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THE CHINESE PEASANT

By John Bowman

THE sweep and the scale of the Communist advance in the later months of 1948 has staggered the Western imperialists and for a time paralysed their strategy in China. Particularly, too, it presents a new problem to those who have hitherto regarded the struggles in the politically unstable countries of Eastern Europe as merely Russian "expansionism" or "imperialism." If the advances of Mao Tse Tung are no more than a hateful conquest of "freedom" by "tyranny", as most bourgeois and reformist politicians hold, or of one tyranny by another, how can we account for the immense vitality of the movement? It cannot be derived, in China, at any rate, simply or even mainly from Russian military strength, where some are tempted to find its source because it started in the North of China, (unlike the 1925 march of the Nationalist armies, which advanced from the South). Not only is the Chinese Red Army operating thousands of miles away from Russian territory, with which direct communications hardly exist, but it is using, not Russian weapons, but weapons captured from the Japanese during and since the war, or (significantly) supplied from American arsenals intended for use against them and brought over to them by deserters from Chiang Kai Shek's armies.

The material basis of the movement is a vast class-struggle within China itself, of the peasants and especially the landless peasants, against usurers and landlords. The information on which this statement is based has recently been gathered together by a Chinese scholar in the recognised scientific journal, the "JOURNAL OF FARM ECONOMICS", for May, 1948, before the great advance really began, and the facts and figures come from recognised, non-communist and generally official sources. They not only show the deep social roots of the movement of peasant revolt which has now toppled over Chiang Kai Shek and his blood-stained regime, but equally they permit us to trace the historical limitations of the movement and its prospects.

THE CHINESE PEASANTRY

China is a sub-continent, and there are great natural and social differences between different provinces, but the dominating feature of social life everywhere is the vast peasant population which endlessly toils to get enough food from tiny holdings of land, and carries on its back all the upper layers of society.

Hardly anywhere in the world is the land so terribly sub-divided between families and cultivators or has the parasitism of landlords and moneylenders such a firm grip. Dealings between the landlords and their tenants or the usurers and their debtors, the formal legal owners of midgot holdings, cannot possibly take place on the basis of social or economic equality.

This state of affairs had existed in the Chinese countryside for thousands of years, but the recent impact of Western imperialism has not had the effect of lightening the peasants' toil and poverty. On the contrary, the exploitation of China by the imperialists has added to the peasants' burdens. On the one hand, they do not offer a profitable field for the investment of capital (for reasons that will become clear later). On the other hand, they now have to produce enough surplus food not only to maintain their own native parasitic classes but to contribute an export for the imperialists as well. Western imperialism disrupted the social structure of Old China, which led to the overthrow of the Emperor and the breakdown of centralised government. It brought the Chinese peasants into the wide arena of world trade, so that when the prices of agricultural products fell, the value of the peasants' harvests fell also, as a natural consequence. Further, when the over-production of silver caused its value to fall in the 1920's, the Chinese currency, based on silver, also lost its value; the peasants' hoardings lost their buying power and the value of his crops in the world market was still further reduced. The various imperialist groups financed war-lords and their private armies, devastated wide areas making impossible any control of floods or soil erosion.

"Communism in China is chiefly a movement of outraged tenant farmers", said the MANCHESTER GUARDIAN editorially on December 15th, 1948. Even the peasants who own their holdings in a legal sense can, however, rarely be considered as genuinely independent in the same way as a tenant farmer in Britain or the Middle West of U.S.A., because they are often hopelessly in debt to the local store-keeper and money-lender. It is true that the percentage of peasants who rent their holdings has risen in recent years and the proportion of land-owning peasants has declined, and this change in the internal composition of the peasant population is one factor in the present mass movement.

<u>Tenure</u>	% of all peasants occupying holdings	
	<u>1911</u>	<u>1939</u>
Tenants	28	38
Part Owners	23	27
Full Owners	49	35

The fall in ownership is somewhat over-stated in these figures because those for 1939 do not include provinces in North China and beyond the Great Wall which were then occupied by the Japanese and where the rainfall is low and large areas are occupied by a few nomadic tribes who live by grazing flocks and herds. The significant point is, however, that the burden of landlordism should have been aggravated rather than relieved in spite of all the peasant risings of the 1920's and the 1930's and the sustained activities of the Red Armies.

The official agency of the Nanking Government for increasing food production during the war, reported that in the fourteen provinces of "Free China" (that, is provinces not under Japanese occupation), all sorts of rents on almost every type of land had gone up between 1937 and 1941. In that year, the government began to collect the farm taxes in produce instead of in money, because the inflation was taking away the value of the currency. At one, the landowners raised their rents, to ensure in the case of rents paid in money that the money would buy as much as before, or, when rents were paid in produce, that the produce would sell for enough money to buy as many manufactured goods as before, at higher prices. Though the government could not provide itself with precise information about prices, it is safe to say that the price of agricultural products, that is, of what the peasants sell, did not rise nearly so much as those of manufactured goods, which the peasant cannot produce for himself and has to buy from the town. In these different ways, the peasants carried additional burdens in consequence of the war.

The proportion of tenancy is higher in the more fertile and productive regions. In the north, the yield of a farm is too low even to be shared between a landlord and a tenant, and the high proportion of owner-occupied holdings in that region points not to an emancipated peasantry but to a poverty-stricken one. In the rice-growing region of the South-East, irrigation makes the land more productive and the crops less uncertain. The surplus has invited investments from absentee landowners, capitalists and bureaucrats.

The relations of the peasant to his landlord are sometimes like those of the mediaeval serf of Europe to the lord of the manor. In many parts the tenant has to pay gifts to his landlord over and above his rent on such occasions as New Year's Day, the landlord's birthday and festivals. In the interior in some places the tenant has to work without pay for the landlord for a certain number of days in the year, as under the corvee of pre-revolutionary France, and in some areas the poor tenant pays his rent by his own labour service.

Principally, however, the rent is paid in cash or in produce. In recent years the inflation has resulted in crop rents becoming more prevalent, because the value of money may fall before it is paid. A crop rent usually absorbs about 50% of the tenant's annual farm produce, and where the landlord gets not a fixed amount but a predetermined share of the crop (which means a rent which varies from year to year according to the size of the crop), he gets slightly over 50%. The landlord sometimes provides seed, tools, fertilisers or a working animal, but ordinarily charges extra for them.

The landless peasant's security of tenure varies from one province to another, but figures quoted from the official "CHINA'S ECONOMIC YEAR-BOOK" for 1935 show that more than half of the tenancies are on the basis of an unfixed period, that is, they are terminable at will by the landlord. Such tenancies must in practice be from harvest to harvest, and clearly more than half of the tenant farmers in China must be in constant fear of being ejected from their holdings, their only source of livelihood. Further, since most of the landless peasants are illiterate and the local administration has traditionally been in the hands of the landowning gentry, a written lease offers little effective protection.

