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Two Assessments of the Chinese Cultural Revolution: A Balance Sheet

Draft Resolution for the Fourth World Congress Since Reunification

Submitted by United Secretariat members Abel, Adair,
Hans, Juan, Pedro, Stateman and Therese

I. THE TWO LINES AT THE 1969 WORLD CONGRESS AND THE TEST OF EVENTS

Prior to the last world congress, the Fourth International, in several meetings of the United Secretariat and of the International Executive Committee, as well as in its press and in the international discussion bulletins, began analyzing the so-called Cultural Revolution unfolding in China. (The public part of this analysis is available in the back issues of *Quatrième Internationale* and *Intercontinental Press*. The internal discussion, published in English in the International Information Bulletin *Discussion on China [1968-1971]*, is not yet available in other languages.)

The United Secretariat decided to place the discussion of the Cultural Revolution on the agenda of the Third World Congress Since Reunification (Ninth World Congress), and asked the Political Committee of the Socialist Workers Party to prepare a draft resolution as the basis for discussion.

This was written by Comrades George Novack and Joseph Hansen, after consultation with Comrade Ernest Mandel. It drew heavily on the analyses made by Comrades Chen Pi-lan and the IEC member of the Chinese section of the Fourth International, Peng Shu-tse, who had written extensively on the Chinese Cultural Revolution. (See *The Chinese Revolution, Part III*, Education for Socialists bulletin, by Comrades Chen and Peng.)

In light of the discussion with Comrade Mandel, the SWP Political Committee assumed that the draft resolution would be adopted unanimously, with perhaps alterations of an editorial nature. However, a majority of those present at the meeting of the United Secretariat where the draft was considered found that they disagreed with the line. Comrades Maitan, Mandel, and Frank took the lead

in proposing amendments of such nature as to change the basic analysis and orientation of the resolution. The amended version was adopted by a majority of the United Secretariat. (Both versions, arranged in dual columns so that the changes can easily be followed, are reprinted at the end of this resolution. See appendix.)

At the world congress Comrade Maitan reported for the United Secretariat majority on the resolution containing the Maitan-Mandel-Frank amendments. Comrade Ross Dowson reported on the original Peng-Novack-Hansen resolution. The vote was divided, the Maitan-Mandel-Frank resolution receiving a majority.

Comrade Peng was granted extended time to express his tactical differences on the attitude taken in both documents toward the Liu Shao-chi oppositionists. In his opinion, the Fourth International should have offered critical support to Liu Shao-chi against Mao's purge in order to better reach open-minded Chinese militants with the program of Trotskyism.

Peng argued that the Fourth International should have adopted a more interventionist approach toward the Cultural Revolution. In a statement accompanying his vote for the original resolution, he indicated that the discussion of the Cultural Revolution had already become a historical question inasmuch as the decisive defeat of Liu Shao-chi by the Maoists marked the end of this stage of the upheaval in China. The most important thing to be accomplished by the world congress in its discussion of China, he said, was "to clarify the theoretical differences in order to prepare for the future."

Comrades Moreno and Lorenzo of Argentina had not seen the resolutions prior to the congress—they were not

available in Spanish—and thus had not had time to study them. Consequently they did not vote for either of the resolutions placed before the delegates. They submitted a brief written statement expressing their view on the character of the Chinese student movement, which they placed in the framework of the worldwide youth radicalization as a precursor of political revolution in China. This statement suggested defining the Cultural Revolution "as a highly contradictory phenomenon characterized by . . . the manipulation and utilization, by the Mao faction of the bureaucracy, of the Chinese student movement, in order to overcome the grave crisis in which the bureaucratic caste and Chinese society found themselves, and in order thereby to save that same bureaucratic caste represented by Mao from the inevitable struggle of the Chinese masses against it, through a political revolution."

They deferred further analysis until they and the rest of the leadership of the Argentine section had an opportunity to study the documentation.

The Issues in Dispute

In the light of the events since 1969 it should now be possible to draw a definitive balance sheet on the differences expressed in the two resolutions.

The disputed points on the Chinese Cultural Revolution concerned both the foreign and domestic policy of the People's Republic of China. Those who spoke for the Maitan-Mandel-Frank amendments argued that while the Cultural Revolution had begun as an intrabureaucratic struggle, it had developed into something else. Mao and his followers, they contended, were sensitive to mass pressure for reforms. They said that significant concessions to the masses would be forthcoming as a result of the Cultural Revolution despite the bureaucratic character of the Mao faction. They regarded Maoist foreign policy as eclectic and inconsistent, wavering between opportunism in some countries and objectively anti-imperialist or revolutionary positions in others. The supporters of this resolution rejected the view that Mao would favor rapprochement with American imperialism at the expense of the world revolution.

Those who favored the original resolution also viewed the Cultural Revolution as an intrabureaucratic struggle, but insisted that neither of the contenders would make major concessions to the masses. The supporters of this position held that Mao's policy on the international plane was fundamentally opportunist, aimed at reaching an accommodation with American imperialism and at practicing class collaboration with the bourgeoisie in the colonial and semicolonial countries.

Underlying these two opposing views was a disagreement on the character of the Chinese Communist Party. The amendments proposed by Comrades Maitan, Mandel, and Frank showed that they considered it to be "bureaucratic centrist," i.e., that under the pressure of the masses or in resisting imperialism the Maoists could occasionally be expected to take positions close to those of revolutionary Marxism.

The original document analyzed the policies of the Maoists—socialism in one country, the two-stage theory of revolution, zigzags in pursuit of peaceful coexistence, opposition to proletarian democracy—as expressions of the

interests of a "crystallized bureaucratic caste" that ought properly to be called Stalinist because of its essential similarity to the counterrevolutionary bureaucracy consolidated in the Soviet Union in the 1920s and 1930s.

More specific differences concerned (1) the degree of independence of the Red Guards from the Maoist apparatus; (2) whether the army became the predominant organized force in the government in the course of the fight with Liu Shao-chi; (3) whether the Cultural Revolution had extended or further restricted the democratic rights of the Chinese masses; (4) whether Peking's criticisms of the Kremlin contributed to the growth of left oppositional currents in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe.

Both resolutions included the following paragraph on the situation at the outbreak of the Cultural Revolution in 1966:

"The high officials around Liu apparently sought to close ranks against Mao following the disastrous results of the Great Leap Forward. Liu and his close associates took fright at the appalling consequences of this adventure, counseled retreat, and succeeded in switching over to a more prudent economic course. During this readjustment, the Liu grouping took control of the party apparatus and pushed Mao to one side. . . .

"By 1965 Mao felt that he was in position to break Liu's hold upon the regime and regain his lost supremacy. By exploiting his immense prestige, by maneuvering between the diverse tendencies and cutting them down one after another, by slandering Liu and his men through a relentless propaganda campaign, Mao succeeded in isolating them and eroding their bases of support among the masses, in the party, the army and the provinces and completing their downfall." (*Discussion on China* [1969-1971], pp. 29-30.)

The amended resolution, however, adduced a further reason for Mao's course:

"The 'cultural revolution' constitutes objectively an attempt by the Mao faction to divert the social forces pushing in that direction [i.e., toward a political revolution] from an overthrow of the bureaucracy into a reform of the bureaucracy." (*Ibid.*, p. 27.)

Mao's 'Concessions'

The estimate that Mao intended to offer concessions to the masses was one of the themes advanced by Comrades Maitan, Mandel, and Frank. Its corollary was the assumption that the Red Guard and workers mobilizations represented an upsurge from below, largely independent of either wing of the bureaucracy, to which the Maoist wing was more responsive.

While the original draft, for instance, described the mobilizations of the masses as "limited and episodic" (p. 31), the word "episodic" was deleted from the amended draft. The original draft included two paragraphs (pp. 32 and 33) stressing the "tendency of the Red Guards toward conformism"; these, too, were deleted. The original draft described the "revolutionary committees" set up by the Maoists to exercise power locally as composed of "individuals handpicked by the authorities" (p. 35). This phrase was removed, the substitution being the view that the "revolutionary committees" were constituted "by compromise between contending factions." Sections on the cultural sterility of the Cultural Revolution were likewise

deleted, along with a comparison of the cult of Mao with that of Stalin (p. 36).

The original draft clearly stated the antidemocratic results of the Cultural Revolution:

"The 'cultural revolution' has ended in the constriction of democracy and the fortification of the positions of one faction of the bureaucracy against its rivals rather than the expansion and deepening of decision-making powers by the masses." (p. 38)

This paragraph was removed and replaced with one stressing a supposed "compromise between the Maoist faction and parts of the old majority faction." The "constriction of democracy" pointed to in the original draft was reduced to "an attempt to stop the mass movement and to restore a new form of bureaucratic rule. . . ."

The implication in the amended resolution that Mao stood, perhaps reluctantly, to the left of Liu Shao-chi on mobilizing the masses, establishing workers' democracy, and reforming the bureaucracy has not been borne out by the events. Nor has the assumption that the Cultural Revolution ended in a compromise between the two factions rather than in a consolidation of Mao's authoritarian rule.

To the degree that elements of the bureaucratically created Red Guards did move outside the prescribed framework as an instrument of Mao's purge they were ruthlessly crushed by the regime and deported to the countryside. Neither in economic policy nor in the administration of the so-called revolutionary committees have significant improvements in the standard of living of the masses or in their democratic rights been registered in the years since the end of the Cultural Revolution.

In the fall of 1971, following the purge of Lin Piao, a campaign was opened against "ultraleftism." This was directed at those who opposed the reinstating of lower-level party functionaries removed during the Cultural Revolution, and at those who continued to call for reductions in the pay of administrators and officials demagogically promised on a number of occasions by the Maoists during the fight against Liu Shao-chi.

The youth remain a special target of the Maoist regime. It has been seven years since China's universities were closed during the Cultural Revolution. Most of them reopened with sharply reduced admissions in mid-1970. Today there are only a fourth as many university students in China as there were in 1966 and these are overwhelmingly members of the ruling party or of its youth organization of unquestioned loyalty to the regime.

The deportation of educated youth to the countryside continues unabated. A September 15-16, 1972, Hsinhua dispatch reported:

"Millions of educated youth from the cities have settled down in mountainous areas and countryside since the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution. They are maturing politically thanks to re-education by the poor and middle peasants."

The same dispatch reported, "400,000 educated young people have settled in the Chinese countryside since the beginning of this year."

The Role of the Army

Closely related to the differences over Mao's alleged concessions to the masses were the opposing assessments made

by the two sides at the world congress on the relative importance of the People's Liberation Army (PLA) in setting the pattern for and enforcing the Cultural Revolution. Mao, confined to a minority in the party and governmental bureaucracy, enlisted outside forces to purge the Liuists. These were the Red Guards, which were most prominent between May 1966 and January 1967, and Lin Piao's PLA, which replaced the Red Guards as the principal instrument of Maoist power in January 1967.

In keeping with what it considered to be the "bureaucratic centrist" nature of Maoist policies and the independent role of the masses and Red Guards during the Cultural Revolution, Comrades Maitan, Mandel, and Frank took a position different from that of Comrades Peng, Novack, and Hansen on the centralization of power in military hands in the course of the purge of Liu Shao-chi. This is evident in several places in the two documents. Where the original draft stressed "the role of the army under Lin Piao as ultimate authority" (p. 31), the amended draft reads "increased authority of the army under Lin Piao." The original draft further stated:

"However much the military high command has been shaken and its leadership divided over the past period, an ominous pattern has been set for the future." (p. 32)

This was removed and in its place a sentence added reading:

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

This was written just before the Ninth Congress of the Chinese CP elected a Central Committee composed 40 percent of army officers, and two years before the last of the provincial "revolutionary committees" had been established, in which twenty-one of the twenty-six provincial and municipal administrations were dominated by the PLA.

The strength and influence of the military, far from decreasing after 1969, was on the upswing. The danger became so acute that Mao felt forced to eliminate Lin Piao and a number of other high military officials in 1971. The Cultural Revolution thus ended in a knockdown fight between Mao and his constitutionally designated heir, who had served as the main instrument in carrying out the purge of Liu Shao-chi. This was almost two-and-a-half years after Peng, Novack, and Hansen had proposed calling attention to this "ominous pattern" in a resolution of the Fourth International.

The purge of Lin Piao marked a further narrowing of the bureaucratic center in Peking. In addition to Lin and other top military leaders who disappeared, Chen Po-ta, Mao's longtime personal secretary and a guiding light of the Cultural Revolution, was eliminated from the leadership.

Today virtually all the old leaders of the CCP have been eliminated. Of the twenty-one members of the Politburo put together by Mao at the Ninth Party Congress in April 1969, eleven have disappeared or died. Of the five members of the Standing Committee of the Politburo, the highest decision-making body in China, only Mao and Chou En-lai remain.

The inability of this Stalinist leadership to renew its ranks, even from within its own apparatus, is further evidence of the correctness of the estimate in the original resolution that the Cultural Revolution aimed at further centralization and narrowing of the bureaucratic hierarchy, not

its democratization. From its earliest days in power the CCP Central Committee and Politburo have been distrustful of new leaders. The "old guard" jealously clung to its power and prerogatives. It functioned as a tight-knit clique that has grown smaller and more ossified with the attrition of age. Mao's Cultural Revolution sought to displace this grouping with his personal dictatorship, not to broaden its base. This was clear in the choice of leaders at the Ninth Party Congress. Of the twenty-one members elected to the Politburo at that time, the average age was sixty-eight. Only one member was under fifty. There have been no additions to the leadership since then, only new purges. Mao himself will be eighty in December, and the few loyal subordinates he permits to retain positions of authority are almost without exception of the same generation, constituting the most aged ruling body of any regime in the world.

The process we have witnessed parallels Stalin's purges of his own faction in the later Moscow Trials, after he had eliminated all oppositions that represented fundamental differences of line. Before the Cultural Revolution and the fall of Lin, Mao's authority rested at least technically on the collective agreement of the Stalinist clique that spoke in the name of the Chinese Communist Party. Now, the relations have been reversed and the ultimate authority in all matters is the Bonapartist octogenarian. This was the position finally consolidated by Stalin in the Soviet Union after the Moscow Trials and his purge of the Red Army leadership in 1938.

Peaceful Coexistence, Detente with Nixon, and Vietnam

The validity of the position stated in the original resolution was borne out even more dramatically with regard to the possibility of a détente between Mao and Nixon. Fresh evidence of Mao's basic foreign policy was at hand when the two versions of the Cultural Revolution document were drafted. In November 1968, Chinese officials had called for a resumption of talks in Warsaw with representatives of the incoming Nixon administration for the purpose of establishing "peaceful coexistence" with Washington.

Because of their view that Maoism is a "centrist" formation, Comrades Maitan, Mandel, and Frank discounted this diplomatic move. The original draft had stated:

"The bankruptcy of this [Mao's] foreign policy became glaringly clear when, after deposing Liu Shao-chi as a 'lackey of imperialism, modern revisionism and the Kuomintang reactionaries,' Mao offered 'peaceful coexistence' to the Nixon administration." (pp. 28-29)

This sentence was removed from the document. It was replaced with the following:

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

This forecast turned out to be wrong. It assumed that Mao's basic foreign policy was not to actively seek a deal with U.S. imperialism. It assumed that Mao and his followers abroad were in general acting with "revolutionary militancy" in mind rather than in accordance with the narrow national interests of the Peking bureaucracy; and

that what was involved was the "normalization" of diplomatic relations, which at worst might lead to modification of Mao's "revolutionary" advice to his followers abroad.

Normalization of diplomatic relations was of course not reprehensible in itself. But that was not all that Mao and Nixon projected. Besides ending the U. S. embargo against China, with its concomitants of admission to the United Nations, the opening of trade, and diplomatic recognition, Mao wanted an understanding that would slow down any aggressive military plans of the Soviet Union. In return Mao was prepared to show Nixon that he could be relied on every bit as much as Stalin or Brezhnev to aid in maintaining the international status quo by opposing revolutions.

The real stake for Nixon was Vietnam. Mao paid off by inviting Nixon to Peking in February 1972. So that the Vietnamese should be certain not to miss the point, Nixon timed his visit to Peking to coincide with a savage escalation of the bombing of Indochina. Mao and Chou issued a polite rebuke and went ahead with the gala reception of the imperialist chieftain. The warm welcome given Nixon proved an invaluable boost to his prospects for reelection and thus strengthened his hand in wringing concessions from the beleaguered Vietnamese and demobilizing the worldwide antiwar movement. It absolved in advance Brezhnev's new betrayal of the Vietnamese at the subsequent summit meeting in Moscow.

On May 8, 1972, Nixon announced the mining of Haiphong harbor and the bombardment of rail links with China—two moves that the Pentagon had feared to take throughout the Vietnam war because of the danger of finally provoking a response from Moscow and Peking. Neither the Soviet Union nor China replied to this monstrous escalation of the war. They did not mobilize their followers around the world to protest the American aggression. They made no show of force to compel Nixon to back down.

The Soviet Union still refused to supply North Vietnam with the sophisticated missiles and aircraft that could have ended the American monopoly of the air over Indochina—equipment that had been supplied in abundance to the bourgeois government of Egypt. Moscow did not even cancel the summit meeting with Nixon a few weeks later. The outpouring of antiwar sentiment around the world after Nixon's May 8 action built toward potentially massive proportions. Then, under the impact of Moscow's and Peking's betrayal, it dissipated and fell back.

It was under these circumstances that the North Vietnamese and the Provisional Revolutionary Government undertook a forced retreat from their previous bargaining positions in Paris and accepted an accord in January 1973 that contained unfavorable clauses, leaving the Saigon regime intact and bolstered by a pledge not to attempt to overthrow it by military means.

In a statement issued in Peking on January 29, Mao Tse-tung, Chou En-lai, Tung Pi-wu, and Chu Teh described the Paris agreement as "a great victory for the three Indochinese peoples' united struggle." (*Peking Review*, February 2, 1973.)

A further touch to Moscow and Peking's betrayal of the Vietnamese revolution came in the International Conference on Vietnam that concluded in Paris on March 2, 1973. There the Democratic Republic of Vietnam's "allies" pledged

themselves to "guarantee" the American-imposed settlement. A Peking *People's Daily* editorial on March 3 hailed the conference and made this promise to Nixon:

"As a party to the Paris international conference and a signatory to its acts, China will seriously undertake the obligation to strictly implement the act of the Paris international conference and never do anything that hinders or violates the Paris agreement." (*Peking Review*, March 9, 1973.)

The agreement the Chinese Stalinists proudly proclaim themselves "a party to" explicitly recognizes the legitimacy of the Thieu regime, prohibits North Vietnamese aid to the struggle in the South, and legalizes American support to "the government set up after the general elections in South Vietnam provided for in Article 9," elections that if they are ever held at all will be conducted under Thieu's auspices in the most populous parts of the country.

The *People's Daily* editorial makes no mention of these onerous and dangerous conditions. Instead it asserts:

"The signing of the Paris agreement has put an end to the war in Vietnam." The Maoist regime, concerned above all else with building "socialism" within the borders of China, is prepared to barter the struggles of the oppressed everywhere else in exchange for a promise that China will be left alone.

Reason for the Error

How did Comrades Maitan, Mandel, and Frank so badly misinterpret Mao's basic policy? How have they explained the events? And how do they explain the fact that the authors of the original resolution were able to make correct forecasts? Up to now they have not provided answers to these questions, although as responsible leaders it is their duty to do so.

