of the Chinese People's Revolution, to the Chinese People's Republic. In record time Soviet scientists and technologists mastered the problems of utilising nuclear energy so as to be capable of producing also the hideous weapon which was the typical proud ultimate product of Western imperialist civilisation and their supposed invincible monopoly panacea to ensure Western imperialist world domination. By 1949 the first Soviet atom bomb had been successfully tested. The Western experts had calculated that it would take the Soviet Union ten to fifteen years to reach this stage, and that in consequence they had this time to prepare the moment for the final "showdown" with invincible nuclear power: the prospective third world war, for which their strategists announced successively variant prospective dates from 1950 to 1955. Now these dreams of monopoly were shattered. But there was still confidence of superiority; for the advance was already proceeding from nuclear to thermonuclear power. By 1952 the United States exploded at Eniwetok a heavy thermonuclear device upon the ground. But by 1953 the first hydrogen bomb was exploded by the Soviet Union from the air before the Western powers had succeeded in reaching this stage. The Soviet Union was now in front. This superiority became visible to the whole world beyond concealment with the advance to the rocket stage and the first Sputnik in 1957. The balance of the world had changed, also in the strategic sphere, as well as in the advance of the majority of mankind.

Thus from 1953 onwards a new perspective could open out. The immediate cold war offensive had failed. The balance had irreversibly changed. The eight years since the war to reach this goal had still been harsh years for the Soviet people, years of continued emergency and strain, many shortages and superhuman effort. The negative features which had characterised the emergency regime of the later period of Stalin's leadership during the years of fascism had continued to some extent to characterise this period of confronting the cold war offensive

(although correction had already begun). With the sudden and characteristically cynical reversal of all the wartime pledges of Teheran, Yalta and Potsdam by the Western allies to switch to the cold war and the rebuilding of German militarism, the deeply ingrained and relentless suspicion and vigilance inherent in Stalin's outlook became all the more hard and embittered, sustaining the continued misuse of the security organs under the control of Beria, and culminating in the senseless concoction of the so-called "doctors' plot" just before his death. Nevertheless, the creative power of socialism and the socialist people, and of the basic democracy of the Soviet system, had triumphed. The goal had been reached. The conditions were now opening out for breath-taking new advances, for relaxation of tension, for rapid improvement of standards. A new post-war socialist generation was coming forward, typified by the Gagarins and the Tereshkovas, trained and moulded still in the tough school of the hard years, but already stepping forward with boundless energy to take up the new tasks and astonish the world anew with the picture of socialist manhood and socialist womanhood, no longer through the triumphs of the Soviet armies, but through the triumphs of peace. The time was at hand for the harvest to begin to be reaped.

4. TWENTIETH CONGRESS OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF THE SOVIET UNION

The Twentieth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union in February, 1956, constituted a landmark of the modern international communist movement, and had a profound influence on the international situation.

In fact the significant changes and the creative response to new world conditions, which characterised the Twentieth Congress, and won general public attention through its proceedings, did not begin with the Twentieth Congress, but developed already during the preceding years.

The response to the new conditions had begun during the preceding years before the Twentieth Congress first brought to general public awareness throughout the world the new advance. As soon as the war was over the lifting of the wartime restriction and restoration of the functioning of inner-party democracy was begun:

> "After the war the first step towards restoring inner-party democracy was the regular holding of party meetings and committee plenary meetings, and reports and elections of party committees at the times laid down by the party rules. District and town party conferences were held in 1945-47, and regional party conferences met in 1947 and early in 1948. Congresses of the Communist Parties of the Union Republics were convened at the close of 1948 and in 1949. From then on local party committees reported on their work, and were elected, at regular intervals. Plenary meetings of party committees began to play a bigger role as organs of collective leadership. Irregular non-Bolshevik practices began to be eliminated on the initiative of the Central committee. . . . This period, however, did not witness the complete elimination of the essential shortcomings in party work."
>
> (History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, 1960, p. 626)

After the death of Stalin in 1953 this process was carried rapidly and decisively forward.

Between the Nineteenth Congress in 1952 and the Twentieth Congress in 1956 energetic initiatives were taken in every field to respond to the requirements of the new era, with the decisive change in the balance of the world and the approach of the Soviet Union to the stage of transition from socialism to communism.

In the international sphere the ending of Western nuclear monopoly or superiority made it possible to take new steps to work for the relaxation of international tension and the replacement of the cold war by peaceful co-existence. While the rearmament of Western Germany in 1954 as a part of the Nato Western military bloc rendered necessary the establishment of the Warsaw Mutual Defence Pact of the socialist states in Europe in 1955, the formation of the latter to counterbalance and hold in check the former proved a steadying factor for peace. In 1955, following the signature of the treaty which established a sovereign disarmed permanently neutral Austria, the first Summit Conference was held of the United States, Britain and France with the Soviet Union. Although it bore no fruits, the tremendous popular response all over the world revealed the universal desire of the peoples for peace;

and the old atmosphere of the cold war anti-Soviet hostility fostered by the prophets of the third world war could no longer be so easily maintained. The Soviet Union had played an active part in promoting peace in Korea in 1953 and in Vietnam in 1954. Diplomatic relations were resumed with Yugoslavia in 1955. The visits of the principal Soviet leaders to Western countries and to India and other Asian countries, and the enthusiasm of their popular reception, had borne witness to the relaxation of international tension and the beginning of a new climate in international relations. The Bandung Afro-Asian Conference in 1955 had demonstrated the unanimous support of the wide range of states there represented for the five principles of peace.

In the domestic sphere no less active steps were taken during these years to carry forward the new advance in every field, economic, governmental and party, as well as in ideological and cultural work. Especial attention was paid to agriculture, whose rate of increase was lagging behind the general rate of increase. The normal functioning of collective leadership and inner-party democracy was restored, where there had been restrictions, and strengthened at all levels. The security services were reorganised (with the removal and sentencing of Beria, who had been at their head) under effective and responsible party control; the security trials and sentences of the preceding period were brought under review, with the result that many who had been sentenced were exonerated, and many thousands were released from the prisons or labour camps and were able to return to party work. It may be noted that already in January, 1954, the Central Committee had adopted a resolution on "Serious Shortcomings in the Work of the Government and Party Apparatus" directed against bureaucratic and formal methods of leadership; and in August, 1954, the organ *Party Life* had published a specific analysis of the adverse consequences arising from "propagation of the cult of the individual"; so that this particular issue was by no means, as is sometimes assumed, raised newly for the first time at the Twentieth Congress.

Thus the Twentieth Congress in 1956 was in reality the culmination of preparations, which had entered upon during the preceding years, and which had now reached such

a degree of fruition as to make possible the opening of a new stage. The Twentieth Congress for the first time drew together the full analysis of the new world situation and the change in the balance of the world, and the consequent tremendous new perspectives now opening out. By the correction of the faults of the preceding period the Twentieth Congress opened out a new era of creative development for the whole international communist movement.

The Congress brought out the new features in the world situation which were resulting in a qualitative change in the balance of the world. First, the extension of socialism from one country to a world system embracing one third of mankind. Second, the demonstration of the economic superiority of socialism by the measure of the relative rate of industrial growth over the preceding quarter of a century (between 1929 and 1955 an average annual rate of growth of 12.3 per cent for the Soviet Union, against 3.3 per cent for the United States and 2.4 per cent for Britain; or, excluding the war years, 18 per cent for the Soviet Union, against 2.8 per cent for the United States and 3.5 per cent for Britain); and the prospect of the production of the socialist world soon outstripping the production of the capitalist world. Third, the sweeping forward of national liberation, with the near approaching prospect of the final ending of colonialism. Fourth, the development of cooperation between the socialist world and the newly independent nations, both in respect of economic aid for reconstruction on a non-imperialist basis, and for peace, thus drawing together the overwhelming majority of the peoples of the world for the cause of peace.

On the basis of this analysis, alongside the concrete objectives set before the Soviet people for economic, cultural and social advance along the road of the transition towards communism, new perspectives on an international scale could be set forward, of inspiring significance for the peoples of the whole world.

First, peaceful co-existence and the realisable possibility of preventing a third world war. The old "Marxist-Leninist precept that wars are inevitable so long as imperialism exists" was "evolved at a time when (i) imperialism was an all-embracing world system, and (ii) the social and political forces

which did not want war were weak, poorly organised, and hence unable to compel the imperialist to renounce war". This applied before the First World War and before the Second World War. "At the present time, however, the situation has changed radically." While "the Leninist precept that so long as imperialism exists, the economic basis giving rise to wars will also be preserved, remains in force," the social and political forces of the peoples are now such that "war is not fatalistically inevitable": that is, the reactionary imperialist drive towards a third world war can be defeated by the "united front" and "vigilance" of the peoples for peace.

Second, the transition to socialism. The "radical changes" in "the historical situation" have made possible "a new approach to the question". With the growth of the forces of socialism and democracy throughout the world, and the weakening of capitalism, a "real opportunity" could arise for "the working class in a number of capitalist countries" to unite the majority of the people, in conditions of capitalist crisis, for the defeat of the reactionary forces, and on this basis "win a stable majority in parliament, and transform the latter from an organ of bourgeois democracy into a genuine instrument of the people's will".

> "The winning of a stable parliamentary majority, backed by a mass revolutionary movement of the proletariat and of all the working people could create for the working class of a number of capitalist and former colonial countries the conditions needed to secure fundamental social changes."

At the same time, "in countries where capitalism is still strong and has a huge military and police apparatus at its disposal," it would be necessary to be prepared for "serious resistance" of "the reactionary forces"; and in all cases "the decisive and indispensable fact is the political leadership of the working class headed by its vanguard". The new "more favourable conditions" have only been made possible because "socialism has won in the Soviet Union and is winning in the people's democracies".

Third, for unity of the working class. Here also, in relation to the split in the working class "the prospect of changing the situation is coming up".

> "Life has put on the agenda many questions which not only demand rapprochement and cooperation between all workers' parties but also create real possibilities for this cooperation. The most important of these questions is that of preventing a new war. . . .
>
> "Today many Social-Democrats stand for active struggle against the war danger and militarism, for rapprochement with the socialist countries, for unity of the labour movement. We sincerely greet these Social-Democrats and are willing to do everything necessary to unite our efforts in the struggle for the noble cause of peace and the interests of the working people."

These were some of the major themes and perspectives opened up by the Twentieth Congress. It was in this larger context of positive and creative response to the opportunities of the new concrete world situation that the same vigorous and dynamic approach was also brought to bear on the question of internal renewal of the party to meet the new conditions, with rigorous exposure and criticism of the shortcomings of the preceding period, associated with the cult of personality and its evil effects and "resolutely sweeping aside" (in the words of the political report to the Congress) "everything that had become outmoded and was hindering our advance". All this was the historic achievement of the Twentieth Congress.

5. DEFEAT OF THE REVISIONIST OFFENSIVE

Following the Twentieth Congress a very large-scale campaign was conducted by the capitalist press and official agencies, including the active intervention of the U.S. State Department, to hide from view all the major issues of the Congress and concentrate only on the correction of shortcomings with regard to the question of the role of Stalin, as if this had been the main theme of the Congress.

> "Why is it that the enemies of communism and socialism are concentrating their attacks on the shortcomings about which the Central Committee of our party spoke at the Twentieth Congress? They are doing so in order to distract the attention of the working class and its parties from the *main* topics advanced by the Twentieth Congress that are clearing the way to further successes

for the cause of peace, socialism and unity of the working class."

(Resolution of the Central Committee of the C.P.S.U., June, 1956).

This campaign on the part of the hostile capitalist and social-democratic camp was not successful, although some temporary confusion was created among some sections.

All the communist parties of the world took serious heed of the lessons of the Twentieth Congress, both the new positive perspectives indicated for peace, working-class unity and the transition to socialism, and the correction of shortcomings and necessity for strengthening inner-party democracy. Advantage was taken of this opportunity by hostile elements, inciting for this purpose a few unstable elements in some of the parties, to endeavour to conduct a revisionist offensive: that is, to try to throw the baby out with the bathwater and, in the name of correcting errors associated with Stalin, to attack the basic principles of Marxism-Leninism, the dictatorship of the proletariat, the conception of the party, soviet democracy, democratic centralism and the impermissibility of factions within a communist party. This revisionist offensive was boosted with large-scale publicity by capitalism and right-wing social democracy in the hope of creating the effect of a "crisis" in communism. The temporary serious situation which arose in Hungary, as a result of counter-revolutionaries and enemy agents taking advantage of the genuine desire of the people for reforms, has already been described. In most of the parties the revisionist offensive won very limited support, mainly among a few of the younger intellectuals or those strongly subject to the influence of their capitalist environment. A certain number of waverers dropped away, and either passed out of political life or drifted into social-democracy or reaction; but some of those who had been sincerely confused returned later, when they realised that the lines of the class struggle, of revolution and counter-revolution, of socialism and imperialism had not changed, and that the communist parties were going forward, as always, in the struggle. On this revisionist offensive, and the attempt by capitalism and right-wing social-democracy to use the invented term "Stalinism" (this term was actually coined by the Trotskyists a quarter of a century earlier as a term of abuse to cover their attacks on

the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and the international communist movement), Khrushchov commented:

"We cannot agree with those who try to use our criticism of the cult of the individual for attacks against the socialist system, against the Communist Party. While criticising the negative aspects of Stalin's activity, the party fought and will continue to fight all who slander Stalin, all who, on the pretext of criticising the cult of the individual, give an inaccurate and distorted picture of the period of our party's activity during which the Central Committee was headed by Stalin. As a devoted Marxist-Leninist and staunch revolutionary, Stalin will occupy a worthy place in history. Our party and the Soviet people will remember Stalin and pay tribute to him.

"Some 'critics' are doing their utmost to cast a slur on this period of our party's struggle, to besmirch the high road blazed by the Soviet Union in the struggle, for socialism. They use—in a negative sense—the name 'Stalinists' for men devoted to Leninism, who have not spared themselves in fighting for the interests of the people, for the cause of socialism. By so doing, they seek to defame and discredit leaders of communist and workers' parties devoted to Marxism-Leninism, to proletarian internationalism. 'Critics' of this variety are either inveterate slanderers or people who are sinking to the rotten position of revisionism and trying to mask their departure from the principles of Marxism-Leninism with shouts about 'Stalinism'. It is not at all accidental that imperialist propaganda has added the provocative slogan of struggle against 'Stalinism' and 'Stalinist' to its arsenal."

(N. S. Khrushchov, Speech on the Fortieth Anniversary of the Russian Socialist Revolution, November, 1957)

The communist parties of the entire world defeated this revisionist offensive and went forward with increased strength to new successes in the fulfilment of the perspectives which had been opened up at the Twentieth Congress. The 1957 Declaration of the twelve communist parties of all the socialist countries (except Yugoslavia not represented) unanimously laid down:

"The historic decisions of the Twentieth Congress of the C.P.S.U. are of tremendous importance not only to the C.P.S.U. and the building of communism in the U.S.S.R. They have opened a new stage in the world communist movement and pushed ahead its further development along Marxist-Leninist lines."

