

(Sent From Bureau)

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EUROCOMMUNISM: A NEW STAGE IN THE CRISIS OF STALINISM

(Draft statement to be submitted by the United Secretariat  
to the discussion with the OCRFI)

1. As analyzed by Leon Trotsky and the Fourth International up to the beginning of the second world war, Stalinism was held to be a system of totalitarian rule and control by the Bonapartist top layer of the Soviet bureaucratic caste over the Soviet state, economy, and society, as well as the bureaucratically degenerated Communist International.

Stalinism arose in the Soviet Union as a result of the industrial backwardness, poverty, and isolation of the first workers state. The success of imperialism in blocking extension of the revolution, combined with the low material and cultural level of the country, the devastation of the imperialist war and subsequent civil war, and the exhaustion of the masses laid the basis for the growth of a parasitic bureaucracy and provided the conditions for its development into a new and distinct social stratum -- characterized by Trotsky as a bureaucratic caste in the framework of the workers state -- with interests in opposition to those of the working class.

The bureaucratic caste consolidated its rule through the usurpation of power, the crushing of the soviets, deprivation of the proletariat of all democratic rights, and the transformation of the Soviet Communist Party into one of the instruments charged with defending the power and privileges of the bureaucracy. Abroad, the Communist International was converted from an instrument of world revolution into an agency serving the diplomatic needs of the Kremlin.

The material basis of the bureaucracy's privileges, which essentially remained in the sphere of distribution, was its control over the surplus product. The Soviet economy, despite the wasteful character of the bureaucratic caste's management and the drain occasioned by its parasitic privileges, remained characterized by rapid development of the productive forces on the basis of the progressive, non-capitalist property relations resulting from the October revolution, which neither international nor indigenous restorationist forces have yet succeeded in overthrowing.

The rationalizations advanced by the bureaucratic caste to justify its rule included such revisions of Marxism as Stalin's theories on the possibility of building socialism in one country, the development of revolutions in separated stages, the survival of commodity production under socialism, the survival and the strengthening of the state in a classless society, the dogma that the proletariat can be

represented by only a single political party, the infallibility of the Central Committee of the Soviet Communist Party and particularly its general secretary, etc.

2. The Kremlin's monolithic control of the Comintern carried the seeds of its disintegration from the very beginning. The theory of socialism in one country, while used to justify the subservience of the Communist parties to the Kremlin, also fostered the growth of nationalistic tendencies in the various Communist parties, especially the large ones with ties to their own bourgeoisies.

The definitive proof that the Comintern had become a counterrevolutionary instrument was the German debacle in 1933 when Hitler seized power without resistance from the CP.

At the Seventh Congress of the Comintern in 1935, the leaders of the Soviet bureaucracy for the first time began to systematically present the Communist parties as defenders of private property and the bourgeois order. This counterrevolutionary reconciliation with the capitalist powers led not only to the espousal of class-collaborationist policies by the French, Spanish, Czechoslovak, and other Communist parties during the mass upsurges of the 1936-37 period (the popular front policy), but also to open alignment with "democratic" imperialist rule in the colonies. These policies were repeated on an even broader scale during the 1941-47 period of the "antifascist front" and postwar capitalist reconstruction.

The left turns by several Communist parties in 1939-41 and again in 1949-53 took place completely within the Stalinist framework, reflecting specific foreign policy turns by the Kremlin (the Stalin-Hitler pact and reaction to the cold war launched by Truman). Despite these left turns, from the inauguration of the popular front on, the strategy of the Stalinist parties has been fundamentally reformist and counterrevolutionary, like that of the Social Democrats since 1914.