The landless Chinese peasant has little hope of ever climbing the ladder to farm ownership, less even than the British farm worker and much less than the American. Can he hire himself for wages and save to buy a holding? In 1937, a hired man earned an average of 43 cents U.S. per day, without food. When the war-time inflation lifted wage levels, the payment for a year's service was 36 U.S. dollars in Chinese currency. In the busy season of the year a farm hand got 37 cents (.U.S.) a day and his board, or 61 cents without board. Where is the margin for saving?

The official Land Commission, in its report for 1937, stated that among owner-occupiers, as distinct from tenants, "roughly one-third of the peasants occupy an area of farm land less than $\frac{3}{4}$ of an acre each, one-fifth occupy from $\frac{3}{4}$ of an acre to $1\frac{1}{2}$ acres and one-seventh from $1\frac{1}{2}$ acres to $2\frac{1}{10}$ acres. In a fertile area, the Red Plain of Szechuan, about 70% of the owner-occupied holdings are less than $1\frac{1}{2}$ acres and nearly 90% are of 3 or under 3 acres." Peasants who own their holdings are no more capable of adding to their farms than landless men are of acquiring them. An official report in 1937 pointed out that as far as any individual family is concerned, whether landless or land-owning, the only way to get more to eat or to raise its economic status, is to procreate more children to work on the land. Taking the peasantry as a whole, however, the effect is to

multiply the farming population beyond the number which the land can feed all the year round and to increase the competition for farms. The struggle for existence, on a pitifully low level, bearing with peculiar harshness on the weaker members of the family, the women and children and exposing every family as a helpless victim to ill-luck and superstition, is grimly delineated in these passages.

The propertied classes of China and their imperialist associates can hold out no hope of lightening the peasants' toil by investing capital to provide farm machinery or fertilisers. Labour-power is plentiful and farms are minute on account of over-population; yields are low through over-cropping and the exhaustion of the soil; the countryside is culturally retarded by chronic poverty; the peasants are burdened with rent, mortgages, taxes, low prices for what they sell and high prices for what they have to buy; the ruling classes of China draw very substantial incomes from land-owning and usury which are the root of the poverty, and naturally have no incentive to invest in agriculture, to raise its technique and the social status of those who work in it. The "civilising mission" of capitalism stops in China at the edge of the towns. Ambitious and destitute youths drift away from their village homes. Industry cannot offer them much chance of employment; except in the armies of coolies in the trade port cities, they do not become proletarians. They join the gangs and make up the armed forces of the war-lords.

The life-long ambition of the landless tenants is to acquire a holding of their own, to climb the "ladder." How many of them manage it? The Department of Agriculture of the University of Nanking made a study in 1934-5 of four central provinces. This showed that 7% of the labourers became tenants, at an average age of 31 years. 1.6% of these original labourers became part-owners, and their average age then was 41 years. 0.6%, or just over one in every two hundred made the whole grade from labourer to full owner, and that at the age of 48, close to the end of their expectation of life.

THE KUOMINTANG AND THE PEASANT MOVEMENT

in its programme that it stood for the distribution of land to the peasants.

The Kuomintang, until recently the ruling party in China, headed by Chiang Kai Shek, proclaimed for many years

The Kuomintang succeeded in suppressing its Left Wing after a series of bloody massacres of workers (Shanghai in 1926, Canton in 1927) and a succession of peasant uprisings which were never completely put down. The defeat of the workers and peasants was largely due to the incorrect policies forced on the Chinese Communist Party by the Stalin faction in the Communist International in 1926 to 1927, which preached first the political subordination of the movement to Chiang Kai Shek, who later organised the massacres, and then an adventurist policy of armed uprisings when the movement had passed its climax. (The full story is told in "THE TRAGEDY OF THE CHINESE REVOLUTION", by Harold Isaacs, pub. by Secker and Warburg). The defeat of the workers and peasants enabled Chiang Kai Shek for a time to raise himself and his armies into a rather insecure position of absolute power, but all China remained in a blind alley because the land problem was not solved.

In the guarded language of a university professor writing under the Chiang Kai Shek dictatorship, the author of the article in the "JOURNAL OF FARM ECONOMICS" states:

"One faction (the Kuomintang) represents largely the vested interests of the landowning gentry and has inherited the position of monopoly of political power and civil administration, and the other (the Communists), by inciting and organising the long suppressed and now restless peasantry has made it a formidable military and political buttress in the struggle for power. The Communist movement in China is based on traditional agriculturalism, the fundamental idea of which is that 'the land belongs to him who tills it.' Wherever and whenever the Communist guerilla force arises a program of social reforms centring on land redistribution will be immediately put into practice. All the large absentee landholdings are confiscated and broken into small parcels and all parcels are equally allotted to all members of the district including the remaining landlords. From the standpoint of the agricultural ladder, the destitute peasants have all in one day gained the status of land ownership for which they might have struggled for years or even generations. This shifting is undoubtedly to their great gratification and satisfaction. It is primarily due to this magic that the Chinese Communists have transformed the conservative, peaceful and illiterate peasants into redoubtable, vigorous and even fanatical warriors... When the Nationalists retake a district, landlords and usurers quickly follow and lose no time in regaining their former position and reasserting their prestige and power."

The agrarian movement of the 1920's could not escape from the historical necessity to find a political expression for its social demands through men from the cities, any more than it could free the countryside from economic dependence on the cities for manufactured goods. Similarly today, two alternatives present themselves to the renescent movement. Insofar as peasants anywhere can formulate any clear political objective beyond the immediate task of ridding themselves of the rural parasites the landlord and the moneylender, they aim at ideal, utopian societies where peasant properties are equalised, every peasant is free and independent, where brotherhood replaces struggle and co-operation replaced the class struggle. There is nothing in their background which enables them independently, without the help of the urban proletariat, to arrive at the conclusion that the class struggle can only end with the establishment of the working class as the ruling class, the abolition of capitalist exploitation but the retention of industry and industrial technique.

Let us assume that the movement again accepts the slogans of "unity" and "liberty", which bind them politically to the property owners. Within the movement itself some peasants already will have enriched themselves more than others, and for them the movement has already reached its goal and need go no further. As we can already see, the supporters of the old regime are changing sides in the hope of saving something from the wreck. In any case, however, the propertied classes of China are too late in developing, too venal, too isolated and too impotent in China and the world arena, to take the power into their hands and build a state machine to fulfill their class objectives and to repress those of the opposing classes, the workers and peasants.

The corruption and general worthlessness of the Chinese bourgeoisie and bureaucracy, which so irritates the American statesmen, flows not from the imperfections of individuals but from the historical impotence of the class, which is trying to protect forms of property and exploitation to which the vast majority of the nation is utterly opposed.

IS RUSSIA MOVING TO COMMUNISM?