A similar view of the international significance of the Twentieth Congress was unanimously agreed in the Statement of the eighty-one Communist and Workers' Parties adopted in 1960.

6. INTERNATIONAL COMMUNIST DECLARATION OF 1957

In the new world situation, with the far-reaching perspectives opened up by the Twentieth Congress, and following the defeat of the revisionist offensive which had been launched by the enemies of communism in 1956, it became important for an international communist meeting to take place. Accordingly, following the attendance of representatives at the celebration of the fortieth anniversary of the Russian socialist revolution, a meeting of delegates of sixty-four Communist and Workers' Parties was held in Moscow on November 16-19, 1957. At this meeting a Declaration was drawn up by the representatives of the parties of the twelve socialist countries participating (Albania, Bulgaria, China, Czechoslovakia, Germany, Hungary, Korea, Mongolia, Poland, Rumania, U.S.S.R., and Vietnam); and at the same time a Peace Appeal was issued on behalf of the sixty-four parties.

The Declaration analysed the character of the new world situation; the advance of socialism and national liberation, and the weakening of imperialism; the aggressive wars conducted by the American, British, French and other imperialists, and "the policy of certain aggressive groups in the United States aimed at rallying round them all the reactionary forces of the capitalist world". On the basis of this analysis the "defence of peace" was declared to be "the most important task of the day":

"The Communist and Workers' Parties taking part in the meeting declare that the Leninist principle of peaceful co-existence of the two systems, which has been further developed and brought up to date in the decisions

of the Twentieth Congress of the C.P.S.U., is the sound basis of the foreign policy of the socialist countries and the dependable pillar of peace and friendship among the peoples. The idea of peaceful co-existence coincides with the five principles advanced jointly by the Chinese People's Republic and the Republic of India and with the programme adopted by the Bandung Conference of Afro-Asian countries. Peace and peaceful co-existence have now become the demands of the broad masses in all countries.

"The Communist Parties regard the struggle for peace as their foremost task."

The Declaration dealt also with the forms of transition to socialism, which "may vary for different countries":

"The working class and its vanguard—the Marxist-Leninist party—seek to achieve the socialist revolution by peaceful means.... Today in a number of capitalist countries the working class, headed by its vanguard, has the opportunity, given a united working class and popular front or other workable forms of agreement and political cooperation between the different parties, and public organisations, to unite a majority of the people, win state power without civil war and ensure the transfer of the basic means of production to the hands of the people.... In the event of the ruling classes resorting to violence against the people, the possibility of non-peaceful transition to socialism should be borne in mind.... The possibility of one or another way to socialism depends on the concrete conditions in each country."

On the parallel dangers of dogmatism and revisionism the Declaration made clear that revisionism was at the moment the main danger, but that dogmatism could become the main danger at one or another time or in one or another party:

"In condemning dogmatism, the Communist Parties believe that the main danger at present is revisionism or, in other words, right-wing opportunism as a manifestation of bourgeois ideology paralysing the revolutionary energy of the working class and demanding the preservation or restoration of capitalism. However, dogmatism and sectarianism can also be the main danger at different phases of development in one party or another. It is for

each Communist Party to decide what danger threatens it more at a given time."

Especial attention was given to international working-class unity and the principles of "socialist internationalism"; solidarity between the socialist countries; unity of all communist parties and fidelity to the principles of Marxism-Leninism, at the same time as creatively applying those principles in accordance with concrete national conditions in each country.

Provision was made in the Declaration for the convening of future international communist conferences when need might arise:

> "After exchanging views the participants in the meeting arrived at the conclusion that in present conditions it is expedient, besides bilateral meetings of leading workers and exchange of information, to hold, as the need arises, more representative conferences of Communist and Workers' Parties to discuss current problems, share experience, study each other's views and attitudes and concert action in the joint struggle for the common goals —peace, democracy and socialism."

7. INTERNATIONAL COMMUNIST STATEMENT OF 1960

During the succeeding years it became clear that, while unanimity had been recorded in the 1957 Declaration, some differences still continued to be expressed in some quarters. Hence it became desirable to hold a further international communist meeting in order to resolve the differences as well as to define policy on the further development of the world situation. Such a meeting was held in November, 1960, in Moscow, following the celebration of the forty-third anniversary of the Russian socialist revolution. It was a measure of the further growth of the international communist movement, and of the representative character of this meeting, that the delegations of eighty-one Communist and Workers' Parties took part, covering virtually all the countries of the European, Asian, American, and Australasian continents, and a number of African countries. The statement adopted by the meeting recorded that there were now Communist Parties active in eighty-one countries of the world, with a total membership of 36,000,000. Prolonged and careful discussion

took place on all the points of a very full and explicit statement of the policy of the international communist movement in the modern world situation. There was no question of a rubber stamp endorsement by any delegation; and some of the formulations represented the outcome of a compromise of viewpoints in the course of discussion. In the end unanimity was reached by the representatives of all the eighty-one parties on the Statement which was published to the world in their name.[17]

As this 1960 Statement represents the most recent (up to the time of writing) and authoritative definition of the viewpoint and policy of the international communist movement in the modern world situation, agreed at the time by all the communist parties, it is important to note briefly some of the points and lines of thought covered. At the same time it is necessary to recognise that the full theoretical analysis and tactical conclusions drawn can only be adequately studied in the complete text.

The Statement, after confirming the findings of the 1957 Declaration, and noting that the historical developments there analysed had been carried further forward during the ensuing three years, began with the decisive question of the definition of the present epoch.

> "Our time, whose main content is the transition from capitalism to socialism initiated by the great October Revolution, is a time of struggle between the two opposing social systems, a time of socialist revolutions and national-liberation revolutions, a time of the breakdown of imperialism, of the abolition of the colonial system, a time of transition of more peoples to the socialist path, of the triumph of socialism and communism on a world-wide scale.
>
> "It is the principal characteristic of our time that the world socialist system is becoming the decisive factor in the development of society. . . .
>
> "Today it is the world socialist system and the forces

[17] On March 31, 1964, the Communist Party of China published its disagreement with the formulation in the 1957 Declaration and the 1960 Statement concerning the possibility of a peaceful transition to socialism in some countries, and called for the revision of the 1960 Statement in this respect. This was the first public expression of a partial repudiation of the 1957 and 1960 documents by the Chinese Communist Party.

fighting against imperialism, for a socialist transformation of society, that determine the main content, main trend and main features of the historical development of society."

This increasing influence of the world socialist system on world development is exercised, under present conditions, mainly by peaceful means in the field of economic construction and peaceful economic competition between the two systems, by the demonstration of the superiority of socialism and by the force of example:

"The course of social development proves right Lenin's prediction that the countries of victorious socialism would influence the development of world revolution chiefly by their economic construction.... By the force of its example the world socialist system is revolutionising the thinking of the working people in the capitalist countries."

On the other hand, with the increasing contradictions of capitalism in the present period of narrowing monopoly and state monopoly capitalism, and with the operation of the law of uneven development leading to increased inequality and antagonisms between capitalist nations and states, the imperialists have resorted to offensives against democracy and establishment of dictatorships in a number of countries, and on an international scale to building up military alliances under the leadership of the United States to defeat the advance of socialism and national liberation.

"The imperialists form military-political alliances under U.S. leadership to fight in common against the socialist camp and to strangle the national-liberation, working-class and socialist movements. International developments in recent years have furnished many new proofs of the fact that U.S. imperialism is the chief bulwark of world reaction and an international gendarme."

But the rising tide of popular struggles, of "anti-imperialist, national-liberation, anti-war and class struggles" weakens imperialism and the fulfilment of its aggressive plans, and has won many victories.

From this follows the character of the present "new stage" in "the general crisis of capitalism", which differs from the previous stages in that it is not the outcome of a world war:

"A new stage has begun in the development of the general crisis of capitalism.... This stage is distinguished by the fact that it has set in, not as a result of the world war, but in the conditions of competition and struggle between the two systems, an increasing change in the balance of forces in favour of socialism, and marked aggravation of all the contradictions of capitalism."

So it built up the picture of the unity of the struggle of the peoples today, with "the international working class and its chief creation, the world socialist system" as "the central factors":

"The peoples who are building socialism and communism, the revolutionary movement of the working class in the capitalist countries, the national-liberation struggle of the oppressed peoples and the general democratic movement—these great forces of our time are merging into one powerful current that undermines and destroys the world imperialist system. The central factors of our day are the international working class and its chief creation, the world socialist system. They are an earnest of victory in the struggle for peace, democracy, national liberation, socialism and human progress."

Such is the broad picture presented of the modern world situation and its governing forces. From this basic theoretical analysis, carrying forward the conceptions of Marxism-Leninism in terms of the modern world, are drawn the political conclusions in the following sections.

In relation to the world socialist camp the combination of independence of the socialist states with cooperation and mutual assistance in construction, aimed towards common objectives, and with unity and solidarity against imperialism was emphasised:

"The socialist camp is a social, economic and political community of free and sovereign peoples united by the close bonds of international socialist solidarity, by common interests and objectives, and following the path of socialism and communism."

Security against capitalist restoration or imperialist intervention is ensured by the united strength of the socialist camp:

"Today the restoration of capitalism has been made socially and economically impossible, not only in the

Soviet Union, but in the other socialist countries as well. The combined forces of the socialist camp reliably safeguard every socialist country against encroachments by imperialist reaction."

On the question of national division the elimination of class antagonisms and unity of interests in the construction of socialism provide the most favourable conditions for the overcoming of national antagonisms: but this does not mean that the latter automatically disappear; a ceaseless conscious struggle has to be waged for the principles of internationalism:

"One of the greatest achievements of the world socialist system is the practical confirmation of the Marxist-Leninist thesis that national antagonisms diminish with the decline of class antagonisms. . . . Manifestations of nationalism and national narrow-mindedness do not disappear automatically with the establishment of the socialist system. If fraternal relations and friendship between the socialist countries are to be strengthened, it is necessary that the Communist and Workers' Parties pursue a Marxist-Leninist internationalist policy, that all working people be educated in a spirit of internationalism and patriotism, and that a resolute struggle be waged to eliminate the survivals of bourgeois nationalism and chauvinism."

As in the 1957 Declaration, the struggle for peace was stated to be the central task in the present situation:

"The problem of war and peace is the most burning problem of our time. . . . As long as imperialism exists there will be soil for wars of aggression. The peoples of all countries know that the danger of a new world war still persists. U.S. imperialism is the main force of aggression and war."

The Statement further emphasised the new and qualitative change brought into the character of any future world war through the development of nuclear weapons:

"Monstrous means of mass annihilation and destruction have been developed which, if used in a new war, can cause unheard-of destruction to entire countries and reduce key centres of world industry and culture to ruins. Such a war would bring death and suffering to hundreds

of millions of people, among them people in countries not involved in it. Imperialism spells grave danger to the whole of mankind."

Nevertheless, despite the unchanged aggressive nature of imperialism, the change in the balance of world forces has now brought within reach the possibility for the peoples to defeat the menace of a new world war:

"The aggressive nature of imperialism has not changed. But real forces have appeared that are capable of foiling its plans of aggression. War is not fatally inevitable. The time has come when the attempts of the imperialist aggressors to start a world war can be curbed. World war can be prevented by the joint efforts of the world socialist camp, the international working class, the national-liberation movement, all the countries opposing war, and all peace-loving forces."

While only the world victory of socialism and end of capitalism can finally end the causes of wars, the further growth of the forces of socialism, national liberation and peace can banish world war even before capitalism has disappeared everywhere. The prospect draws in view in "the near future" of new victories of socialism and peace; the socialist system turning out more than half the world's industrial product; the expansion of the "peace zone" of states cooperating in the cause of peace; the completion of the disintegration of the colonial system; the establishment of absolute superiority of the forces of socialism and peace.

"In these conditions a real possibility will have arisen to exclude world war from the life of society even before socialism achieves complete victory on earth, with capitalism still existing in a part of the world. The victory of socialism all over the world will completely remove the social and national causes of all wars."

Peaceful co-existence is the necessary aim of the fight for peace in the present world situation of the parallel existence of states with opposing social systems.

"Peaceful co-existence of countries with different systems or destructive war—this is the alternative today. There is no other choice. . . .

"Peaceful co-existence of states does not imply renunciation of the class struggle as the revisionists claim. . . .

> In conditions of peaceful co-existence favourable opportunities are provided for the development of the class struggle in the capitalist countries and the national-liberation movement of the peoples of the colonial and dependent countries. In their turn, the successes of the revolutionary class and national-liberation struggle promote peaceful co-existence."

The struggle for peaceful co-existence is associated with the struggle to end the arms race and for the programme of general and complete disarmament as advocated by the Soviet Union.

The possibility of achieving peaceful co-existence results from the new balance of the world situation, since this compels "a definite section" of the ruling class in the imperialist countries to take serious account of the new balance of forces and of "the dire consequences of a modern war", and therefore to favour a policy of peaceful co-existence to replace the policies of the cold war. Thus, while "the aggressive nature of imperialism has not changed", this change in the world balance in favour of the peoples has found reflection in the role of this "definite section" of the ruling class in the imperialist countries favouring peaceful co-existence.

> "The policy of peaceful co-existence is also favoured by a definite section of the bourgeoisie of the developed capitalist countries, which takes a sober view of the relationship of forces and of the dire consequences of a modern war."[18]

[18] The same conception of the necessity to recognise the existence of a "more sober-minded" section of the ruling class of United States imperialism prepared to negotiate for peaceful settlements also in the interests of the United States was very clearly expressed in the Political Report to the Eighth Congress of the Communist Party of China in September, 1956:

> "Even inside the ruling circles of the United States there is a section of more sober-minded people who are becoming more and more aware that the policy of war may not after all be to America's advantage... Our policy of peaceful co-existence based on the five principles does not exclude any country. We have the same desire for peaceful co-existence with the United States."
>
> (Eighth Congress of the Communist Party of China, September, 1956, documents, Vol. I. pp. 90 and 93.)

Similarly the success of the Camp David meeting of the Heads of State of the United States and the Soviet Union was acclaimed by the Communist Party of China in the celebration of the Tenth Anniversary of the foundation of the Chinese People's Republic in October, 1959. On this occasion Chou En-lai wrote:

> "Thanks to the might and unity of the great socialist camp headed by the great Soviet Union and the growth of the struggle against aggression and war, the forces of peace and progress are ever more clearly gaining the upper hand over the forces of war. This fact found clear new expression in the success of Comrade Khrushchov's visit to the United States."