As a result of the policies initiated by the Kremlin, the bureaucratic leaderships of the mass Communist parties in countries with bourgeois parliamentary regimes have become more and more integrated into bourgeois society. This has led to increasing contradictions in the base they stand on. On the one hand these bureaucrats have maintained their material, ideological, and political links with the Soviet bureaucracy; on the other they have become increasingly dependent on their base in bourgeois society. In 1938, Trotsky summarized this situation in the following way:

"As regards the ex-Comintern, its social basis, properly speaking, is of a twofold nature. On the one hand, it lives on the subsidies of the Kremlin, submits to the latter's commands, and, in this respect, every ex-Communist bureaucrat is the younger brother and subordinate of the Soviet bureaucrat. On the other hand, the various machines of the ex-Comintern feed from the same sources as the Social Democracy, that is, the superprofits of imperialism. The growth of the Communist parties in recent years, their infiltration into the ranks of the petty bourgeoisie, their installation in the state machinery, the trade unions, parliaments, the municipalities, etc., have strengthened in the extreme their dependence on national imperialism at the expense of their traditional dependence on the Kremlin.

"Ten years ago it was predicted that the theory of socialism in one country must inevitably lead to the growth of nationalist tendencies in the sections of the Comintern. This prediction has become an obvious fact. But until recently, the chauvinism of the French, British, Belgian, Czechoslovak, American, and other Communist parties seemed to be, and to a certain extent was, a refracted image of the interests of Soviet diplomacy ('the defense of the USSR'). Today, we can predict with assurance the inception of a new stage. The growth of imperialist antagonisms, the obvious proximity of the war danger, and the equally obvious isolation of the USSR must unavoidably strengthen the centrifugal nationalist tendencies within the Comintern. Each one of its sections will begin to evolve a patriotic policy on its own account. Stalin has reconciled the Communist parties of imperialist democracies with their national bourgeoisies. This stage has now been passed. The Bonapartist procurer has played his role. Henceforth the Communo-chauvinists will have to worry about their own hides, whose interests by no means always coincide with the 'defense of the USSR.'" ("A Fresh Lesson: After the Imperialist 'Peace' at Munich," in Writings of Leon Trotsky 1938-39, 2nd edition, pp. 70-71, Pathfinder Press, 1974.)

While the sharp reversal of the Kremlin's policies after the conclusion of the Hitler-Stalin pact in August 1939 did submit the Communist parties in the "democratic" imperialist countries to severe strains, while the French Communist Party did lose an important part of its parliamentary personnel on that occasion, while these parties suffered important losses in their broader mass base during the 1939-41 period as well as at the height of the "cold war" in 1949-1953, strains and losses that confirmed the correctness of Trotsky's historical analysis and prognosis of the long-term effects of the Seventh Comintern Congress, the Communist parties remained faithful to the Kremlin on both occasions. These parties continued to act as political instruments of the Soviet bureaucracy. Likewise, these parties held on to their essential working-class cadre despite all the tactical twists and turns of the 1934-1953 period, because that cadre continued by and large to identify faithfulness to the Kremlin with faithfulness to the October revolution and to view the Communist parties as anticapitalist parties fighting for socialism on a world scale.

3. It was after the second world war, and more precisely with the Stalin-Tito rift in 1948, that the crisis of Stalinism began to erupt in an increasingly explosive way. The victory of the Yugoslav revolution had essentially been achieved through a mass resistance movement against the imperialist occupation growing over into a civil war and accompanied by the advance of the Soviet armies against the common foe.

The Chinese revolution was marked by a number of peculiarities that need not be analyzed here. Suffice it to say that these included mass mobilizations on an unheard-of scale and the development of peasant armies that played a decisive role in toppling the regime of Chiang Kai-shek. While the Chinese Communist Party moved into leadership of these forces, its Stalinist background barred it from developing a Leninist program and it ended up fostering a parasitic social formation that is a replica -- although not an exact one -- of the bureaucratic caste in the Soviet Union.

Thus these two Communist parties acquired a huge material base that was independent of the Kremlin. This did not exist in the other East European countries, where the overturn of property relations in the 1945-48 period, while marked by varying degrees of mass mobilization, was achieved under tight control by the Soviet army. In the eyes of the masses, the leaderships of the Yugoslav and Chinese Communist parties were largely identified with the conquests of these autonomous revolutions. Contrary to the leaders of the Communist parties in the other "people's democracies," they were not seen as satraps of a conquering foreign power. On the contrary, against the Kremlin they could draw on the revolutionary and nationalist sentiments of the masses. In addition to their independent material base, this gave them a powerful political autonomy.