Their mistakes flowed, it appears clear, from an incorrect judgment of the nature of the line being followed by Peking. They estimated Mao's attitude toward the world revolution as follows:

"The more radical line pursued by the Chinese leadership towards world revolutionary developments since the beginning of the Sino-Soviet conflict which, on several important questions, brought it nearer to the positions of revolutionary Marxism (an analysis confirmed in 1968 by Peking's attitude, in contrast to the Kremlin's, towards the May revolution in France, the prerevolutionary struggles in India, the Mexican students' struggles and the rising political revolution in the CSSR leading to the Warsaw Pact countries' occupation of Czechoslovakia), reflects both the specific relationship of imperialism and the Soviet bureaucracy toward the P.R. of China, and the objective impact of the rising tide of world revolution on the Chinese masses." (p. 28)

Comrade Maitan, the United Secretariat majority reporter, summarized his viewpoint clearly in the pre-Congress discussion as follows:

". . . But, despite the attitude of the Chinese in the Vietnamese affair, despite their responsibility in Indonesia, despite the lamentable bankruptcy of almost all the orthodox Maoist groups, we must not lose sight of:

"(a) That the international line of the Chinese remains objectively more progressive than the Soviet line and there is no ground for equating them.

"(b) That China is aiding and stimulating some sweep-

ing guerrilla movements in several Asian countries.

"(c) That the Chinese criticism has had an incontestable effect in the revolutionary ripening of broad layers of the new revolutionary left in the advanced capitalist countries.

"(d) That despite certain traits of the 'cultural revolution,' the attitudes and conceptions of the Chinese leaders continue to operate objectively in a direction diametrically opposed to that of Stalinism. (The comrades will obviously understand that I am utilizing the term Stalinism here in the more specific sense of the word and not as a synonym for bureaucratic concepts and praxis in general)." (*An Insufficient Document*, reprinted IIB, *Discussion on Latin America* (1968-1972), p. 13.)

In the early years of the Sino-Soviet split the Fourth International took note of the fact that on several important points the positions voiced by Peking stood to the left of those upheld by the Kremlin. The Fourth International also fixed the blame on the Kremlin for precipitating the breach of relations between the two giant workers' states by unilaterally withdrawing its technicians and aid from China, which was and remains qualitatively more underdeveloped than the USSR. It was for these reasons that our movement critically supported Peking in its fight with the Kremlin. It was apparent as the Sino-Soviet dispute unfolded that what was involved on Peking's part was a turn toward bureaucratic ultraleftism and adventurism reminiscent of Third Period Stalinism, not a change of direction toward Marxist practice. Moreover, Peking simultaneously followed class-collaborationist policies with every bourgeois regime that responded favorably to its overtures.

To speak of Peking's "more radical line" in 1969, after the Indonesian catastrophe, was to overlook the practice of the Stalinist regime in Peking. The examples cited by Comrades Maitan, Mandel, and Frank where Peking's practice was allegedly to the left of the Kremlin's (France, India, Mexico, and Czechoslovakia) taken all together hardly outweigh the betrayal of the Indonesian revolution, still less the subsequent betrayal of Vietnam. In every case Mao's support remained largely verbal, his advice had an ultraleft sectarian character, and was dictated by considerations of factional advantage against the USSR, not by the needs of the revolutionary movement in the countries cited.

Maoism, the National Bourgeoisie, and Maoist Parties Abroad

It is clear in retrospect that the authors of the amended resolution did not grasp the underlying consistency of Mao's peaceful coexistence policies and saw the betrayals in Indonesia and Pakistan as aberrations. Thus, where the original draft said clearly that "Mao followed a policy of collaborating with the colonial bourgeoisie, as in Pakistan," this was amended to read, "Mao followed in several countries a policy of collaborating with the colonial bourgeoisie. . . ." (p. 28)

The thesis that Maoist foreign policy was eclectic and only collaborationist in "several countries" was developed even more pointedly later in the resolution. The original draft contained the following paragraph:

"[Peking] has extended material aid to guerrilla forces as well as countries like Tanzania, thus helping to create

an image far to the left of Moscow. Nevertheless, Peking's basic policy, as reiterated many times by its leaders and voiced once again upon the inauguration of the Nixon administration, has been 'peaceful coexistence' with U.S. imperialism. Out of narrow nationalistic considerations and in line with its doctrine that the revolution must first pass through a bourgeois stage before it can reach the socialist stage, Peking counsels and countenances support to bourgeois governments in Indonesia, Pakistan and other countries instead of mobilizing the masses for uncompromising struggle against the neocolonial regimes." (p. 39)

This assessment, the accuracy of which should be clear today, was replaced by some sentences extolling the "objectively" revolutionary contributions of Maoism throughout the world:

"[Peking] has extended material aid to guerrilla forces. This has not only created an image far to the left of Moscow but also objectively favored anti-imperialist struggles in various parts of the world, especially Southeast Asia, the Arab countries and Africa. Likewise, the sharp campaign which Peking unleashed against the right-wing opportunist line of the CP's following Moscow's lead, and against some key features of the bureaucratic rule in Eastern Europe, has objectively contributed to deepen the world crisis of Stalinism and to facilitate the upsurge of a new youth vanguard the world over."

This statement did not withstand the test of events. Even at the time it was written, the memory was still fresh of the debacle in Indonesia in 1965 in which as many as several hundred thousand members and supporters of the pro-Maoist Indonesian CP were slaughtered as the price of that party's Peking-approved prostration before the Sukarno regime. Mao later attempted to place the blame for this disaster on Liu Shao-chi, but there is ample evidence to prove that Mao gave his personal approval to the program and practice of the Indonesian CP. In a message of greetings to the Indonesian CP on May 20, 1965, scarcely four months before the bloodbath began, Mao praised the party and its leader, D.N. Aidit, for having "skillfully and creatively applied and developed Marxism-Leninism in the light of the revolutionary practice of its own country." (Hsinhua dispatch, May 23, 1965.)

In Algeria, Peking for its own factional reasons was the first government in the world to recognize the reactionary Boumedienne regime after the coup that overthrew Ben Bella in June 1965. In Latin America the verbal revolutionism of the Maoist sects covered Peking's growing uncritical support for "reformist" military dictatorships such as the Velasco government that seized power in Peru in October 1968.

Today hardly anyone in the world Trotskyist movement would argue that these were aberrations limited to "several countries" while on the whole Peking's foreign policy "objectively favored anti-imperialist struggles."

In 1971 the depth of Mao's commitment to peaceful coexistence received three separate tests in countries that maintained friendly relations with Peking. In each case China supported the counterrevolution. In March, Yahya Khan launched a bloodbath in East Bengal to prevent the Bengali people from freeing themselves from the national oppression they had suffered at the hands of their masters in West Pakistan. Peking denounced the separatist movement and continued to send aid to the military dictatorship.

In April the procapitalist Bandaranaike government in Ceylon sought to repress the rapidly growing organization of young radicals called the Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna (JVP—People's Liberation Front). Here, as in Pakistan, the Stalinists in Peking found themselves on the same side as American imperialism in providing aid to a counterrevolutionary regime engaged in a brutal repression of its own people.

The events in the Sudan in July, while receiving less international publicity than those in Ceylon and Bangladesh, were an equally clear demonstration of the counterrevolutionary policy of Peking. On July 19, General Nimeiry was overthrown by a military coup that received support from the Sudanese Communist Party, the largest CP in the Arab world.

Nimeiry returned to power in a countercoup on July 22 and proceeded to decimate the Sudanese CP and the trade unions. Radio Omdurman broadcast appeals to the population to denounce all "Communists, traitors to the fatherland, and enemies of God." By the end of the month the whole CP leadership was imprisoned and mass executions had begun. On August 5, Nimeiry sent a personal letter to Mao and Chou En-lai thanking them for supporting his regime in the crisis and refraining from condemning his witch-hunt.

In Africa, Peking openly endorses the "leftist" neocolonial regimes in Tanzania and Guinea. In Latin America it is pursuing not "armed struggle" but peaceful coexistence with governments throughout the continent with special stress on the popular front coalition headed by Salvador Allende in Chile.

The main thrust of Peking's political and diplomatic efforts in Europe is to secure recognition from the existing regimes, not to topple them. It has extended diplomatic recognition to and sought friendly relations with Franco's Spain and the Greece of the colonels. It openly endorses the Common Market as a progressive move by European imperialist powers aimed at the Soviet Union and the United States. It opposes reductions in NATO troop strength in Europe which might weaken capitalist Europe in face of the Soviet Union.

In Southeast Asia, Peking's betrayal of the Vietnamese revolution in exchange for improved relations with Washington is recognized by most of those who voted for the amended resolution submitted by the majority of the United Secretariat in 1969, although comrades Maitan, Mandel, and Frank insisted then on deleting any suggestion that such a thing could happen.

What remains of Peking's "objectively" anti-imperialist and revolutionary influence? Peking continues—as does the Kremlin—to mouth platitudes about anti-imperialist struggle. But in the last five years in the hot spots where it exerts influence it has either openly sided with the counterrevolution or covertly put pressure on those under fire to settle for peace at any price. The exceptions are few. They include the minimal support provided up to now to the guerrilla struggles in Burma and northern Thailand, countries on or near the Chinese border where from purely "buffer zone" considerations Peking can be expected to promote opposition to regimes in the orbit of American imperialism—until they come to terms with Chou En-lai.

Some of the sections or groups of the Fourth International have sought in their publications to explain this comprehensive policy of class collaboration as a "right

turn" by Peking in response to concessions offered by American imperialism. This is wrong on two counts. First, it exaggerates the rightward shift in Peking's diplomacy since 1971 by down playing the earlier examples of such practice and the continuous professions by the Maoist leadership, even in its most ultraleft period, of a desire and willingness to secure peaceful coexistence with imperialism.

Second, it fails to grasp the fact that a generalized policy of peaceful coexistence is dictated by the material interests of the bureaucratic caste, which fears the spread of revolution and the effect it might have on the masses in its own country. The occasional turns toward adventurism taken by Stalinist bureaucrats, unlike the leftward vacillations of genuine centrists, have as their principal object applying pressure to imperialism to accept a mutual arrangement to maintain the status quo. They are not evidence of responsiveness to the revolutionary aspirations of the masses.

In one respect the Peking bureaucracy has shown itself to be even more narrowly nationalistic and provincial than its Stalinist counterpart in Moscow. That is in its indifference to the facade of international working class support that the Kremlin keeps up through its alliance with "fraternal parties" loyal to Moscow. Peking after some desultory efforts in 1960-67 to establish Maoist groups abroad, has abandoned any serious effort to penetrate the working-class movement in other countries.

Peking's international attention is now divided between expanding its ties with Washington and intensifying its efforts to use the United Nations as a forum to build a bloc of neocolonialist governments capable of maneuvering against the "superpowers"—the Soviet Union and the United States. Of the two superpowers, Peking openly labels the Soviet workers state as the "main enemy."

Peking and Political Revolution in Eastern Europe

In the amended resolution Comrades Maitan, Mandel, and Frank argued that "the sharp campaign which Peking unleashed against the right-wing opportunist line of the CPs following Moscow's lead, and against some key features of the bureaucratic rule in Eastern Europe, has objectively contributed to deepen the world crisis of Stalinism. . . ." (p. 39)

Many things, of course, "objectively" deepen the world crisis of Stalinism. Criticism of the Soviet bureaucracy by West European CPs under the pressure of Social Democracy have this effect without contributing to the development of the revolutionary movement in Europe. The Kremlin's invasion of Czechoslovakia, to take an extreme example, made a big "contribution" to the crisis of Stalinism, although that was far from the intentions of Brezhnev and Co.

The view that Peking should be given credit for contributing "objectively" to the critique of "some of the key

features of the bureaucratic rule in Eastern Europe" has not been borne out. It is true that in the early years of the Sino-Soviet dispute (when, as both resolutions agreed, Liu Shao-chi was at the helm in China) the polemics with Moscow were couched in a relatively cautious tone, and the writings of Marx and Lenin were cited to buttress the Chinese case against the Kremlin's offensive. With the advent of the Cultural Revolution Peking escalated its denunciations but did not move toward a Marxist analysis of the dispute.

Mao's thoughts on this question were utilized by the Kremlin to discredit any currents in the Soviet Union sympathetic to Peking. An example was Mao's characterization of the Soviet Union as a "fascist" state in which capitalism had been restored under a "red bourgeoisie." Another example was Peking's adulation of Stalin.

If Mao promoted the struggle for socialist democracy in Eastern Europe by denouncing the "new tsars," shall we say equally that the Kremlin bureaucracy promoted the struggle for socialist democracy in China by denouncing Mao for his "petty-bourgeois policy which became increasingly intertwined with nationalism" and his exercise of "bureaucratic authority"? ("China in the Vice [sic] of Maoism," *Soviet News*, August 5, 1969.)

The logical extension of such reasoning is to be found in Comrade Germain's April 3, 1969, article, "An Unacceptable Amendment." (*Discussion on China*, p. 45.) Here, referring to Peking's opposition to the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968, he wrote:

"In fact, they were fighting on the same side of the barricades as our comrades most of the time, while the Khrushchevists were on the other side."

But Mao is in favor of anything that will weaken his opponents in the Kremlin. If in Czechoslovakia this resulted in Peking ending up on "the same side of the barricades as our comrades," in the Sudan it resulted in Mao applauding the massacre of the CP and trade-union leaders by a bourgeois government because that, too, was a blow to Moscow. Which side of the barricades was Peking on in the Sudan?

It should be remembered that in 1956, before the split with Moscow, Peking supported the crushing of the Hungarian revolution. Its attitude, then as now, was determined by the narrow national interests of the Stalinist bureaucratic caste in China, not by consideration of workers democracy. Moreover, Peking's new-found devotion to the cause of proletarian democracy in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe does not extend to China, the most obvious test of whether Mao's opposition to bureaucratism stems from revolutionary or opportunist motives. The real reason Mao opposed the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia (at the same time, by the way, denouncing the resistance movement as "revisionist") was because the Brezhnev doctrine of "limited sovereignty" established a precedent for Soviet military intervention against China. The clash on the Ussuri river took place less than seven months after the Warsaw Pact occupation of Prague.

II. THEORETICAL ROOTS OF THE DISPUTE IN THE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL

Is Maoism Stalinist or 'Bureaucratic Centrist'?

On all the principal conjunctural differences on the meaning of the Cultural Revolution and the direction in which Maoism was headed in 1969, the position of the minority of the United Secretariat proved to be correct and the position of the majority proved to be faulty and belied by the later events. But more than conjunctural differences were involved. The underlying appraisals of Maoism by the two sides were and remain sharply divergent. The clearest definition of the nature of Maoism by the leaders of the United Secretariat majority appeared in the article by Comrade Germain cited above ("An Unacceptable Amendment"). There he wrote:

"It has been solid facts that convinced us that on several essential questions, the position of the Chinese remains closer to that of the revolutionary Marxists and more progressive as a whole than that of the Kremlin. . . .

"We do not believe, and we have never said, that the leadership of the Chinese CP is revolutionary. It is a question of a bureaucratic centrist leadership. The fact which we have never ceased to stress is that it is impossible to identify this leadership with that of the Soviet bureaucracy or with Stalinism. It is indispensable to distinguish between them, because this corresponds to the objective reality and because otherwise an effective struggle against Maoism becomes more difficult." (p. 47)

There can of course be no objection to developing in our resolutions and in our press an analysis of the specific characteristics of the Chinese variant of Stalinism as distinct from the Russian variant of Stalinism. These exist and it is necessary to take account of them.

But it is now clear that the differences in the Fourth International on this point do not involve distinguishing the dissimilarities of the two parasitic castes. It has been shown how in the recent past the insistence on the "bureaucratic centrist" character of Maoism led to grave errors as to the aims and intentions of the Peking bureaucracy. The "effective struggle against Maoism" was made more difficult by failing to grasp its Stalinist character, not by failing to distinguish it from the Soviet bureaucracy.

The phrase "bureaucratic centrism" is incorrect in suggesting that the Maoist apparatus and accompanying bureaucratic caste is not yet a fully developed social formation, that it is more responsive to the pressures of the world revolution, and that avenues remain open for the Chinese masses to impress their will on the bureaucratic machine to move it in an "objectively" revolutionary direction.

Comrade Germain insists that it is correct to label Maoism "bureaucratic centrist," to make a qualitative distinction between Maoism and Stalinism, and, moreover, that this has always been the position of the Fourth International. An examination of Trotsky's views and how they were modified by Comrades Maitan, Mandel, and Frank in the resolution they sponsored on the Cultural Revolution should shed some light on this long-disputed question.

The term "bureaucratic centrism" has a very specific meaning in the Trotskyist movement. It originated in

reference to the Stalin faction of the CPSU in the 1920s. The Stalin faction then stood in the center between the Left Opposition and the Bukharin right wing of the party. The label was based on the assumption that the Soviet Communist Party remained a working-class party capable of being reformed under the pressure of the masses and the criticism of the Left Opposition. With the consolidation of a bureaucratic caste, the Soviet CP was transformed into a purely administrative agency of the petty-bourgeois bureaucracy, and merged with the state apparatus.

The term "bureaucratic centrism" predated Trotsky's recognition that the Soviet bureaucracy represented a privileged social caste with its own material interests that could be replaced only through political revolution. It was dropped when it became clear that the Soviet Communist Party had been qualitatively changed under Stalin's domination. The term "bureaucratic centrism" to designate Stalinism was then viewed by Trotsky as inconsistent with the call for political revolution.

In 1933 the German CP and the Social Democracy permitted Hitler to take power without a fight. The total default of the Comintern in the face of this historical defeat convinced Trotsky that a new international must be built and that the Stalinist regime had to be ousted through a political revolution. Stalinism had become an opportunist petty-bourgeois current in the world working-class movement.

Trotsky's explicit change in terminology came when he examined in theoretical depth the implications of the term "bureaucratic centrism" in the light of the Left Opposition's new appraisal of the evolution of Stalinism.

In his article "The Workers' State, Thermidor and Bonapartism" (1935) he wrote:

"As the bureaucracy becomes more independent, as more and more power is concentrated in the hands of a single person, the more does *bureaucratic centrism* turn into Bonapartism." (*Writings of Leon Trotsky, 1934-35*, p. 180, emphasis in original.) It was in this same article that Trotsky explained: "The Thermidor of the Great Russian Revolution is not before us but already far behind." (p. 182)

Trotsky concluded: "Stalin guards the conquests of the October Revolution not only against the feudal-bourgeois counterrevolution but also against the claims of the toilers, their impatience and their dissatisfaction; he crushed the left wing that expresses the ordered historical and progressive tendencies of the unprivileged working masses; he creates a new aristocracy by means of an extreme differentiation in wages, privileges, ranks, etc. Leaning for support upon the topmost layer of the new social hierarchy against the lowest — sometimes vice versa — Stalin has attained the complete concentration of power in his own hands. What else should this regime be called if not Soviet Bonapartism?" (p. 181)

Isn't this a description that applies to the China of Mao as well as to the Russia of Stalin? It is the Bonapartist nature of Stalinism, resting on a "new special hierarchy" and balancing between the working class and world imperialism, that distinguishes it from all varieties of

centrist vacillation. To speak of a "right turn" in China without specifying the axis around which the zigzags of the Maoist leadership revolve—the interests of a hardened bureaucratic caste—can lead to illusions as to the underlying determinants of Peking's policies. Such an assessment is suggested by Comrade Maitan in his article on the downfall of Lin Piao written in June 1972. There he writes:

"It would be an error to consider that the positions taken by the Chinese leaders in the most recent period have a definitive character. First of all, the new policy has not yet been sufficiently defined on all levels. Secondly and most importantly, it has always been a characteristic of the Chinese bureaucracy to adapt pliantly to the changes in situations on the basis of an underlying empiricism. In the same way as it shifted gears in 1970-71, it may do so again in the future. For example, if on the international front new dramatic tensions arose in Asia . . . the Chinese leaders might be forced back to a 'hard' line, impelled by the need to stay the hand of imperialism by other means." (*Intercontinental Press*, October 9, 1972, p. 1091.) Maitan adds his estimate that the current opportunist policy of the Peking regime is "likely" to last "for at least a few years."