On the same occasion Chen Yi officially welcomed the outcome of the Camp David Khruschov-Eisenhower talks:

> "The joint communiqué issued after talks between Comrade Khrushchov and President Eisenhower of the United States mentioned among other things that both sides agreed that international disputes should be settled not by the use of force but by peaceful means of negotiations. The U.S. has persisted in the display of military force, and has carried out its so-called 'positions of strength' policy. Now it, too, has to agree that international disputes should not be settled by force. This undoubtedly deserves to be welcomed."

The victories of national liberation are the second great feature of the present epoch, following the establishment of the world socialist system:

> "The complete collapse of colonialism is imminent. The breakdown of the system of colonial slavery under the impact of the national-liberation movement is a development ranking second in historic importance only to the formation of the world socialist system."

The 1960 Statement covered important new ground in this field, going beyond the ground covered in the 1957 Declaration. The Statement exposed all the new methods by which the imperialists endeavour to "emasculate and undermine the national sovereignty of the newly-free countries" by drawing them into military blocs, implanting military dictatorships or setting up puppets in power or bribing a section of the bourgeoisie, or seeking to preserve their positions and capture new positions in the economy of the newly independent countries under the guise of economic "aid". In this context the Statement gave careful attention to the problems of the peoples of the newly independent countries "after winning political independence"; the role of different classes and parties; the tasks of "the anti-imperialist, anti-feudal, democratic revolution" to consolidate independence against imperialism and carry forward social and economic reconstruction. So was set out the general guiding line of the aim of establishing states of "independent national democracy" (the definition of which has been cited in the preceding chapter p. 312).

On the transition to socialism the Statement set out very fully the guiding lines of the communist approach in the conditions of present-day capitalism and the present stage of the working-class movement in the various capitalist countries.

In the developed capitalist countries the immediate aim is to build up unity of the working class and widest sections of the people against the domination of the big monopolies:

> "Communists hold that this unity can be achieved on the basis of the struggle for peace, national independence, the protection and extension of democracy, nationalisation of the key branches of economy and democratisation of their management, the use of the entire economy for peaceful purposes in order to satisfy the needs of the population, implementation of radical reforms, improvement of the living conditions of the working people, protection of the interests of the peasantry and the small and middle urban bourgeoisie against the tyranny of the monopolies. . . .
>
> "Communists regard the struggle for democracy as part of the struggle for socialism."

Especially important is the aim to promote working-class unity, both "the restoration of unity in the trade union movement in countries where it is split, as well as on the international scale", and cooperation between communists and social-democrats:

> "Communists will continue to criticise the ideological positions and right-wing opportunist practices of the Social-Democrats. They will continue to work to induce the Social-Democratic masses to adopt policies of consistent class struggle against capitalism, for the triumph of socialism. The Communists are firmly convinced that the ideological differences which exist between themselves and the Social-Democrats must not hinder exchanges of opinion on the pressing problems of the working-class movement and the joint struggle, especially against the war danger.
>
> "Communists regard Social-Democrats among the working people as their class brothers. They often work together in trade unions and other organisations, and fight jointly for the interests of the working class and the people as a whole."

Such united action of the working class and all sections of the people in the fight against the monopolies for living needs, democratic demands, social and economic reforms, and in the cause of peace, prepares the conditions for the further advance to the change of social system, that is, the transition to socialism. This change can only be determined by the choice of the people within each country in accordance with their conditions and development:

> "The choice of social system is the inalienable right of the people of each country. Socialist revolution cannot be imported, nor imposed from without. It is a result of the internal development of the country concerned, of the utmost sharpening of social contradictions within it. The Communist Parties, which guide themselves by the Marxist-Leninist doctrine, have always been against the export of revolution. At the same time they fight resolutely against imperialist export of counter-revolution."

The formulations on the possibility of a peaceful transition to socialism in a number of capitalist countries through a united working class leading the majority of the people, defeating the reactionary forces, securing a stable majority in parliament, and transforming parliament from an instrument of the capitalist class into an instrument serving the working people, with the accompanying warning on the possibility of the exploiters resorting to violence and compelling a "non-peaceful transition to socialism", repeat and amplify the similar formulations already set out in the 1957 Declaration.

> "Relying on the majority of the people and resolutely rebuffing the opportunist elements incapable of relinquishing the policy of compromise with the capitalists and landlords, the working class can defeat the reactionary anti-popular forces, secure a firm majority in parliament, transform parliament from an instrument serving the class interests of the bourgeoisie into an instrument serving the working people, launch an extra-parliamentary mass struggle, smash the resistance of the reactionary forces and create the necessary conditions for the peaceful realisation of the socialist revolution. . . . In the event of the exploiting classes resorting to violence against the people, the possibility of non-peaceful transition to socialism should be borne in mind. . . . The actual possibility of the one or the other way of transition to socialism in each individual country depends on the concrete historical conditions."

It should be noted that this conception of the more favourable

conditions today, following the establishment of the world system of socialism and the change in the world balance, making possible a peaceful transition to socialism in a number of countries, was not a new departure of the 1957 Declaration and 1960 Statement, but had previously been set out at the Twentieth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, and had already before that had wide currency in the international communist movement in the nineteen-fifties. Thus, for example, this conception, including the transformation of parliament by the role of a united working class and extra-parliamentary mass movement, had already been very explicitly elaborated in the programme of the British Communist Party adopted at its Congress in 1951, *The British Road to Socialism*. The text of this programme was re-published at the time in *Pravda* and other communist organs, with references to it as a "creative" expression of Marxism-Leninism, thereby suggesting that this conception had the concurrence of other parties, including the Communist Party of the Soviet Union at a time when Stalin was leading its central committee. Hence the conception arose as a development of modern communist thought, in response to changed world conditions, during the period while Stalin was exercising his leading role, and not as an innovation after the period of Stalin.

The final section of the Statement devoted the most careful attention to the international communist movement, its development and the relations of communist parties. Through the ideological defeat of the international offensive of revisionism the communist parties had gained in strength. Special attention was paid to the Yugoslav form of revisionism, which had come anew into the forefront of attention subsequently to the 1957 Declaration, through the publication of the 1958 revisionist programme of the Yugoslav party. On the parallel fight against revisionism and dogmatism the Statement reiterated the line of the 1957 Declaration, calling for

> "a determined struggle on two fronts—against revisionism, which remains the main danger, and against dogmatism and sectarianism.... Dogmatism and sectarianism in theory and practice can also become the main danger at some stage of development of individual parties, unless combated unrelentingly."

In this concluding section on the international communist movement the greatest emphasis was laid on the vital necessity and duty to maintain international communist unity.

> "The interests of the struggle for the working-class cause demand of each Communist Party and of the great army of Communists ever-closer unity of will and action. It is the supreme internationalist duty of every Marxist-Leninist party to work continuously for greater unity in the world communist movement.
>
> "A resolute defence of the unity of the world communist movement on the principles of Marxism-Leninism and proletarianism, and the prevention of any actions which may undermine that unity, are a necessary condition for victory in the struggle for national independence, democracy and peace, for the successful accomplishment of the tasks of the socialist revolution and of the building of socialism and communism. Violation of these principles would impair the forces of communism."

While all communist parties are independent with equal rights, their duty is to maintain solidarity and support one another.

> "All the Marxist-Leninist parties are independent and have equal rights; they shape their policies according to the specific conditions in their respective countries and in keeping with Marxist-Leninist principles, and support each other. The success of the working-class cause in any country is unthinkable without the internationalist solidarity of all Marxist-Leninist parties. Every party is responsible to the working class, to the working people of its country, to the international working class and communist movement as a whole."

What happens in the event of questions arising with regard to the activity of a brother party? The machinery for consultation in such an event was very explicitly laid down:

> "Whenever a Party wants to clear up questions relating to the activities of another fraternal Party, its leadership approaches the leadership of the Party concerned; if necessary, they hold meetings and consultation."

Broader meetings of parties may be held to exchange views or discuss joint actions:

> "The Communist and Workers' Parties hold meetings

whenever necessary to discuss urgent problems, to share experiences, acquaint themselves with each other's views and positions, work out common views through consultations and co-ordinate joint actions in the struggle for common goals."

The experience of the "two major meetings", in 1957 and 1960, has shown that

"in present-day conditions such meetings are an effective form of exchanging views and experience, enriching Marxist-Leninist theory by collective effort and elaborating a common attitude in the struggle for common objectives."

Within the fraternity of communist parties the vanguard role of the party of the Soviet Union was unanimously recognised by all parties.

"The Communist and Workers' Parties unanimously declare that the Communist Party of the Soviet Union has been, and remains, the universally recognised vanguard of the world Communist movement, being the most experienced and steeled contingent of the international communist movement. The experience which the C.P.S.U. has gained in the struggle for the victory of the working class, in socialist construction and in the full-scale construction of communism, is of fundamental significance for the whole of the world communist movement. The example of the C.P.S.U. and its fraternal solidarity inspire all the Communist Parties in their struggle for peace and socialism, and represent the revolutionary principles of proletarian internationalism applied in practice. The historic decisions of the Twentieth Congress of the C.P.S.U. are not only of great importance for the C.P.S.U. and communist construction in the U.S.S.R., but have initiated a new stage in the world communist movement, and have promoted its development on the basis of Marxism-Leninism."

Finally an important agreed conclusion was recorded in the course of this section that all parties should show "solidarity" in the "observance" of the "estimates and conclusions" reached at joint meetings of parties such as this 1960 meeting:

"Communists throughout the world are united by the great doctrine of Marxism-Leninism and by the joint

struggle for its realisation. The interests of the communist movement require solidarity by every Communist Party in the observance of the estimates and conclusions on the common tasks in the struggle against imperialism, for peace, democracy and socialism, jointly reached by the fraternal parties at their meetings."

Thus the 1960 Statement developed and amplified the 1957 Declaration, and clarified many points on which discussion had arisen, including on questions of the relations between communist parties and the necessary procedure to combine the independence and equality of all parties with the indispensable supreme aim of maintaining and strengthening international communist unity on the basis of the principles of Marxism-Leninism and observance and fulfilment of the agreed decisions reached at joint fraternal meetings of the parties.

Together, the 1957 Declaration and the 1960 Statement constitute the two most important documents of modern communism. Their conclusions were not only agreed unanimously at the time, after full discussion, by the accredited representatives of all the communist parties participating, but were subsequently endorsed by the central committees and congresses of all communist parties (with the sole exception of the Yugoslav party, which was not represented) all over the world. Thus they may be regarded as authoritative statements of the modern communist viewpoint. Even where subsequent controversies have arisen—and very sharp subsequent controversies have arisen—all parties concerned initially proclaimed fidelity to these two documents, and appealed to these two documents to supply confirmation of one or another particular view. This significant fact does not mean that such appeals were in every case justified (sometimes the appeal might be made in support of a particular view which was specifically rejected in the course of the discussions preceding the agreed formulation, and which could prove, on examination to be very conspicuously contradicting what the documents plainly lay down). Nor does it mean that the documents lack clarity or can be regarded as in any sense ambiguous facing-both-ways statements. But this significant fact of the original universal appeal to these two documents as authoritative and agreed does indicate that

there exists in these two documents the most recent and most widely agreed formulation of the modern communist viewpoint, not merely in terms of the classics of Marxism-Leninism, but in terms of the modern world situation, and giving explicit concrete answers to concrete questions of the movement today.

This is not to say that these two documents are the last word on all modern problems. There is no "last word" on the approach of Marxism-Leninism to the ever more rapidly changing world situation. Further documents may be found necessary to deal with new problems or clarify issues still in dispute. But present controversies make it all the more important to study these two documents as the most authoritative basic statements so far available of the modern communist viewpoint.

CHAPTER XIV

THE SOCIAL-DEMOCRATIC INTERNATIONAL

"Social-Democracy had never succeeded anywhere else, and we are now trying to show that it can and will be successful."

MORGAN PHILLIPS, Secretary of the British Labour Party, *Daily Herald*, February 9, 1948.

Since 1914 the term "Social-Democracy" has taken on a special meaning differing from that prior to 1914. Before 1914 the Marxist working-class parties, which were affiliated to the old Second International, called themselves in general Social-Democratic Parties or Social-Democratic Labour Parties. The Bolshevik party was the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party (Bolshevik section, or majority section). "Social-Democratic" was at that time the recognised label to designate acceptance of Marxism, and to differentiate the party in question from the host of "Radical-Socialist parties" (as in France), "Liberal Socialists", "National Socialists", "Socialist-Progressives" and the like, which proliferated in many Continental countries, and professed every kind of "socialism", ethical, liberal, religious, progressive, or humanitarian, but did not accept Marxism, and were therefore designated by the old Marxist parties of the Second International as in essence capitalist parties and not "Social-Democratic parties".

It is true that Marx and Engels always made explicitly clear their objection to the term "Social-Democrat" as scientifically incorrect for the description of their party and outlook, which

they explained could only be correctly described as "Communist". "Social-Democrat", they explained, implied that the basic aim included "democracy", whereas democracy was a form of state, and the final aim of communism was the abolition of the state entirely, including democracy as a state form. At the end of his life, in 1894, Engels explained why Marx and he always used the term "Communist" as the only correct term, and could not in their writings use the term "Social-Democrat", which was the term used by the Proudhonists in France and the Lassalleans in Germany, that is, the anti-Marxist reformists, to describe themselves, although they were prepared to tolerate the term, despite incorrectness, now that it was used for Marxist parties:

> "For Marx and me it was therefore quite impossible to choose such an elastic term to characterise our special point of view. Today things are different, and the term ("Social-Democrat") may perhaps pass muster, however unsuitable it still is for a party whose economic programme is not merely socialist in general, but directly communist, and whose ultimate political aim is to overcome the whole state, and therefore democracy as well. The names of *real* political parties, however, are never wholly appropriate; the party develops while the name persists."
>
> (Engels, Preface to *Internationales Aus dem Volkstaat*, January 3, 1894)

Commenting on this Lenin remarked:

> "The dialectician Engels remains true to dialectics to the end of his days. Marx and I, he says, had a splendid, scientific exact name for the party, but there was no real party, i.e. no proletarian mass party. Now, at the end of the nineteenth century, there is a real party, but its name is scientifically inexact. Never mind, 'it will pass muster', only let the party *grow*, do not let the scientific inexactness of its name be hidden from it, and do not let it hinder its development in the right direction."
>
> (Lenin, *State and Revolution*, 1917)

Engels had already expressed the expectation, at the time of the end of the First International, that a future International would come closer to the conceptions of Marx and himself, that is, to communism. After the transition stage of the Second International this expectation of Engels was fulfilled in the Communist International.