Both the Yugoslav and Chinese Communist parties had such strong bases that efforts by the Kremlin to assert domination over them, to subvert and change their leaderships, were condemned to failure. The Tito-Stalin rift of 1948 and the Mao-Khrushchev rift of 1960 marked crises for Stalinism of such depth as to be irreparable.

In the East European "people's democracies" the Kremlin from the beginning feared the appearance of independent, indigenous bureaucracies rooted in the new workers states. The Slansky, Rajk, Kostov trials and other purges were designed to try to prevent the emergence of such leadership around which a political opposition to the Kremlin might eventually form.

4. In the 1945-48 period when Stalin and the Soviet bureaucracy rose to the pinnacle of their strength, Stalinism developed into a complex but integrated system of totalitarian rule by the Bonapartist leadership of the bureaucracy over Soviet society, the East European "people's democracies," and the Communist parties of the capitalist countries. But as this power machine began to extend itself far beyond the frontiers of the USSR, the circumstances that had led to its formation had already changed. The deepening crisis of Stalinism became cumulative. It did not remain confined to the Tito-Stalin and the Mao-Khrushchev rifts. It developed in successive convulsions as well as less visible molecular changes that were the result of interactions among the following main factors:

a. The crisis of the Soviet bureaucracy's rule over the East European "people's democracies." This was a product of rising mass discontent in these countries as well as divergent interests between the national bureaucracies. The outcome was a closely intertwined process of social upheavals and deep internal crises plus divisions within the Communist parties of these countries (East Germany in 1953, Hungary and Poland in 1956, Czechoslovakia in 1968, Polish workers uprisings in 1970 and 1976).

b. The repercussions among the Communist parties of the "people's democracies" of the Tito-Stalin and Mao-Khrushchev rifts, which deepened the interbureaucratic conflicts. Despite the Kremlin's fierce repression, some bureaucracies (particularly in Romania and Albania) were able to win a substantial degree of independence, principally by playing on the contradictions between Belgrade, Moscow, and Peking.

c. The rise of a more militant mood among the Soviet proletariat. Large-scale uprisings occurred in the forced labor camps after Stalin died; this made Stalin's heirs substantially reduce the scope of direct physical terror and repression.

That in turn triggered a whole series of changes leading up to Khrushchev's sensational report at the Twentieth Congress of the Soviet Communist Party and the subsequent "de-Stalinization" process. This process was in no way a manifestation of "self-reform" by a "liberal" wing of the bureaucracy, nor an attempt at political revolution from above. On the contrary, it was an attempt by the bureaucracy to meet the new threat to its power and privileges by offering some concessions. The move represented an effort to gain time in handling the social relationship of forces within Soviet society after Stalin's death. But it could not prevent -- it even partially nurtured -- the

chain of limited challenges to the bureaucracy's rule that has characterized the internal situation in the USSR ever since. Of these challenges, those by oppressed nationalities have been the most significant to date. Important challenges have also been made by oppositional writers, artists, and scientists, and by workers fighting for better living conditions.

d. The repercussions among the cadres and militants of the Communist parties in the capitalist countries of such events as the rehabilitation of Tito in 1955 and especially the Khrushchev report in 1956. These dealt shattering blows to the myth of Stalinist infallibility. Combined with the repercussions of the 1953 East German uprising, the 1956 Hungarian revolution and Polish upsurge, the 1960 Mao-Khrushchev rift, and the 1968 invasion of Czechoslovakia, the myth of Moscow as the "leading center of the international labor movement" -- the myth that the Kremlin's policies represent the interests of world revolution -- was weakened in the eyes of the vanguard of the international working class.

e. The impact of the Cuban revolution on layers of Communist party cadres, especially in Latin America. They were attracted to the leaders of this revolution who proved that success can be won by revolutionists of non-Stalinist origin and who urged that the best defense of Cuba was to make revolutions in other countries.