The notion of a purely empirical (i.e., diplomatic and political) determinant of Peking's line and the hope that Mao will revert to a "hard" line in a few years flow from the view that Maoist Stalinism is an expression of bureaucratic centrism. Trotsky, however, insisted in the late 1930s that such a characterization was inadequate to understand or explain the vacillations of the Stalinist parties. In a letter to James P. Cannon dated October 10, 1937, he wrote:

"Some comrades continue to characterize Stalinism as 'bureaucratic centrism.' This characterization is now totally out of date. On the international arena, Stalinism is no longer centrism, but the crudest form of opportunism and social patriotism. See Spain!" (*Intercontinental Press*, January 22, 1973, p. 57.)

Trotsky developed this point further in "Lessons of Spain: The Last Warning" (December 17, 1937). There he wrote:

"The left Socialists and Anarchists, the captives of the Popular Front, tried, it is true, to save whatever could be saved of democracy. But inasmuch as they did not dare to mobilize the masses against the gendarmes of the Popular Front, their efforts at the end were reduced to complaints and wails. The Stalinists were thus in alliance with the extreme right, avowedly bourgeois wing of the Socialist Party. They directed their repressions against the left—the POUM, the Anarchists, the 'left' Socialists—in other words, against the centrist groupings who reflected, even in a most remote degree, the pressure of the revolutionary masses.

"This political fact, very significant in itself, provides at the same time a measure of the degeneration of the Comintern in the last few years. I once defined Stalinism as bureaucratic centrism, and events brought a series of corroborations of the correctness of this definition. But it is obviously obsolete today. The interests of the Bonapartist bureaucracy can no longer be reconciled with centrist hesitation and vacillation. In search of reconciliation with the bourgeoisie, the Stalinist clique is capable of entering into alliance only with the most conservative groupings among the international labor aristocracy. This

has acted to fix definitively the counterrevolutionary character of Stalinism on the international arena." (*The Spanish Revolution, 1931-39*, p. 311. Emphasis in original.)

Thus we see that Trotsky long ago abandoned the term "bureaucratic centrism" for the Soviet bureaucracy and the parties that follow its line. He did not hesitate to use the term Stalinist to designate the Spanish Communist Party, which combined its repression of the centrist POUM and the Trotskyists with leadership of an armed struggle of no small proportions against Franco.

The inherently counterrevolutionary character of Stalinism flows from profound sociological reasons of which its Bonapartist political character is a corresponding reflection. Trotsky, while sharply distinguishing the Soviet bureaucracy from a ruling class, nevertheless noted that it was a far more self-conscious and homogeneous social formation than any previously known bureaucracy. It was for this reason that he labeled it a social caste. In the *Revolution Betrayed*, written in 1936, he said:

"In no other regime has a bureaucracy ever achieved such a degree of independence from the dominating class. In bourgeois society, the bureaucracy represents the interests of a possessing and educated class, which has at its disposal innumerable means of everyday control over its administration of affairs. The Soviet bureaucracy has risen above a class which is hardly emerging from destitution and darkness, and has no tradition of dominion or command. Whereas the fascists, when they find themselves in power, are united with the big bourgeoisie by bonds of common interest, friendship, marriage, etc., the Soviet bureaucracy takes on bourgeois customs without having beside it a national bourgeoisie. In this sense we cannot deny that it is something more than a bureaucracy. It is in the full sense of the word the sole privileged and commanding stratum in the Soviet society." (Pathfinder Press edition, 1972, pp. 248-49.)

Finally on this point, in his article "The USSR in War," written on September 25, 1939, Trotsky explained his use of the term "caste" to characterize the Soviet regime, distinguishing it from other forms of bureaucracy known in the labor movement in the West or in capitalist state apparatuses. He wrote:

"Our critics have more than once argued that the present Soviet bureaucracy bears very little resemblance to either the bourgeois or labor bureaucracy in capitalist society; that to a far greater degree than fascist bureaucracy it represents a new and much more powerful social formation. This is quite correct and we have never closed our eyes to it.... We frequently call the Soviet bureaucracy a caste, underscoring thereby its shut-in character, its arbitrary rule, and the haughtiness of the ruling stratum which considers that its progenitors issued from the divine lips of Brahma whereas the popular masses originated from the grosser portions of his anatomy." (*In Defense of Marxism* [Pathfinder Press, 1973], pp. 5-6)

The Fourth International in all its sections accepted Trotsky's analysis of Stalinism, his call for political revolution against the Soviet bureaucracy, and the identification of pro-Moscow parties, including the Chinese CP, as Stalinist. This remained the position of our movement as a whole until the Chinese revolution of 1949 which posed important theoretical and practical problems for world Trotskyism. In the first tentative estimates of this development made at the Third World Congress in 1951,

most of the participants tended to conclude that by the very fact of having taken part in a revolution and having won state power the Maoist CCP had to some degree broken with Stalinism (one exception was Pablo who concluded that the Chinese revolution showed a hitherto unexpected revolutionary potential for parties that remained Stalinist).

The split in the Fourth International in 1954 into two public factions—the International Committee and the International Secretariat—prevented a common world discussion of these important problems. In the period immediately following the split, two distinct views of Maoism emerged in the ranks of world Trotskyism. The Socialist Workers Party in its 1955 resolution on China, drafted for the International Committee in late 1954, concluded that the CCP, despite its having led an armed struggle and despite its rise to state power, remained a Stalinist party that was rapidly consolidating a hardened caste similar in essentials to that in the Soviet Union. This view was shared by Comrade Peng and the Chinese Trotskyists. The resolution stated:

"In terms of political organization the Mao bureaucracy succeeded in the very course of the Third Chinese Revolution in imposing a totalitarian state power. They are now seeking to intrench this bureaucratic superstructure on the proletarian foundation, on the conquests of the revolution. This insolvable contradiction, which characterizes the USSR, and which renders the regime that of permanent crisis, is now being reproduced on Chinese soil, posing before the Chinese workers the iron necessity of political revolution against the bureaucratic caste." ("The Third Chinese Revolution and Its Aftermath," in *The Chinese Revolution and Its Development*, Education for Socialists bulletin, p. 8.)

Comrades Maitan, Mandel, and Frank in 1954 took a position distinct from that of Comrade Peng and the SWP. They held that the CCP's role in the Chinese revolution constituted an objective break with Stalinism and a return to a "bureaucratic centrist" formation of the type represented by the Stalinist faction of the CPSU in the mid-1920s. From this they concluded, consistently if wrongly, that neither a political revolution nor a party of the Fourth International was required in China. This view was expressed in the resolution "The Rise and Decline of Stalinism," adopted by the "Fourth World Congress of the Fourth International" (which was a congress sponsored by the International Secretariat and therefore representative of only a part of the world Trotskyist movement). The resolution stated:

"Since both the Chinese CP and to a certain extent also the Yugoslav CP are in reality bureaucratic centrist parties, which however still find themselves under the pressure of the revolution in their countries, we do not call upon the proletariat of these countries to constitute new revolutionary parties or to prepare a political revolution in these countries. We are working toward the constitution of a left tendency within the JCP and within the Chinese CP, a tendency which will be able, in connection with the development of the world revolutionary rise, to assure and to lead a new stage forward in the revolution in these two countries." (Reprinted in *The Development and Disintegration of World Stalinism*, Education for Socialists bulletin, March 1970, p. 20.)

The resolutions of the Reunification Congress in 1963

make no mention of "bureaucratic centrism" or of any objection to building revolutionary Marxist parties in China or Yugoslavia. The congress outlined a program for workers' democracy in China and stated:

"These conquests cannot be won except through an anti-bureaucratic struggle on a scale massive enough to bring about a qualitative change in the political form of government." ("The Sino-Soviet Conflict and the Situation in the USSR and the Other Workers' States," Fourth International, October-December 1963, p. 64.)

This formulation stated in essence the need for a political revolution in China, although not explicitly.

It was only at the December 1965 world congress that the concept that the Chinese CP represented a form of centrism was introduced into the documents of the unified International. This took place through amendments and additions to a common resolution on the Sino-Soviet conflict that had been submitted by the world leadership as a whole. These changes were made at a time when Comrade Hansen, who had collaborated on the document for the SWP, was seriously ill and unable to attend the congress. When the alterations in the document came to the attention of the SWP leadership—only after the congress had concluded—they were protested and rejected. (See *The Anatomy of Stalinism*, by Tom Kerry, Education for Socialists bulletin, June 1972, for a discussion of this correspondence.)

The alterations included the introduction of a theory postulating the impossibility of the rise of a bureaucratic caste similar to that in the Soviet Union anywhere else in the world:

". . . the material forces that gave rise to such a hardened and fully crystallized bureaucratic caste as appeared in the Soviet Union no longer exist anywhere in the world." ("The Sino-Soviet Conflict and the Crisis of the International Communist Movement." *International Socialist Review*, Spring 1966, p. 80.)

This uncalled-for assertion was then applied to China:

"The Chinese Communist Party cannot be considered to have been a Stalinist party in the strict sense of the term; that is subordinated since the twenties to the bureaucratic leadership of the Kremlin. The Mao leadership had its own personality; and its policies, although often marked in practice by compromises with the Moscow leadership which led to the gravest deviations, had a generally centrist character leaning toward the left." (Ibid.)

This estimate was carried over in the amendments through which Comrades Maitan, Mandel, and Frank changed the original resolution on the Cultural Revolution in 1969. That document, however, for the first time since the formulation in the 1963 reunification resolution explicitly included a call for political revolution in China. This was a contradictory position. Remnants of the old position of the International Secretariat stood in the way of correctly explaining and anticipating the course of Maoist Stalinism in the recent period.

Maoism as a Social Formation

The fact is that two different views of Maoism still exist in the Fourth International. This explains why one of the resolutions submitted to the 1969 world congress saw deeper into the character and actions of Maoism than the other. The resolution prepared by Comrades Maitan,

Mandel, and Frank, reinforced by Comrade Maitan's report, approached Maoism as a purely *political* phenomenon. Its appraisals were based on study of the programmatic statements and documents issued in Peking.

The original resolution prepared by Comrades Peng, Novack, and Hansen was based on viewing Maoism as a social formation equivalent in essentials to the parasitic caste in the Soviet Union. It was only on this level that a correct understanding of the long-term motivations of the Peking leadership could be reached.

It is true that there is much that is new in the development of Stalinism. Trotsky thought that revolutions in the advanced capitalist countries after World War II would lead to the eclipse and overthrow of Stalinism. But events did not conform to Trotsky's prediction on this score. Stalinism was temporarily strengthened after the war. The developments in Eastern Europe demonstrated that the conditions of caste rule could be duplicated in at least the countries bordering the Soviet Union so long as the Soviet bureaucracy remained in power. We need not repeat here the exceptional circumstances that made this possible.

III. A PROGRAM FOR POLITICAL REVOLUTION IN CHINA

A key test of all theories lies in their capacity to correctly forecast events. Our movement from the mid-1930s until the Chinese revolution of 1949 was unanimous in characterizing the Chinese Communist Party as a Stalinist party based on its sociological character and its program. Drawing in a one-sided way on the provisional and on some points erroneous estimates made of the Chinese revolution at the Third World Congress in 1951, a section of the world Trotskyist movement has since 1954 felt that this characterization turned out to be wrong. According to this view, a party that retained a military apparatus and succeeded, under whatever exceptional circumstances, in taking state power could not possibly be Stalinist.

It is almost twenty years since this division of opinion appeared in our ranks. The course of the Cultural Revolution and its aftermath have shown which of these approaches corresponds most closely to the reality.

This should now be recognized by the Fourth International. (1) Maoism should be characterized as a variety of Stalinism and not as "bureaucratic centrism." (2) The general line of the original resolution submitted by the minority of the United Secretariat to the Ninth World Congress should be adopted.

* * *

In addition we propose the following as among the main points of a program to establish proletarian democracy in China:

1. The establishment of proletarian democracy is China's most crying need. The will of the toiling majority does not prevail in China today. Instead, a narrow circle of bureaucrats, acting like the crowned heads of an uncontrolled dynasty, decide in secret on all major policies af-

With the victory of the Chinese revolution in 1949, the Chinese Stalinists found themselves in command of a vast, but extremely poverty-stricken country, which, in the absence of a mass revolutionary Marxist opposition and with help from the Kremlin, favored the growth of a caste on the Soviet model. This process had in fact already begun before 1949 in the remote rural areas where the petty-bourgeois Stalinist leaders exercised command over hundreds of thousands and even millions of peasants through the Maoist "Red Army."

To continue to treat this formation as no more than a bureaucratized political tendency in the workers' movement and not take into account its real social basis as it has become more and more entrenched could only lead to grave mistakes in estimating its inner dynamics and course of development. It is high time for our movement as a whole to apply Trotsky's most important theoretical contribution after the theory of permanent revolution—his analysis of the sociological roots of Stalinism in the material interests of a privileged ruling caste—to the rise of an essentially similar social formation in backward China.

fecting the lives of hundreds of millions of persons. This state of affairs is fraught with danger for China both at home and abroad.

2. What is immediately required is outlawing of the special privileges of the bureaucracy, the well-spring of the bureaucratic caste. This can be achieved only by structuring the economy and the state on councils controlled by the masses, with the right of all prosocialist tendencies to participate, and with all elected officials subject to immediate recall.

3. This must be accompanied by separation of the party from the state apparatus, abolition of the single-party system, legalization of tendencies within the CCP, and recognition of the right of the masses to assemble and to form opposition parties on the basis of defense of the socialist property forms against attempts from within or without to restore capitalism.

4. To assure proletarian democracy, the masses must have access to accurate information and a wide spectrum of views through a free press, radio, and television.

5. The workers and poor peasants must be guaranteed the right to form unions independent of the state apparatus to enable them to participate without fetters in the elaboration of the economic plan and to safeguard their living standards from encroachment by the state apparatus.

6. National minorities must be granted full national rights, including the right to form independent socialist republics. While representing only 6 percent of the population, the Tibetans, Mongols, Uighurs, Manchus, Chuang, and other minority peoples occupy 60 percent of the land, in the most barren and undeveloped parts of the country.

7. The Mao regime has resisted every tentative effort of the masses to gain proletarian democracy. It is clear that a political revolution is required to overturn the bureaucratic caste and make possible a regime like that of the Paris Commune or of the government headed by

Lenin and Trotsky in Russia following the October revolution.

8. The political revolution must be the task of the Chinese workers and poor peasants themselves. They can carry out this task successfully only on condition that the Chinese workers state is defended unconditionally, despite its present leadership, from any attack by imperialism.

The Chinese workers state must likewise be defended against the attempts by the Soviet bureaucracy to impose its will through rattling the nuclear bomb, posting Soviet armies on the Chinese border, and threatening to intervene in the internal affairs of the People's Republic of China.

9. The Chinese Stalinist leaders have demonstrated by their proscription of proletarian democracy, and in the course and outcome of the Cultural Revolution, that it would be delusory to think that the Chinese Communist Party can be reformed. The indispensable instrument for

the success of the political revolution is a revolutionary Marxist party, the Chinese section of the Fourth International. The construction of such a party under the difficult conditions imposed by the Mao regime must be the first priority of the class-conscious workers, revolutionary-minded students, and poor peasants in China today.

10. One of the tasks that revolutionists abroad can take up to assist in this process is defense of the political prisoners held by the Maoist regime. Many of these political prisoners, including several score Fourth Internationalists, have been kept imprisoned for more than twenty years. The fate of most of them is unknown. Ways and means must be found to break the wall of secrecy the Chinese Stalinist bureaucracy has maintained over the fate of revolutionists who have dared to speak against the existence of special privileges in a country that is struggling to achieve socialism.

APPENDIX: Draft Resolution on the 'Cultural Revolution'

Original

Proposed Amendments

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

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

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

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

The "cultural revolution" represented a phase of sharp public conflict in an inter-bureaucratic struggle between divergent tendencies in the topmost circles of the Chinese Communist party leadership which eventually affected every sector of Chinese society. It constituted the greatest single crisis experienced by the bureaucratic regime since its establishment.

establishment and expresses an important weakening of that bureaucratic regime,

both as the result of its inner contradictions and of a widespread mobilization of the masses.

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

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

The period of intensified difficulties goes back to the damage done to Chinese agriculture and economy during the Great Leap Forward and the 1959-61 near-famine period.

The difficulties at home have been aggravated by the deterioration of Peking's international position due to Mao's foreign policy. This policy, in essence, expresses the narrow national interests of the ruling bureaucracy in China. It has oscillated between opportunism and ultraleftism or combinations of both.

One of the worst setbacks was the break with the Soviet Union. While major responsibility for this lies with the bureaucratic rulers in Moscow, who in the late fifties denied the Chinese government access to nuclear weapons and cut off economic aid, the initiative in extending the rift to the governmental level was taken by Peking.

Moreover, Mao's ultimatism alienated the powerful support and sympathy among the people of other workers states and the ranks of other Communist parties which China had at the beginning of the Sino-Soviet dispute.

Mao's unwillingness or incapacity to promulgate a united front with Moscow served to encourage the expansion of U.S. intervention in Vietnam and a mounting militant danger for China despite the nuclear deterrents which were developed at staggering cost to the Chinese economy.

However, the colossal problems of economic, social, political and cultural development confronting so backward a country as China, with its huge population, were far from having been solved, and the authoritarian methods practiced by the Maoist leadership have in addition seriously hampered the working out of such solutions.

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

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

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

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

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

(e) The contradiction between the objective needs for accelerated industrialization created by the Kremlin's sudden and

brutal economic blockade of China.

(f) The contradiction between the rapid expansion of literacy and the increase in general level of education of the Chinese youth at the one hand, and the still relatively low number of skilled jobs available in China.

All these contradictions have been intensified by the damage done to Chinese agriculture and economy during the second phase of the Great Leap Forward and the 1959-61 near-famine period. They created an explosive situation in the country, in which a process of political differentiation and increased political activity of the masses became possible. In this situation, conditions for a genuine political revolution against the ruling bureaucracy matured. The "cultural revolution" constitutes objectively an attempt by the Mao faction to divert the social forces pushing in that direction from an overthrow of the bureaucracy into a reform of the bureaucracy.

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

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

The leadership of the Chinese CP, educated in the Stalinist school, has always accepted the theory of "building socialism in one country." However, in the fifties, the importance of the help which the other workers states could give to the economic growth and the military defense of the P.R. of China, made the dangerous implications of that theory inside China less important than in the USSR in the late twenties and the thirties (its international implications detrimental to world revolution continued to manifest themselves even then). The reversal of the Maoist leadership to a policy of "self-

reliance" and large-scale economic autarchy and self-sufficiency is only a rationalization of the consequences of the Kremlin's blockade and the tremendous burden imposed on China by the need to develop its own nuclear weapons, given the refusal of the Soviet bureaucracy to assist it on this field.

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

It is however also true that the bureaucratic character of the Mao faction have added to the international isolation of the P.R. of China and increased the contradictions and political conflicts inside the CP of China.

Although Peking maintained its resolution to defend the USSR against imperialism and the Kremlin failed to reiterate similar assurances to the P.R. of China, Mao failed to promote a consistent policy of anti-imperialist united front in Vietnam, thereby harming the defense of the Vietnamese revolution and the political influence of the CP of China in the world Communist movement.

In place of consistent development of the world revolution, which could have brought new socialist allies into being and carried the struggle for socialism into the main strongholds of the capitalist system, Mao followed a policy of collaborating with the colonial bourgeoisie, as in Pakistan.

in several countries

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

The bankruptcy of this foreign policy became glaringly clear when, after deposing Liu Shao-chi as a "lackey of imperialism, modern revisionism and the Kuomintang reac-

It can even not be excluded that a change of line of U.S. imperialism towards China would lead to a significant modification of revolutionary militancy advised by

tionaries," Mao offered "peaceful coexistence" to the Nixon administration.

the Chinese leadership to its followers abroad -- a normalization of relations at state level with the USA being in itself of course not reprehensible.