With the collapse of the Second International in 1914 the name "Social-Democrat" became contaminated by association with those leaders and parties which chose to be identified with their own capitalist governments, betrayed their international pledges, and hounded on the imperialist war and mutual working-class slaughter. Hence it became necessary to revert to the correct term approved by Marx and Engels, the term "Communist", to describe the Marxist working-class parties, and abandon the term "Social-Democrat", always disapproved by Marx and Engels, to the use of those leaders and parties who had betrayed Marxism and international socialism. In March, 1918, at its Seventh Congress the Russian Social Democratic Labour Party (Bolshevik) revised its name accordingly, and adopted the name Russian Communist Party (Bolshevik)—now Communist Party of the Soviet Union. The new International founded in March, 1919, to replace the defunct Second International, and uniting the sections and parties which remained faithful to the pledges of the old International and the principles of Marxism, was named the Communist International.

All the militant sections and the main Marxist parties of the old Second International became Communist Parties affiliated to the Communist International. The German party was split; the centrist Marxist section, which had followed Kautsky, joined up with the revolutionary left wing or Spartacists, who had already become the Communist Party in 1918, to form the United Communist Party in 1920; while the followers of Noske, "the bloodhound" (in his own term), and Scheidemann, the associates of the White Guard officers in butchering the German revolution, continued as the German Social-Democratic Party. In France the defeated minority, after the Tours Congress of the United Socialist Party in 1920 had carried by an overwhelming majority of over three to one the motion to affiliate to the Communist International and become the French Communist Party, continued as a separate party, using the name of French Socialist Party, although the real content had gone elsewhere. In Britain the British Socialist Party, which had been the original party of socialism and the recognised Marxist party, and which had fulfilled the

policy of the Socialist International in opposition to the war, united with the left wing of the Independent Labour Party and other groupings to form the Communist Party in 1920. The Labour Party, in whose foundation the predecessor of the British Socialist Party, the Social Democratic Federation, had taken part, and which had accepted the affiliation of the British Socialist Party, refused the affiliation of the Communist Party. Thereby the Labour Party abandoned its previous character of a unitary federal party of working-class and socialist organisations, and continued under its right-wing leadership as a main constituent body, and eventually the dominant body of the Social-Democratic International.

Henceforth the term "Social-Democrat", which had once been used for Marxists, came to mean the right-wing pro-imperialist section of leadership, or parties under this leadership, in the working-class movement, mainly in a few imperialist countries, which was closely identified with their own capitalist class in each country and increasingly hostile to Marxism (at first not openly, still with some verbal professions of adherence, but in the end, as at the present day, quite openly), to communism, to the Soviet Union or the new socialist countries, and to the class struggle. The main base was the British Labour Party, and the parties in the Scandinavian and Low countries, and in West Germany and Austria, that is, West European countries in the orbit of imperialism. In these countries the base in the working class makes these parties still of importance in the international working-class movement, although the policies of their dominant leadership (not always acceptable to the membership) are only pale echoes of current imperialist politics, and have nothing in common with Marxism, working-class politics or socialism. The problem and task of healing the split in the working class in these countries remains.

1. COMISCO 1946-1951

The record of the attempted resurrection of the Second International by right-wing social-democracy between the two world wars, and the bankruptcy of this attempted resurrection in the face of fascism, has already been narrated. The German Social-Democratic Party, despite its hopes after the banning of the Communist Party to survive as a tolerated

party under Hitler, its official protest to the Second International denouncing the spreading of atrocity stories against Hitler, and its joining in the unanimous Reichstag vote of May 17 for Hitler's motion, was nonetheless banned, on the grounds that, as the Nazi official explanation stated whatever the professions of loyalty to Hitler, the party was better out of the way and the leaders in prison. The French Socialist Party, after having voted the Death Decree against the Communists (which was ardently justified by Blum as fraternal delegate addressing an applauding Labour Party Conference in the spring of 1940 as an essential measure against the menace of fascism), proceeded to vote the special powers to Pétain to instal the Vichy fascist regime by the vote of 110 of the 186 Socialist deputies. The Belgian Labour Party Chairman, after the Nazi occupation, dissolved the party and moved over to open collaboration with the Nazis.

Individual social-democrats, however, and minority sections of social-democratic parties cooperated with the Communist Parties in the resistance movement in the Nazi-occupied countries. This cooperation and comradeship, both in the active resistance movement and in the concentration camps, led to mutual pledges to maintain this cooperation after the war and work towards the aim of single united working-class parties.

Western official policy, which began in the autumn of 1942 its careful planning of the cold war to follow the war, viewed with no little alarm the prospect that after the defeat of Hitler the united anti-fascist resistance movements, with socialist-communist cooperation as the core, would sweep over Europe in a victorious popular revolution. As Sir Samuel Hoare then British Ambassador in Spain, had explained to Franco's Foreign Minister in 1943, the main purpose of the immense Anglo-American armies, which were being maintained inactive and in reserve during the critical phases of the war, would be to intervene in the concluding phase with overwhelming strength, in order to prevent a popular revolution in the countries of Europe which had been occupied by fascism. This was carried out wherever the Anglo-American armies were able to establish their grip, in Western Europe and in Greece. In West Germany the Anglo-American authorities intervened directly after the war by administrative

order to ban socialist-communist unification, with the result that the Socialist Unity Party could only be formed initially in the eastern part of Germany.

An integral part of this policy was to prepare beforehand in Britain a nucleus of right-wing social-democratic leadership which could be counted on to oppose cooperation with communism. This task became the special responsibility of the British Labour Party right-wing leadership, which was directly associated in the Churchill Cabinet in his preparation of the cold war as set out in his secret memorandum of 1942. Contact was maintained with selected right-wing social-democratic émigrés in Britain; and in September, 1944, an "Inter-Allied Committee" at Transport House adopted a resolution calling on the Executive of the Labour Party to take the "initiative in forming a preparatory committee" with a view to the future establishment of a new "Socialist International" which should exclude communists and their sympathisers.

In February, 1945, a conference was held in London of delegates of nine parties. In May, 1946, a further conference at Clacton-on-Sea set up a "Socialist Information and Liaison Office" which was attached to the Secretariat of the Labour Party. Prime Minister Attlee and Foreign Secretary Bevin threw their full weight behind the conference, which was thus manifestly in accordance with the policy of the Foreign Office to promote the cold war line, publicly proclaimed shortly after by Churchill at Fulton, and break up the socialist-communist cooperation widely prevalent in the European countries after liberation from Nazism. Commissions and delegations were sent to various countries in Europe to break up this cooperation and prepare the ground for the new organisation. Later in the same year, following further conferences in Antwerp and Zürich, the "Liaison Office" was replaced by a "Committee of the International Socialist Conference", which became known as Comisco.

In his pamphlet *Why I was Expelled*, K. Zilliacus M.P. quoted the London correspondent of the New York *Herald Tribune* who in May, 1946, had written that he had been told

> "by a well-informed Labour Party source that the Labour Government were planning to unite the Social-Democrats in Germany and Western Europe for an ideological battle against the Communists of Eastern Europe.
>
> "This, the correspondent observed, would be a new Socialist International, but it would only be one wing—the left wing—of a greater, predominantly non-socialist International which is now in the making, an odd alliance which includes groups ranging from the old-line socialists to the Falange."

The reference to a "greater, predominantly non-socialist International" was an anticipation of the Marshall Plan organisation of Western Europe, which followed in 1947, and the establishment of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation in 1949, preparing the way for the rearmament of West Germany.

Although Comisco had only been established as a temporary provisional committee to prepare the ground for launching the new right-wing social-democratic International, this process of preparing the ground and disrupting the existing socialist-communist cooperation took no less than five years before the conditions were deemed ripe for launching the Social-Democratic International in 1951. It was not until after American dollars and pressure had done their work, after the Marshall Plan had broken up the socialist-communist coalitions in France and other West European countries, after Nato in 1949 had set up the integrated West European military structure under the control of the United States, reducing the West European countries to the position of satellites, and after the Labour Government in 1950 had finally agreed to West German rearmament, that in 1951 the Foundation Congress of the new International was held in the West German town of Frankfurt.

The intervening five years had been years of intensive activity by Comisco, under the guidance of the Labour Party, in close association with West German Social-Democracy. In 1947 at the Zürich Conference of Comisco the initial attempt, advocated by the Labour Party, to secure the acceptance of the West German Social-Democratic Party as a member, was rejected, so intense were still the memories of the war and Nazism. In 1948 Comisco expelled the Rumanian, Bulgarian and Hungarian Social-Democratic parties as guilty of cooperation with communism, and warned the Czechoslovak Social-Democratic Party and the Italian Socialist Party for the same

offence; the Italian delegates walked out. The same Conference declared support for the American Marshall Plan. In 1949, to replace the expelled Social-Democratic Parties, a "Socialist Union of Central Eastern Europe" was formed, consisting of émigrés from a variety of countries, including Estonia, Lithuania, Latvia and the Ukraine, as well as the Balkans, Poland, Czechoslovakia and Hungary. These were thereafter given "observer" status to participate in the proceedings of Comisco and the subsequent International. Various of these émigré organisations in London were, according to Zilliacus, in close contact with the Central Intelligence Agency in Washington.[19]

2. FOUNDATION OF THE FRANKFURT INTERNATIONAL IN 1951

At the Copenhagen Conference of Comisco in 1950 the decision was taken to prepare a statement of principles and launch the new International. This same Conference issued a warning against the Soviet "peace offensive". It was at this Conference that Morgan Phillips, as Secretary of the Labour Party, made his famous speech declaring that Methodism, not Marx, was the inspiration of the British Labour Party—apparently oblivious of the historical record of the role of Methodism, in the intention of its founders, to serve as a weapon to counter the incipient working-class movement. In respect of official Labour policy Phillips spoke truer than he knew.

In June, 1951, the new "Socialist International" was inaugurated at Frankfurt, the main American military base in Europe, in the midst of the G.I.s and comic strips. Without blinking an eye the assembled delegates sang the Internationale. It is not recorded whether they sang the famous fifth verse.

[19] An interesting feature of the role of these émigré organisations as associated members of a "Socialist International" is that, since their fight is directed against socialist countries, their platform has to be one calling for denationalisation and restoration of "free enterprise". Under the heading "Curious Position" *The Times* reported, on the occasion of the celebration of the tenth anniversary of this "Socialist Union of Central Eastern Europe" or Sucee in 1959:

> "They are in the curious position, for socialists, of finding themselves compelled to advocate a large measure of denationalisation. 'Private ownership of land must be restored and guaranteed,' they say. 'Small and medium sized industries and the retail trade, which have been bureaucratised by the monopolistic state, should be left to free enterprise.' " (*The* (*Times*, August 3, 1959.)

"With fumes of battle we've been drunken,
Against our brothers we've made war,
In mutual slaughter for our tyrants—
'Down Arms!' will take the soldier far!
Perchance they're stubborn, these man-eaters?
Would make us still for 'heroes' pass?
We'll find a good use for our bullets
Against th' oppressors of our class!"[20]

A Declaration or Programme was adopted by the Frankfurt Congress under the title "The Aims and Tasks of Democratic Socialism". According to this declaration it was made clear that, while the class struggle was renounced, and while capitalism was already so reformed as to be no longer the main enemy, and imperialism was no longer the old imperialism, the new main enemy, which it would be the task of the "Socialist International" to combat was Communism in general and the U.S.S.R. in particular:

> "International Communism is the instrument of a new imperialism. Wherever it has achieved power, it has destroyed freedom or the chance of gaining freedom. It is based on a militarist bureaucracy and a terrorist police. By producing glaring contrasts of wealth and privilege it has created a new class society."

Marxism was explicitly rejected as the basis of socialism:

> "Socialism . . . does not demand a rigid uniformity of approach. Whether socialists build their faith on Marxist or other methods of analysing society, whether they are inspired by religious or humanitarian principles, they all strive for the same goal—a system of social justice, better living, freedom and world peace."

[20] This translation by Eden and Cedar Paul, the only one which has been given wider currency in English (all official Labour, Fabian and I.L.P. versions of the Internationale discreetly omit the fifth verse) takes considerable liberties with the real text and falls far short of the simple directness of the original:

"Les rois nous soulaient de fumées,
Paix entre nous, guerre aux tyrans!
Appliquons la grève aux armées,
Crosse en l'air, et rompons les rangs!
S'ils s'obstinent, ces cannibales,
A faire de nous des héros,
Ils sauront bien que nos balles,
Sont pour nos propres généraux!"

It will be seen that this "new" definition of socialism ("social justice, better living, freedom and world peace") would be fully acceptable to Sir Alec Douglas Home, Mr. Grimond, Chancellor Erhard, the Pope, President de Gaulle or President Johnson, that is, to any capitalist statesman, Tory or Liberal, or of any political colour.

With regard to capitalism the old aim of the social ownership of the means of production was explicitly repudiated:

> "Socialist planning does not presuppose public ownership of all the means of production. It is compatible with the existence of private ownership in important fields. . . . The State must prevent private owners from abusing their powers. It can and should assist them to contribute towards increased production and well-being within the framework of a planned economy."

This definition of economic aim might almost be lifted from a modern Tory election manifesto.

Due obeisance was paid to American capitalism by the Chairman of the Congress, Morgan Phillips:

> "I know that many Socialists are still obsessed by doctrinal suspicions of American democracy, that they fear the American economic and political system will encourage dangerous policies which may lead to war.
>
> "We should be guilty of a criminal myopia if we did not recognise that the present American policy shows a degree of enlightened and progressive unselfishness which few countries with comparable power have ever displayed."

It is not surprising that the outcome of the Frankfurt Congress, and the foundation of this somewhat peculiar "Socialist International" was hailed with paeans of applause and satisfaction by the capitalist press of the world, including the American normally anti-socialist press. The Declaration, reported Reuters, "reserves its main fire for Communism". *The Times* editorial welcomed the "basic change in Socialism", noting with approval that the "old catchwords" had been abolished, and concluding that the "new Socialism" removed any difference of principle from the capitalist parties:

> "Socialism as it is here stated differs in degree rather than in kind from the policies of other democratic parties in the countries of Western Europe and elsewhere which have reached a comparable stage of development."
>
> (*The Times*, July 2, 1951)

This geographical limitation discreetly added by *The Times* ("the countries of Western Europe and elsewhere which have reached a comparable stage of development"—a diplomatic circumlocution for imperialist countries) was in fact a pointer to the real character of this new "International".

3. IMPERIALIST LIMITATIONS OF THE SOCIAL-DEMOCRATIC INTERNATIONAL

To found a "Socialist International" for the purpose of combating socialism might appear an odd proceeding. Socialism in 1951 existed over one third of the world. The new "International" proclaimed this to be the main enemy. Capitalism had reached its highest point of multi-billionaire monopoly concentration and military extension across two thirds of the globe in United States imperialism. The new "International" proclaimed this to be the most "enlightened and progressive" force in the world.