BY B. HUNTER.

IN the Cominform journal "FOR A LASTING PEACE, FOR A PEOPLES' DEMOCRACY" dated November 1st, 1948, there appeared an article by P. Yudin. In it, he informed readers that Soviet society is now entering a new phase of its development; "is advancing towards the completion of socialist construction and the gradual transition from Socialism to Communism."

Since 1936 particularly, various Stalinist leaders have declared that the final victory of socialism in Russia was accomplished. Now Yudin gives a definite date for the completion of the task of the transition from socialism to communism. His "communism" is measured in terms of a level of Russian productive forces arbitrarily chosen by Stalin in 1939. To quote Yudin:

"At the Eighteenth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (Bolsheviks) in 1939, and later, after World War 2, in February 1946, Comrade Stalin stated that the productive forces of the land of Socialism must reach a level that will enable the U.S.S.R. to produce annually 50 million tons of pig iron, up to 60 million tons of steel, 500 million tons of coal, and 60 million tons of oil. At the same time the other branches of the national economy will be developed accordingly. The attainment of this level in the development of the productive forces will mean the solving of all the main economic problems connected with the transition to a Communist society in the U.S.S.R."

Yudin asks himself "how much time will the Soviet Union need for the productive forces to reach the level advanced by Comrade Stalin.." and declares:

"This question can be answered quite definitely: another three or four Five Year Plans will be needed for this. In other words, the U.S.S.R. will need another 15 or 20 years to round off the construction of Socialism and to effect the transition from Socialism to Communism."

One thing is certain. However much Yudin and the Stalinist leaders may attempt to spur on the Russian workers by this promise of communism in 15 to 20 years, their conception of "communism" bears very little resemblance to that system envisaged by the Marxist teachers of the past.

SOCIALISM AND BOURGEOIS RIGHT

As is well known, Marx divided communist society into two stages - a lower and a higher. It is the first stage which Lenin termed socialism, and which the Stalinist leaders allege has already been reached in the Soviet Union.

In the first stage, the stage of socialism, according to Lenin, paraphrasing Marx:

"The means of production are no longer the private property of individuals. The means of production belong to the whole of society. Every member of society, performing a certain part of socially-necessary labour, receives a certificate from society to the effect that he has done such and such an amount of work. According to this certificate, he receives from the public warehouses, where articles of consumption are stored, a corresponding quantity of products. Deducting that proportion of labour which goes to the public fund, every worker, therefore, receives from society as much as he has given it."

(STATE AND REVOLUTION, page 72)

Marx, in the CRITIQUE OF THE GOTHA PROGRAMME, pointed out that this first stage of communist society must be in every respect "economically, morally, and intellectually, still stamped with the birthmarks of the old society from whose womb it emerges." This was so because it was not possible to introduce immediately the principle "From each according to his ability, to each according to his needs." Such a principle, the principle of the final stage of communist society could only be introduced on the basis of an all round increase of the productive forces and an all round development of the communist individual shorn of all the individualistic tendencies engendered by capitalism. Marx pointed out (in the CRITIQUE OF THE GOTHA PROGRAMME, page 12) that in this first stage, under socialism, so far as the distribution of the means of consumption was concerned, "...the same principle prevails as in the exchange of commodity-equivalents, so much labour in one form is exchanged for an equal amount of labour in another form." It is important to note his comment on this principle of paying each according to the work performed. He declared that this society was an advance on capitalist society insofar as "no-one can give anything but his labour, and because, on the other hand, nothing can pass into the ownership of individuals except individual means of consumption." However, although ownership prevailed in the sphere of production, in the distribution of means of consumption bourgeois rights still prevailed. "...this equal right

(so much labour in one form exchanged for an equal amount of labour in another form) is still stigmatised by a bourgeois limitation. The right of the producers is proportional to the labour they supply; the equality consists in the fact that measurement is made with an equal standard, labour." But measurement by an equal standard cannot ensure that equality which is the aim of communist society.

"But one man is superior to another physically or mentally and so supplies more labour in the same time, or can labour for a longer time; and labour, to serve as a measure, must be defined by its duration or intensity, otherwise it ceases to be a standard of measurement. This equal right is an unequal right for unequal labour. It recognises no class differences, because everyone is only a worker like everyone else; but it tacitly recognises unequal individual endowment and thus productive capacity as natural privileges. It is therefore a right of inequality in its content, like every right. Right by its very nature can only consist in the application of an equal standard; but unequal individuals (and they would not be different individuals if they were not unequal) are only measurable by an equal standard insofar as they are brought under an equal point of view, are taken from one definite side only, e.g. in the present case are regarded only as workers, and nothing more seen in them, everything else being ignored. Further, one worker is married another not; one has more children than another and so on and so forth. Thus, with an equal output, and hence an equal share in the social consumption fund, one will in fact receive more than another, one will be richer than another, and so on. To avoid all these defects, right, instead of being equal, would have to be unequal...

"In a higher phase of communist society, after the enslaving subordination of individuals under division of labour, and therefore also the antithesis between mental and physical labour, has vanished; after labour, from a mere means of life, has itself become the prime necessity of life; after the productive forces have also increased with the all round development of the individual, and all the springs of cooperative wealth flow more abundantly - only then can the narrow horizon of bourgeois right be fully left behind, and society inscribe on its banners: from each according to his ability, to each according to his needs!"

However, while recognising that socialism and the transition toward communism would carry the marks of the society from whose womb it sprung, Marx, Engels and Lenin repeated and underlined that these bourgeois rights would be dying characteristics of the new society.

In the Soviet Union, while state ownership of the means of production has been maintained, bourgeois rights in the sphere of distribution, bourgeois inequality, have grown stronger. In this lies the whole contradictory character of the Soviet Union.

The great Marxists conceived that socialism would only be possible on the basis of productive forces supplying the wants of the members of that society to a far higher degree than under capitalism. As Trotsky pointed out in the REVOLUTION BETRAYED: "Theoretically, such a conception is flawless, for taken on a world scale, communism, even in its first incipient stage, means a higher level of development than that of bourgeois society. Moreover, Marx expected that the Frenchman would begin the social revolution, the German continue it; and as to the Russian, Marx left him far in the rear."

The Bolshevik leaders never conceived of building socialism in the Soviet Union alone. They viewed their task in the nature of hanging on, developing backward Russia as far as possible, but recognised that to create even the base for a socialist level for the satisfaction of human wants, it was necessary that the imperialist encirclement should be decisively broken, that the productive forces of the most advanced capitalist countries should pass under the control of the workers. Any survey of the writings of the Bolshevik leaders in the early years of the Soviet Union confirms this. We find Lenin writing in January 1918:

"We are far from having completed even the transitional period from Capitalism to Socialism. We have never consoled ourselves with the hope that we could finish it without the aid of the international proletariat. We never had any illusions on that score and we know how difficult is the road that leads from capitalism to socialism; but it is our duty to say that our Soviet Republic is a socialist republic because we have taken this road, and our words will not be empty words."