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

setbacks

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

SHIFT These paragraphs to Page 30

him

By 1965 Mao felt that he was in position to break Liu's hold upon the regime and regain his lost supremacy. By exploiting his immense prestige, by maneuvering between the diverse tendencies and cutting them down one after another, by slandering Liu and his men through a relentless propaganda campaign, Mao succeeded in isolating them and eroding their bases of support among the masses, in the party, the army and the provinces and completing their downfall.

4.

Because of the fragmentary, contradictory and unconfirmed nature of the information available, it is difficult and hazardous to attempt a precise delineation of either the evolution or content of (these disagreements). The available evidence indicates that a number of oppositional tendencies were involved. The Maoist machine has not permitted their spokesmen -- or they have not dared or cared -- to state their positions or platforms publicly, frankly or fully.

the disagreements inside the leadership of the CP of China.

The voluminous Maoist polemics, filled with self-contradictions, present obviously falsified accounts and distorted interpretations of the opinions of their opponents and critics. It is, for example, incredible that the head of state Liu Shao-chi, the mayor of Peking Peng Chen and other Political Bureau members such as Teng

Hsiao-peng and Tao Chu (the leading Chinese Communists most publicly identified with the Sino-Soviet clashes), the deposed military leaders, the better-known disgraced Communist intellectuals, and other alleged "renegades, enemy agents or counterrevolutionary revisionists" conspired or aspired to bring back capitalism on behalf of "the imperialists and the Kuomintang reactionaries."

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

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The objective basis of this success lies in Mao's capacity to mobilize larger masses, especially of the youth, and to exploit the hatred which had been accumulated in the people against the bureaucracy as a whole. The Liu faction was paralyzed by sticking to the bureaucratic rules and by its inability to question the Mao myth, which it had itself largely contributed to create.

The factional warfare which burst forth in the upper echelons of the bureaucracy passed beyond the confines of the ruling circles in the middle of 1966 after the showdown in the eleventh Central Committee plenum of early August which adopted the 16-point decision on the "cultural revolution." In their maneuvers, they sought support among layers extending far outside the

5.

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

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

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

This flies in the face of obvious facts. The authoritarian manner in which the "cultural revolution" was launched, conducted, guided and concluded; the suppression of dissenters, coupled with the conscienceless deformation of the views of the anti-Mao tendencies; the outrageous cult of Mao; the absence of elections and democratic institutions controlled by the workers and peasants; the role of the army under Lin Piao as ultimate authority -- all testify to the antic

increased authority of the army under Lin Piao -- all testify to the bureaucratic

political course taken by the Maoist faction, which has dwindled down to a small core of the old leadership.

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

preciably change until after Stalin's death.

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

As against this, however, the army, under Lin Piao, Mao's new heir apparent and chief lieutenant, has gained greatly in political weight. By virtue of its interventions in the conflicts between the contending bureaucratic factions and between the masses in motion and the regime, the army -- at the expense of the leading role of the party -- has become the mainstay of Mao's rulership, the chief arbiter and principal centralizing force in the country. This is one of the most dangerous consequences of the "cultural revolution." However much the military high command has been shaken and its leadership divided over the past period, an ominous pattern has been set for the future.

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

6.

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

took

reestablish his control over the country.

Throughout its course, the Red Guard movement was highly contradictory. Unlike the rebellious student movements in the West, it was initiated from the very summit of state power. It did not have to engage in a "confrontation" with either the police or the armed forces. It operated in collaboration with them or with their blessing. The approbation of the country's living deity helped direct the energies of the Red Guard movement along the course selected for it, so that even in its rebellion against the bureaucratic authority it did not transcend the broad limitations set by the supreme bureaucrat.

stage.

except in its initial

The tendency of the Red Guards toward conformism could be observed at first hand in the West when the Chinese students studying abroad were recalled (not to be replaced to this day). Some of these unfortunates went to extraordinary lengths to arrive home as bandaged heroes, victims of either the Western police or the Khrushchevist bureaucracy.

The excursions of roaming bands of youth, numbering in the millions, were fostered and financed by the state, either directly or indirectly. Besides facilitating the development of the Red Guard movement in this way, Mao used even stronger means to force its pace of growth. The schools were shut down by decree, China's entire educational system being dealt a blow of immense proportions, the effects of which will be felt for a long time to come.

The fact that the Red Guard movement was initiated from above and not by the youth themselves greatly facilitated the efforts of other sectors of the bureaucracy to counter Mao's factional action by setting up Red Guard groups under their own auspices. Since all the groups were formed under the guise of carrying out Mao's directives and Mao's "thought," the confusion was immense. Nevertheless many of the groups became differentiated sufficiently in their interpretations of Mao's doctrines to come to blows and worse.

Mao's "thought," it was difficult for broader masses to understand their political differences.

Where civil strife reached proportions bordering on civil war, whether through excesses of the Red Guards or through their incapacity to actually "seize power" for Mao in areas where opposing forces were strongly entrenched, the army moved in. Thus behind the Red Guard movement stood the army as the final authority, sometimes instigating the bands of youth, at other times restraining them or even reversing what they had done.

manipulating

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

This explains why Mao had such difficulty retaining control of the Red Guard movement and curbing it once it had served the main purposes he envisioned. The Red Guard movement acquired a logic of its own.

Roaming the countryside on their own, engaging in actions of a violent nature against echelons of the bureaucracy, millions of youth gained in self-confidence and boldness. The most unmanageable of these elements passed beyond the specific objectives set for them by their bureaucratic patrons and even collided with them. Their tendency to move in the direction of critical thought and independent political action was observable in many of the wall posters and mimeographed or print-

ed publications put out by the Red Guards and in some of the "seizures of power" in which they engaged. The movement became so dangerous to Mao's objectives that he finally found it advisable to demobilize the Red Guards and send them back to the classrooms or the countryside for labor.

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

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

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

The Maoist press depicts the "cultural revolution" as a clear-cut class conflict between staunch defenders of socialism and the proletariat under "the wise leadership of our great leader Chairman Mao," and "a bunch of counterrevolutionary revisionists" and "representatives of the bourgeoisie who have sneaked into the Party, the government, the army and various spheres of culture" in order, when conditions are ripe, to "seize political power and turn the dictatorship of the proletariat into a dictatorship of the bourgeoisie."

Actually, an assortment of political currents holding different views and oriented in various directions have emerged from the disintegration of the formally monolithic bureaucracy and the turmoil of the "cultural revolution." Some of the features of these currents are distinguishable despite the concern of all of them to wear the same uniform of "Mao's Thought."

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

7.

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

actually
genuine

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

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

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

such

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

by compromise between contending factions under the supervision of the Mao-Lin Piao hard core.

There have been reports of elements on the left flanks of the contending top factions, both among Mao's followers and

Original

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

The most ironic aspect of the vaunted Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution is the damage it has inflicted upon the cultural life of China. The witch-hunt and persecution of intellectuals, the stifling of discussion and the bridling of free inquiry; the closing down of the universities and high schools for almost two years; the demand that all fields of creative and artistic endeavor submit to the arbitrary specifications laid down by state and party authorities; the universal chanting of obligatory phrases to Mao Tse-tung in the style of a primitive religion creates an atmosphere completely inimical to the development of a humanistic culture permeated with the ideals and critical thought of socialist liberation. Cultural creativity and activity must wither under conformism and regimentation of thought where the expression of dissenting views on all issues of concern to the nation are tabooed and penalized.

The grotesque cult of Mao, who has been elevated like Stalin before him to the height of a semicelestial being with powers bordering on the supernatural, is utterly antipathetic to the critical spirit of Marxism and the development of a socialist culture. Some 3.4 billion sets of Chairman Mao's writings and reproductions of his portrait have been issued during the "cultural revolution" and his name is invoked about five million times a day on the air. Ludicrous and repulsive as this after the lessons of the adulation accorded to Stalin, the deification of Mao serves a practical political function. The reverence for Mao among the masses, serving as an opiate of the people, is an indispensable source of stability for the Chinese bureaucracy. His disappearance from the scene will precipitate a problem of succession more perilous for the present regime than was the death of Stalin for the Soviet bureaucracy.

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

8.

as guilty as

(1) In countries that have overthrown the bourgeoisie and abolished private ownership of the means of production, they assert that capitalism can be restored by gradual and peaceful processes through machinations

and false policies of one or another tendency in the leadership of the Communist parties. This discards or disregards the Marxist theory of the state which asserts that such fundamental changes cannot be accomplished either gradually or peacefully.

(2) They identify the bureaucratic degeneration of the revolution with capitalist restoration. In doing this, the Maoists lapse into an extreme voluntarism, enormously exaggerating the social weight of ideology. Mao locates the chief cause of the danger of bureaucratic degeneration and capitalist restoration, not in the material foundations of the socio-economic order, but in the realm of ideology. He proclaims that if revisionism is not rooted out on the theoretical, scientific, artistic and literary levels, it will inevitably lead to the overthrow of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

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

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

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

(5) The strategy of world revolution expounded by Mao and Lin Piao extols the insurrectionary movements of the peasantry in the backward colonial areas and systematic-

ally underrates or dismisses the key role which the industrial working class in the advanced countries must play in overthrowing the power of imperialism and helping to create the new socialist society.

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

9.

The need for a political revolution where state power has been usurped by a bureaucracy and all avenues of democratic control have been closed to the masses has been made clearer and more understandable to broad sections of the international Communist movement and the revolutionary vanguard. This lesson has been reinforced by the abrupt and brutal halting of the drive toward democratization in Czechoslovakia in 1968 by the Soviet occupation.

If the "cultural revolution" has helped popularize and win acceptance of the notion of political revolution in the bureaucratized workers states, its course and outcome under the tutelage of Mao Tse-tung demonstrates that the methods pursued by his faction leads to the opposite result. It is impossible to eradicate bureaucracy by bureaucratic means. The "cultural revolution" has ended in the constriction of democracy and the fortification of the positions of one faction of the bureaucracy against its rivals rather than the expansion and deepening of decision-making powers by the masses.

The "cultural revolution" has ended in an attempt to stop the mass movement and to restore a new form of bureaucratic rule, under the guise of the "triple alliance," instead of the rule of the old party and state bureaucracy which had, in its majority, supported Liu. This "triple alliance" is in reality a compromise between the Maoist faction and parts of the old majority faction, compromise initiated when the masses started to intervene autonomously into the struggle and thereby threatened the whole bureaucratic rule.

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

* * *

10.

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

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

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

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

them, although some practical agreements on military assistance to Vietnam were finally concluded.

While recognizing that for its own reasons Peking often pursues a more aggressive diplomatic policy than Moscow, the Fourth International also criticizes the opportunism of the Chinese Communist leadership. In seeking to gain influence in the colonial world, Peking uses a language that is strongly anti-imperialist. It has extended material aid to guerrilla forces as well as countries like Tanzania, thus helping to create an image far to the left of Moscow. Nevertheless, Peking's basic policy, as reiterated many times by its leaders and voiced once again upon the inauguration of the Nixon administration, has been "peaceful coexistence" with U.S. imperialism. Out of narrow nationalistic considerations and in line with its doctrine that the revolution must first pass through a bourgeois stage before it can reach the socialist stage, Peking counsels and countenances support to bourgeois governments in Indonesia, Pakistan and other countries instead of mobilizing the masses for uncompromising struggle against the neocolonial regimes.

advocates a more militant line to its followers abroad

bureaucratic centrism

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

On the other hand, Peking's basic policy has continued to imply support to whatever bourgeois government in a semi-colonial country happens to diplomatically collaborate with China (yesterday Indo-

nesia, today Pakistan and Tanzania), which leads to disastrous results for the revolutionary class struggle in these countries.

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

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

In a few areas newly radicalized youth have mistaken the verbal militancy and activism of the Maoist groups as representing Marxist-Leninism in contrast to the cowardly reformism of the Social Democrats and the opportunism of Moscow and its followers. With experience this initial impression soon fades in most instances. Almost ten years after the Sino-Soviet dispute began, the Maoists have still proved incapable of creating a sizeable youth movement in any country outside of China or providing substantial or lasting programmatic inspiration to the leaderships of the new generation of rebel youth advancing into the political arena on an international scale.

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

also
in China, the bureaucracy cannot be removed by reforms.

The Social Roots of Chinese Stalinism and the Dispute in the Fourth International

By Les Evans

The Third Chinese Revolution of 1946-53 posed some difficult questions for the world Trotskyist movement. If Stalinism was thoroughly counterrevolutionary, how could a Stalinist party lead a revolution? The Third World Congress of the Fourth International held in August-September 1951 suggested the line of reasoning that was developed further by the supporters of the Maitan-Mandel-Frank resolution on the Cultural Revolution submitted to the 1969 world congress.

"In the event of powerful revolutionary uprisings of the masses, like those which occurred during the war in Yugoslavia, in China, and recently in Korea . . . it is not excluded that certain Communist Parties with the bulk of their forces can be pushed out of the strict orbit of the Soviet bureaucracy and can project a revolutionary orientation.

"From that moment on, they would cease to be strictly Stalinist parties, mere instruments of the policy of the Soviet bureaucracy, and would lend themselves to a differentiation and to a politically autonomous course." (*Fourth International*, November-December 1951, p. 186.)

It is not entirely clear what this wording means to suggest. It does not definitely say that the three parties mentioned had already ceased to be "strictly Stalinist," but on the other hand "Stalinism" is defined extremely narrowly, as synonymous with "mere instruments of the policy of the Soviet bureaucracy." This very limited definition does not suggest how we should characterize a workers state headed by a Stalinist party if that party should develop tactical differences with the Kremlin. Is "Stalinism" a generic term that can be applied to the regime in any workers state in which a parasitic bureaucratic caste has arisen, holds the reins of power, and promulgates the program of socialism in one country? The 1951 resolution seems to say no, without providing an alternative definition.

In 1954 the Fourth International split into two public factions, the International Committee and the International Secretariat, and the discussion of China and Maoism pro-

ceeded along two different lines.

At the 1954 "Fourth World Congress" of the supporters of the International Secretariat, the resolution "The Rise and Decline of Stalinism" made explicit the implications of the 1951 world congress documents. It stated:

"There is no contradiction between the fact that, on the one hand, the Yugoslav CP and the Chinese CP have been able to lead a revolution victoriously and independently of the Kremlin and have in these instances ceased to be Stalinist parties in the proper meaning of this term; and that, on the other hand, these parties have followed and continue to follow an opportunist orientation which restricts, disorganizes, and places in danger the conquests of the revolution—an opportunist line essentially derived from the Stalinist past of the leaderships of these parties." (*The Development and Disintegration of World Stalinism*, Education for Socialists bulletin, March 1970, p. 18.)

The armed struggle for power, then, independently of the program and intentions of the Stalinist parties of China and Yugoslavia, had resulted in these parties ceasing to be Stalinist "in the proper meaning of this term." What had they become? The resolution essayed a new definition:

"Since both the Chinese CP and to a certain extent also the Yugoslav CP are in reality bureaucratic centrist parties, which however still find themselves under the pressure of the revolution in their countries, we do not call upon the proletariat of these countries to constitute new revolutionary parties or to prepare a political revolution in these countries." (*Ibid.*, p. 20.)

This definition is at least consistent. Maoism in this view ceased to be Stalinist by virtue of its having led the military struggle for power. Having become a "bureaucratic centrist" party, Trotskyists were to take the same attitude toward it that they took toward the Soviet Communist Party when it was characterized as bureaucratic centrist before 1933: the task was to reform it and not to overthrow it in a political revolution.

The supporters of the International Committee followed a different course in appraising Maoism. They avoided *a priori* judgments of what a Stalinist party might be capable of when caught up in a mass revolutionary upheaval. Instead, they examined the Chinese reality to determine if the program and practice of the Chinese Communist Party had contributed to the success of the revolution or had acted as an obstacle. They compared the overturn of capitalism in China by the Chinese Stalinists to the extension of noncapitalist property relations into Eastern Europe by Stalin himself with the aid of the East European Stalinist parties. Above all they examined (1) the roles of the peasantry and the working class in the Chinese revolution, and (2) the state structure that emerged from the revolution. They compared this structure with that of the Soviet Union under the rule of the parasitic bureaucratic caste.

Their conclusions were summarized in the resolution drafted in late 1954 for the International Committee by the Socialist Workers Party. It said:

"In terms of political organization the Mao bureaucracy succeeded in the very course of the Third Chinese Revolution in imposing a totalitarian state power. They are now seeking to entrench this bureaucratic superstructure on the proletarian foundation, on the conquests of the revolution. This insolvable contradiction, which characterizes the USSR, and which renders the regime that of permanent crisis, is now being reproduced on Chinese soil, posing before the Chinese workers the iron necessity of political revolution against the bureaucratic caste." ("The Third Chinese Revolution and Its Aftermath," in *The Chinese Revolution and Its Development*, Education for Socialists bulletin, November 1969, p. 8.)

If these different appraisals could be restricted to the past, there would be no purpose except perhaps of a historical character in raising them again today. Unfortunately the two resolutions on the Cultural Revolution in 1969 embodied just this underlying difference: Is the basic thrust of Maoist policy similar in essence to the counterrevolutionary nature of Soviet Stalinism and does it flow from similar social roots; or is the Maoist party a "bureaucratic centrist" formation capable of oscillations that bring it nearer in practice to the positions of revolutionary Marxism? The denouement of the Cultural Revolution should allow us to draw some conclusions on this long-standing difference of estimate.

Underlying the position of Comrades Maitan, Mandel, and Frank that the Maoist regime is "bureaucratic centrist"—ignoring for the moment the contradictory call for its overthrow in a political revolution which these comrades for the first time put forward in their 1969 resolution—is the idea developed in 1951-54 that leading a revolution is in itself proof of a break to the left from Stalinism. All the supporters of the Maitan-Mandel-Frank resolution in 1969 argued that the most important single "proof" of the Chinese CP's supposed pragmatic shift from Stalinism to "bureaucratic centrism" lay in its willingness, reluctant or not, to wage a military struggle that resulted in the creation of a workers' state. Before proceeding to the analysis of Maoism in power, then, three questions should be answered: (1) Did the waging of an armed struggle and the practice of "people's war" in the years before 1949 constitute a break with Stalinism? (2) Is it possible for a Stalinist or other petty-bourgeois party to seize governmental power and then to carry out a social transformation re-

sulting in the creation of a workers' state, and if so, under what circumstances and through what mechanism? (3) Did the Third Chinese Revolution involve or necessitate a break with Stalin?

Trotsky's Estimate of 'People's War' and the Chinese CP

Although there undoubtedly exist differences among the supporters of the 1969 Maitan-Mandel-Frank resolution on the Cultural Revolution as to how early the Chinese CP's break with Stalinism is supposed to have occurred, the logic of their position is to push it back to the very beginnings of "armed struggle" in China during the ultra-left years of Third Period Stalinism following the defeat of the revolution of 1925-27. This is implicit in one of the last-minute amendments made by Comrades Maitan, Mandel, and Frank to the resolution on the Sino-Soviet conflict adopted by the 1965 world congress (without the agreement of the SWP—see the discussion of this point in the accompanying resolution). There they wrote:

"The Chinese Communist Party cannot be considered to have been a Stalinist party in the strict sense of the term; that is, subordinated since the twenties to the bureaucratic leadership of the Kremlin. The Mao leadership had its own personality; and its policies, although often marked in practice by compromises with the Moscow leadership which led to the gravest deviations, had a generally centrist character leaning toward the left." (*International Socialist Review*, Spring 1966, p. 80.)

This theme is picked up in almost the same words and then developed further by Comrade Henri Weber in the October 7, 1972, issue of *Rouge*. Comrade Weber does not indicate if his views are shared by other leaders of the Ligue Communiste, but they certainly must have been taken as such by the readers of *Rouge* inasmuch as he is the newspaper's editor, a member of the Political Bureau of the Ligue, and a member of the International Executive Committee of the Fourth International. He wrote:

"Although formed in the school of the Third International, the Maoist leadership cannot strictly be characterized as a Stalinist leadership. For specific historical reasons which relate to the conditions of struggle born from the defeat of the Chinese revolution of 1927, this leadership has preserved a genuine political autonomy in relationship to the Stalinist bureaucracy. . . ."