This apparent contradiction was in fact no contradiction, but followed from the real character of the new "International" as a subordinate arm of the American-controlled Western imperialist military-economic-political structure expressed in O.E.E.C. and Nato. The Frankfurt Congress, alongside resolutions for the rearmament of West Germany and for approval of the Western imperialist rearmament programmes, set the aim, in the words of the Chairman, "to unite the whole of the non-Stalinist world as an organic united whole". This elegant phrase "the non-Stalinist world" solved the problem (which the previous favourite formula "free world" had failed to solve) to cover the whole orbit of the American alliance and include successfully Greek and Turkish and Portuguese fascism, the Nazis and German militarists, or eventually Franco—in short, the revival of the "Anti-Comintern Pact" of fascism. In the same address the Chairman, Phillips, belaboured the other West European satellites for insufficient rearmament, and boasted that British arms expenditure per head under the Labour Government was the highest in the world:

> "In terms of man-years for defence for every thousand inhabitants Britain is providing 40 per cent more than

any other European country, and more even than the United States of America."

This was the last phase of the Labour Government.

A corresponding manoeuvre on behalf of American imperialism was conducted in the international trade union movement. The World Federation of Trade Unions had been founded at a Congress in London in February, 1945, followed by a Congress in Paris in September, 1945, uniting the delegates of 66.7 million workers in sixty-five national trade union organisations (the old International Federation of Trade Unions under right-wing domination had never claimed more than 19 million members in twenty-three countries). This was a tremendous demonstration for world working-class unity, following the joint victory over fascism. Only the American Federation of Labour held aloof; but the American Conference of Industrial Organisations participated. The Executive of nine members united the representatives of Britain, China, France, Italy, Mexico, the Netherlands, the U.S.A. and the U.S.S.R. The object was defined "to organise and unite the trade unions of the whole world, irrespective of race, nationality, religion or political opinion". The American imperialist offensive imperatively required the disruption of this international working-class unity, in the same way as socialist-communist unity and cooperation had been disrupted in Western Europe. Accordingly in 1948 the Anglo-American trade union leaders demanded that acceptance of the American Marshall Plan be imposed on the World Federation of Trade Unions. Since opinions differed on this, the answer was given, in accordance with the constitution of the W.F.T.U., that national trade union centres should be free to follow the policy they thought best on this matter. This correct position for unity won majority support. Thereupon the Anglo-American trade union leaders in 1949, being in a minority in the world trade union movement, refused to accept the reasonable and tolerant viewpoint of the majority, and seceded to form the breakaway "International Confederation of Free Trade Unions". The I.C.F.T.U. subsequently served as an agency, very lavishly financed from American sources, to disrupt trade unionism in the interests of imperialism in the colonial and newly independent countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America. This disruption of international trade unionism preceded and prepared the ground for the formation of the corresponding Frankfurt International in the political field.

The composition of the Frankfurt International corresponded to this imperialist character. Of the twenty-three parties reported as affiliated members in 1952, seventeen were West European, or in the West European imperialist orbit, like Greece in Nato. Of the six outside Europe, three were American (Argentine, Canada, Uruguay). The Middle East was only "represented" by Israel. From the rest of Asia there was only Japan (the Praja Socialist Party in India was a consultative member). From Africa there was no representation.

The leadership of the new International were keenly aware that this conspicuously imperialist character of their organisation, and lack of contact with the vast new Afro-Asian world (in addition to hostility to the socialist third of the world) was the Achilles' heel of their organisation, which exposed too dangerously its true character. Hence during the following years intensive efforts were conducted to establish contacts in Asia, Africa and Latin America. In Asia the British Labour Party leadership played the main role, with the dispatch of many missions, in seeking to build up social-democratic organisation. In Africa, Israel was especially active as a go-between, seeking to present itself as a "non-colonial" power, supposedly free from links with imperialism, by whose subsidies it was in fact maintained, and through whose armed power the original occupation of Palestine had been conducted. West Germany sought similarly to extend its influence in Africa, on the basis of presenting itself as a "non-colonial" and "non-imperialist" power.

In 1953 a "Conference of Asian Socialist Parties" was held at Rangoon, with ex-Premier Attlee attending on behalf of the Frankfurt International. Delegates from parties in nine countries were reported as attending. Despite a warning by Attlee against multiplying regional organisations, the Conference decided to set up a separate "Asian Socialist Conference" which would be independent of the Frankfurt International, while maintaining relations with it. The subsequent history of this organisation was tenuous.

Following the Cuban socialist revolution, intensive efforts were made by the Frankfurt International to win adherents

in Latin America. For this purpose at the Amsterdam Congress in 1963, which was attended by six "guests" from Latin America, it was decided to broaden the statutes so as to enable non-socialist parties which stood for reforms to become associate members, and thus make it possible to draw in the association of bourgeois-democratic parties in Latin America.

The poor success of these efforts to extend the range of the Frankfurt International beyond the orbit of the Western imperialist countries only demonstrated anew the truth, long ago made clear by Lenin, that "social-democracy" in the modern sense, that is, reformism or opportunism, is an outcome of imperialist corruption in the upper sections of the working-class movement in the imperialist metropolitan countries, and can therefore find little promising soil in colonial countries or ex-colonial countries still heavily exploited by imperialism. It was thus significant that the main social-democratic parties in Asia to become associated with the Social-Democratic International should be (1) in Israel, an offshoot and close satellite of Western imperialism; (2) in Japan, a temporarily defeated imperialist power, aspiring, like West Germany, to resume its imperialist role and ambitions; and (3) in India, with the most advanced monopoly capitalist development outside Japan, and some expansionist ambitions, and even there the forms of social-democratic organisation have been precarious and unstable, and consistently weaker so far than the Communist Party of India.

Despite all the efforts, the essentially West European imperialist character of the Frankfurt International was revealed by the composition of the Executive. At Frankfurt in 1951 an Executive of nine was elected, to consist of representatives of Britain, France, West Germany, Italy, Japan, Belgium, Holland, Austria and a Scandinavian; that is, eight West Europeans (mostly Nato) and one Japanese. At the Milan Congress in 1952 Canada and Israel were added, and a seat held available for the Indian Praja Socialist Party; but the overwhelming West European two thirds predominance remained, and Canada and Israel only meant additional representation of the Western imperialist bloc.

Similarly the politics of the successive Congresses of the Social-Democratic International reflected faithfully the politics of imperialism, with each social-democratic party reflecting the alignment of its own monopoly capitalist grouping in the various conflicts and rival alignments, as over Nato and West German rearmament, the European Defence Community, the Iron and Steel Community, the Common Market or Free Trade Area, and West European Federation (France and West Germany) or looser association (Britain and Scandinavia). All this was no more than an echo of current inter-imperialist politics, seasoned with a strong sauce of anti-communist and anti-Soviet hostility and recurrent warnings against "peace offensives" or the dangers of communist "infiltration".

4. PLATFORM OF REPUDIATION OF MARXISM AND SOCIALISM

The Declaration of the Foundation Congress of the current Social-Democratic International at Frankfurt already set out plainly the basic principles of repudiation of Marxism as the theory of socialism, substitution of a vague ethical aim of "social justice, better living, freedom and world peace" in place of a definition of socialism, and rejection of the aim of public ownership of the means of production.

During the succeeding decade the right-wing social-democratic leadership in the various parties carried further this crusade, no longer merely against communism, Marxism or the class struggle, but against the most elementary traditional conceptions of socialism as previously presented even by reformist socialists or their own inherited constitutions and platforms. At the same time this anti-socialist offensive aroused opposition from sections of the working-class membership in their own parties, or from those on the left in their parties who still regarded the aim of socialism to be the ending of capitalism and substitution of social ownership of the means of production.

Typical of this battle within the social-democratic parties during the nineteen-fifties and early nineteen-sixties was the offensive conducted by Gaitskell as Leader of the Labour Party against Clause 4 of the Labour Party Constitution, which had been adopted in 1918 under the influence of the victory of the Russian socialist revolution of 1917. Clause 4 set out the aim of "common ownership of the means of production, distribution and exchange". Until the recent period this aim had been accepted (not in the sense of being carried out,

but in the sense of not being formally challenged) even by the right-wing leadership. Thus Attlee, the leader of the Labour Party before Gaitskell, had said in his book *The Labour Party in Perspective*, published in 1937, to describe socialism: "All the major industries will be owned and controlled by the community."

Gaitskell and his associates, Jay, Crosland, Strachey and others, representing the offensive of capitalist economic-political assumptions against Marxism and socialism, sought to conduct a campaign during this period for so-called "new thinking" in the labour movement about socialism—actually the resurrection of the most hoary exploded nineteenth century liberal-reformist illusions about capitalism, which the early socialist pioneers had long ago demolished. They sought to prove that Clause 4 was out of date; that modern capitalism was completely transformed, and had revealed a progressive and dynamic character defeating all the anticipations of Marxist theory; that imperialism had disappeared from the world except in the socialist third; that the old aim of social ownership of the means of production would inevitably mean the horrors of totalitarianism, with the state as the single employer; that private enterprise was the essential foundation for freedom; and that a "mixed economy", with the giant monopolies left securely in possession and a State sector fulfilling an auxiliary role, was the true pattern of the future.

It is a significant demonstration of the still developing internal situation within the social-democratic parties, beneath all the official surface rigidity of right-wing leadership and policy, that the Gaitskell offensive against Clause 4 in the Labour Party constitution, although backed by the entire weight of the capitalist press, was in the end defeated, and had to be abandoned. This did not mean that the Gaitskell policy of practical repudiation of socialism was defeated, or that the retention of the formal socialist aim expressed in Clause 4 as a pious formula in the constitution, to be venerated like the Sermon on the Mount, made any difference to the opportunist capitalist practice. But the revolt of the rank-and-file against the Gaitskell offensive was an indication of the desire and aspiration still entertained by the organised workers and individual members in the Labour Party for the aim of socialism, however contrary the policy of their leaders.

Hence the necessity for these leaders still to speak constantly of the aim of "socialism", and to seek to perform a familar sleight-of-hand by offering every day a "new definition" of what they mean by socialism, each "new definition" being more tepidly vague and empty than the last, and usually amounting to a general expression of benevolence and philanthropy.

This defeat of the Gaitskell offensive on Clause 4 in the Labour Party reflected in part the special character of the composition and organisation of the Labour Party, differing from most of the social-democratic parties. Whereas most of the social-democratic parties are based on individual membership, that is, on conscious acceptance of social-democratic doctrine and politics in preference to communism, the Labour Party is based, in respect of five sixths of its membership, on the trade unions, which are united organs of the workers, without distinction of political outlook, for class solidarity in the class struggle for wages and conditions against the employers and capitalist class. Insofar as policies of class co-operation dominate the trade unions, there can be harmony with the Labour Party leadership, which repudiates the class struggle. The alliance between the Labour Party leadership, which is mainly drawn from capitalist or petty-bourgeois circles, and the right-wing trade union bureaucracy, normally serves to control the Labour Party and prevent the eruption of class politics. But the latent contradiction between the foundation of the Labour Party in organs of class struggle below and the repudiation of class politics above can occasionally upset this alliance and reveal the really explosive situation beneath. The British trade union movement is by long tradition a united trade union movement, drawing in all workers without distinction of doctrine, and with equal democratic rights in most unions, though not in all, for all members. Thus in the unions socialists, communists and militant trade unionists are able to work together for common class aims, including in the field of political questions; and communists as trade unionists are affiliated members of the Labour Party, although denied rights of direct participation as delegates. Accordingly when, as sometimes happens, following on progressive agitation below, a number of powerful unions are aligned with the otherwise very weakly placed militant

socialists among the individual members of the Labour Party on a given issue, the right-wing leadership can be defeated on that issue. This happened in the case of the Gaitskell offensive against Clause 4, and again in the case of the famous resolution of the Scarborough Conference in 1960 against nuclear arms or bases for Britain. These results do not in themselves mean any change in official policy and leadership; since the right-wing leadership have made clear that they do not regard themselves as democratically bound by the decision of the elected annual conference of their party. But these clashes do indicate the conflict between the class interests of the workers and the repudiation of class politics by the leadership in all social-democratic parties. The structure of the Labour Party in Britain reveals this conflict with exceptional clearness. For the same reason these developments throw a light on the significance of the political role of the Communist Party in the conditions of Britain, despite its relatively small numbers, as the organ of the working class fight for socialism in the broad labour movement, and point the way to the political future in Britain.

In West Germany, on the other hand, the Social-Democratic Party leadership, feeling untrammeled by any role of communists or the Marxist left within its constituent organisations, since the membership is entirely an individual membership controlled from on top, while the Communist Party is banned by the Bonn Government in the same way as it was by Hitler, went the whole hog in repudiating the conceptions of socialism or Marxism and proclaiming adherence to the principles of capitalist ownership and "free enterprise" in terms similar to those of the rival conservative party, the Christian Democratic Union of Adenauer and Erhard. In 1958 the Bad Godesberg programme called for free competition and free enterprise. In 1959 the complete new programme was presented. *The Times* summarised its verbose formulations in the following terms:

> "Democratic Socialism, the preamble states, is rooted in Christian ethics, humanism and classical philosophy. . . .
>
> "If this is not enough to make its distinguished former member Karl Marx turn in his grave, the draft goes on to condemn Communism and proposes the creation of a property-owning society not too unlike that visualised by Professor Erhard. It says that all must have the same chance of sharing in the prosperity of the world, a slogan closer to the Conservative Party's call for equal opportunities than Labour's fair shares.
>
> "A centrally controlled economy destroys freedom; the party therefore approves a free economy wherever real competition prevails. Freedom to buy and work and freedom of business initiative are essential, and free competition is an important element in a free economy. . . .
>
> "The draft is rather vague when it comes to explaining how control of a free economy can be established."
>
> (*The Times*, September 11, 1959)

Similarly on the occasion of the death of the party leader, Ollenhauer, in 1963, *The Times* editorial paid tribute to his role in casting out the old conceptions of socialism and converting the party to open support for capitalism:

> "Ollenhauer's greatest work in re-shaping and unifying the party came four years ago when, under his chairmanship, it dropped much of its ideological programme. The movement that prided itself on being Karl Marx's own decided to cast out Marx as behind the times and wrong-headed. It was not content with simply saying that it would not press on with schemes of nationalisation. For good measure it declared that a centrally controlled economy destroyed freedom; and it looked forward—in words not altogether unlike Dr. Erhard's—to a property-owning society with equal opportunities for all."
>
> (*The Times*, December 16, 1963)

A similar process in varying degree could be illustrated in the other social-democratic parties. But this does not mean that this process of transformation of the programme from the professed aim of socialism to open support of capitalism has gone through without opposition in the various social-democratic parties. The struggle which reached its sharpest and clearest expression in the British Labour Party has manifested itself in all. This battle between left and right within the social-democratic parties is bound up with the question of socialist-communist cooperation either within the given country or on an international scale.

5. QUESTION OF UNITED WORKING-CLASS ACTION

Lenin long ago showed the roots of opportunism in the conditions of imperialism, enabling the capitalist class in the metropolitan countries of imperialism to use a portion of their super-profits from overseas exploitation to corrupt an upper section of the working class and its leadership in these countries, and draw them into an alliance which sacrifices the long-term interests of the whole class to the temporary advantage of a section.