(Selected Works, Vol 17, Page 275)

Lenin was careful to define the Soviet Union as a Socialist Union of States, only in so far as they had taken the road towards Socialism. The consummation of that aim depended not only on the intervention of the world working class to neutralise the imperialist attacks on the Soviet Union, but in the successes of the world revolution in overthrowing the bourgeoisie and freeing the productive forces of the foremost capitalist nations to advance in cooperation with those of Russia. Without that development, the forces of production in the

Soviet Union, could only go forward under the burden of a tremendous military expenditure and increasing concessions to bourgeois rights.

Despite the tremendous advances in the productive forces since the revolution, even today in Russia the level of consumption, the standard of living of the Russian masses is far below that of the advanced capitalist countries, Britain and America. In the following table can be seen the difference between the purchasing power of the Russian and the British workers. We assume here that the average earning of the Russian worker is 500 roubles a month (which is the average of all employed by the state, including the bureaucracy in the plan for the end of the 4th Five Year Plan in 1950). On the other hand we have taken as the basis of the price calculation the official prices from Zone 1, the area in which prices are lowest in Russia. For Britain we have taken the average weekly earnings of the worker as £5.3.6. as given by the Ministry of Labour Survey for British workers, April 1947. The basis for the British price calculation are those published by the Board of Trade.

NUMBER OF UNITS AVERAGE WEEKLY WAGES CAN BUY:

	<u>Unit</u>	<u>Russia</u>	<u>Britain</u>
Wheat bread (first grade).....	lbs.	41.7	480.7
Wheat bread (second ").....	"	63.3	--
Rye bread	"	91	--
Beef.....	"	9	79-127
Butter.....	"	4.1	77.2
Milk.....	Pints	57-81	227.2
Sugar.....	lbs.	18.5	412
Eggs.....	Number	82-115	706.3
Tea.....	lbs.	1.6	36.4
Coffee.....	"	3.4	41.2
Beer.....	Pints	14.4	88.2
Cigarettes.....	Number	464	618
Men's Shoes.....	Pairs	0.4	2-4.5
Women's Shoes.....	"	0.4	1-4
Stockings, women's cotton.....	"	16.2	25-27
Crepe-de-chine.....	Yards	1.4	23-25
Men's Suits.....	Number	0.3	0.6-1.5
Women's cotton dresses.....	"	0.2	3.5-6
Women's woollen dresses.....	"	0.6	0.8-2.1
Matches.....	Boxes	577	824
Combs, (women's).....	Number	28.8	103-154

This table indicates that the standards of life of the masses in the Soviet Union are far below those of the advanced capitalist countries in the West.

THE STALINIST CONCEPTION OF SOCIALISM

- THE PAYMENT OF SPECIALISTS -

The Stalinist criterion for socialism is that in the Soviet Union the

means of production are owned by the state and the principle "From each according to his abilities and to each according to work performed" has been realised. But in Russia the "advance towards socialism", the "advance of socialism towards communism" is not being accomplished by a withering away of the capitalist mode of payment. It is accompanied by an intensification in the field of piece-work, in the salaries of directors, specialists and state officials. The Stalinists make nonsense of the Marxist conceptions of the transition period towards socialism and of bourgeois right, by denoting these payments as being part of a socialist principle. Marx taught that even "payment according to work performed" was a capitalist right.

In 1921, Lenin declared: "Our present rates of pay vary from six hundred roubles to three thousand roubles - five times more." Although this was "necessary", he said, "we are now overpaying experts." But the present differentiation between specialists and workers in the Soviet Union is many times greater than five to one. In "WAGES FRONT" by Margot Heinemann, published by the Labour Research Department, (page 194) we find the following scale for the engineering industry, taking the lowest wage as 100.

Draughtsman.....	350-600 roubles
Foreman.....	500-600 "
Junior Engineer.....	500-600 "
Senior Engineer.....	600-1,500 "
Director Small Enterprise....	1,000
Director Big Enterprise....	1,000-2,000 "
Director of Trust.....	2,500 upwards"

Up to the first Five Year Plan no member of the C.P. of Russia was allowed to earn more than the wage of a skilled worker. But after that the rates of wages of the bureaucracy soared. For example, according to a decision of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR of the 17th January, 1938, the salary of the President of the Supreme Soviet of the Russian Republic and his Deputies was fixed at 150,000 roubles per annum. The President and Vice-President of the Soviets of the USSR and the Soviet of Nationalities was fixed at 300,000 roubles per annum. Members of the Supreme Soviets were to receive 12,000, in addition to 150 roubles per day of session. The

privileges they have in the form of cars, free flats, etc, are not here included. At that time the unskilled workers received 1,200 to 1,800 roubles per year, and the skilled workers 2,400 and 3,600 roubles per year.

The Stalinist leaders attempt to justify the tremendous individual inequalities in Russia as a socialist principle. (In Britain, of course, they agitate against the high salaries of the Labour leaders as a feature of capitalism.) Thus, A.P. Lyapin, Russian theorist, writing in the December 1947 issue of "THE COMMUNIST", monthly organ of the Communist Party of India, declared that one of the "hang-overs of capitalism in the consciousness of man" is expressed in the ideas of "petty bourgeois" "levelling (equalisation)"

When the Soviet state was first forced to increase the payment of technicians in order to attract specialists, Lenin defined this as a step backward. He refused to call such payments anything other than payment according to bourgeois method. In an article on the Immediate Tasks of the Soviet Government (Selected Works, Volume 7, pages 322-3) Lenin declared in 1918:

"Now we have to resort to the old bourgeois method and to agree to pay a very high price for the 'services' of the biggest bourgeois specialists. All those who are familiar with the subject appreciate this, but not all ponder over the significance of the measure that has been adopted by the proletarian state. Clearly, such a measure is a compromise, a departure from the principles of the Paris Commune and of every proletarian state, which call for the reduction of all salaries to the level of the wage of the average worker, which call for a struggle against careerism, not in words, but in deeds..."

"To conceal from the masses the fact that the enlistment of bourgeois specialists by means of extremely high salaries is a retreat from the principles of the Paris Commune would be tantamount to sinking to the level of bourgeois politicians and to deceiving the masses. Openly explaining how and why we took this step backward, and then publicly discussing what means are available for making up for lost time, means educating the masses and learning from experience together with the masses how to build up socialism."

These ideas put forward today would be denounced by the Stalinist leaders as "petty bourgeois levelling." Lenin stressed again and again that the aim of the Soviet Government should be the equalisation

of all wages; any step in the opposite direction forced upon them by circumstances must be explained as a departure from the principles of the proletarian state. In his rough draft of a party programme (Vol 8. Page 334) we find the slogan:

"...for the gradual reduction of the working day to six hours and for the gradual equalisation of all wages and salaries in all professions and categories."