"This autonomy of the Maoist leadership was expressed in the elaboration of an original strategy for the conquest of power: the strategy of prolonged war, a strategy totally foreign to Stalinism. . . ."

Maitan, Mandel, and Frank in 1965 argued that the Chinese Communist Party had not been "subordinated since the twenties to the bureaucratic leadership of the Kremlin," but gave no examples of its supposed "generally centrist character leaning toward the left." Weber's singling out of "revolutionary war" as the basis for this view of the CCP as non-Stalinist seems quite consistent with the general line of the 1969 Maitan-Mandel-Frank resolution. This position exaggerates the revolutionary virtues of armed struggle divorced from program, the revolutionary proletarian party, and the working class. This is in consonance with the positions taken by the supporters of the Maitan-Mandel-Frank tendency on "guerrilla warfare" in

Latin America.

Trotsky, in assessing the Stalinist betrayal of the Chinese revolution of 1925-27, opposed not only the class-collaborationist subordination of the Chinese Communist Party to the Kuomintang, but also the ultraleft adventures that followed. Trotsky's criticisms were not limited to the disastrous Canton insurrection of December 1927, but also encompassed Mao's Autumn Harvest uprising, the formation of "peasant soviets" in the absence of workers' soviets in the cities, the establishment of a peasant "Red Army," and the creation of a nonproletarian territorial base in the hinterland of Kiangsi Province.

Trotsky saw no contradiction between Mao's strategy of "prolonged revolutionary war" and Stalinism. He did not even preclude the possibility that Mao would succeed in toppling the Chiang Kai-shek government. What was essential for Trotsky was the class composition of the Maoist forces, their social program, and the kind of regime they could be expected to establish if they did succeed in winning governmental power.

In an article entitled "Peasant War in China" written in September 1932 (before Trotsky finally abandoned the perspective of reforming the Comintern) he developed his principal critique of the Maoist-Stalinist strategy. It is worth quoting at some length:

"Among the Communist leaders of Red detachments there are indubitably many declassed intellectuals and semi-intellectuals who have not gone through the school of proletarian struggle. For two or three years they live the lives of partisan commanders and commissars, they wage battles, seize territories, etc. They absorb the spirit of their environment. Meanwhile the majority of the rank and file Communists in the Red detachments unquestionably consists of peasants, who assume the name Communist in all honesty and sincerity but who in actuality remain revolutionary paupers or revolutionary petty proprietors. In politics he who judges by denominations and labels and not by social facts is lost. All the more so, when the politics concerned is carried out arms in hand.

"The true Communist party is the organization of the proletarian vanguard. Meanwhile, we must not forget that the working class of China during the last four years has been kept in an oppressed and amorphous condition and only recently has it evinced signs of revival. It is one thing when the Communist party, firmly resting upon the flower of the urban proletariat, strives, through the workers, to lead the peasant war. It is an altogether different thing when a few thousand or even tens of thousands of revolutionists assume the leadership of the peasant war and are in reality Communists or take that name, without having serious support from the proletariat. This is precisely the situation in China. This acts to augment in the extreme the danger of conflicts between the workers and the armed peasants. . . .

"In China the situation is . . . completely to the disadvantage of the workers. In the most important regions of China the power is in the hands of bourgeois militarists. In other regions, in the hands of leaders of armed peasants. Nowhere is there any proletarian power as yet. The trade unions are weak. The influence of the party among the workers is insignificant. The peasant detachments, flushed with victories they have achieved, stand under the wing of the Comintern. They call themselves 'the Red Army,' i.e., they identify themselves with the armed forces

of the Soviets. What results consequently is that the revolutionary peasantry of China, in the person of its ruling stratum, seems to have appropriated to itself beforehand the political and moral capital which should by the nature of things belong to the Chinese workers. Isn't it possible that things may turn out so that all this capital will be directed at a certain moment *against* the workers?" (*The Chinese Revolution: Problems and Perspectives*, p. 16. Emphasis in original.)

The thesis that Maoism is a form of centrism rests first of all on the assumption that it is a *workers'* party with bureaucratic or reformist deformations from its Stalinist "past." This was not at all Trotsky's estimate of the character of the Maoist leadership or the class composition of its following. Here are Trotsky's conclusions on the nature of the Maoist command and its course should it take governmental power:

"The commanding stratum of the Chinese 'Red Army' has no doubt succeeded in inculcating itself with the habit of issuing commands. The absence of a strong revolutionary party and of mass organizations of the proletariat renders control over the commanding stratum virtually impossible. The commanders and commissars appear in the guise of absolute masters of the situation and upon occupying cities will be rather apt to look down from above upon the workers. The demands of the workers might often appear to them either inopportune or ill-advised.

"Nor should one forget such 'trifles' as the fact that within cities, the staffs and offices of the victorious armies are established not in the proletarian huts but in the finest city buildings, in the houses and apartments of the bourgeoisie; and all facilitates the inclination of the upper stratum of the peasant armies to feel itself part of the 'cultured' and 'educated' classes, nowise the proletariat.

"Thus, in China, the causes and grounds for conflicts between the army, which is *peasant in composition and petty bourgeois in leadership*, and the workers, not only are not eliminated but on the contrary all the circumstances are such as to greatly increase the possibility and even the inevitability of such conflicts; and in addition the chances of the proletariat are in advance far less favorable than was the case in Russia." (*Ibid.*, pp. 16-17. Emphasis added.)

Trotsky pointed out that in the Russian Revolution the party of the city proletariat provided the leadership for the peasant uprisings. "The Chinese Stalinists," he concluded, "have acted otherwise. . . . The party actually tore itself away from its class. Thereby in the last analysis it can cause injury to the peasantry as well. For should the proletariat continue to remain on the sidelines, without organization, without leadership, then the peasant war even if fully victorious will inevitably arrive in a blind alley." (p. 17.)

Petty-bourgeois Parties, Workers' and Farmers' Governments, and the Proletarian Revolution

In 1969 Comrade Germain, in his article "An Unacceptable Amendment," wrote that "we have never ceased to stress . . . that it is impossible to identify this [the Maoist] leadership with that of the Soviet bureaucracy or with

Stalinism." I have shown that this was not at all Trotsky's opinion. He unequivocally characterized the Chinese Communist Party as a Stalinist party and the peasant war it conducted with Stalin's approval as a Stalinist policy. He indicated the methods by which a petty-bourgeois social formation was being consolidated through the authoritarian command structure of the rural peasant armies and showed how such a leadership "if fully victorious" would exercise totalitarian control over the working class.

It is important to note the class character that Trotsky assigned to this movement, based on its actual social composition, program, and leadership. He described it accurately as "peasant in composition and petty bourgeois in leadership." Trotsky also characterized the bureaucratic caste in the Soviet Union and the policies it projected as petty bourgeois. It is on this question that an important revision of Trotsky's thesis on the nature of Stalinism is undertaken by Comrades Maitan, Mandel, and Frank in order to explain how the Chinese Communist Party succeeded in creating a workers' state in China. They postulate that since the end product in China was a workers' state, however bureaucratically deformed, the party at its head must necessarily be a proletarian party. This is the only interpretation that can be given to the definition of "bureaucratic centrism" that they attempt to impose on the CCP.

This notion crops up in a rather dramatic way in the "Letter to the PRT (Combatiente)" of October 31, 1972, signed by Ernest, Livio, Pierre, Sandor, Tariq, and Delphin. There, in explaining to the leadership of the PRT (Combatiente) why conditions for full-scale Maoist-style people's war are not present in Argentina, they note that in China there existed "a party—prior to the launching of the peasant war—that had a very broad mass influence and was linked to the world Communist movement and through this to the tradition of the October Revolution." (International Internal Discussion Bulletin, Vol. X, No. 7, June 1973.)

The "world Communist movement" that the Chinese CP was linked to at the time it launched the peasant war was the Stalinized Comintern, the world-wide political agency of the petty-bourgeois bureaucracy in the Soviet Union. This organization was the anthesis of the Bolshevik, proletarian tradition of the October Revolution, not its continuator.

There is a certain confusion that arises from the fact that we often refer to the Stalinist and Social Democratic parties as "workers' parties." Such a definition flows not from the program of such parties, which is petty-bourgeois to the core, but because they function as tendencies within the world working-class movement. We are compelled to defend such parties when they come under attack by the bourgeoisie because the attack is aimed, through them, at the working class.

In China the Maoist CP, unlike its French or Italian counterparts, did not even have a working class rank-and-file.

This raises a thorny theoretical problem which stands at the very center of the differences over the Chinese regime in the Fourth International: How is it possible for a petty-bourgeois party to make a socialist revolution? Maitan, Mandel, and Frank extricate themselves from facing such an apparent contradiction through the following reasoning: The Chinese Communist Party derives its pro-

letarian character from the program of Stalinism (they cannot say from its actual class composition because this flies in the face of the known facts). This compounds rather than resolves the problem because Stalinism has historically been judged by our movement to be (1) itself petty bourgeois and (2) rooted in the need to pursue a counter-revolutionary defense of the status quo. Having granted an entirely unwarranted "proletarian" character to Stalinism, they still feel uncomfortable in recognizing that under certain exceptional circumstances Stalinist parties, in the course of a mass revolutionary upsurge, can be forced to seek the leadership of the masses and in the process end in the creation of new workers' states—without changing their fundamental nature. To avoid granting in theory the possibility that Stalinist parties can be at the head of a revolution, they redefine such parties that engage in armed struggle, particularly if the end product is a workers' state, as some form of left-centrist workers' party broken free of its Stalinist past.

There are a number of difficulties with this schema. It deduces the class character of a party from its willingness to engage in armed struggle, not from its actual composition, program, or political practice. In ascribing a proletarian content to the program of Stalinism it underestimates the extent to which, in the revolutions where Stalinist parties have come to power, it was in spite of their program and not because of it. In establishing the single criterion of military struggle leading to the capture of state power as marking the decisive break with Stalinism—without requiring a break with Stalinist program—this schema implies the grave danger of an incorrect understanding of Leninism: the conscious expression of the interests of the proletariat, in theory and in practice, is the decisive defining characteristic of a revolutionary workers party. The belittling of programmatic criteria can lead to adaptation to Stalinism by placing unwarranted confidence in the presumably "revolutionary" or "objectively revolutionary" capacity of those Stalinist parties engaged in armed struggle. It can lead to unwarranted expectations that the capture of state power will be followed by the adoption of "left centrist" or "objectively revolutionary" positions on other questions. It blinds one to the caste structure that the practice of such parties leads to if they are not halted by a genuine proletarian revolutionary party.

If we reject the Maitan-Mandel-Frank thesis and retain Trotsky's position that the Chinese CP was Stalinist after it adopted the peasant war strategy, and that Stalinism is a petty-bourgeois current, how do we explain the Third Chinese Revolution? We must begin by stating that Trotsky did not expect that such a party would create a workers' state. When he said that "even if fully victorious" the peasant war would end "in a blind alley," his assumption was that it would succeed only in playing the role of a new bourgeois government.

Trotsky returned to this question later. In the *Transitional Program* adopted by the founding congress of the Fourth International in 1938, Trotsky proposed the slogan "For a workers' and farmers' government." He clearly differentiated this from the Comintern's call for the "democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry," which in Stalinist usage, he said, had a "purely 'democratic,' i.e., bourgeois content." In Trotsky's view, a genuine workers' and farmers' government would be a government headed by the "petty-bourgeois representatives of the work-

ers and peasants"—he cites as an example the possibility of a Menshevik and Social Revolutionary government advocated as a transitional measure by the Bolsheviks in 1917. Such a government, he says, would be "independent of the bourgeoisie," although headed by petty-bourgeois forces that would preclude the entry into it of the revolutionary party. Such a weakening situation, in his opinion, could lead directly to the overthrow of the bourgeois state and the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat. However, Trotsky did not believe that this final decisive step would be led by the petty-bourgeois parties, but rather by the revolutionary proletarian party.

"The slogan, 'workers' and farmers' government,'" he wrote, "is thus acceptable to us only in the sense that it had in 1917 with the Bolsheviks, i.e., as an anti-bourgeois and anti-capitalist slogan, but in no case in that 'democratic' sense which later the epigones gave it, transforming it from a bridge to socialist revolution into the chief barrier upon its path." ("The Death Agony of Capitalism and the Tasks of the Fourth International," in *The Transitional Program for Socialist Revolution* [New York: Pathfinder Press, 1973], p. 94.)

Did Trotsky believe that petty-bourgeois Stalinist parties could take power in their own hands and reject bourgeois participation in their government, i.e., create a workers' and farmers' government that was "anti-bourgeois and anti-capitalist"? Clearly such a step would be in violation of their basic interests and program. As Trotsky put it, "The experience of Russia demonstrated, and the experience of Spain and France once again confirms, that even under very favorable conditions the parties of petty-bourgeois democracy (S.R.'s, Social Democrats, Stalinists, Anarchists) are incapable of creating a government of workers and peasants, that is, a government independent of the bourgeoisie." (Ibid., p. 94.)

But he did not at all exclude the theoretical possibility of such a thing happening:

"Is the creation of such a government by the traditional workers' organizations possible? Past experience shows, as has already been stated, that this is to say the least highly improbable. However, one cannot categorically deny in advance the theoretical possibility that, under the influence of completely exceptional circumstances (war, defeat, financial crash, mass revolutionary pressure, etc.), the petty-bourgeois parties including the Stalinists may go further than they themselves wish along the road to a break with the bourgeoisie. In any case one thing is not to be doubted: even if this highly improbable variant somewhere at some time becomes a reality and the 'workers' and farmers' government' in the above-mentioned sense is established in fact, it would represent merely a short episode on the road to the actual dictatorship of the proletariat." (Ibid., p. 95.)

Thus Trotsky did believe that it was possible under exceptional circumstances for a Stalinist party to take governmental power against the bourgeoisie, although he did not believe that such a party would go on to consolidate the dictatorship of the proletariat. His conviction that this transformation would nevertheless take place was based on the expectation that in such circumstances of revolutionary ferment, mass parties of the Fourth International would arise that would in turn win or take the power from the petty-bourgeois heads of a workers' and farmers' government.

In the actual unfolding of events things have proceeded somewhat differently than Trotsky expected. He was correct in foreseeing the emergence of revolutionary crises of such depth that even petty-bourgeois forces would be compelled to "go further than they themselves wish along the road to a break with the bourgeoisie." This took place in several countries where the forces of the Fourth International were either too small or too decimated by bourgeois and Stalinist repression to constitute a mass pole in time to influence the outcome of events. That was a variant that Trotsky did not expect. What happened, then, when a petty-bourgeois leadership did succeed in riding a mass upsurge to the creation of a workers' and farmers' government?

That we have seen this happen in a number of countries testifies to the depth of the crisis of latter-day capitalism and to the fundamental correctness of the theory of permanent revolution, which described this anticapitalist dynamic. At the same time, the bureaucratic distortions of these workers states were greatly exacerbated due to the petty-bourgeois character of the leaderships that came to power. In most cases—i.e., except for Cuba—the hegemony of Stalinist leaderships led from the outset to the development of bureaucratic castes; thus these workers states were *deformed* from birth, rather than *degenerating*, as was the case in the USSR.

A workers' and farmers' government headed by a petty-bourgeois party is inherently a transitional and short-lived formation. The bourgeois state, based on capitalist property relations, has not yet been destroyed. But it is a weakened bourgeois state, in which governmental power is in the hands of non-bourgeois forces. Thus such a government must use its power in a relatively short time to carry through the expropriation of bourgeois private property in the means of production, or be overthrown.

We saw the first example of this in Trotsky's lifetime in the division of Poland between Hitler Germany and Stalin's Russia in 1939. Here the form—the territorial expansion of the Soviet Union—tended to obscure the content—a change in property relations carried out by a petty-bourgeois Stalinist party. After the occupation but before capitalist property had been touched in Poland, Trotsky quite clearly posed the idea that things could go either way:

"Let us for a moment conceive that in accordance with the treaty with Hitler, the Moscow government leaves untouched the rights of private property in the occupied areas and limits itself to 'control' after the fascist pattern. Such a concession would have a deep-going principled character and might become a starting point for a new chapter in the history of the Soviet regime; and consequently a starting point for a new appraisal on our part of the nature of the Soviet state.

"It is more likely, however, that in the territories scheduled to become a part of the USSR, the Moscow government will carry through the expropriation of the large land-owners and statification of the means of production. This variant is most probable not because the bureaucracy remains true to the socialist program but because it is neither desirous nor capable of sharing the power, and the privileges the latter entails, with the old ruling classes in the occupied territories." ("The USSR in War," *In Defense of Marxism*, New York: Pathfinder Press, 1973, p. 18.)

This second variant was fundamentally repeated on a wider scale in the buffer zone of Eastern Europe at the

end of World War II but without these areas being integrated into the Soviet Union. Up until 1947-48, Stalin maintained capitalism in these countries through coalition governments in which remnants of bourgeois parties participated. After Washington opened the cold war, the Kremlin used military-bureaucratic means to carry out the overthrows. The pattern was different in Yugoslavia and Albania because of the absence of Soviet armies and because of the role played by the masses. Austria is of interest because the Soviet occupation was withdrawn and the state continued as before to be capitalist in nature.

In China also exceptionally favorable circumstances resulted in the creation of a workers' and farmers' government in 1949. These included virtually the entire set of circumstances enumerated by Trotsky in the *Transitional Program* that might produce such a phenomenon: World War II, the loss of large areas of North China to Japan that were then contested between the Stalinist and Chiang forces at the war's end, the financial collapse of the Chiang regime, and the outbreak of a spontaneous mass peasant revolt of the kind seen so many times before in China's imperial past. To this must be added the inability of American imperialism to directly intervene in defense of its Chinese ally.

The Third Chinese Revolution thus was an extended process that went through several distinct stages and whose final outcome was not determined by the winning of governmental power by the Stalinists in 1949. It began with *Chiang's* rejection of a coalition government and *his* attack on the Maoist forces in 1946. After the failure by Mao to secure a compromise at several junctures in 1946 and 1947, the Stalinists, in harmony with the world-wide Stalinist left turn, made a decision to fight for governmental power, which was secured in 1949. They later went forward to establish a workers' and farmers' government, still seeking to preserve capitalist property relations in China. The process was not concluded until 1953, under the pressure of the Korean war, when the decisive change in property relations finally took place, marking the creation of a workers' state in China.

We have seen since then that the Stalinists are not the only petty-bourgeois force capable of carrying through such a transformation, through the instrumentality of a workers' and farmers' government. Joseph Hansen has developed the theory of this process most fully in his writings on the Cuban revolution. There the petty-bourgeois July 26 Movement with its program of bourgeois-democratic reform succeeded in toppling the Batista regime on January 1, 1959. A coalition government was formed that included bourgeois representatives as well as leaders of the insurgent forces. This phase ended with the clash between Urrutia and Castro in July 1959. Urrutia's resignation from the presidency and Castro's clear assumption of power marked the establishment of a workers' and farmers' government through which the masses were mobilized in support of the series of expropriations of capitalist properties which by October 1960 showed that a workers state had been established in Cuba.

Because of the fundamental instability of a workers' and farmers' government and the fact that property relations remain bourgeois, this transient governmental form can be pushed back if the masses are not mobilized to move forward to the dictatorship of the proletariat. This is what happened in Algeria where the Ben Bella regime in 1963

drove out the French, soon establishing a workers' and farmers' government that then marked time, lost the initiative, failed to mobilize the masses and take decisive measures against capitalist property relations. It was swept aside by the Boumedienne coup of June 1965.