f. The increasingly autonomous development of a series of Communist parties in the capitalist countries. This trend at first resulted from the rank-and-file reaction to the process cited above. With the sharpening of the class struggle in Western Europe, especially after May 1968 in France, other factors came into play, such as the need of the CPs to present a more attractive image of their model of socialism, their growing competition with the social democracy and with left-wing trade-union currents in some countries, and their need to widen their mass base in general. All these factors combined to lead a number of CPs in Europe to demarcate themselves from the Kremlin. The phenomenon of "Eurocommunism" epitomizes this tendency.

g. The repercussions of Eurocommunism within the Communist parties of Eastern Europe and the USSR, and in broader social circles in these countries. The growth of Eurocommunism encourages the voicing of political opposition to the bureaucracy's rule, which objectively contributes to the preparation of the coming political revolution.

Taken as a whole, these aspects of the deepening crisis of Stalinism testify to the hastening of the process of world revolution and

to a relationship of social forces in the USSR that is increasingly favorable to the proletariat.

5. "Eurocommunism" is misnamed. It is by no means limited to various Communist parties of Western Europe. The Communist parties of Australia, Japan, and Mexico have developed similar positions on various points, as has the Venezuelan MAS, which originated as a split from the CP. Comparable, as yet minority currents exist in other Communist parties. Furthermore, it is by no means a coherent and coordinated international movement. The particular interests of the bureaucracy of each Eurocommunist party can lead to conflicts among them.

What is characteristic of Eurocommunism is not any new strategy. All the basic revisions of Marxist theory and communist class-struggle strategy of the parties in Italy, Britain, Sweden, Spain, Switzerland, France, Belgium, and Greece (the "Interior" party) are shared by those parties that defend the Soviet bureaucracy in the old terms, such as the CPs in Portugal, the United States, Greece ("Exterior"), and West Germany.

Both the dogmatists and the Eurocommunists adhere to the basic strategy of "peaceful coexistence," i.e., of defense of the status quo in the West. They reject any head-on tests of strength with the bourgeoisie in the imperialist countries; and consider any revolutionary perspective in these countries to be hopeless. Far from advancing the perspective of establishing a dictatorship of the proletariat, they practice class collaborationism with bourgeois parties, political demagogues, and factions of the capitalist class, and uphold the bourgeois state.

Nor has the Kremlin any material interest or political and ideological reasons to reject these strategies, even when they are pushed to their extreme counterrevolutionary implications as they are today in Italy and Spain where the CP leaderships endorse anti-working-class "austerity policies." The Soviet bureaucracy not only agrees with them as part and parcel of its own "peaceful coexistence" orientation, it initiated them under Stalin. Outstanding examples were the betrayal of the Spanish revolution in the 1930s through the popular front, pursuit of a similarly disastrous popular-front policy in France on the eve of World War II, and participation in the postwar coalition governments in France, Italy, and Belgium. Similar betrayals of working-class interests and of defense of private property and the bourgeois state by the Stalinists are foreshadowed in the programs to which the Eurocommunists have committed themselves.

What is peculiar to the Eurocommunist parties can be listed as follows:

A systematic codification of their revisions of Marxism introduced in the communist movement by Stalin, as well as a codification of their long-term reformist practice. This has culminated in explicit rejection of Leninism by some of these parties, explicit advocacy of utilizing bourgeois parliaments for the "gradual" building of socialism, and explicit adherence to the "principle" of "alternance of government" with bourgeois parties, thus leaving the capitalist state intact. This blatant expression of their revisionism reflects their own electoral and material needs as labor bureaucracies increasingly integrated into bourgeois society. It does not reflect the interests of a wing of the Soviet bureaucracy that is more restorationist than the bureaucracy as a whole, as some have proposed.

Some of these generalizations cannot be accepted by the Soviet bureaucracy because of their explosive political implications inside the USSR and the East European workers states. An example is the Eurocommunists' support to a multiparty system.