In Russia today, the differentiations now called "socialist", have gone far beyond those of Lenin's time. Uncontrolled by the masses, with the repressive organs of the state at its command, the bureaucracy has been able to secure for itself a parasitic increment out of all proportion to even those of its functions which are necessary to society. The top strata in Russia today consume as much, if not more than the bourgeoisie in the capitalist countries.

THE STATE UNDER SOCIALISM

One of the best known arguments of Marx and Engels was that in a society developing towards communism, the state would "wither away." This was summarised in "ANTI-DUHRING" (page 308):

"Former society, moving in class antagonisms, had need of the state, that is, an organisation of the exploiting class at each period for the maintenance of its external conditions of production; that is, therefore for the forcible holding down of the exploited class in the conditions of oppression (slavery, villinage or serfdom, wage labour) determined by the existing mode of production... When ultimately it becomes really representative of society as a whole, it makes itself superfluous. As soon as there is no longer any class of society to be held in subjection; as soon as, along with class domination and the struggle for individual existence based on the former anarchy of production, the collisions and excesses arising from these have also been abolished, there is nothing more to be repressed which would make a special repressive force, a state, necessary.."
The interference of the state power in social relations becomes superfluous in one sphere after another, and then ceases of itself. The government of persons is replaced by the administration of things and the direction of the processes of production. The state is not 'abolished', it withers away."

And Lenin, in his classic work "STATE AND REVOLUTION" (page 68) wrote:

"...freed from capitalist slavery, from the untold horrors, savagery, absurdities and infamies of capitalist exploitation, people will gradually become accustomed to observing the elementary rules of social life that have been known for centuries

and repeated for thousands of years in all copy book maxims: they will become accustomed to observing them without force, without compulsion, without subordination, without the special apparatus for compulsion which is called the state."

Lenin points out that under socialism because there would still exist "bourgeois right" in the sphere of distribution, the state could not be immediately abolished. He pointed out that "Of course, bourgeois right in regard to the distribution of articles of consumption inevitably presupposes the existence of the bourgeois state; for right is nothing without the apparatus capable of enforcing the observance of the standard of right."

Under socialism, however, the repressive functions of the state would be immeasurably less than under capitalism, since classes and class inequality would be completely abolished, and the state would exist simply to maintain an ever decreasing individual inequality. Lenin also viewed the state of the workers in the transition towards socialism and under socialism as being a state of an entirely new type. With "the diffusion of democracy among such an overwhelming majority of the population the need for a special machine of suppression will begin to disappear." (STATE AND REVOLUTION, Page 69) There would be the need for a "certain form of state, but it does not call for a special military and bureaucratic apparatus, with officials occupying especially privileged positions. (Page 46)

State officials would be reduced to the role of simply carrying out the instructions of the workers as "responsible, revocable, moderately paid 'managers'". Lenin stated that the immediate object of the workers would be to organise national economy so that the technicians, managers, book-keepers, as well as all officials, shall receive salaries no higher than "workmen's wages", all under the control and leadership of the armed working class. Lenin stressed and underlined the necessity in bridging capitalism to socialism, to subject all officials to election and recall at any time, and reduce their salaries to the level of workmen's wages, maintaining a close link between the masses and the state. All would fulfil the function of control and supervision so that all for a time would become bureaucrats, and therefore nobody would be a bureaucrat.

The need for a special machine of suppression will disappear. Far from the special machine of suppression disappearing in the Soviet Union, we have witnessed its monstrous growth. The M.V.D. (formerly GPU), the police regime, the slave labour camps (officially admitted to embrace millions) - all these constitute a mockery of the conceptions of Lenin.

These hideous distortions: the separation of the state from the masses, the "especially privileged positions" which officials occupy, their salaries far above "workingmen's wages" -- all this is direct evidence against the claim of the bureaucracy, that socialism has been introduced into the Soviet Union. In line with the growth of "bourgeois rights", the state, far from "withering away" has grown more and more bureaucratic and repressive in order to guarantee those rights, to protect the bureaucratic privileges, to iron out the contradictions in Soviet economy.

Yudin's "Communism", of course, allows for no change in this respect. He denounces "The bourgeois and petty bourgeois conception of Communism as a purely consumer system of society in which people behave like anarchists, in which they will work only when they feel like doing so, and that all they are concerned with is gluttony, is a bourgeois parody of Communism and lacks any serious foundation."

It is almost superfluous to comment that the only strata in the Soviet Union to-day who have the opportunities for gluttony - and utilise them - are the bureaucrats. In the sense of aiming at a society in which it would no longer be necessary to subject man to outside compulsion, the Marxists have in no way differed from the anarchists. Marx once declared: "all socialists understand by anarchy the ultimate aim of the proletarian movement." They saw Communism precisely as a system in which man would "work when he felt like it." The very conditions would create a "communist man", so change human nature and give to everyone the possibility of varied and creative work, that voluntary work according to ability would become a habit. Engels made this plain in ANTI-DUHRING (Page 322):

"Productive labour instead of being a means to the subjection of man, will become a means to their emancipation by giving each individual the opportunity to develop and exercise all his faculties, physical and mental, in all directions; in which therefore productive labour will become a pleasure and not a burden."

The Stalinist theoreticians string contradictory ideas together like beads on a string. Yudin himself, after denouncing "petty bourgeois conceptions of communism", and decalring "Communism is a society of the highest development of conscious labour discipline", goes on: "Lenin pointed out that under communism work becomes a habit. Man grows so accustomed to voluntary labour that it becomes a necessity for any healthy organism."

But once work has become a habit, an intrinsic part of man's nature, then how can there be a necessity for discipline, conscious or otherwise? The nature of communist man and the nature of communist society

would be such that it would be impossible for man to conceive otherwise than to perform productive labour according to his ability. This was the conception of Lenin, who, of course, refused to fix any date line for the arrival of such a society.

Yudin, however, sees the position of labour under communism as merely an extension of the present relationships in Russia which are not at all the same as Lenin visualised. In discussing the position of labour under communism, Yudin informs his readers that already in the Soviet Union "To an increasing extent work is becoming a natural requirement of man" and that "even now in the USSR work has become a matter of honour, glory, valour and heroism." We must presume then, that it is because work begins to have a "communist" characteristic, a matter of "honour, glory, valour and heroism" that it is necessary to have a labour code preventing the movement of workers from their jobs? Yudin evidently includes draconic labour laws in the category of "conscious labour discipline." He writes:

"Today it is clear that Communism signifies that all members of society must in equal measure work consciously for the well-being of society." (My emphasis - BH)

Communism signifies nothing of the kind. What does "from each according to his ability" mean? As Marx points out in the "CRITIQUE of the GOTHA PROGRAMME", since Communism cannot abolish the differences between men, physical and mental - they will give according to an unequal measure, that is, according to their ability. If society must demand work in an equal measure, because of the given stage of its development, then it follows it must pay according to work performed in order to determine that each individual gives of his measure. Yudin in fact declares that under communism, trade, money, the commercial relations of capitalism, and thus the payment of wages, will continue. Here he further contradicts the principle: "From each according to his ability, to each according to his need."