Finally on this point: How is it possible for the petty-bourgeoisie to substitute itself for the proletariat in carrying through a revolution that topples capitalism?

For world capitalism as a whole, the Marxists have excluded, and still exclude, the possibility. In Lenin and Trotsky's time it was thought that it could not occur in any country anywhere. Nevertheless, in the early days of the Communist International, the possibility was discussed of petty-bourgeois parties coming to power and taking serious steps in the direction of toppling capitalism. In line with these discussions, Trotsky, as we have seen, held that under exceptional circumstances a petty-bourgeois party could head a revolutionary upsurge and go as far as establishing a workers' and farmers' government. We have seen this occur in our time. And we have seen, moreover, that the actual appearance of a workers' and farmers' government opens further possibilities. What are the reasons for this?

First is the increasingly revolutionary character of our epoch, which generates spontaneous mass anticapitalist upsurges that can occasionally, at least in the colonial or semicolonial countries, shatter a bourgeois regime and permit a petty-bourgeois party to come to power.

Second is the victory of the Soviet Union in World II, which provided a pole of attraction for such petty-bourgeois forces so that if they succeeded in creating a workers' and farmers' government a certain pressure existed for them to imitate the state forms of the Soviet Union rather than those of imperialism. In every case where this has happened, it has resulted in introduction of nationalized property relations and, with the exception of Cuba, in formation of a bureaucratic caste as well, resulting in the appearance of replicas of the Stalinist bureaucracy in a number of countries, from Eastern Europe to China. This was unexpected but is easily explainable by the methods of analysis Trotsky applied to the Soviet Union itself to determine the character of Russian Stalinism.

A Mao-Stalin Rift?

I have quoted in 1954 resolution of the "Fourth World Congress" of the supporters of the International Secretariat which declares that "the Yugoslav CP and the Chinese CP have been able to lead a revolution victoriously and independently of the Kremlin and have in these instances ceased to be Stalinist parties in the proper meaning of this term." Whether or not all those who voted for the Maitan-Mandel-Frank resolution in 1969 would agree that the Chinese CP broke with Stalinism in the 1920s, they would probably all defend the thesis expressed above that the Third Chinese Revolution constituted or revealed a break with Stalinism and the Kremlin.

In fact there is no reason in theory to postulate such a break and no convincing evidence in practice that such was the case. We should remember that the overriding determinant of Stalinist policy is the preservation of the power and privileges of the bureaucratic caste. That leads in general to class-collaborationist and reformist practices, but is not identical to bourgeois liberalism. While

never conceding to demands for genuine proletarian democracy or proposing a revolutionary proletarian policy, Stalin was forced on a number of occasions to take measures to repel imperialist assaults on his regime or to apply pressure to force the imperialists to accept his overtures for peaceful coexistence.

In the "Third Period," the Stalinized Communist parties followed an ultraleft adventurist line, reflecting the abrupt turn to the forced collectivization and first five-year plans of the Soviet bureaucracy.

At the outbreak of the cold war in 1946-47 the imperialists and their agents in the colonial and semicolonial countries launched an assault on Stalinist parties throughout the world, threatened war against the Soviet Union, and rejected Stalin's proposals for a continuation of the war-time alliance. Depending on the tempo of the attacks in various countries, the Stalinist parties were forced to respond by using their influence in the mass movement to defend themselves, sometimes through rather militant means. This culminated in a general "left" turn by the Kremlin in the years 1947-51, marked by such diverse actions as the expropriation of capitalist property relations in Eastern Europe, the Berlin blockade, the Indochinese civil war (from late 1946), the Madiun uprising in Indonesia (1948), the CP-led Telengana peasant uprisings in India, the break of the French CP from the de Gaulle government, and the formation of the abortive Progressive Party by the American Stalinists. In China, this period coincided with and was one of the major factors in precipitating the civil war between the Maoist forces and those of Chiang Kai-shek.

Comrade Tom Kerry examined the program and conduct of the Chinese Stalinists during this period in relation to Kremlin policy in his article "A Mao-Stalin Rift: Myth or Fact?" in the September-October 1969 *International Socialist Review*. Some of his conclusions are worth repeating. He pointed out that Mao, in his report "On Coalition Government" to the Seventh National Congress of the Chinese Communist Party on April 24, 1945, outlined a program of class-collaboration with the Chiang regime for a whole historical period to come. The role of the CP's armies and territory were to act as the stakes in convincing Chiang to accept the CP as a minority party in the Kuomintang regime. Kerry quoted extensively from the American edition of this speech published in 1945 (it was drastically revised when it was included in Mao's *Selected Works* in 1955). Mao said: "Some people cannot understand why the Communists, far from being antipathetic to capitalism, actually promote its development. To them we can simply say this much: to replace the oppression of foreign imperialism and native feudalism with the development of capitalism is not only an advance, but also an unavoidable process; it will benefit not only the capitalist class, but also the proletariat. What China does not want is foreign capitalism and native feudalism; it does not oppose native capitalism." (In *The Fight for a New China* [New York: New Century Publishers, 1945], p. 38.)

Mao insisted that his call for a bourgeois-democratic republic founded on a coalition government with Chiang was not to be a short interlude on the road to the socialist revolution:

"The carrying out of this [the CCP's] program will not advance China to Socialism. This is not a question of the

subjective willingness or unwillingness of certain individuals to do the advancing; it is due to the fact that the objective political and social conditions in China do not permit the advance." (Ibid., p. 37.)

In January 1946 the Stalinists participated in the Political Consultative Conference in Chungking, called by Chiang Kai-shek with the aim of incorporating the CP as an ineffectual minority in his government. The Stalinists agreed to join the government if they were granted a third of the seats in the new parliament for themselves and their allies, giving them effective veto-power over fundamental changes in the initial agreement. Chiang refused, launching a military offensive against the CP in June 1946, thus initiating the civil war. Up to this point there is no indication of any break with Stalin's policy, much less with Stalinism. As late as October, after the fighting had been going on for four months, Chou En-lai expressed his willingness to return to enter a coalition government if the CP's demand for a third of the seats was met. By this time the cold war course of American imperialism had become clear to Stalin and the international left turn was underway. Tom Kerry summarized both Stalin's attitude and that of the CCP in deciding on a decisive military struggle with Chiang:

"Under the circumstances Stalin could only view with jaundiced eye the prospect of a Nationalist victory in the Chinese civil war or even a coalition regime in which the CCP was stripped of its armed forces to become hostage to a puppet of American imperialism. Stalin was prepared to go to considerable lengths to avoid the danger of a war on two fronts inherent in the control of China by a hostile regime. In the period from June 1946 to the definitive split in China in January 1947 and after, there was no valid reason, either from a political or military view, for a 'break' between Stalin and Mao. On the contrary, the interests of the Soviet Union required a friendly ally on its eastern frontier.

"Given the choice of unconditional surrender or fight, the CCP elected to fight."

Of course, we know that ultimately the Chinese Stalinists broke with Moscow, but this took place a decade later, not in the postwar period. And the break, when it came, flowed from the different national interests of the two bureaucratic castes, not from the "centrist" character of either of them.

The Stages of Maoist Power

In the near quarter century that the CCP has been in power we have witnessed a number of sharp zig-zags in foreign and domestic policy. These can be roughly itemized in the following way:

1. 1949-53, in which the "New Democracy" program of preserving capitalist relations in land and in industry was assiduously followed. In the later part of this period a workers' and farmers' government was constituted.

2. 1953-57, creation of a workers' state through nationalization of industry, a break with the rich peasantry, etc. In domestic cultural and economic policy this period was characterized by organization of replicas of the Stalinist Soviet model, while foreign policy continued to follow the Kremlin's lead as before. The crushing of the Hungarian revolution was supported. The 1957 Moscow meeting of Communist parties papered over the initial Sino-

Soviet differences.

3. 1958, the Great Leap Forward. It is clear today that this marked the opening Sino-Soviet rupture and the attempt to adapt the methods of rule inherited from the Kremlin to specific Chinese conditions through the creation of the "People's Communes," etc.

4. 1959-65. The period of the Liu Shao-chi leadership. This coincides with the development of the Sino-Soviet split. In domestic policies there was a return to the practices of the period preceding the Great Leap Forward while a more radical stance was struck in foreign policy to counter the influence of the Soviet bureaucracy and the policy of American imperialism of "containing" China through an economic embargo and diplomatic isolation.

5. 1966-69, the Cultural Revolution. Here we saw the purge of the supporters of Liu Shao-chi and a return to many of the practices of the Great Leap Forward.

6. 1969-73. The further narrowing of the Mao-Chou En-lai faction, especially after the purge of Lin Biao in September 1971.

Prior to the Great Leap Forward there are very limited indications of either serious differences with the Kremlin or within the basic core of the CCP high command. The 1969 Maitan-Mandel-Frank resolution on the Cultural Revolution itself dated the "more radical line" of the Chinese leadership as appearing "since the beginning of the Sino-Soviet conflict." This is an accurate statement. Maoism's claim to stand to the left of the Soviet bureaucracy dates only from 1958. Moreover, in the fight with Liu, Mao claimed to represent the left wing. Thus if the characterization of Maoism by Comrades Maitan, Mandel, and Frank as "centrist" from 1949 or even earlier were valid, we should have seen a shift in the direction of revolutionary politics during and after the Cultural Revolution, when the most radical section of the bureaucracy had succeeded in freeing itself of the retarding influence of its more right-wing colleagues.

The reality turned out to be just the opposite. When Mao's "rightist" opponents were safely disposed of, Mao and Chou En-lai themselves dropped the leftist demagoguery of the Cultural Revolution.

This is not to say there were no genuine policy differences between Mao and Liu Shao-chi. Indeed it is the intrabureaucratic struggles of the 1958-71 period that reveal most of what we know about the real motives and aims of the highly secretive Chinese leadership. What is most striking about the differences that have emerged, however, is the degree to which they all revolve around the central axis of how best to preserve and extend the power of the bureaucracy, not whether the bureaucracy should be more responsive to the Chinese masses or to the world revolution.

Let me indicate in somewhat more detail the stages of Maoist rule outlined above to show what the internal disputes were that erupted in the Cultural Revolution and how they have been finally resolved.

From 'New Democracy' to the First Five-Year Plan

1. *The consolidation of power, 1949-53.* The working class itself played virtually no role in the seizure of power, which was secured by an overwhelmingly peasant force under the leadership of a bureaucratic peasant party

that had been out of contact with the city workers for more than twenty years.

The new regime sought to hold the revolution within a bourgeois-democratic stage, as called for in the Stalinist program. This was to prove impossible, but the Maoist leadership made every effort. Land reform was limited to expropriating the landlord class while rich peasants were by and large exempted, especially in South China. Civil servants and government functionaries, including judges and police, were kept on in large numbers from the old regime. Extensive capitalist holdings in light industry were left in private hands and even provided with state aid. The National People's Congress included representatives of a number of the smaller bourgeois parties, notably the Left Kuomintang and the Democratic League. As late as 1953 in the extent and importance of capitalist property relations, China remained a capitalist state under the political administration of a Stalinist party. The military power of the bourgeoisie had been crushed, but as in Eastern Europe before the decisive nationalizations of the late 1940s, it was not yet possible to characterize China as a workers' state. What existed was a workers' and farmers' government under the leadership of a petty-bourgeois Stalinist party.

It was only during the Korean war, when the CCP found itself faced with growing threats of insubordination by small-scale industrialists, the rich peasantry, its own inherited civil-service bureaucracy, and the probourgeois holdovers in the coalition government in Peking, that it was decided that there was no choice but to abandon the New Democratic program and stamp out the procapitalist opposition. One star in China's national flag today still symbolizes the national bourgeoisie that was supposed to be included for a whole historical period in the post-1949 bloc of four classes.

The first signs of the break with capitalism came in the mobilizations of the "Five-Anti" and the "Three-Anti" campaigns in 1952, although the decisive expropriations did not come until a year later (and even then they took the form of "joint state-private" enterprises where the capitalists were kept on as managers, a situation that was continued until 1956). The transition was dramatic, involving not only expropriations of industry but a purge of the civil-service bureaucracy, the institution of a monopoly of foreign trade, and the beginning of a genuinely radical land-reform in the countryside aimed at sectors of the rich peasantry that had gone untouched in the antilandlord movement of 1951-52.

2. *Duplication of the Soviet model, 1953-57.* The beginning of the First Five Year Plan in 1953 marked the transition to a planned economy. This was the first time the Maoist hierarchy called on the industrial workers of the cities. During and after liberation strikes had been prohibited. No soviet institutions were created that would give the industrial proletariat a voice in the decisions of the new regime. No national congress of trade unions had been called since 1948. In May of 1953 the Seventh Trade Union Congress was held. Its function was to begin a controlled mobilization of the workers as a counterweight to the small capitalists who still dominated China's light industry.

The economic plan was drafted in consultation with Soviet advisers. It virtually ignored agriculture and consumer goods, allocating resources primarily for heavy

industry (70 percent of all investment funds) on the Russian pattern. In 1955 ranks were introduced in the Army.

On the field of foreign policy, Peking followed Moscow's lead. True, in the Korean war Chinese troops entered the fight directly, but only after MacArthur had invaded North Korea and threatened to cross the Yalu into China itself. The main thrust of Peking's diplomacy was aimed at winning influence among the neocolonialist regimes of the Third World. Where Comrade Weber points to "the strategy of prolonged revolutionary war" as the hallmark of Maoist thought, this was not at all the center of Peking's propaganda around the Korean war. In an editorial honoring May Day in the May 1, 1952, issue of *People's China*, for example, the editors called "for the peaceful settlement of the Korean question and other problems in Asia and the world" and for "peaceful coexistence of nations of differing political, economic and social systems." The words "revolution," "armed struggle," and "prolonged revolutionary war" did not appear at all.

It can be very misleading to project back on the first decade of Maoist power the rhetoric of the second. The highwater mark of Peking's diplomatic success in the 1950s was unrelated to revolutions or armed struggle; it was at the Bandung conference in Indonesia in 1955 where Chou En-lai cemented relations with the "neutralist" heads of state of the Afro-Asian bloc, notably Nehru and Sukarno as the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence were instituted.

The People's Republic of China scored a number of genuine advances in the early 1950s as planning took hold and industrial production surged forward. Famine, prostitution, and opium addiction were all eliminated. Unemployment and illiteracy were sharply reduced. But taken as a whole, the Maoist leadership did not stand to the left of Stalin and his successors after 1953 in the Kremlin.

What did appear in this period was one of the chronic problems that has haunted Maoism to this day and been the source of many of the disputes in the top leadership: relations with the peasantry and control of the agricultural surplus product.

In the "New Democracy" years the regime deliberately fostered the growth of a "kulak" element in the countryside by exempting the land of well-to-do peasants from confiscation. But the party in power in Peking no longer represented a rural peasant "soviet." It had to supply a massive city population with the means of life or face mounting opposition from the working class. The privileged sector of the peasantry cultivated by Mao simply raised its own standard of living and withheld grain and rice from the cities. This jolted the regime into an attempt to repeat Stalin's remedy of forced collectivization. In China as in Russia the peasant collectivization had not only a bureaucratic but also a utopian character because it was not accompanied by any real improvement in the productive forces of agriculture, either in the form of mechanization or in the provision of fertilizer.

In effect, while collectivization aimed at long-term improvement in the productivity of agriculture, it became a more and more frantic short-term scramble to find administrative means simply to lay hands on the peasants' produce. This is quite clear in the frenetic changes in the goals and pace of collectivization from 1955-58. In 1955 there was an actual grain crisis in which hunger reappeared in the cities. On July 30 the Five Year Plan, already half completed, was submitted for the first time to a

National People's Congress for approval. The congress resolution projected that by the end of 1957 ". . . about one-third of all the peasant households in the country will have joined the present agricultural producers' cooperatives of elementary form." (*First Five-Year Plan for Development of the People's Republic of China in 1953-1957*. Peking: Foreign Languages Press, 1956, p. 119.)

Twenty-four hours after the congress adjourned, Mao overrode its decisions and demanded immediate wholesale collectivization. In June of 1955 only 14 percent of peasant households were organized in Agricultural Producers' Cooperatives. By December this had jumped to 63 percent and in 1956 all individual title to land was abolished, with collectivization reaching 97 percent of peasant families by 1957.

The collectivization failed to achieve its immediate aim. The collectives were still contiguous with the old villages, and family and clan ties were strong enough for the "collectives" to put their own interests ahead of the state's grain quotas. Sales of agricultural produce to the state stagnated from 1955 to 1956 and increased only marginally in 1957. (Peter Schran, *The Development of Chinese Agriculture, 1950-1959* [Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1969], p. 6.) This prompted Mao to project the adventurist People's Commune policy in 1958.

On top of the agricultural crisis came the Khrushchev revelations at the Twentieth Congress of the CPSU at the beginning of 1956, and the Hungarian revolution in the fall, Peking's response was to support the crushing of the Hungarian workers, while taking a small step in the direction of de-Stalinization at its own Eighth Congress in September, just before the Hungarian events. The "thought of Mao Tse-tung," which had been embodied as the guiding principal of the CCP in the documents of its Seventh Congress in 1945, was eliminated from the formal resolution of the Eighth Congress.

In February 1957 Mao delivered his speech on "Contradictions Among the People," in which he encouraged the airing of "nonantagonistic" contradictions, somewhat on the pattern of the de-Stalinization under Khrushchev in the Soviet Union. This inaugurated the "Hundred Flowers" episode of May-June 1957 in which students, intellectuals, and many workers sharply criticized the bureaucratic regime, some from an embryonic Leninist standpoint calling for the formation of a new Marxist party and the overthrow of the bureaucracy.

The simultaneous rift with the peasantry and with the intelligentsia and skilled workers produced the first deep-going crisis within the leadership and gave rise to the "two lines" that were fought out in the Cultural Revolution.

Until the archives of the Chinese Communist Party are opened we will not know precisely who stood where on the policy differences that emerged in 1958-59. The only thing that can be reconstructed with some certainty are the policies that were actually followed: in the Great Leap Forward, for which Mao claims the credit; in the retreat afterward, which Mao attributes to Liu Shao-chi; and in the Cultural Revolution and its aftermath.

The two positions can be summarized as follows:

1. Mao: For further centralization of bureaucratic political authority; decentralization of the economy; for a break with the technocrats and the intellectuals.

2. Liu Shao-chi: For de-Stalinization; for continued central planning on the Soviet model and possibly better relations with the Kremlin; for incorporation of the techno-

crats and intellectuals into the state and party bureaucracy on the Soviet pattern.

It is not at all clear how early these different approaches became hardened. What is clear is that, like the split between technocrats and party bureaucrats in Eastern Europe, the differences were tactical, over how best to protect and defend the privileges and interests of the bureaucracy.

The Great Leap Forward

If a case is to be made that Maoism is a form of centrism, occasionally vacillating far to the left of the Kremlin bureaucracy, it must stand or fall on the turn made by Peking in the Great Leap Forward of 1958. This was the first time that a form of social organization and a set of policies distinctively different from those employed at the time in the USSR were put into practice. It is only in the Great Leap and again in the Cultural Revolution that "Maoism" as a special variant of Stalinism appears. Previously the domestic and foreign policies of the People's Republic of China were slavishly modeled on those of Moscow with only the degree of difference that would inevitably appear as a consequence of the different material conditions, traditions, culture, level of the productive forces, etc.

What, then, were Mao's aims in the Great Leap and how and why did it differ from the previous practice of the Peking hierarchy? We have already seen the two most serious failures of the Russian model, *to effectively secure bureaucratic hegemony over the peasantry and the intelligentsia*. This above all was what Mao hoped to remedy. The Khrushchev schema was inapplicable to China on several counts. First, the predominance given to heavy industry in the plan was predicated on the Kremlin's control over the peasantry won in the brutal collectivization drive ordered by Stalin in the late 1920s and early 1930s. The Chinese peasantry remained fragmented and presented no political obstacle to the government in Peking, but neither had bureaucratic control been effectively extended to the village level where the agricultural surplus product was actually divided. Moreover, the traditional underemployment in the countryside promoted emigration to the cities, swelling an urban population that had to be sustained on the produce of the peasantry. This urbanization became even more rapid after 1956 when the peasantry as a whole was put on a wage-payment system and no longer felt tied to particular plots of land.