Today the imperialist sector has dwindled in the world. Socialism and national liberation have won extending victories. In the socialist third of the world over one thousand million people have been withdrawn from the reach of imperialist exploitation. In the newly independent former colonial countries which are still so far within the capitalist sector imperialist exploitation still continues, and is in some cases even intensified, although the struggle of the peoples in all these countries is advancing against this exploitation to bring it to an end and to complete national liberation by winning possession of their countries.

This continuance of imperialist exploitation over two thirds of the world means that the basis of opportunism, whose modern expression is contemporary Social-Democracy, still remains in the upper sections and leadership of the working-class movement in the metropolitan countries of the still remaining, though dwindling, imperialist sector. But the range has narrowed. The last Congress of the Social-Democratic International at Amsterdam in September, 1963, assembled ninety-nine delegates from twenty countries. Nearly sixty years earlier the famous Amsterdam Congress of the Second International in 1904 had assembled 476 delegates, and the following Stuttgart Congress three years later 886 delegates. It was the famous Amsterdam Congress of 1904 which had declared that "congress repudiates every attempt to blur the ever-growing class antagonism", "repudiates a policy of concession to the established order of society", "the party rejects all responsibility of any sort under the political and economic conditions based on capitalist production", and "Social-Democracy can strive for no participation in the government under bourgeois society". In that same resolution the objectives of Social-Democracy were stated to be "revolutionary" objectives for "the most speedy transformation possible of bourgeois society into socialist society". Objectives and principles proclaimed at the Amsterdam Congress of Social-Democracy sixty years ago, and all fulfilled in the socialist third of the world today. But a far cry indeed to the ghost which met at Amsterdam in 1963.

Nevertheless, Lenin also showed that, so long as significant sections of the working class in these countries remained under the influence of opportunist policies and leadership, it was essential for the Marxist workers and militant working class to strive for a united front with these sections, not in the sense of a false synthesis or reconciliation between the principles of opportunism and Marxism, but in the sense of common action for immediate common objectives. This was the line of approach indicated in the resolution on the united front, initiated by Lenin and adopted by the Communist International in 1921.

These principles continue of no less importance also today, no matter how extreme the transition which has by now taken place of the right-wing social-democratic leadership to open support of capitalism. Millions of organised workers, and in some countries the majority remain still in the social-democratic parties in Western Europe and a few countries beyond Europe. The report to the Amsterdam Congress in 1963 claimed 11.8 million members, the majority being the 6.3 million members of the British Labour Party. The question of united socialist-communist action in these countries and on an international scale remains of vital importance for the advance of the interests of the working class and of peace.

In 1956 the Twentieth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union raised sharply the desirability of such united action in the present world situation, especially for the fight against a new world war. The General Council of the Social-Democratic International met at Zürich at the end of February, 1956, and rejected the proposal for a united front; but a division of approach was revealed, and the question was remitted to a further meeting of the Executive in London in April, 1956. This meeting finally adopted a very violently phrased negative resolution, presented by the majority, declaring that "Socialism and Communism have nothing in common". But in fact differentiation had already appeared at

Zürich between the viewpoint of the British Labour Party, French Socialists and Canadians on the one hand, and the West German-Austrian-Dutch-Scandinavian majority on the other. Again at the London meeting the document prepared by the Labour Party for a slightly more constructive approach appears to have been ignored by the majority ("Transport House prepared a document, but little use seems to have been made of it", *The Times*, April 9, 1956).

This differentiation revealed that, despite the official unqualified negative stand (a negative stand repeated in 1957, following a letter from the Communist Party of the Soviet Union to a number of leading parties with regard to the dangerous situation arising from Anglo-American interventionist action in the Middle East), the question was in fact on the agenda, and new trends were in practice developing in various parties.

Although the Social-Democratic International officially declared disapproval of exchanges of delegations between social-democratic parties and communist parties in the socialist countries, laying down that delegations should only take place to the governments of those countries, in practice during the succeeding years delegations from various social-democratic parties in Western Europe held official interchanges with representatives of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. Especial importance attached to the visit of the official delegation led by Guy Mollet on behalf of the French Socialist Party in 1963, and the joint communiqué with the Communist Party of the Soviet Union published after this visit. This had a manifest bearing on the political situation in France and the approaching Presidential election, with strong pressure from many sections within the French Socialist Party for a united working-class front and popular front as the only way to restore democratic functioning in France.

Thus, despite the repeated inflexible proclamations of anti-communist hostility and unconditional opposition to any form of united working-class action on the part of the dominant extreme right-wing leadership of the Social-Democratic International, it would be a mistake to imagine that the present situation is necessarily for all time rigid and unchanging. Certainly this opposition on the part of the extreme right-wing leadership offers no prospect of any change, whatever the

march of events. But in fact the fortunes of Social-Democracy are bound up with the fortunes of imperialism. As the basis of imperialism becomes more restricted with the further advance of socialism and national liberation, so the basis for social-democratic policy and leadership in the working class in the leading imperialist countries becomes correspondingly narrowed.

So long as imperialism remains, opportunism or the current of social-democracy will remain as a trend of varying strength in the metropolitan countries of imperialism. But the present accelerating relative weakening of imperialism in the world balance; the advance of the popular national movements to challenge and take over the assets hitherto monopolised by imperialism and seek to staunch the flow of imperialist tribute; the consequent simultaneous tendency to a decline in the volume of imperialist super-profits and gigantically increased armaments and overseas military expenditure in order to seek to counteract this decline; and the further consequence of sharpened offensives to increase the exploitation of the workers in the metropolitan countries, through policies of wage-restraint, heavy taxation, and even direct assaults on democracy, as in France: all this progressively weakens the basis of social-democracy. A crisis of social-democracy develops in a variety of forms, varying in the form in which it manifests itself in the British Labour Party (the continuous conflict between the left and the right over the extension of nationalisation and over defence policy, and the testing time which a prospective Fourth Labour Government would bring); in the French Socialist Party (the increasing demand for a return to the united working-class front and popular front); in the Italian Socialist and Social-Democratic Parties (the question of relations to the Christian Democrats or to the Communist majority of the working class); and also even in the to all outward appearance most inflexibly reactionary West German Social-Democratic Party (the conflict between continued adherence to the old rigid Adenauer policy of a ban on all dealings with the East, and the advocates of some approach to East-West negotiations, also over Berlin).

These signs are still no more than initial symptoms. There is no reason to assume that the process will be rapid. On the other hand, the world situation, all the larger questions of

war or peace, of nuclear weapons and disarmament, of East-West relations, press for solution without delay, and imperatively demand the greatest possible united action of the working class and of the peoples. Such united action for urgent immediate objectives does not end the still continuing division of trends within the working class or exclude the necessity of the continued ideological debate on principles. But such united action can help to promote closer contact and understanding between the different sections of the working class, and thus help to prepare the way for the long-term future aim of the healing of the split and development of united working-class parties.

CHAPTER XV

PERSPECTIVE

"Let us recall the main principle of the International: solidarity. We shall achieve the great goal for which we are striving provided we firmly consolidate this life-giving principle among all workers in all countries."

MARX, speech on the Hague Congress of the First International, at the meeting in Amsterdam following the Congress, September 8, 1872.

One hundred years have passed since the foundation of the International Working Men's Association or First International. If we look back to the original foundation of the Communist League, the first international organisation of communists, in 1847, and its declaration of programme, the *Manifesto of the Communist Party*, drafted by Marx and Engels and published in 1848, a distance of only 117 years, or less than twelve decades, separates us from that starting point.

A long road has been travelled in this short space of time —a mere moment, in terms of years, in the life-span of human development. During these years the handful of tiny groups gathered in one corner of one continent in the Communist League has extended: through the First International of organised working-class movements in a number of countries, with the direct leadership of Marx; through the Second International of mass working-class parties declaring acceptance of the principles and programme of Marxism, even though weakened in practice by opportunist leadership in many cases; through the Third International of communist parties directly

re-asserting and carrying forward the revolutionary teachings of Marxism, purged of the opportunist dross, and guided by the creative leadership of Lenin in the conditions of the imperialist era and the opening of the socialist revolution; to the present-day international communist movement of some ninety communist parties spread all over the world with close on 45 million members.

Communist parties lead the fortunes of their peoples in the victorious socialist revolution over one third of the earth; whether in the initial construction of socialism from previous conditions of backwardness and oppression; or in the completion of the construction of socialism; or, on the basis of completed socialism, to new and audacious achievements of scientific, technological, educational and cultural advance, made possible by the foundation of socialism, and stimulating efforts of openly envious emulation by the older capitalist world now falling behind in one sphere after another, as the completed socialist societies enter on the transition to communist society.

Victories of socialism and national liberation, inseparably united as constituent parts of the world socialist revolution against imperialism, with the ever wider successes of national liberation, made possible by the prior success of the socialist revolution, and capable of confronting the threats and aggression of imperialism thanks to the strength and support of the socialist countries, have now extended over the greater part of the world. Half a century ago imperialism dominated the entire world. Today imperialism has become the minority sector of the world.

This change continues to go forward at an accelerating pace. The shift in the economic balance of the world moves every decade further in favour of socialism. The extension of the socialist world, of the peoples in one country after another moving forward to mastery of their countries and socialist reconstruction through the leadership of their communist parties and the guidance of the principles of Marxism-Leninism, does not stop at the magic number of fourteen countries. The conditions are ripening in a number of countries, where the communist parties are already the leading parties of their peoples. Similarly the number of newly independent countries sweeps forward, as well as the resistance to the attempts of imperialism to maintain its hold in one guise or another or undermine the independence of the peoples who have won liberation. The final end of colonialism draws in view.

There is no parallel in history, or in pre-history for that matter, for this advance of communism within a little over a century from the theory of two men of genius and the support of a handful of tiny groups to one third of the world. But this advance itself in only the expression of the transformation of the world in our time, the economic, social, political, scientific and technological transformation of the world from the last stage of the old social orders of class society to enter on the transition to the classless society based on the common ownership of the means of production.

Familiar attempts by philistine hostile observers to seek to find parallels for this advance in previous examples of the advance of a religion or creed or of an empire betray only the superficial outlook and ignorance of those who would offer such parallels. Marxism is no religion, but the expression of a completely non-religious non-idealist rational scientific approach, based on dialectical materialism, for the mastery of the real world and of the laws of development of human society. Communism and the extension of the world socialist system is no empire (the present acute and open differences between leading socialist countries is sufficient evidence of that), but the expression of the advance of the peoples all over the world to throw off the shackles of class and national oppression and build a classless society based on the common ownership of the means of production capable of realising on earth the aim of human brotherhood.

1. THE PATH OF MARX AND LENIN

The world has indeed changed during this little over a century. And it has changed along the lines and general direction indicated by the teachings and practical leadership of Marx and Lenin. Not in the sense of any automatic fulfilment of some rigid scheme along a pre-determined groove predicted by a magic conjuror. But in the entirely rational sense of development along the lines indicated by a realist and scientific social theory, whose correctness has been proved, in the only way in which the correctness of any theory can be

finally proved, by the event, by the outcome, by practice. And the development along these lines has shown at the same time abundantly more variety, complexity, emergence of new forms, or shifts in the tempo of the time schedule, sometimes slower and sometimes quicker, than could have been within any human capacity to predict.

The world has moved along the general lines indicated by Marx and Lenin, and in a direction entirely opposite to all the assumptions of their contemporaries, whether the nineteenth century statesmen and theorists who saw in the spread of pre-monopoly free trade capitalism the ultimate eternal outcome of human progress, or their successors, the apostles of imperialism, who saw in the various empires they were building the sublime supreme aim and highest form of human social organisation. Now that all their theories have vanished into the dustbin, their disillusioned successors have fallen into a mood of black pessimism, cynical denials of the in their view obsolete and exploded nineteenth century illusions of progress, or surrender to fatalist cyclical theories of history and of the inevitable decline of civilisations.

Marx already in 1848, in the mid-nineteenth century, at a time when all the foremost contemporary political leaders, economists or social theoriests of capitalism were seeing in liberal free trade capitalism the ultimate highest outcome of human progress and the supposed eternal and immutable laws of political economy; or when the utopian socialists had envisaged the dream of a social order based on justice through common ownership, but had no more idea how to attain it than to appeal to the crowned heads of Europe: Marx already at that time laid bare the transient character of capitalism as a historical stage, with a beginning and an end and its own laws of motion, the last stage of class society preparing the conditions for its replacement. Marx showed how capitalism was creating its own gravedigger in the industrial working class; and how the working class, with the development of organisation and solidarity in the daily struggle against capitalism, and with the development of political understanding, would advance to leadership of all sections of the working people to end the class rule of the capitalists and establish its own political power, the dictatorship of the proletariat, in order to wrest out of the hands of

the capitalists the means of production and establish socialism, the first stage of the advance to the future classless communist society.

At that time Marx and Engels still anticipated that this advance to the socialist revolution would follow rapidly in the further unfolding of the democratic revolutions then impending in Western and Central Europe, and especially in Germany.

But as soon as the failure of the democratic revolution of 1848 had been demonstrated in Western and Central Europe by 1850, Marx from 1850 onwards corrected this anticipation as erroneous and transferred his focus of the future of the revolution to a world scale in the unfolding of the battle against world capitalism. "History has proved us, and all who thought like us, wrong," wrote Engels frankly half a century later (in his Preface to Marx's *Class Struggles in France*, March 6, 1895) referring to the expectation of the socialist revolution in Western Europe in the period of 1848, and emphasising that capitalism had still at that time "great capacity for expansion" beyond Western Europe.

Marx by 1850 (in a letter from London on January 31, 1850, published in the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung*) was already stressing the significance of the world development of capitalism as narrowing the role of Western Europe to second place, predicting the change of the centre of gravity of capitalism to American capitalism displacing the supremacy of British capitalism; and further predicting that the Western European capitalist countries would fall into "industrial, commercial and political dependence" on American capitalism, unless they entered on the path of the socialist revolution.

While maintaining his close association with the advance of the working-class movement in the European countries, Marx was giving increasing attention to extra-European development.

Marx in 1850 (in the same letter) was already demolishing the myth of the supposed inevitable eternal conservatism of China, and was anticipating the future victory of the Chinese Republic when he declared that Western reaction, seeking to find a final bastion of reaction in China, might find instead inscribed on the Great Wall of China: "REPUBLIC OF CHINA: LIBERTY! EQUALITY! FRATERNITY!"

Marx during the eighteen-fifties was devoting no less than twenty-three articles within a few years to the study of India, and in 1853 made his famous prediction (in his article "The Future Results of British Rule in India", published in the *New York Daily Tribune*, August 8, 1853) of the future victory of Indian national liberation, either through the victory of the working class in Britain, or when "the Hindoos themselves shall have grown strong enough to throw off the English yoke altogether".