The above mentioned principle means that because of the development of society and of human nature, there has been abolished the capitalist aspect in which work is a means to life, and work performed is intimately bound up with its reward. It means that in a society no longer forced to guard with a jealous eye the expenditure of its productive effort, labour has become free labour without thought of reward. Conversely, the satisfaction of needs takes place without relation to the work performed. Thus there is no need for wages. In such a society, the measuring rod of goods consumed by the individual is his need. There is thus no necessity for money. Society has reached the stage where it is unnecessary to assess the relation be-

tween what an individual puts into society and what he takes out. Yudin, however declares:

"The principles of Soviet Socialist trade, which will continue to be developed and perfected will remain the basis for supplying the population during the transition to Communism and when entering the phase of communism.

Consequently, the idea that with the transition to Communism, money will no longer be required, must be rejected. Money will remain and will continue its function of equivalent exchange."

Equivalent exchange, Soviet trade! And this is supposed to be distribution according to needs. There is no necessity to express needs in an equivalent - money - under a communist society. They are expressed by their satisfaction. Money exists as a measure of the value of commodities. Marx's view was that it would exist in the transition stage between capitalism and socialism as an indirect means of distribution only until such times as it was impossible for society to control directly the production and distribution of all products. In "ANTI-DUHRING" Engels made it clear:

"Direct social production and direct distribution exclude all exchange of commodities, therefore also the transformation of the product into commodities (at any rate within the community) and consequently also their transformation into values."

Without the transformation of the product into values, under direct distribution, there is obviously no need of a measurement of value - money. That society finds it necessary to maintain money is simply a reflection of its lack of "economic maturity."

On this question the "theorists" in Stalinist Russia have made their full circle. When the first Five Year Plan was promulgated it was declared that its aim was the "gradual emancipation" of Soviet society "from the laws of money economy."

At a stage when a stable measure of value was essential the Stalinist planners declared the state above monetary laws and set their aim as passing rapidly to direct distribution. The Left Opposition pointed out then, and Trotsky commented later in REVOLUTION BETRAYED, (Page 67):

"The role of money in the Soviet economy is not only unfinished but, as we have said, still has a long growth ahead... The raising of ^{the} productivity of labour and bettering of the quality of its products is quite unattainable without an accurate measure freely penetrating into all the cells of industry - that is, without a stable unit of currency."

Now, in contrast to their former position, the Stalinists declare that money and trade will exist even under communism!

It is worth noting that Yudin contradicts Lyapin in the article of last December. Since then, it seems, Communism has become something different. Let us listen for a moment to Lyapin.

"Under Communism, where the productive forces will reach their highest development and the Communist principle of distribution will be applied, there will be no need to estimate individual consumption on the basis of quantity and quality of labour expended. Together with it will come the abolition of monetary payment for labour. 'From each according to his capacity to each according to his needs,' presupposes a change from the commodity-monetary estimate of labour and labour products to labour time, the natural estimate of labour. On the other hand, Communist distribution excludes commodity exchange, and the transformation of products into commodities; it excludes the necessity of value forms." (Our emphasis)

Lyapin quotes the highest authority for this argument - Stalin himself!

"In 1934," he declares, "during the XVII Party Congress, Comrade Stalin, criticising all 'Leftist' theories dealing with the abolition of money and Soviet trade, said:

"These people who are as far removed from Marxism as the sky is from the earth, evidently do not realise that we shall use money for a long time to come right up to the time when the first stage of Communism, i.e., the Socialist stage of development, has been completed. They do not realise that money is the instrument of bourgeois economy which the Soviet Government has taken over and adapted to the interests of Socialism for the purpose of expanding Soviet trade to the utmost, and of thus creating the conditions necessary for the direct exchange of products.." (Our emphasis)

Perhaps Stalin will now correct himself and declare with Yudin that the "instrument of bourgeois economy" must exist even under communism? On the contrary, his past statements will be conveniently forgotten, just as the Stalinist statements that the First Five Year Plan was going to abolish money, have been

expunged from Stalinist history "Theory", is used by the Stalinists not as a guide, but as a justification for their actions.

Yudin's "Communism", means, in his own words, "the raising of the general cultural and technical level of the Soviet people to the level of engineers and technicians." How is this to be done? Very simply!

"The Stakhanovites of the U.S.S.R. are people with a high technical culture and general education. The more advanced Stakhanovites are steadily approaching the level of the engineering-technical personnel.

"These processes, in the aggregate, convey an idea of the powerful advance of Soviet Socialist society towards its transformation into a society composed entirely of highly educated people."

Marxism advances! We now have the emancipation of the working class, one by one, through Stakhanovism. The method whereby the masses will be raised to a communist technical level and culture is to be the piece-work system, a system which Marx declared was "the most suitable to capitalistic methods of production." However much it may be necessary, at a certain stage, and under certain conditions in the transition from capitalism to socialism, to introduce capitalist forms of payment such as piece-work, the preparation for the transition to Communism will begin, not with the introduction of piece-work payments, but with its abolition as a relic of capitalism. For piece-work payment increases production by fostering inequalities and the individual struggle for existence, and not by abolishing them.

Yudin gives no indication, as indeed he cannot, how the whole general tendency of Russian society, which is one of greater inequalities and differentiation, is to be halted. That general tendency has been more and more to separate off the "technically cultured elements", the managers, the officials, the governing hierarchy, from the mass of the population. To speak of the advance towards Communism as synonymous with the elimination of the privileges of this strata will now, as in the past, bring forth accusations of "petty bourgeois levelling."

It is evident that Yudin and the Stalinist leaders begin from the proposition that they must promise Communism to the masses within a foreseeable future - here fifteen to twenty years. Starting from there, they declare that the productive figures which they hope to realise by then, are sufficient for the establishment of communism. If the definition of communism given by the great Marxists does not coincide with the nature of the Russian system at that time, then that definition must be changed. That becomes clear

from Yudin's article, in which he utilises the form of classical Marxist phraseology while giving them an entirely new and contradictory content.

He defines communist society as a society in which each will receive according to need, and give "according to ability." However, he gives this Marxist aphorism a completely different content. What he describes in fact, is not a communist society but Russian society as he envisages it will be in fifteen to twenty years; a society which in its relationships, will be no different to that of the Soviet Union today with all its contradictions and sharp differentiations in the sphere of consumption. "Communism" thus becomes an empty phrase, a mirage which is projected before the Russian masses in order to justify their sacrifices of today.