Mao's People's Communes aimed to eliminate the agricultural crisis in a number of specific ways. They had nothing to do with "communist" forms of social organization, democratic control by the masses, or any of the other egalitarian motives often attributed to them. To hold the peasantry on the land and compel them to sell their grain to the state at fixed prices required either a shift toward investment in agriculture and away from industry, or a forced march of the peasantry to increase agricultural production and simultaneously build light industrial plants in the countryside to turn out locally needed consumer goods without the benefit of state aid and investment. The second course was the one followed in the Great Leap.

Since the peasants could be expected to oppose any such drastic increase in the labor demanded from them and the real decline in their standard of living implied in larger

grain exactions by the government, a new form of organization was required in the countryside that would make the most efficient use of the limited government and party personnel as a coercive instrument. The communes served this purpose by combining for the first time several villages under a single local jurisdiction, the communes incorporating a number of village-centered Agricultural Production Cooperatives. This had the effect of allowing party administrators to play off the clans of one village against another with decisions centralized at the commune rather than the village level as before. In the fall of 1958 virtually the entire peasant population was united into communes under party control. This was accompanied by a severe lengthening of the work day and extensive efforts to build from scratch and without state aid a nearly self-sufficient network of light industrial plants under the jurisdiction of each commune.

By the beginning of 1959 there were 24,000 communes each containing an average of 5,000 peasant households. To staff such an immense apparatus required large-scale transfers of party and government personnel from the cities to the countryside. Here we saw another Maoist innovation that has been erroneously passed off as an antibureaucratic measure but in reality had an entirely different purpose: the institution of periodic compulsory labor for large sections of the bureaucracy. There are limited parallels for this measure in the Soviet Union during the First Five-Year Plan, but nothing like it exists in the present-day USSR. The fundamental motive rests on two somewhat different methods of bureaucratic rule. In the Soviet Union, even in Stalin's lifetime but much more prominently afterward, the Kremlin hierarchy has sought to isolate the bureaucracy as a whole from the general population. This serves the purpose of maintaining the consciousness of being an elite corps among the bureaucrats, but leads to widespread political apathy and relatively open hostility to the regime. The Kremlin's response has been to allow a certain level of disaffection as long as it takes no organized form. A policy of selective repression has been followed for which the specialized apparatus of the secret police has in the main been adequate.

This policy proved inadequate in China. It was clearly the direction in which the regime was headed until 1958. The restoration of ranks in the army in 1955 and the introduction of the Stakhanovite system (in which rewards are based on speeded up production and not primarily on overt demonstrations of political loyalty to the regime) are two indications. But the Chinese Stalinists disposed of a much smaller social surplus product than their Russian counterparts. In 1952, China produced only 1.35 million tons of steel, compared to 4.25 million tons in the USSR in 1927-28. Even in agriculture, basic grain production in China in 1952 was only 48.7 percent of per capita production in the Soviet Union twenty-five years earlier. Fewer resources were available and Mao made some different decisions from Khrushchev on how those resources should be allocated.

The bureaucracy in China was to earn its keep not merely by administering the plan and keeping the population in line as in the latter-day Soviet Union, but by acting as a transmission belt for Mao's thought in every workshop and commune. Mao's fusion of a military command structure with the regular party and government bureaucracy

was used to instill demonstrative political conformity on the entire population through a perpetual series of bureaucratic mobilizations, forced marches, and compulsory public professions of faith in his leadership from every worker and peasant. This was a much more ambitious enterprise in social control than anything attempted in the Soviet Union. By organizing every citizen in "self-criticism" circles where their most intimate "flaws" and slightest deviations could be constantly probed and recorded it sought to control thought and extirpate opposition in advance in a way that, if less overtly repressive than Stalin's purges, lacked little of their intent and effectiveness.

Embarking on such a project placed the regime squarely at odds with the intelligentsia, even those trained in the Stalinist school. If no deviations were to be permitted and the whole intellectual life of the country reduced to the current slogans of Mao-Thought, the more vocal sections of the population represented a danger for the bureaucracy. Furthermore, husbanding his narrow resources and watching the role of the technocracy as a potential pole of opposition in Eastern Europe, Mao in effect decided to prune the intelligentsia.

These then were the essential elements of Maoism as revealed in the Great Leap: Decentralization of the economy in an effort to draw, out of the ground as it were, a big light-industrial base in the countryside. Imposition of party control over the peasantry through the structure of the People's Communes. Voluntarist appeals to "self-reliance" and heroic sacrifice as a substitute for state aid and technical improvement. Imposition of super-centralized control, through energetic mobilization of the bureaucracy itself, over the thought processes of the masses. And lastly hostility to any sector, particularly the intelligentsia, that might threaten to put independence of thought, the needs of the masses, reliance on technique and industrial science, or anything else above the political subordination of the masses to the pronouncements of the bureaucratic hierarchy. (This last is expressed in the slogans "Politics in Command" and "Better Red than Expert.")

The alternative offered in practice was emulation of Khrushchev's Russia. On the level of democratic rights this side hesitantly embraced de-Stalinization. On all other questions they hewed to the tried and true methods of super-centralized economic planning, cultivation of the technocratic elite, and strict managerial control. In the field of foreign policy there do not seem to have been deep-going differences between the two wings of the bureaucracy. Each tried to blame the other for the disastrous setbacks of the early 1960s, but both advocated peaceful coexistence with imperialism, support to the neocolonialist bourgeoisie and the two-stage theory of revolution. The Maoist wing for a time stressed the notion of "people's war" somewhat more than its opposition, but here again it was to be a *peasant* war to achieve a bourgeois-democratic revolution, and, like Mao's appeals for "self-reliance" in the Chinese countryside, it was to be fought without outside aid or support. It was neither a proletarian nor an internationalist proposal.

Retreat After 1958

Mao's attempt to adapt the methods of Russian Stalinism to Chinese conditions proved initially to be a po-

litical and economic disaster. The peasants responded to the new regimentation with what amounted to a sit-down strike. In the cities the workers simply refused to participate in "urban communes" and these were soon abandoned. The harvest of grain in 1958, planted before the communes were organized, was a record 207 million tons. In 1959 the grain harvest fell to 163 million tons and continued downward to 150 million in 1960. Industrial output fell drastically as well.

The results of Mao's adventurist policies convinced his colleagues to beat a retreat. In December 1958 Mao resigned as head of state, to be replaced in April by Liu Shao-chi. An accounting was made at the Lushan plenum of the Central Committee in July-August 1959. This marked the first deep-going rift in the CCP leadership since it had come to power.

The attack on the Great Leap Forward was led by P'eng Te-huai, the minister of defense, who had commanded the Chinese forces in the Korean war. He denounced the Great Leap as "petty-bourgeois fanaticism" and argued that "Putting politics in command is no substitute for economic principles." (From a Red Gurad source, cited by Philip Bridgham, "Factionalism in the Central Committee," in *Party Leadership and Revolutionary Power in China*, London: Cambridge University Press, 1970, p. 214.)

The plenum arrived at a compromise. P'eng was purged, but most of the distinctive policies of the Great Leap were abandoned or de-emphasized. The communes continued in name, but effectively the decision-making units were hereafter the production brigades, i.e., the old villages, and the authority of the commune administration was sharply reduced. This represented a compromise with the peasantry.

Mao later charged that from Lushan until the Cultural Revolution in 1966 control of the party and government was held by Liu Shao-chi. There is no reason to dispute this claim. Certainly there was an across-the-board return to pre-1958 policies in almost every sphere. "Work-study" schools were dropped and funds that had been withdrawn from higher education in 1958 were restored. Organized adulation of the leadership was curtailed in favor of improving production. "Manual labor" by the bureaucrats was substantially reduced and bonuses and wage differentials were stressed instead of military-style "moral" incentives. In 1962 there was a brief intellectual thaw of the Khrushchev type.

Simultaneous with the return to domestic "Khrushchevism" came the Sino-Soviet rupture. In 1960 the Kremlin ordered the withdrawal of all Soviet technicians in China and the unilateral abrogation of all aid agreements. The Peking leadership retaliated with an international propaganda campaign stressing the "revisionism" of the Kremlin hierarchy.

There is no need here to recapitulate the details of the Sino-Soviet dispute. A few points need to be made, however. The breach with the Kremlin was implicit in the very victory of the Chinese revolution. China was too big and too much a factor in world politics in its own right to remain for long subservient to the USSR. Once consolidated, its own bureaucratic caste proved capable of asserting its own national interests against the Kremlin. Both capitals were striving, after all, to build "socialism in one country," and gave priority to their respective national interests against the other.

Unquestionably in the early years of the dispute the Chinese put forward positions that on paper stood to the left of Moscow: opposing Soviet collaboration with U.S. imperialism *against China*; for armed struggle; against the conception of a peaceful transition to socialism. This campaign, it now appears, was masterminded by Liu Shao-chi, who drew by rote on the classic Marxist works to formulate Peking's critique of Moscow and of its "fraternal" parties. In part Peking's more radical stand was dictated by the refusal of imperialism to entertain any accommodation with the government of the People's Republic of China. Stalin, when faced with similar circumstances as at the outbreak of the Cold War, also followed a "leftist" course as a means of applying indirect pressure to imperialism.

One thing that provided a test of Peking's rhetoric was its efforts to establish an international following to apply its revolutionary-sounding proclamations. Liu, acting from the same considerations that led Stalin to seek to capture the Third International rather than withdraw from it, sought to build "Maoist" parties through splits from the Moscow-oriented world Communist movement. For some years, particularly between 1963 and 1965, it appeared that Peking was seriously going about constructing a pro-Chinese "international," although the sectarianism of Peking even in that period produced very small results in comparison to the influence and resources of the Chinese workers state. Since then, in the full flower of Maoism after the Cultural Revolution, these efforts have been virtually abandoned and the organized world following of Maoism has never been at a lower ebb than it is today.

It should be noted that even during the early 1960s when Peking took a militant stance against the Kremlin it did not hesitate to drop any talk of people's war in countries that proved willing to establish peaceful co-existence with China. Just as in Stalin's Russia, a governmental agreement with Peking was a guarantee of virtually uncritical support from the local pro-Peking group. This was most notable in Indonesia and Pakistan but it was true also of many of the newly emergent neocolonial regimes of Africa as well.

Preparation for the Cultural Revolution

The claim that the Cultural Revolution represented a left turn by the Mao wing of the bureaucracy or that it was taken under mass pressure for reform is belied by the way it was prepared. Three elements went into the construction of the base from which Mao was to launch his attack on Liu Shao-chi: the Socialist Education Movement of 1962-64; the reorganization of the People's Liberation Army as a factional instrument of the Mao-Lin Piao grouping; and the "theoretical" turn proposed by Mao at a fall 1962 CCP Central Committee meeting. This last is very instructive. "In the historical period of socialism," Mao said, "there are still classes, class contradictions and class struggle, there is the struggle between the socialist road and the capitalist road, and there is the danger of capitalist restoration." (Cited in Lin Piao's report to the Ninth Congress of the CCP, April 1, 1969, in *Peking Review*, April 28, 1969.) Mao would later define the "capitalist road" as the positions taken by any and all of his opponents within the party and government hierarchy.

This was nothing but a restatement of Stalin's notorious "theory" of the "sharpening class struggle under socialism," which was put forward in the first place to justify the continued rule of the bureaucracy and to "explain" the physical extermination of the Left Opposition on the grounds that they were "class enemies." This is a formula for outlawing any kind of dissent and preparing a purge. What is significant is that it marks a shift to the right from Mao's 1957 accommodation to Khrushchev's de-Stalinization when he proclaimed the "nonantagonistic contradictions among the people." Henceforward any contradiction of Mao's thought was to be branded "antagonistic" to socialism and dealt with by the methods reserved for class enemies.

Mao still needed an instrument to carry out his purge. His power in the party and government had been severely restricted. He turned, then, not to the mass organizations, however bureaucratized, such as the trade unions or the women's groups, but to the most centralized and bureaucratically disciplined of all the institutions in China: the army.

Part of the quid pro quo in 1959 when Mao stepped down as head of state was the replacement of P'eng Te-huai as minister of defence by Lin Piao, a staunch supporter of Mao. It was within Lin's PLA that Mao began to foster the cult of his thought as the absolute authority in Chinese life.

The Socialist Education Movement had little to do with either socialism or education. Its main ingredient was the Mao cult and appeals to the kind of hyperactive and unquestioning labor that characterized the Great Leap Forward. This time the party leadership, while formally approving the program, did little to implement it. It was only in the army that the campaign was followed seriously. On February 1, 1964, when the base had been prepared in the army, a drive was launched for the whole country to "learn from the PLA." What the workers and peasants were to learn was to adulate Mao and to work harder to increase production without expecting any improvement in their standard of living. Mao himself was very blunt in explaining his antipathy to genuine education—revealing his hostility toward the intellectuals, technocrats, students, and other layers that had been most vocal in opposing his policies in the past. At an educational work conference on February 13, 1964, he said:

"... T'ai-tsu and Ch'eng were the two successful emperors of the Ming Dynasty. One was illiterate and the other was able to read not many characters. Later, when the intellectuals came into power under the reign of Chia-ching, the country was poorly run. Too much education is harmful, and one with too much education cannot be a good emperor." (*Long Live Mao Tse-tung Thought* translated in *Current Background*, Hong Kong, No. 891, October 8, 1969, p. 42.)

Could there be any more graphic expression of the gulf that separates the scientific method of Marxism from this idealization of ignorance by the Maoist bureaucracy? This attitude has in fact guided the Peking leadership since the Cultural Revolution in its approach to higher education in China.

What the Cultural Revolution Revealed

The Cultural Revolution did more than eliminate one

set of Chinese leaders and replace them with another. This first deep-going public rift in the top leadership of the CCP enabled us to get a glimpse of the inner workings of the Chinese Stalinist bureaucracy. Above all, in counterposing two bureaucratic policies—that of the out-of-power Mao Tse-tung against that of the incumbent Liu Shao-chi—the very narrowness of the expressed differences highlighted the essential similarities.

It is true that Liu Shao-chi was never permitted to state his side of the case. It is also true that the most-repeated charges leveled against him were Stalinist slanders that he aimed at the restoration of capitalism in China. But the Chinese press was filled with more specific accusations as well, including innumerable local examples of the practice of the Liu faction in power. These are highly biased, but an objective standard of measurement is provided by the public policies of the regime from 1959-66, when Liu functioned as head of state, and the institutional changes made by Mao and Lin Piao during and after the Cultural Revolution.

What, then, were the concrete allegations made against Liu? These follow a generally consistent pattern that goes back to the disputes of the Great Leap Forward. The attacks centered on a few central themes: (1) Liu had cultivated acquisitive tendencies by stressing bonuses and material incentives rather than selfless dedication to production for the sake of the revolution. (2) He had bureaucratically abused his authority by elevating technicians and managers above the workers and peasants, relying on scientific technique rather than involvement of the masses in technical innovation and construction. (3) He had exalted state planning, state aid, and foreign knowledge, all concentrated in the heavy industrial plants of the cities, and underestimated the creative potential of the peasantry to build a light industrial base at the commune level using their own resources and initiative. (4) He had exempted party cadres and managers from periodic manual labor, thus placing them out of contact with the masses. (5) He had failed to put "politics in command," i.e., he had opposed the defication of Mao's thought as the ultimate authority with which the masses were to be inculcated as a first priority of the regime.

This seems a more or less accurate description of the administrative pattern followed by the CCP hierarchy, and not only in the years 1959-66, but also in the period of the First Five Year Plan, 1953-57. The only criticism of Liu's foreign policy that was consistently voiced was that he allegedly sympathized with the "Soviet revisionist renegade clique."

The sum total of Liu's sins conforms not to a policy for the restoration of capitalism, but to the standard operating procedure of the Kremlin bureaucracy in Stalin's lifetime and after. That Mao appeared as a critic of certain aspects of the Soviet model as practiced by Liu Shao-chi has been taken by many Maoist sympathizers in the West as proof that the Cultural Revolution was directed against the bureaucracy. Unfortunately some members of the Fourth International have accepted in large part Mao's own claims that he was fighting bureaucracy and have not examined the alternative forms of organization the Maoists actually put into practice during and after the Cultural Revolution.

A particular disturbing example of the credence given to Mao's demagogy was the article by Comrade Weber cited earlier on the twenty-third anniversary of the victory of

the Chinese revolution that appeared in the October 7, 1972, issue of *Rouge*. He wrote:

"Another appreciable difference from the process of bureaucratization in the USSR [has been] the attitude of Mao Tse-tung. If, because of his political limitations (lack of understanding of the Stalinist degeneration), Mao Tse-tung did not oppose the process of bureaucratization of the new Chinese state, if he did not create institutions of the soviet type that could moderate and contain this process, nevertheless, in contrast to Stalin, he has never become the conscious agent of the bureaucratization. He has never become the recognized spokesman of the new privileged layers, elaborating their ideology, expressing their aspirations, and defending their caste interests.

"On the contrary, Mao quickly showed himself to be concerned with the new social stratification that was developing before his eyes. That is, in his own way he has taken cognizance that common interests could well develop between the capitalist tendencies engendered by the maintenance of petty commodity production in the countryside and the conservative bureaucracy of the party and the state. This concern was demonstrated in Mao's constant intervention to push forward the collectivization of the land (speech of July 31, 1955, to provincial and regional party secretaries); in initiating the Hundred Flowers campaign. Above all this was shown in the ultraleftist projection of the Great Leap Forward and the People's Communes.

"Through all these interventions, especially the last, Mao tried in his way to push forward the transition to socialism, to prevent stagnation in the status quo. In doing this, he struggled unceasingly against the Chinese bureaucracy. Far from being its spokesman, he upset and abused it, not without reactions from the bureaucracy. . . .

"It is clearly evident that in the course of the 1960s Mao had to question the evolution of his own revolution, on the worth and orientation of his own cadres. Apparently he concluded that, just like the USSR, China risked 'changing color.'"

This depiction of Mao as an antibureaucratic fighter seeking to prevent the rise of a bureaucratic caste in China goes far beyond the line adopted at the 1969 world congress. Yet it appears uncontested in the journal of one of the leading sections of the International, signed by a leader of the Ligue Communiste and a member of the IEC. The membership of the Fourth International has a right to know if this represents the evolution of the thinking of the defenders of the Maitan-Mandel-Frank resolution since 1969, or, if not, if the various lines that have emerged from within the 1969 majority will be represented by different documents at the next world congress or will be reconciled by a common resolution broad enough to encompass the position of Comrade Weber.

Let us first take Comrade Weber's defense of Mao's good intentions, and then return to Mao's answers to the bureaucratic practices of Liu Shao-chi. As we have already seen, it was not so much to prevent the growth of petty commodity production in the countryside as to secure control over the grain surplus that Mao overturned the decisions of the National People's Congress in 1955.

The Hundred Flowers campaign was later denounced by Mao himself for having produced so many "poisonous weeds," and he approved and still approves of the "anti-rightist" campaign in the fall of 1957 that victimized the

students and intellectuals for daring to criticize the regime. It is debatable what Mao's real motives were in initiating the Hundred Flowers episode, but neither of the two most likely alternatives are exactly flattering to Mao's credentials as a would-be opponent of bureaucracy. The most likely explanation is that Mao, seeking to avoid a break with the Kremlin at that time, tried to follow Khrushchev's example of loosening the bureaucratic reins to defuse mass discontent. Mao underestimated the degree of hostility the bureaucracy had engendered and was taken aback by the results. Clearly, at some point during the May-June "blooming," the regime began simply to use the public expression of dissidence as a means of finding out who its opponents were with the aim of purging them later, as was done. Perhaps Mao had fallen victim to his own propaganda that the masses loved him and could be expected to say so if given the opportunity. The alternative is to believe that the whole thing was a put-up job, planned from the beginning as a ruse to unmask hidden critics and punish them.