Marx in 1858, calling attention again to the significance of the new further world development of capitalism, with the "colonisation of California and Australia and the opening up of China and Japan", constituting a new "sixteenth century" of bourgeois society, specifically questioned the prospect of the socialist revolution "in this little corner", that is, in Western Europe, since "in a far greater territory the movement of bourgeois society is still in the ascendant" (Letter to Engels, October 8, 1858).

Marx in the eighteen-sixties reached a revision of his viewpoint on the relationship of national liberation and the prospect of the socialist revolution in the Western imperialist metropolitan countries. Taking the question of Ireland, which at that time represented the forefront of the national liberation struggle against British imperialism, he stated that "for a long time" he had "believed that it would be possible to overthrow the Irish regime by English working-class ascendancy", but that "deeper study has now convinced me of the opposite. The English working class will *never accomplish anything* before it has got rid of Ireland. The lever must be applied in Ireland" (letter to Engels, December 10, 1869). Thus by 1869 Marx had reached the conclusion, recorded as a definite revision of his former standpoint, that in the case of the key Western colonialist metropolitan country, Britain, where the profits of colonialism had enabled the rulers, as he repeatedly showed, to corrupt an upper section and leadership of the working class, national liberation, in place of following from the victory of the working class, might need to come first and be the indispensable pre-condition, making possible the liberation of the working class in the metropolitan country from its bondage, under its opportunist leadership, to its capitalist rulers. The significance of this considered conclusion of Marx for the subsequent development of the imperialist era, when the same imperialist corruption of an upper section and opportunist leadership had developed in all the Western European countries, for the retardation of the socialist revolution in Western Europe and for the development of the initial phases of the world socialist revolution along different lines, as has in fact taken place, is evident.

Marx by the later eighteen-seventies and early eighties had reached the conclusion, during the years before his death, that Russia now represented the vanguard of the revolution:

> "This time the revolution will begin in the East, hitherto the unbroken bulwark and reserve army of counter-revolution."
>
> (Marx, letter to Sorge, September 27, 1877)

> "Russia forms the vanguard of revolutionary action in Europe."
>
> (Marx and Engels, 1882 Preface to the Russian edition of the *Communist Manifesto*)

Kautsky, when he was still the recognised international theorist and spokesman of Marxism after the death of Marx and Engels, carried forward the same outlook of the closing years of Marx when he wrote in 1902:

> "The revolutionary centre is moving from the West to the East. In the first half of the nineteenth century the centre was in France, some time in England. In 1848 Germany entered the ranks of revolutionary nations. The new century is being ushered in by such events as induce us to think that we are confronted by a further removal of the revolutionary centre, namely, to Russia.... The Russian revolutionary movement which is now bursting into flame will perhaps become the strongest means for the extermination of the senile philistinism and sedate politics which is beginning to spread in our ranks, and will again rekindle the militant spirit and the passionate devotion to our great ideals.
>
> "Russia has long ceased to be for Western Europe a prop for reaction and absolutism.... However the present struggle in Russia may end, the blood of the martyrs who have originated from it, unfortunately in too great numbers, will not have been shed in vain. It will

nourish the shoots of the socialist revolution throughout the civilised world and make them flourish more quickly. In 1848 the Slavs were that crackling frost which killed the flowers of spring of the awakening peoples; perhaps now they are destined to be that storm which will break through the ice of reaction and will irresistibly bring it the happy spring of the peoples."

(Kautsky, *The Slavs and Revolution*, in Iskra March 10, 1902)

"How well Kautsky wrote eighteen years ago," commented Lenin, when he quoted this in the first section of his *Left-Wing Communism* in 1920.

Lenin in 1902 gave the same perspective as Marx and Kautsky had done, of the coming victory of the revolution first in Russia, and of the consequent international significance and vanguard role of the Russian revolution for the whole international working-class movement:

"History has now confronted us with an immediate task which is more revolutionary than all the immediate tasks which confront the proletariat of any other country. The fulfilment of this task, the destruction of the most powerful bulwark, not only of European, but also, it may be said, of Asiatic reaction, places the Russian proletariat in the vanguard of the international revolutionary proletariat."

(Lenin, *What Is To Be Done?* 1902)

Fifty-eight years later the international meeting of eighty-one communist parties in 1960, including parties leading victorious socialist revolutions and governments over one third of the world, confirmed this prediction of Lenin, and bore witness to the role of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union as "the universally recognised vanguard of the world communist movement".

World development has continued to move forward along the lines indicated by Marx and Lenin. The socialist revolution conquered first in Russia, the weakest link of the imperialist chain and the base of the most advanced vanguard of the international revolutionary working class, as predicted by Marx in his concluding years, by Kautsky while he was still repeating the teachings of Marxism, and by Lenin; and not first in Western Europe, as the vulgarised distortions of

Marxism which were given wide currency especially in the capitalist press sought to pretend.

Lenin in 1915 predicted that the victory of socialism might first come in a single country ("the victory of socialism is possible first in several or even in one capitalist country, taken singly"), and that in that case "the victorious proletariat of that country" would "organise its own socialist production" and confront the capitalist world, "attracting to its cause the oppressed classes of other countries" (*The United States of Europe Slogan*, 1915).

Lenin in 1918, when the Russian socialist revolution was beleaguered by the hostile forces of capitalism, and when Trotsky and the Left Communists opposed the signing of the Brest peace with German imperialism, declaring that the survival of the Russian revolution depended on the victory of the socialist revolution in Western Europe, dismissed this perspective of salvation through the victory of the socialist revolution in Western Europe as "a fairy tale", "a very beautiful fairy tale"; assuredly the victory of the socialist revolution would come eventually also in Western Europe; but there could be no question of fixing the date (see pages 148-149).

Lenin in 1923, in his last article before his death, reviewing the prospects of the world socialist revolution, and answering the query and doubts (the viewpoint of Trotsky and the Mensheviks) that the Russian revolution could not be expected to survive in the event of delay of victory of the socialist revolution in Western Europe, once again dismissed this viewpoint and expectation, and declared, in the customary deeply ironic manner of his later years, that the Western capitalist countries were assuredly consummating their path towards the socialist revolution, but that they were doing it in a peculiar fashion, by exploiting the nations of Asia and Africa, and that in consequence these nations were now drawn into the revolutionary current; that the next stage of advance should be looked for, not in Western Europe, but in China, India and the countries of Asia; that "Russia, China, India, etc." constitute "the overwhelming majority of the population of the globe"; and that "in this sense the complete victory of socialism is fully and absolutely assured" (see pages 182-183).

Once again the outcome of world development has

confirmed the predictions of Marxism-Leninism—that is, of the true teachings of Marx and Lenin, and not of what Fleet Street loves to call "classical Marxism", meaning thereby the vulgarised distortion of Marxism made familiar to these experts through the flood of second-rate textbooks by anti-Marxists or conveyed to the more literate among them through the literary brilliance of the basically non-Marxist, and ultimately anti-Soviet and anti-communist, writings of Trotsky. The Soviet Union, under the leadership of its Communist Party, with Stalin at the head, did build socialism in one country, in the midst of the hostile capitalist environment. The building of socialism in one country was not the betrayal of the world socialist revolution, as the Trotsky and Zinoviev Opposition, and their admirers in the Western capitalist press sought to assert, but established the strongest impregnable base of the world socialist revolution, capable of coming to the rescue of the rest of the international working class when the latter had fallen under the lash of fascism through following the policies of the enemies of communism.

The Soviet Union, under the leadership of its Communist Party, did not collapse before the assault of Nazism in defeat and dissolution of the regime, as all the Western general staffs and statesmen and experts privately, and Trotsky publicly, had declared would be the supposedly inevitable outcome of such a war. Instead, the Soviet Union smashed the Nazi armies and completed the war in Berlin, with Hitler committing suicide in his bunker. If today the remnants of Nazism and fascism still seek to rebuild themselves in West Germany and Western Europe and Japan and certain states of Latin America, it is only because during the intervening years the rulers of the Western imperialist powers, joint victors with the Soviet Union, have sought to undo the results of that victory and to reverse their alliances, by building up anew the old discredited forces, once again in the name of the sacred cause of anti-communism.

The prediction of Marxism-Leninism, voiced in 1934, that if capitalism were to unloose a second world war, the outcome would see, not only the "complete defeat of the aggressors", but the disappearance of the old regime in a number of capitalist countries, "revolution in a number of countries in Europe and Asia" and "the destruction of the bourgeois-landlord governments in those countries", was once again proved correct by the outcome in the sequel of 1945, with the development of the people's democracies in Europe and the extension of socialism from one country to a world socialist system.

The historic victory of the second greatest socialist revolution, following the Russian socialist revolution, took place, not as Trotsky and the Western falsifiers of Marxism had anticipated, in Western Europe, but as Lenin had predicted, in China, with the final victory of the Chinese People's Republic in 1949.

Even since the 1960 Statement of the eighty-one Communist and Workers' Parties, defining the new world situation, and describing the advance of international communism and the extending victories of socialist revolution and national-liberation revolutions, the process therein described has gone further forward. The heroic resistance of the Cuban people, supported by the socialist countries, to the repeated offensives of American imperialism has been accompanied by the accession of Cuba to join the ranks of the new socialist states, and the announcement in 1961 of the decision to build a unified party on the basis of Marxism-Leninism. The victory of Algerian national independence in 1962, after a seven years war of liberation against French imperialism, has been a further landmark in the extending series of advances of national independence in many countries during these recent years.

At the same time the working-class movement has advanced in strength in the Western imperialist countries, together with far-reaching changes in economic, social and political conditions with the further development of the general crisis of capitalism, so that here also the foundation is being laid for the advance to final victory.

The world has indeed developed during this century and a third since the *Communist Manifesto* along the broad lines indicated by the teachings of Marx and Lenin.

2. CONFLICT AND THE FUTURE

But, say the critics, how is it possible to speak at the present time of the triumphant advance of communism during the past century and a third, when at this moment the international

communist movement is rent by a fierce internal controversy and ideological dispute threatening its unity and endangering the unity of the system of socialist states?

Certainly it is true that at the moment a very serious controversy has developed. Its highly polemical public expression has given great pleasure to the enemies of communism, who have been busily speculating, as they have always loved to speculate, on a "crisis of communism" and the impending break-up of the movement. It is also true that this controversy has taken on a character in some respects more serious than the previous very intense controversies which have accompanied the development of the communist movement, inasmuch as the theoretical and tactical controversy has become to some extent entangled with particular questions raised affecting relations between socialist states. The controversy has also given rise, as in previous controversies, notably in the case of the offensive of Trotskyism, to attempts at factionalism and disruption of existing communist parties. All this, if further continued and aggravated, could give rise to the danger of a major split.

This serious and dangerous situation has not yet at the time of writing been resolved by the international communist movement. The position may even grow worse during the phase immediately in front, before it improves. The process of this controversy is still fluid and in motion, so that any attempt to treat it here would be out-dated before it could appear.

The very varied theoretical and basic tactical questions raised in the controversy (peaceful co-existence; the estimation of imperialism; the attitude to nuclear war; the relationship of national liberation to the world socialist revolution; peaceful and non-peaceful forms of transition to socialism; revisionism and dogmatism, and the relative weight of either danger at a given moment; the estimation of the Twentieth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and of the vanguard role of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union; and the relationship between communist parties, and correct forms of procedure in the event of differences arising between communist parties) have all been very fully and clearly dealt with in the 1960 Statement, agreed at the time by all the eighty-one Communist and Workers' Parties. An analysis of the main

lines of this Statement, and of its explicit answers to the principal questions raised, has already been given.

All serious communists throughout the world have always had and have the deepest affection and honour for the Soviet people, for the great October socialist revolution, the pioneer of the world socialist revolution, and for the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, "the universally recognised vanguard of the world communist movement" (in the words of the 1960 Statement, agreed by all communist parties). All have also the deepest affection and honour for the Chinese people, for the glorious Chinese People's Revolution, the second greatest socialist revolution, and for the heroic Communist Party of China, which has led to victory and is now leading in the construction of socialism one quarter of mankind whatever the concern and questioning at the moment arising from some disturbing recent manifestations and expressions. All serious communists are concerned to do everything in their power to assist in the resolution of differences affecting the relations of the parties of the two leading countries of socialism, as of all socialist countries and communist parties, and for the promotion and strengthening of cooperation and friendship of the Soviet Union, the Chinese People's Republic and all socialist states, and of all communist parties.

Any attempt to repudiate the basic principles of the 1960 Statement and substitute an alternative set of principles; in the name of these principles to conduct a campaign of vilification against the Soviet Union and leading Communist Parties, with denunciation of the Soviet Union as capitalist, and similar absurdities; and on this basis to call for splits in communist parties: such attempts can only be regarded as a violation of the elementary principles of international communism and a disservice to the international communist movement.

All serious communists are opposed to factionalism in the communist movement, and are concerned when factionalism, or minority splits of parties or recognition of such minority splits in place of normal relations between communist parties, receive encouragement from any leading communist quarters. Factionalism, or the formation of counterposed groups around opposing platforms within a communist party, was condemned by Lenin, and, on Lenin's initiative,

prohibited by the Tenth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union in 1921 as incompatible with the principles of democratic centralism of a communist party. Factionalism is no less impermissible on an international scale. During the nineteen-thirties Trotskyism tried to organise factionalism on an international scale, with the customary call to "all true Marxist-Leninists" or "all true Bolsheviks" (a particularly rich call, this latter, from Trotsky) to form their grouplets or would-be "parties" in each country in opposition to the communist party and the international communist movement (portrayed as hopelessly corrupted, bureaucratic, betraying Marxism-Leninism, and jumping obediently to the "orders of Moscow"), and on this basis to erect a so-called "Fourth International". The attempt was an ignominious fiasco from the outset; and the latest phase of the myriad convolutions of the fragments of the so-called "Fourth International" has been its further disintegration into three rival mutually squabbling "international centres" in different continents—a feat surpassing the splitting of the atom. Nevertheless, even this puny and unsuccessful example of the attempt to promote factionalism on an international scale did harm by providing the capitalist press with rich material for denunciation of the international communist movement in suitably tricky terms for the left public, or for presenting the most honoured and fearless revolutionary working-class fighters all over the world, with long records of devotion and integrity through every ordeal, as "jumping to the orders of Moscow". This type of squalid smear campaign, however petty and dubious its source, has served, after transmission through the megaphones of the millionaire press, to confuse some of those sincerely seeking their way to Marxism-Leninism and communism, or even sometimes a few waverers in the communist ranks. Thus the international communist movement has long experience of the harmfulness of factionalism and of the use of it made by the enemy. Any attempt at factionalism requires to be met with the united opposition of the entire international communist movement. This is the emphatic warning message of the 1960 Statement of the eighty-one Communist and Workers' Parties:

> "Marxist-Leninist parties regard it as a law of their activity strictly to observe the Leninist standards of party life in keeping with the principles of democratic centralism, and to cherish party unity like the apple of their eye."