ECONOMIC MATURITY -
HOW IS IT MEASURED?

"The sole difference" declares Yudin, "between Socialism and Communism is the extent of the economic maturity of society."

This tells us nothing. How is that economic maturity measured? Stalin gives arbitrary figures of the production of steel, coal, etc, in order to measure whether or not society has reached communism. Lenin measured the economic maturity of the economic forces in terms of how society was supplying human wants. Communism would be reached when the supply of consumers' goods was so rich and varied that the principle: "From each according to his ability, to each according to his needs" could be realised. Society would reach the economic maturity necessary for communism when the state as an outside body of compulsion, standing above the members of that society, was no longer necessary and had withered away; a society which would be free because every individual member would be free. Who would argue that such a yardstick would apply to Russian society today?

Engels declared in "ANTI-DUHRING", that no society can be free until every individual member of it is free. Its economic maturity would be measured not by the amount of pig-iron it produced -- although a tremendous advance of the productive forces above the level reached by capitalism, would of course, provide the necessary base for it -- but by the development of its members and their relationships with each other. A Communist society would be realised, said Lenin:

Even if the Soviet Union succeeds in achieving Stalin's targets, the total production of basic materials would be lower than American production today; bearing in mind the difference in population, the per capita production would be far lower. Last year America already produced 590 million tons of coal and 79 million tons of steel. Compare these with Stalin's figures given on page 8)

... "when people have become so accustomed to observing the fundamental rules of social life and when their labour is so productive that they will voluntarily (our emphasis) work according to their ability. 'The narrow horizon of bourgeois right' which compels one to calculate with the shrewdness of a Shylock whether he has not worked half an hour more than another, whether he is not getting less pay than another - this narrow horizon will then be left behind. There will then be no need of society to make an exact calculation of the quantity of products to be distributed to each of its members: each will take freely 'according to his needs.'" (STATE AND REVOLUTION) Page 72-3

Not only would the production of the good things of life be on an extremely high level, but human nature itself will have changed so that free labour and the free satisfaction of wants, untrammelled by any outside compulsion would be possible. The dialectical conception of Marxism is that Man, under a society that freed him from the individual struggle for existence, would be developed as a social animal with his individual needs, for the first time in harmony with society, and would at the same time provide the possibilities for the full flowering of his individual personality.

Yudin, and in this he reflects, of course, the Stalinist bureaucracy, could never conceive of society without the policeman. It is evident that he shares the typical bureaucratic and for that matter, bourgeois, contempt for the masses; the conception that they must have an outside force to determine their role in society. It is not possible for him to conceive, as Marx did, of the development of individuals which would take place in the transition to Communism. As Lenin put it: Communism presupposes "a productivity of labour unlike the present and a person unlike the present man-in-the-street who, like the seminary students in Pomyalovsky's story, is capable of damaging the stores of social wealth 'just for fun', and of demanding the impossible." Such a development, the transition to Communism, presupposes the elimination of the bureaucratic policeman, and Yudin and the Stalinist bureaucrats are incapable of viewing their own exit as a historical necessity.

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The Indonesian Movements

BY ANIL KUMARAN

AMONG the foremost in the struggle of the Asiatic masses to free themselves from the imperialist yoke following the war, were the 50 million people of the former Netherlands East Indies. A factor of special importance to revolutionary socialists is the existence there of a revolutionary alternative of significant strength, an alternative to the infantile comprador native bourgeoisie and the treacherous agents of Stalin.

Geographically speaking, Sumatra and Java represent the greatest and wealthiest section of the Malayan archipelago. Since the enslavement of the Indonesian people by the Dutch in the 17th century, their exploitation has been going on at an unprecedented rate. It has been accompanied by the classical forms of colonial brutality. The rate of imperialist extraction from this area was £32 million a year. It gave the Dutch capitalists the opportunity of bribing and corrupting the leaders of the Dutch working class and softening the class struggle at home.

THE CONDITIONS OF THE INDONESIAN TOILERS

Literacy under Dutch rule was 7.2%. In that figure, however, must be included the relatively large literate European population. In 1939, only one child in eleven attended school. Approximately 7d. per head per year was expended on education.

In 1938, Indonesian exports amounted to £225 millions. Imports were only £125 million. Income tax was levied on incomes above 900 guilder (£135) per year. Only 36,006 Indonesians reached this figure, that is .05% of the population. However, the rest of the population did not escape taxation. A basic tax was payable of 4% of wages earned. This reflects the very depressed economic status of the masses.

The internal regime of the Dutch was typically militarist with police powers. No "Asiatic" was allowed to stand in a Dutch court. He was forced to squat on his haunches. A law was enforced against "impoliteness" to the Dutch. Those even faintly suspected of "agitation" were liable to be fined; "incitement to strike" resulted in 5 years imprisonment. Concentration camps were a

feature of Dutch rule, such as the one in Boyen Digal - a proto-type of Belsen. In 1931-2, militants were sent to such imprisonment. Under a special act, exile could be imposed for an indefinite period, with no legal process being necessary.

The medical system was typical of colonial rule. In 1939 there were only 689 doctors and 200 apothecaries. This among a population of 50 million.

NATIONAL AND REVOLUTIONARY MOVEMENTS

In the early twentieth century there were only two national movements, having

their base in the weak petty bourgeoisie aided timidly by sections of the small compradore bourgeoisie. These were, first, the "BOEDI OETOMO" which stood for better and free education and for higher wages for the workers. By 1910 it had 10,000 members. The second movement, the "SAREKAT ISLAM" was born in that year. Like the "Boedi Oetomo" it was a "radical" movement, but flavoured its programme with a religious bias. At the first Congress of the Sarekat Islam, it had 800,000 members who pledged loyalty to the Dutch. In 1917, under the pressure of the Russian Revolution, it went further and demanded complete independence.

In 1919 the first trade union was formed. This move was preceded in the political sphere by the founding of the Social Democratic League. The industrial advance made by the young and small Indonesian working class was greatly assisted by the work of the Dutch revolutionary - Sneevliet

Following in the wake of these developments came a wave of strikes, in the sugar and rail industries among others.

In 1920, the Partai Komunis Indonesia was formed from the Social Democratic League, and was joined by a split-away from the "Sarekat Islam." Weakened by this, the latter later abandoned politics. Strike struggles took place between 1922-7, with varying intensity and success climaxed by an island-wide general strike, and a premature uprising led by the young P.K.I. when Sneevliet had been exiled. The P.K.I. was illegalised; the movement crushed and headed, and thousands were sent to concentration camps. However, the Partai Nasional Indonesia, which was formed by a group of intellectuals in 1925 and led by Sakoerno, was allowed to exist for some time. Later, it in turn, was illegalised.