An increasing amount of public criticism of the worst repressive features of the bureaucratic dictatorships in the USSR and the "people's democracies." This public criticism, which was initiated with the condemnation of the 1968 invasion of Czechoslovakia helps give legitimacy to a more systematic critique of the repressive practices of the bureaucracy's rule in general. The Carrillo leadership of the Spanish CP has gone furthest in its open rejection of the characterization of the USSR and the "people's democracies" as socialist countries.

A stronger trend to recruit and educate cadres on the basis of the policies and authority of the national Eurocommunist leaderships rather than pointing to the Kremlin as the ultimate authority.

The more critical attitude of the Eurocommunists toward the Kremlin and its worst crimes against the Soviet and East European masses, the more critical reappraisal of the entire past history of the USSR, including the meaning of Trotsky's struggle against bureaucratism and the counterrevolutionary role played by Stalin primarily reflects pressure emanating from the large majority of the advanced workers in the imperialist countries who have become aware of the bureaucratic degeneration of the USSR (contrary to the situation in the 1930s, '40s, and early '50s). Antibureaucratic sentiments have grown stronger among average workers in these countries, so that the Eurocommunists cannot keep or extend their mass base within the working class without



increasingly taking their distance from the bureaucracy's repressive actions and institutions.

This becomes all the more obvious when such criticism is coupled with attempts at partial identification with some of the traditional themes of workers democracy such as rejection of the one-party system, acceptance of differences in opinion at Central Committee meetings or conferences, the cautious extension of the area of free discussion in these parties and the lip service paid to the slogan of workers control and self-management.

The bourgeoisie has no interest whatsoever in promoting these themes among the Western proletariat, especially under present circumstances when the undermining of bureaucratic control over potentially explosive movements runs completely counter to the political calculations of the capitalists, including use of the Eurocommunists to strangle future revolutionary upheavals. The appearance of these themes in Eurocommunist propaganda can only be explained as resulting from increasing pressure from the workers and the fear that if at least lip service is not paid to them, the ranks of the CPs will continually shrink, especially among working-class youth.

6. The development of Eurocommunism represents a new stage in what Trotsky called the "centrifugal nationalist tendencies" observable in world Stalinism. It reflects the growing integration of these CPs into bourgeois society. This trend could eventually lead the bureaucracies of these parties to completely break with the Kremlin and become social democratic bureaucracies. But it should be stressed that this qualitative change has not occurred. Although the counterrevolutionary role these parties play in the workers movement is fundamentally the same as that of the Social Democratic parties, the Eurocommunist parties are still distinguished by their political, ideological, and material links with the deformed and degenerated workers states. These links are weakening, but they have not been broken. They remain the essential feature differentiating the Eurocommunist from the Social Democratic parties. The most important obstacle to breaking these links is the material and political self-interest of the bureaucratic leaderships of these CPs, that is, their need to maintain a separate political identity from the Social Democratic parties.

a. The domestic political policies followed by the Eurocommunist parties are thoroughly reformist, conforming de facto with the foreign policy objectives of the Kremlin and the bureaucracies of the East European workers states. The European bourgeoisies likewise recognize

that the Eurocommunists pose no threat to the capitalist status quo; what the ruling capitalists doubt is not the Communist parties' commitment to reformism, but their capacity, in a period of rising class struggle, to succeed in their treacherous objective of holding the workers in check, including the working-class members and sympathizers of the Communist parties themselves.

However, it is their international, rather than their domestic, positions that distinguish the Eurocommunists from the Social Democrats. On most major international issues in dispute between Washington and Moscow the Eurocommunist parties have rallied behind Moscow (e.g., Angola, the Mideast, the Horn of Africa, the neutron bomb). On other important international questions such as NATO or the Common Market, the actual policy of the Kremlin, as distinct from its ceremonial pronouncements, is to maintain the status quo, while favoring a greater degree of independence from Washington on the part of the other imperialist powers. This policy of the Kremlin accords with the stands taken by the Eurocommunist parties.