I have already discussed the Great Leap Forward, the first indication that Mao had anything different in mind for China besides mechanical imitation of the Soviet Union. It was in no sense a drive against bureaucracy, but aimed only at repressing one sector of the bureaucracy, the technocratic layer most prone to reformist and liberalizing experiments, as in Eastern Europe. As for suppressing petty commodity production in the countryside, it should be remembered that the peasantry had already been put on wages and that "kulaks" no longer existed as a class in rural China. It is true that private plots were abolished in the Great Leap, but these were later restored and went basically unchallenged during the Cultural Revolution and after. If the People's Communes of 1958 were effectively state farms, in the form they have taken since 1962 they are actually cooperatives in which the members collectively own the land and whatever light industry exists and sell their produce to the state, dividing the profits among themselves (more accurately, the commune managers reinvest the profits locally and have a growing stake in promoting this process of capital accumulation). The widespread introduction of light industrial plants into the countryside where they are built outside the sphere of state ownership is Mao's own innovation and is in fact a move in the direction of strengthening petty commodity production in the countryside. Moreover, Mao's transfers of government and party functionaries to the countryside for longer or shorter times has strengthened, not weakened, the ties between the privileged bureaucracy in the cities and the privileged administrators and commune managers in the countryside (these and not individual peasant producers are the real source today of restorationist tendencies in rural China).

What of Weber's final conclusion, that all of Mao's supposed antibureaucratic interventions built up to his final sally in the Cultural Revolution to prevent China from "changing color," i.e., to stop the consolidation of a bureaucratic caste such as exists in the Soviet Union? Here we should return to the sins of Liu Shao-chi and examine Mao's alternatives.

How Mao 'Corrected' Liu Shao-chi

1. *Material versus moral incentives.* Following the ex-

perience in the Soviet Union and in Cuba in the early 1960s we have become used to identifying moral incentives with egalitarianism, and material incentives with the fostering of privileged layers in a workers' state. But viewed in the light of the concrete reality of China the two positions are not so simple. What Trotsky and the Left Opposition objected to in Stalin's policy of material incentives was not that it raised the standard of living of the masses, but that it promoted grossly unequal incomes between administrators and workers, and within the working class through the Stakhanovite system.

Since the opening up of China to foreign visitors in 1971 we have obtained a number of first-hand accounts of how wages are paid, what pay grades exist, and the criterion for advancement. Most of these writers are sympathetic to Maoism, and there is a high degree of agreement between their separate accounts (Klaus Mehnert, Maria Antonietta Macciocchi, Ross Terrill, etc.). We must remember that China is a very poor country where even relatively small differentials in income constitute genuine privileges for those at the high end of the spectrum. Macciocchi (*Daily Life in Revolutionary China* [New York: Monthly Review, 1972]) records factory managers who received 120 yuan per month (1 yuan equals US \$4.00) while the average factory worker received 60 yuan and workers in low pay grades received only 46. K.S. Karol, who visited China in 1966, before the Cultural Revolution, found factory managers whose pay ranged from 128 yuan to 190 (*China: The Other Communism* [New York: Hill and Wang, 1967], p. 446). The average pay at that time was also 60 yuan. But Mitch Meisner, who visited China in March and April 1972, observed wage differentials fully as great as those recorded by Karol before the Cultural Revolution. In his report, "The Shenyang Transformer Factory—A Profile" (*China Quarterly*, October-December 1972), he provided this listing:

"Within the factory there are three categories of employees: workers, state cadres, and technicians. Each has a separate set of grades and gradations of pay. There are usually eight grades of workers; some job classifications that are less complex and with fewer levels of skill differentiation have seven or only six. In the Shenyang Transformer Factory, the lowest grade is salaried at 33 yuan per month. The highest, grade 8, receives 104 yuan per month. The average worker's wage in 1971 was 64 yuan, [slightly above the national average], an increase from 20 yuan in 1950 and 55.5 yuan in 1960. State cadres are paid according to a 24-level national scale. They range as high as 180 yuan a month, with an average of 60 yuan (no low range figure was provided). Technicians are ranked in four grades: practising technicians, assistant technicians, technicians and engineers. Their salaries range from 34 yuan to 230 yuan with an average of 60 yuan. It is interesting to note the high range differentials on the one hand, but the similarity of average wages among the three categories on the other."

It is true that wage differentials in China are not as great as in the Soviet Union, but neither does China stand anywhere near the per capita productive capacity of the USSR even of the 1930s. More important, there has been no significant lowering of wage differentials in the course of the Cultural Revolution. And even more significant, there was no increase in the "average" worker's pay for more than seven years! (Apparently there was a small

raise given in 1972, but it scarcely made up for the loss.) Nor does the figuring of an "average" payscale include apprentices, who serve a three-year term at wages of as low as 20 *yuan* a month.

The goal of the Maoists in attacking "material incentives" was actually very limited. The size of the bureaucracy was pared down (reduction of government personnel, dropping of some technicians into lower pay grades), largely as an attempt to economize on payrolls, but the scope of the previous differentials was not significantly reduced. Admittance to the higher pay grades, i.e., into the bureaucracy proper, was made more dependent on demonstrative political loyalty to Mao ("moral incentive") and less on objective criterion of skill and productive labor as before. And lastly, the masses were urged to labor harder without "material incentives"—here the real Maoist notion of opposing "material incentives" is revealed as a refusal to make concessions to the masses on their standard of living.

2. *Technical elite versus technical innovation by the masses.* Several important changes were introduced along these lines in the course of the Cultural Revolution, but they are not concerned with the struggle against bureaucratism *per se*. Liu's work in the party apparatus from the 1920s was closely tied to the trade unions (for the party as a whole this was a very minimal involvement). After 1953 the trade unions were incorporated into factory management on the Russian pattern. The basic administrative hierarchy at the factory level revolved around the managers, technicians, and union bureaucrats. Part of Mao's schema, over and above the factional need to erase Liu's influence in the areas where the former head of state had the deepest roots, was to mobilize the working masses under direct party and army command for a forced march toward higher productivity. This was expressed in one of the main slogans of the Cultural Revolution, "Grasp revolution, promote production." Like the Great Leap of 1958, there was an intensive speedup throughout Chinese industry. Mao sought to organize this work mobilization through a combination of army, party, and state cadres who would break with the routinism of the previous period and get down to the shop level to prod the workers forward. The workers' role in all this was to unquestioningly contribute their labor and technical ingenuity without asking either for more pay or for a part in making *political* decisions.

3. *State planning and heavy industry versus construction of light industry in the countryside using local resources.* Here we see a reform that, if carried out under the direction of a national congress of workers' councils and integrated in the state plan, could solve a number of the problems of China's underdevelopment: the gap between city and country, the scarcity of consumer goods, the useful employment of the surplus population in the countryside, the stemming of migration to the cities unaccompanied by concomitant increases in the number of city jobs available. But as carried out by the Maoist bureaucracy, the industrialization drive in the countryside has resulted in increasing rather than decreasing inequality and poses serious problems for the preservation of a genuine planned economy.

One of the objections Mao raised to Liu's organization of state industry under the central plan was that the criterion of profitability had been introduced, somewhat along the lines of the Liberman reforms in the Soviet Un-

ion. Since the Cultural Revolution this appears to have been eliminated, with production being geared to centrally established quotas regardless of factory cost estimates. But an altogether different situation exists in the commune factories in the countryside. The avowed purpose of such light industrial plants is to provide local self-sufficiency in simple machine tools, consumer goods, artificial fertilizers, etc. These plants are to be built strictly without state aid and their output is locally consumed and does not figure in the national plan. There is some excuse for this because of the lack of transport facilities to move mass-produced goods from one part of the country to another. But the system strongly favors the economic independence of local managers, the withholding of goods from nearby provinces outside of the local jurisdiction, hoarding, the *de facto* rise of protectionist moves to exclude goods produced elsewhere, particularly those from the big state factories, in order to nurture local industries, and so on. The most obvious inequality is that regions naturally rich in resources grow in income while more poorly favored areas decline into poverty. Audrey Donnithorne, writing in the October-December 1972 *China Quarterly*, describes two production brigades in the same part of Kwangtung Province: "One was badly managed and its members received hardly any cash payment over and above their grain rations at the end of the year. The other was well managed and each household earned over 1,000 *yuan* (c. U. S. \$400) per annum from its work for the collective."

Undoubtedly there is a certain amount of local initiative in building commune factories, but again it is party and army cadres who hold all political decision-making power—and inasmuch as all major political decisions are made in Peking, their real power is in the realm of undertaking new work projects. While in the short term this may result in increases in gross national product, in the long run local hierarchies will begin to pull against the national plan as they establish privileged bases of their own which they do not wish to share with neighboring areas that are not doing as well. There are no institutions of workers' control that could equalize wages and incomes on a national scale, and the Maoist center in Peking seems unconcerned over the centrifugal tendencies it is fostering in the countryside under the aegis of bureaucrats who for the moment remain loyal to Peking.

4. *Specialization of bureaucratic personnel versus compulsory manual labor.* It is argued that a leadership that forces the bureaucrats to periodically get their hands dirty must be opposed to the development of special privilege and wants to maintain ties between the administrative personnel and the masses. But Mao has several motives for this policy that have nothing to do with democratization. In relation to the masses, the bureaucrats still retain their material privileges and their political power. Bringing them individually in contact with workers and peasants is necessary to implement Mao's long-standing efforts to maintain a high pitch of labor discipline with a relatively limited force of overseers. Mao deploys his bureaucratic troops to get the broadest impact from the smallest number of forces. Within the bureaucracy itself, however, the threat of a permanent "downward transfer" to the countryside is an effective device for keeping the lower echelons in line. The clue to the whole system is that while the administrators occasionally must play the role of workers,

the workers are never permitted to play the role of administrators.

5. *Politics in command versus technical expertise.* Here again we are back to Mao's split with the technocrats and the refusal of Liu to place the cult of Mao and the efforts to inculcate it among the masses above the routine administrative functions of the bureaucracy. There is certainly no difference in principle here. If anything, Mao's insistence on total, unanimous, and vocal support for his line from every individual citizen is a bureaucratic utopia even more extreme than Liu's efforts to reproduce the police-style administrative command structure of the Kremlin Stalinists.

Someday we may know how many of the policies attributed to Liu Shao-chi were actually embraced. We cannot from the outside penetrate the wall of secrecy erected by the Maoist bureaucracy to conceal its inner workings. Liu's actual personal preferences are of secondary importance, however. What matters here is that the attack on Liu encompassed a shift in economic and political policy as outlined, whoever may have been the real protagonists of either side (we cannot yet be certain if all the changes made in the Cultural Revolution were at Mao's behest or if some of them were special projects of Lin Piao or Chou En-lai). *Neither extreme yielded any significant concessions on the two key bulwarks of caste rule: democratic rights for the masses or elimination of material and political privileges for the bureaucratic hierarchy.* By definition centrism, even bureaucratic centrism, wavers between reformism and the pressure of the masses toward revolutionary policies. The right and left swings of Stalinism, on the contrary, circle around the axis of preservation of the material privileges of the bureaucracy, defending the caste interests of the hierarchy now from the left and now from the right, but in no case determining its policy by the "reflected. . . pressure of the revolutionary masses" (Trotsky). This is why it is correct to label Maoism in China "Stalinist" and incorrect to suggest that its vacillations are so free swinging as to bring it occasionally "closer to the positions of revolutionary Marxism" than the Kremlin, which is, after all, merely another example of a hardened bureaucratic caste in power.

Institutional Changes since the Cultural Revolution

Apart from the economic reorganization discussed above, the biggest institutional change wrought by the Cultural Revolution was the creation of "Revolutionary Committees" which took over factory, commune, city, and provincial administrations. These were described in the Maoist press as being modeled after the Paris Commune, and were claimed to embody a high degree of popular democracy. In fact, while these institutions were newly created in the Cultural Revolution, they represented no break with the *kind* of institutions that preceded them. We should remember that in the Soviet Union local "soviets" continue to exist to this day, entirely stripped of their content as revolutionary workers' councils. In the third Chinese revolution there never were soviets of the type that sprang up in the Russian revolutions of 1905 and 1917.

The constitution of the People's Republic of China, adopted in 1954, after the transition from "New Democracy" to the First Five-Year Plan, provides for a National People's Congress and local governmental organizations (People's Congresses and People's Councils). These formally nonparty institutions, just as in the USSR after Stalin's rise to power, always acted politically as rubber-stamp bodies for the ruling bureaucracy. But they served a necessary function for the bureaucracy as administrative instruments that were not easily replaced by direct party organizations.

During the Great Leap Forward the People's Councils were effectively subsumed under the urban and rural commune administrations—more openly controlled by the party than the People's Councils. The "nonparty" local governmental structures were revived in the retreat from the Great Leap, especially in the cities where the urban communes never took hold.

In the Cultural Revolution the People's Councils were swept away, along with the trade unions, the Communist Youth League, and the national women's organizations. This time, however, Mao could not call on the party to construct a new administrative apparatus because he did not command the party, especially on the provincial and local level. Even in Shanghai, where the Maoists were strongest and from where the Cultural Revolution was launched, Mao's opponents retained powerful positions in the party and governmental apparatus and were only deposed in the so-called January Revolution in 1967.

The "Revolutionary Committees" were created as a replacement for the defunct People's Councils, i.e., as administrative units to govern the factories, communes, municipalities, and provinces. They were composed of a "three-in-one" alliance of PLA cadres, "revolutionary rebels" (Maoist supporters from the Red Guards, the government bureaucracy, the trade-union officialdom, etc.), and party functionaries who sided with Mao. In the period until the purge of Lin Piao in September 1971 the army was the dominant component of the "Revolutionary Committees." Since then, while the army remains very strong, the locus of power appears to have passed to the reconstructed party, which is an instrument of the Mao-Chou faction. The third component, which was, in the official propaganda, supposed to be the direct representatives of the masses, never constituted a major power bloc and is today composed almost entirely of party cadres and army personnel. The subterfuge of mass representation is maintained but even the most uncritical Western Maoists who have visited China since the Cultural Revolution have provided evidence that dispels this facade.

Macciocchi, who spent eight weeks in China in October-December 1970, described the port workers' "Revolutionary Committee" in Tientsin:

"In deciding how many delegates each of the three groups should send to the revolutionary committee, it was decided that the representatives from the revolutionary masses should comprise a majority." On the thirty-three-member committee there were three PLA representatives, fourteen party cadres, and sixteen delegates from the "revolutionary masses." But on enquiring further, Macciocchi discovered that most of the last category happened to also be party members. In fact, twenty-six of the thirty-three mem-

bers of the committee were party members.

Meisner, who visited Shenyang a year and a half later, found that even this weighted "representation" had been further eroded by reducing the "Revolutionary Committee" to a mere administrative arm of the local party leadership. As he described the Shenyang Transformer Factory:

"The factory is under the unified leadership of the Communist Party Committee. Below the Party Committee is a complex administrative body, the factory Revolutionary Committee. The Party Committee was described explicitly to us as the political or policy-making authority and the Revolutionary Committee as an administrative body which implements the Party's line in running the factory. Within the Revolutionary Committee are several sections: political work, production, routine management, and security."

Until the fall of Lin Piao, the province-level "Revolutionary Committees" were dominated by PLA officers. The shift to party control recorded by Meisner is a shift between the army and party hierarchies, and not one from mass representation to a reassertion of party authority.

The Pitfalls of a 'Political' Analysis of Maoism

Trotsky wrote that the Spanish civil war proved that it had been correct to abandon "bureaucratic centrism" to describe Stalinism because its representatives had proved "capable of entering into alliance only with the most conservative groupings among the international labor aristocracy." (*The Spanish Revolution, 1931-39*, p. 311.) The repressions of the centrists in Spain, after all, were carried out mainly by the Stalinists themselves while they were participating in a bourgeois government. In Bangladesh, Ceylon, and the Sudan, Mao sided with the most reactionary sector of the *bourgeoisie* not only against the centrists but against the labor aristocracy as well!

Chinese Stalinism in power, particularly since the Cultural Revolution, has shown itself to be every bit as narrowly national minded, class collaborationist, and counterrevolutionary as the Kremlin in Stalin's day. If the rhetoric of anti-imperialist struggle still receives a little more lip service from Peking than from Moscow, there is nothing to choose between their respective interpretations of peaceful coexistence or their dedication to "socialism in one country." In a single year Peking provided military and financial aid to a bourgeois dictatorship carrying out genocide against an oppressed people (Pakistan); it gave uncritical support to a capitalist government in the violent repression of its radicalized youth (Ceylon); and it endorsed the smashing of a Communist party with a large proletarian base and the trade unions it led in a conflict with another bourgeois military regime (Sudan).

In 1969 Comrade Germain wrote that "it is impossible to identify this [Mao's] leadership with that of the Soviet bureaucracy or with Stalinism." (*Discussion on China*, p. 47.) Let us repeat here one of his central arguments and see how well it stands up:

"Comrade Charlier's amendment is unacceptable. . . . Because he implies—without saying so clearly—that if in 1963 the Chinese documents or certain actions which they projected presented a more progressive character than the policy of the Kremlin bureaucracy, this is no longer the case today. Yet as point No. 3 of the resolution of the majority of the U.S. observes, both with regard to the revolution of May 1968 in France and the events in Czechoslovakia in August 1968, the two main revolutionary explosions of the past year, both the Chinese CP and the Maoist groups manifested a position closer to that of the revolutionary Marxists than that of the Kremlin and the CPs adhering to it. In fact, they were fighting on the same side of the barricades as our comrades most of the time, while the Khrushchevists were on the other side.

"Comrade Charlier states that the Maoists were on the right side for bad reasons—ultraleft and sectarian. We believe that is too great a simplification. But even if he were right, the fact remains that to fight on the side of the socialist revolution in France, of the political revolution in Czechoslovakia, even with bad motives and a detestable ideology, is obviously more progressive than the fact of *combating* the revolutionary mass movements in these countries, as the Kremlin and its agents did. To deny this difference is to deny the evidence." (p. 45.)

To deduce the character of a bureaucratic regime from the chance alignments of its foreign policy, as Comrade Germain does, rather than from its caste structure and internal dynamics, leads only to the worst kind of impressionism. If we were to apply his argument today, what would we come up with? If in 1968 in two revolutionary situations very far from China, involving governments with which it had limited ties or no ties at all, Peking provided verbal support to the left, in 1971 when three major repressions occurred, two of them on its doorstep—carried out by regimes with which it maintained close relations—Peking placed itself squarely on the side of the counter-revolution. Moreover, in two of these cases—Bangladesh and the Sudan, the Kremlin bureaucracy was on the "same side of the barricades as our comrades"! Shall we conclude that Mao became a Stalinist in 1971 while the Kremlin was transformed into a "bureaucratic centrist" regime? Comrade Germain might object that Moscow's support to Bangladesh and the Sudanese CP was carried out with bad motives and a detestable ideology, but he has already denied the validity of such answers.

In the betrayal of Vietnam through the detente with Nixon both Moscow and Peking find themselves on the same side of the barricades, along with American imperialism, against the Vietnamese revolution.

Isn't it time to conclude that Comrade Germain's method is wrong? Rather than searching out the points on which one or the other of the two principal Stalinist bureaucracies have "manifested a position closer to that of the revolutionary Marxist" we would have far a more accurate appraisal of their characteristics, and experience fewer rude shocks, if we recognized that both of them determine their policies not out of concern for the interests of the class struggle but out of concern for their real material interests as privileged parasitical growths fastened to their respective workers' states.