At the same time, grave as is the present phase of intense controversy within the international communist movement, exceeding any previous precedent, and serious as are the further dangers to which it could give rise, if present trends are continued and extended, it is necessary to see also this situation with some sense of perspective, and in relation to the long record of history of the international communist movement. The advance of the international communist movement over the past century and a third from the tiny handful of pioneers to one third of the world has been no smooth and easy road. The record has been full of storms and conflicts, often fierce and embittered, no placid theoretical debates of disinterested observers, but shot through with personal passions and unsparing denunciations, sometimes even reaching a tornado height to threaten to wreck the ship. Yet through every such phase the international communist movement has emerged in the end the stronger and the more united to new triumphs.

It is only necessary to recall since 1917 the denunciations which were poured out against Lenin, not only by the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks, but also by the Left Communists, as betraying the revolution when he insisted on the signature of peace with German imperialism. The Left Socialist Revolutionaries, in association with the Left Communists, sought even to stage a coup for the establishment of a "revolutionary" government to displace Lenin. It is only necessary to recall the even fiercer denunciation of Lenin, the Soviet Government and the leadership of the Russian Communist Party as having finally betrayed the revolution, abandoned communism and restored capitalism, when, after the suppression of the Kronstadt rising, the New Economic Policy was introduced, permitting freedom of trade and small-scale capitalism, and offering concessions for exploitation on Soviet territory to the big overseas monopolies of imperialism. It is only necessary to recall the no less fierce denunciations of Stalin, the Soviet Government and the leadership of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, as having finally betrayed the world socialist revolution, when the programme of building socialism in one country, originally

indicated by Lenin, was proclaimed, and the conception of "export of revolution" was explicitly repudiated by Stalin (a repudiation, it is interesting to note, repeated verbally in the 1960 Statement agreed by all communist parties).

The Moscow Regional Committee of the Russian Communist Party on February 24, 1918, unanimously adopted a resolution proclaiming "lack of confidence in the Central Committee" (led by Lenin, Sverdlov and Stalin) on the question of peace with German imperialism, announcing that it "does not consider itself bound to obey unreservedly those decisions of the Central Committee that will be connected with the implementation of the terms of the peace treaty with Austria and Germany", and proposing to split the party in order to "unite all consistent revolutionary communist" against the "moderate opportunists in the party" (Lenin etc.).

> "The Moscow Regional Bureau considers a split in the party in the very near future hardly avoidable, and it sets itself the aim of helping to unite all consistent revolutionary communists who equally oppose both the advocates of the conclusion of a separate peace and all moderate opportunists in the party. In the interests of the world revolution we consider it expedient to accept the possibility of losing the Soviet power, which is now becoming merely formal."

It was on this resolution that Lenin wrote his famous article "Strange and Monstrous", exposing the conception of those who thought "that the interests of the world revolution demand that it should be given a push, and that only war can give that push," or "that peace might give the people the impression that imperialism was being 'legalised' ".

Today all this is past history, and there is no stauncher bulwark of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union than its Moscow Regional Committee.

In the spring of 1921 the spokesman of the "Workers' Opposition" in the Russian Communist Party, Kollontai in the booklet entitled *The Workers' Opposition*, proclaimed that the dictatorship of the working class in Russia had become no more than "a formal signboard"; that the Russian Communist Party under the leadership of Lenin had been "drawn away from the class path"; that "big magnates of capitalist production, obedient and excellently paid hired servants of

capital" were "exercising an increasing influence on policy"; and that trade relations with capitalist powers were "proceeding over the heads of both Russian and foreign organised proletariats". At the Third Congress of the Communist International in July, 1921, Kollontai declared that the New Economic Policy meant "on the whole, the restoration of the old system of production, of capitalism"; that it drew its inspiration partly from "foreign capital, which has in Russia its own ideological agents, so to speak, and through them is influencing our policy"; that this was "losing the confidence of the mass of the workers in our party"; and that if this turn in policy went further, the Soviet Republic would lose its communist character, and then

> "the nucleus of firm communists will take into its hands the red banner of revolution, to ensure the victory of communism throughout the world."

Today these tirades of the "Workers' Opposition" against the Soviet Government and the Soviet Communist Party, led by Lenin, as having betrayed the revolution in favour of an alliance with Western imperialism, and calling for a "nucleus of firm communists" to take over the leadership of the world revolution, have disappeared into a museum memory. The Soviet Union and the Soviet Communist Party, in the vanguard role of the international communist movement, continue to carry forward the banner of the revolution.

Similarly the Platform of the Trotskyist Opposition in 1927, led by Trotsky, Zinoviev and Kamenev, proclaimed that the policy of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, under the Central Committee led by Stalin, represented an "open castration of the revolutionary policy of Lenin" an "essentially social-democratic appraisal of the present epoch" and foreign policy "a full capitulation on the part of the Soviet power."

All these past tirades of denunciation of the Soviet Union, the Soviet Party and its leaders, whether Lenin or Stalin, and the leaders of the international communist movement as supposedly betraying communism and the revolution, have long vanished into the dustbin of history. All these confident "ultra-revolutionary" calls to split the communist parties as having betrayed the revolution and to form new breakaway organisations of "true consistent revolutionary communists" or "true

Marxist-Leninists" have fallen by the wayside and ended in the desert. There is a lesson in this also for today. There is all the more reason why it should not be necessary to repeat this wasteful and bankrupt experience for the twentieth time today.

Whatever the ordeals which may still have to be passed through—and the present dangerous situation, as has been already noted, may grow worse before it grows better—there is every ground, in terms of a longer historical judgement, for firm confidence in the future of the international communist movement and of international communism; in the deep underlying bonds of friendship and cooperation of all socialist states; in the unity of the international communist movement; in the future triumph of communism throughout the world.

There is no objective justification for any division of interests between socialist states, or between the working-class movements in different countries, or between socialism and national liberation. The differences that arise are subjective, and can be resolved on the basis of Marxism-Leninism.

The salutary warning of the present controversies and differences arises in the practical demonstration that the internationalism which is the cardinal principle of communism is not automatically achieved because the true interests of all working people and of all socialist countries are common. The 1960 Statement of all communist parties already warned that even after the victory of socialism in a series of countries, and the establishment of a world socialist system, "manifestations of nationalism and national narrow-mindedness do not disappear automatically with the establishment of the socialist system". Internationalism has to be consciously fostered, equally in the socialist countries and in the working class and national liberation movements in all countries. The most careful attention needs to be given to every possible source of difference, in every sphere of relations between socialist countries, and to strengthen mutual aid and cooperation. In capitalist countries the most active combat needs to be conducted against the evil inheritance of deeply ingrained traditions of nationalist and racialist and colour-bar conceptions of superiority and discrimination and antagonism. The spirit of international brotherhood needs to be taught and built up

as the most treasured possession of the international working class.

Communism alone provides the objective basis for the fulfilment of the aim of internationalism. Superficial comparisons which are sometimes offered with an air of profound wisdom to present as parallel and almost identical the current controversies and differences affecting the relations of socialist states and the conflicts within the Western imperialist military alliances, or within Nato, or between American and Western Europe, miss the main point. For the differences within the Western imperialist camp reflect the real contradictions of rival imperialist interests, drawn together only on the basis of their combined counter-revolutionary class aims against communism, but otherwise in full conflict for the exploitation of the world. The differences affecting the socialist countries, on the other hand, do not arise from any objective inevitable differences of interests, but are temporary subjective differences in the interpretation of those interests or of the most fruitful immediate steps in their fulfilment, and are capable of being resolved because of the basic identity of interests of the socialist economic system directed to the maximum development of production, cooperation and interchange for the material and cultural advance of their peoples, and because of the basic community of aims of communists throughout the world.

3. TOWARDS THE GOAL OF COMMUNISM

Modern world conditions, with the accelerating speed of communications and the technique of large-scale production beating against the limitations of old state barriers, and with the destructive power of new weapons transforming the questions of major war or peace, have brought home to all the necessity of internationalism. On the other hand, the simultaneously intensified antagonisms of rival property interests, by no means softened or diminished with the advance of science and technology and the scale of productive and trading operations, but, on the contrary, tremendously sharpened with the advance to the present giant super-monopolies and state monopoly concentrations fighting one another with every weapon in their armoury, block the path to the fulfil-

ment of the international aims which modern economic and political conditions demand.

Under these conditions the League of Nations or United Nations, whatever the dreams of some of their founders may have been, become either distorted to the role of instruments in imperialist power conflicts or, at the best, a useful international forum (weakened so far by the unjust exclusion of China) for the expression of the opinion of the participating nations, such as, since the accession of the extending number of Afro-Asian nations alongside the socialist nations to constitute a new majority, can sometimes exercise a moral influence. But the Charter has been long ago torn to shreds by the Western imperialist powers, with the formation of the prohibited sectional military alliance of Nato, or the illegal bypassing of the Security Council in order to launch wars.

What is the solution? Many non-socialist observers, and also some professed socialists, speak of the sovereign "nation-state" as an out-dated anachronism, or demand the establishment of an "international police force" to maintain international "law and order". They fail to see that they are thereby only reflecting the basic hostility of the big imperialist powers, which have always lived on the subjection and exploitation of weaker nations, to the conception of national independence, at the very moment when scores and scores of nations, which have lived under enslavement to imperialism, have only just won, and are struggling to maintain, their still precarious national independence, or are still struggling to win their national independence, against the domination of imperialism. Similarly, when these observers speak of an "international police force" to maintain international "law and order", they fail to take into account that the international "law and order" which they assume as requiring to be upheld is in fact the "law and order" of imperialist property relations extending their grip over two thirds of the world, and that the sharpest conflicts and wars which have arisen in modern conditions have arisen when the newly independent nations have sought to take over the assets of the imperialist monopolies (Suez, Iran, Indonesia, Cuba). Thus their "international police force" becomes under these conditions, not a plan for solving the problem of internationalism, but a plan to establish

an international gendarme to protect the interests of imperialism.

What, then, is the solution? It is evident that the problem of internationalism, of replacing international conflicts and wars by international cooperation, cannot be treated as an abstract political problem. It cannot be separated from the social and economic conditions of the modern world which give rise to international conflicts.

In the short term, given the present parallel existence of imperialism and socialism in the world, together with the increasing number of newly independent nations which are seeking to move towards socialism, the necessary immediate practical path of solution is the policy of peaceful co-existence to replace the policies of the cold war: that is, the promotion of peaceful relations between the countries of socialism and capitalism; recognition of the right of every people to choose their own social system without external interference; no export of revolution and no export of counter-revolution; endeavours to end the arms race, ban nuclear weapons and work towards the aim of disarmament; steps to promote international trade and economic cooperation.

Such a short-term solution would provide the most favourable conditions for advancing to the only final long-term solution. For the final long-term solution requires the elimination of the rival property-owning interests which are the breeding ground of international conflict and war. So long as capitalism and imperialism exists, the economic ground exists for international conflict and war. Only when the majority of the peoples of the world have advanced to the basis of socialism, alongside the completion of national liberation in all countries, and the rivalries of private and class property ownership have been eliminated, will the conditions have been reached for the realisation of the age-old dreams of internationalism, of lasting peace and cooperation of the peoples. The goal of communism, however difficult still the struggles in reaching it, represents the fulfilment of internationalism, of human brotherhood.

Marx prophesied, in the Address of the General Council of the First International on July 23, 1870, on the occasion of the Franco-German war:

"A new society is springing up whose International

role will be *Peace*, because its national ruler will be everywhere the same—*Labour*! The pioneer of that new society is the International Working Men's Association."

(Marx. *The Civil War in France*, 1871)

At the same time in that same immortal work Marx warned that the working class

"to work out their own emancipation, and along with it that higher form to which present society is irresistibly bending by its own economical agencies, will have to pass through long struggles, through a series of historic processes transforming circumstances and men. They have no ideals to realise but to set free the elements of the new society with which the old collapsing bourgeois society itself is pregnant."

Already at the end of the *Communist Manifesto* Marx had declared that the downfall of capitalism and the future victory of the working class was "inevitable". When he said "inevitable" he by no means implied some fatalist theory of history, as if the life of human society were to be regarded as some mechanism pursuing a pre-determined course independent of human will and action. The entire life-work of Marx, his ceaseless effort and devotion and expenditure without reserve of all his health and strength in the cause of the working class and communism, proved the opposite. His affirmation of "inevitability" was his affirmation of confidence in humanity, in the capacity of the working people to overcome the obstacles and find their way forward, through whatever errors and "long struggles" and "historic processes" on the way, to the only solution which could answer the problems posed by the breakdown of the old social order and "set free the elements of the new society".

Every step along this path of more than a century, from the handful of pioneers to the victory of the working class and communism over one third of the world, has only been won by the conscious will, the organisation, the limitless devotion and sacrifices, and the heroism of millions and millions of human beings, inspired and guided by the teachings of Marx and Lenin, and united by comradeship in service to a common cause, the cause of the future of human brotherhood, of communism.

Thanks to the efforts of those who have gone before, the

path now opens out more bright with promise than ever before. But the menace from the final explosions of the old dying social order also more urgent than ever. The time for the transition from capitalism to socialism was already due in terms of material conditions, and of the ending of the progressive role of capitalism, when nineteenth century capitalism passed into monopoly capitalism ("moribund", "parasitic", "decaying" capitalism, as Lenin called it). Delay in the readiness of the subjective factor, represented by the working-class movement in the leading imperialist countries, has already cost two world wars, the miseries of mass unemployment, fascism, and now the menace of nuclear war. All the new marvels of modern science in the twentieth century, the releasing of nuclear energy or the magic wand of the latest chemical discovery and techniques, should have belonged to the era of socialism, speeding the path to abundance for all. The fact that these new powers, appropriate only to socialism, should have come into the grip of the out-dated monsters of the monopoly capitalist jungle is producing in our time new horrors, abortions and menaces on a scale never before known.

For this reason the absolute and unqualified confidence of communists in the future is not, and can never be, a blind, empty facile optimism. The fulfilment of the great possibilities of our epoch depends on human consciousness and human effort. Therefore at the present time, to meet the needs of the present epoch, and to defeat the dangers which are obvious to all, the call sounds all the more urgently for renewed effort and activity in the cause of the working class and the peoples and of peace. The call sounds for the extension of political consciousness, inspired by the teachings of Marx and Lenin, among ever wider sections in all countries; to build up the unity and strength of the working class and democratic and national-liberation movement; to build up the unity and strength of the international communist movement; and along this path to speed the day when the divisions and conflicts of class society shall belong to the past, and

THE INTERNATIONALE SHALL BE THE HUMAN RACE.

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