While favoring reforms, the Eurocommunist parties do not challenge the system of domination by the bureaucratic castes in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, and their criticisms of conditions in these countries are made within certain limits. Their aim is to avoid an irreparable rupture with the Kremlin and to maintain close relations with the other bureaucratic regimes. The objective of maintaining friendly ties with the Romanian Stalinists, for example, led the Eurocommunists to turn a blind eye to the 1977 miners strike there. The Kremlin and the East European regimes, in turn, have sought to hold the Eurocommunist parties in the "socialist camp."

The Eurocommunist parties, especially those with mass support in the working class, thus remain important to the Kremlin's foreign policy. For this reason, the Eurocommunist parties, despite their counterrevolutionary policies, are less reliable in the eyes of their own bourgeoisies than the Social Democratic parties. The European bourgeoisies, while preparing to accept the prospect of Communist party participation in the governments of several countries if the sharpening of the class struggle makes this necessary to preserve capitalist rule, still aim to forestall this, if possible. They also fear, justifiably, that CP participation in the government would undercut propaganda campaigns against the "red menace" which have been used to justify their huge military outlays.

b. The ideological positions of the Eurocommunist parties, although less crude than the ploys of Stalinism characteristic of earlier

periods, still retain important ideological tenets of Stalinism. They claim to trace their roots to the Russian revolution. They still generally accept the theory of "socialism in one country" (albeit as a dogma applicable in many countries). While rejecting many of the specific features of the bureaucratic regime in the Soviet Union as valid in their own countries, they continue in general to present it as a variant of socialism under the conditions inherited from tsarism. They reject the perspective of a workers state based on democratic workers councils. They look to the "socialist camp," headed by Moscow, as the camp representing progress for humanity and the bulwark against imperialist reaction. They accept "peaceful coexistence" -- meaning class collaborationism -- as a world strategy for the current epoch. They attempt to inculcate these ideological views in their memberships as a means of distinguishing themselves from the Social Democrats.

c. The Eurocommunist parties continue to maintain material links with the Kremlin. They still receive subsidies, although by more round-about means than in the past, and their leading and secondary cadres are still corrupted individually as the recipients of material privileges and status in the "socialist world."

These material links are more important to some smaller Communist parties than those with a mass following and resources based on trade unions, business enterprises, etc. These large Eurocommunist parties have indeed "strengthened in the extreme," as Trotsky said, "their dependence on national imperialism at the expense of their traditional dependence on the Kremlin." Nevertheless, they have not yet reached the same degree of dependence on their own bourgeoisies as have the Social Democratic parties. Likewise, while capitalists in most imperialist countries are already collaborating with CP mayors, union leaders, heads of cooperatives, top functionaries of publicly owned companies, and will tomorrow collaborate with CP cabinet ministers, the Eurocommunists are still far from the point reached today in many imperialist countries where a section of the Social Democratic leadership participates directly in the management of private industry and banking.

These mass Communist parties often find themselves in a defensive position in some countries where they are being challenged by the Social Democracy. Under these circumstances the Eurocommunist parties are compelled out of self-interest to seek to maintain and periodically sharpen their differentiation from the Social Democrats. This can lead them to stepping up sectarian and divisionist policies toward other forces in the labor and mass movements.

The Communist parties also face a growing challenge from left currents in the mass organizations they control. This is one of the factors explaining the continued identification of the Eurocommunist parties with the "socialist camp" and the "heritage of the October revolution." They are unwilling to make it easier for revolutionary Marxists to be recognized by large sectors of the working class as the genuine representatives of communism.

As all of these factors show, no qualitative change has occurred in the nature of these Communist parties. Nevertheless Eurocommunism represents a response to definite objective factors. Most important is the Communist parties' increasing integration into the bourgeois state and economic institutions (in Trotsky's words, the Communist parties "feed from the same sources as the Social Democracy, that is, the superprofits of imperialism"). This trend, resulting from the crisis of Stalinism and the crisis of imperialism on a world scale, could eventually lead to the transformation of these parties into Social Democratic parties.

This qualitative change has not occurred. The conditions for such a transformation include profound upheavals in the organized labor movement, successive splits and regroupments, significant alterations in the international situation, as well as important shifts in the relationship of forces among the different political currents in the working class.

7. The main source of the avowed hostility of the Kremlin toward the Eurocommunist parties is fear that their criticisms of repression in the bureaucratized workers states will foster political dissent and encourage the development of oppositional layers of the intellectuals and the working class in these countries.

In addition, the Kremlin is well aware that with the shattering of Stalinist monolithism, the Eurocommunists' explicit rejection of the dogma of the "leading role of the Soviet Union and of the Soviet Communist Party" aids the East European bureaucracies in pursuing greater autonomy from the Kremlin and stimulates differentiation within the bureaucracies themselves.

The Eurocommunists consciously play on these differentiations, seeking points of support in the East European CPs. They have registered some successes in this with the Hungarian, Polish, and Romanian bureaucracies.

Such developments signify mounting dangers for the Kremlin and its henchmen. Thus it might well be asked why the Soviet Union has up until now attempted to maneuver and negotiate -- with increasing

difficulties -- to keep the Eurocommunist parties within the fold of the "world Communist movement" rather than provoke or even risk an open break with these parties. Several reasons for this maneuverist course can be cited.

After the Stalin-Tito and Mao-Khrushchev rifts, a third great split would end the credibility of any international mission or function of the Kremlin in the world labor movement. A new schism would have grave consequences among many layers of communist workers and intellectuals, not only in semicolonial countries where the prestige of the USSR is still higher than it is among the oppressed in the imperialist powers, but also in the USSR and in the CPs of Eastern Europe. As a major blow to the Kremlin's prestige, it would stimulate new ideological crises in the CPSU similar to those of the "de-Stalinization" period. It would also leave the Kremlin without any effective instrument for intervening in the political life of key imperialist countries, thereby divesting it of what has for decades been one of its most important cards in diplomatic maneuvers with imperialism.

Under the present circumstances, the Kremlin calculates that any one hundred percent pro-Moscow grouping that splits from the Eurocommunists would rapidly become transformed into an ossified, marginalized sect without any possibility of acquiring a new mass base or of playing a significant role in national politics.

Thus, the Kremlin considers that it has more to lose than to gain from an open break with the Eurocommunists. It prefers to maintain an uneasy truce, combining public polemics with conciliatory maneuvers, attempts to sow divisions among the Eurocommunist parties and to "subvert" individual leaders. This does not exclude the existence of important differences within the top layers of the Soviet bureaucracy and the pro-Moscow CPs on this question, nor future reversals of this line.

An important factor determining the Kremlin's attitude toward Eurocommunism is its judgment of the objective impact of Eurocommunism on the political and social situation in the imperialist countries. Since the perspectives of the Eurocommunist parties largely coincide with the Kremlin's interests, the Kremlin still considers that it can make more gains in the advanced capitalist countries from the spread of Eurocommunism than it stands to lose in its own sphere of domination. Hence, a public stance of toleration toward Eurocommunism appears as a lesser evil to the possible losses involved in an open rift.

However, the growing conflict between the Kremlin and these parties has its own objective logic, which in the final analysis cannot

be controlled by either of the protagonists. To be noted are the successive split-offs of pro-Moscow diehards from the Eurocommunist parties. Splits of this kind have already occurred in Australia, Japan, Sweden, Britain, and Spain. New splits are developing in several of these parties and other CPs. This tendency represents a continual warning to the Eurocommunists.

8. Two dovetailing conclusions must be drawn from this analysis of Eurocommunism -- on the level of perspectives and on the level of tasks and opportunities for the Fourth International.

Eurocommunism accentuates the other components of the crisis of Stalinism within the Eurocommunist parties themselves. For instance, the acceptance by the Italian and Spanish CPs of a capitalist "austerity policy" combined with a loosening of tight bureaucratic control over both party activists and the unions can only lead to explosive differentiations and conflicts among different wings and sections of these parties and in the trade unions they control. This holds especially true, since it coincides with a sharpening of the class struggle and a big increase in worker militancy.

Eurocommunism will therefore be marked by mounting inner-party conflicts and potential splits, not only of the most service pro-Moscow elements, but also of currents moving toward the Social Democracy or in the opposite direction toward the left. We reject any illusion that, as a result of the Eurocommunist trend, the CPs can be regenerated or can transform themselves into centrist parties. But our perspective does include the possibility that important sectors of the working-class and youth activists of the Eurocommunist parties can be won over to revolutionary Marxism and thereby make an essential contribution to the building of new mass revolutionary parties in the advanced capitalist countries. Indeed, this should become a conscious goal of our sections in the countries where Eurocommunism is on the rise.

The Fourth International sees in the development of Eurocommunism a big opening for breaking the stranglehold of Stalinism over important sectors of the mass movement, and for deepening the world crisis of Stalinism, thereby contributing to an acceleration of the processes leading up to the political revolution in the USSR and East Europe.

The existence of this opening necessitates close attention to the discussions, polemics, and inner-party struggles and regroupments which Eurocommunism is causing to an increasing extent both in the so-called "world Communist movement" and in the labor movement as a whole.

Intervention by the revolutionary Marxists should center around the following points:

a. A clear explanation of the revisionist nature of abandoning of the struggle for the dictatorship of the proletariat, of abandoning the Marxist theory of the state, of Leninism, of the traditional Marxist critique of the capitalist economy and of bourgeois democracy. This should be coupled with defense of classical communist positions on these questions, whose validity is confirmed by all recent developments in the class struggle, from Chile to Portugal.

b. A systematic counterposing of our positions on workers power and socialist democracy to both the traditional Stalinist justifications of the bureaucratic dictatorship and the ideological capitulation of the Eurocommunists to traditional Social Democratic programmatic conceptions. The statement by the United Secretariat of the Fourth International, "Socialist Democracy and the Dictatorship of the Proletariat," exemplifies this approach.

c. A clear explanation of the treacherous, class-collaborationist overall strategy of Eurocommunism, of its rejection of and attempt to stifle any possibility of socialist revolution in the imperialist countries, and a reminder that these strategies and objectives have their roots in the abandonment of the world revolution in favor of the false theory of "socialism in one country," and the adoption of the "popular front" policy by the Seventh Congress of the Comintern.

d. A counterposition of our basic strategy of mass mobilizations around demands raised in accordance with the approach of the Transitional Program of the Fourth International. The objective of such demands is the conquest of state power by the proletariat. Our strategy stands in opposition to the strategy of gradualism, reformism, "anti-monopolistic alliances," "advanced democracy," and other revisionist concepts of the Eurocommunists. Our strategy includes counterposition of the workers united front to the line of alliance with bourgeois parties and sectors of the bourgeoisie, and a systematic struggle for unity of the working class on all levels.

e. A reaffirmation that, historically, the entire origin and justification for communism is tied to the fact that the international socialist revolution has been on the agenda since at least 1914 and that rejecting the timeliness of the socialist revolution in both the imperialist and oppressed colonial and semicolonial countries is intimately related to the theory of "socialism in one country" and the strategy of "peaceful coexistence" that flows from it.

f. A systematic campaign to confront the Eurocommunist bureaucrats with the contrast between their lip service to "pluralism" and the absence of democracy within the working-class organizations they control, particularly the trade unions and their own parties, where even the elementary right to form tendencies and engage in genuinely free debate is denied.

g. A campaign to bring about the systematic participation of the Eurocommunist parties, leaders, and cadres in united-front campaigns for the defense of all victims of bureaucratic repression in the USSR and the "people's democracies."

h. A critique of the insufficient and largely apologetic character of the Eurocommunists' reappraisal of Stalin, of the bureaucracy's rule in the USSR, and of the role of Trotsky, along with a dialogue with the most advanced of these militants to convince them of the correctness of the Trotskyist analysis of Stalinism, the nature of the USSR, and the nature of the bureaucracy.

i. A systematic campaign to mobilize Eurocommunists on behalf of full rehabilitation of Trotsky and his followers murdered under Stalinist orders inside and outside the USSR, the victims of the Moscow trials, and all the old Bolsheviks, both in the Western CPs and in the bureaucratically degenerated or deformed workers states themselves.

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