The Partai Nasional Indonesia had connections with the Stalinist front organisation, the Anti-Imperialist League. In the late thirties, the Greater Indonesia Party was formed and gained con-

siderable influence, even though it attempted to collaborate with Imperialism. At the outbreak of the Pacific war it offered support to Dutch Imperialism.

The Indonesian struggles found a reflection among the Dutch workers. In 1933 there took place the wonderful episode at Soerabaya. Joint meetings of Dutch and Indonesian sailors' unions protested their dissatisfaction. This was translated into action by the seizure of the cruiser "Zeyern Provincenne" and the raising of the red flag on the cruiser "Java." However, these struggles did not lead to any organised attempt to the overthrow of Dutch imperialism, and therefore failed - except that they demonstrated for the first time the fraternal and class solidarity of the Dutch and Indonesian toilers.

THE PERMANENT REVOLUTION

The struggle of the colonial workers and peasants cannot thoroughly be understood without recourse to Trotsky's

theory theory of the permanent revolution. In essence, it points out that the colonial bourgeoisie are congenitally incapable of leading an independent revolutionary struggle because of their historical weakness. They cannot perform those historical tasks carried through by the bourgeoisie in capitalist revolutions in the past, such as the agrarian revolution. They are afraid to have recourse to revolutionary means, but must seek to compromise with the imperialists for better terms to stave off the threat of a disciplined and conscious working class.

In the light of this the events in Indonesia since the defeat of the Japanese and the formation of a Republic conform to pattern - the derailing of the popular movement and compromise with the Dutch.

The establishment of an independent Republic under the dual conditions of the pressure of the masses and the weakness of imperialism, struck alarm into the hearts of the imperialists. The Dutch were not in a position to match strength. However, the British Labour Government, on the pretext of disarming Japanese troops (who had already been disarmed by the Indonesians) landed their forces, and soon hostilities broke out.

British seamen who took part in this episode testify to the absolutely false information given them of the operations and the reasons for them. They testify to the nature of the whole manoeuvre which was conducted to weaken the Republic.

British imperialism had to check the developments in Indonesia from spreading into their own sacred lands - Malaya, Burma, Ceylon. Mountbatten, who who was Commander in Chief ordered the Jap C.in C to

retain arms and status quo until the arrival of the British.

However, the British found that the masses put up a very stiff resistance, thus they had to start negotiations to gain time. Meanwhile, well-trained and equipped Dutch troops were sent to Indonesia. When they arrived in sufficient strength in 1946, all the British forces were withdrawn.

THE LINDGADJATE AGREEMENT In March 1947, the infamous Lindgadjati agreement was signed by the Dutch imperialists and the Indonesian bourgeoisie. The pressure of the workers' movement in the direction of state power drove the bourgeoisie towards this compromise. This "treaty" granted the "United States of Indonesia" independence while at the same time sovereignty remained with the Dutch. This little contradiction was resolved by the instrumentality of a Dutch-Indonesian "Union" - typically imperialist euphemism for the continuance of imperialist domination.

Once the Indonesian bourgeoisie began to seek a compromise with the imperialists, under the fear that the mass movement would go too far, the Dutch began to harden. They refused to implement the treaty and an uneasy truce continued while negotiations for a new agreement dragged on. At this time, the Dutch increased their hold and conducted an economic blockade. The local bourgeoisie, mortally afraid of the mass movement, were unable to conduct an all-out struggle against imperialism. The Indonesian army was used more and more against "extremists," a policy that reached its climax when Sharir crushed and imprisoned the leaders of the revolutionary party led by Tan Malakka.

THE ROLE OF STALINISM The role of the Stalinists is clearly discernible in Indonesia, through all the tortuous turns made by them in the recent post-war period. At first, they advocated support for a Dutch-Indonesian Union, while entirely supporting the Indonesian bourgeoisie. When the bourgeoisie conducted the campaign against Tan Malakka, the Stalinists enthusiastically supported them, and with their characteristic love of liberty for left wing groups opposed to them, demanded the liquidation of the organisation. When Sharir imprisoned the Stalinist leader - Joseph - even this did not prevent them from praising and supporting the bourgeoisie. They denounced Joseph as a Trotskyist!

Arthur Clegg, a Stalinist "expert" on South East Asia, recently wrote of Tan Malakka as a "gangster" (Daily Worker, 2nd Dec 1948). His

Indian Stalinist friends had this to say of Tan Malakka:

"News has recently been received that the leader of the Indonesian Communists, Tan Malakka, a legendary hero who was captured by the Dutch in 1927 and later escaped from the concentration camp in New Guinea and worked underground all these years, is back again at his post."

(Indonesian War of Independence, Peoples Publishing House, Bombay.)

Needless to say, Tan Malakka is at his post, loyal to the working class, but opposed to the Stalinists when they supported the capitalists. After the imprisonment of Tan Malakka, with the world wide left turn of Stalinism in 1947, the Indonesian Stalinists also changed their line. They had partial control of the trade union organisation, SOBSA and had made infiltrations into the Socialist Party and Youth movement. In September 1948, they united with these two groups to form the United Communist Party of Indonesia. With the arrival of Moeso from Moscow, they started an adventurist putch, without preparation, in the city of Madiun. The "DAILY WORKER" had this to say at the time:

"The rising in Madiun was almost bloodless and lasted three hours. At the end of that time the city was in the hands of the workers, who are patrolling the streets in cars flying the red flag." (September 21st, 1948)

After the failure of this adventure, this very same paper, unblushingly and contradictorily declared, 1) there was no rising, and 2) that the rising was due to Trotskyist and American provocation.

Very scanty information has reached us about Tan Malakka and his movement. But some indication can be gained from the speech of a Dutch delegate to the United Nations Security Council, Van Roijen. He declared, on December 24th, 1948:

"Immediately Tan Malakka was released (end of 1948 -AK) and he organised a new party which comprises several smaller parties of Communist leanings... The city of Soerakarta, the second largest of middle Java has been partially in the power of this new party... The aims of the new communist party called "PARTA MURBA", allows no illusion, like the former Communist Party, its aim is to turn Indonesia into a communist state."

LEON TROTSKY on:

THE ENGLISH REVOLUTION

Editor's Note: Three hundred years ago, on January 30th 1649, King Charles I was beheaded. On February 6th 1649 the House of Lords was solemnly abolished.

In view of the fact that this issue of "Workers' International News" coincides with the tercentenary of these two events at the close of the English revolution, we are reproducing here an extract from Trotsky's book, "Whither England?". In this extract, Trotsky gives a brilliant summarised analysis of the social forces represented in this revolution.

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"The lower house represented the nation, the bourgeoisie, and therefore also the national wealth. In the reign of Charles I it was ascertained, not without astonishment, that the House of Commons was three times as rich as the House of Lords. The king now prorogues the Parliament, and then summonses it to assemble anew under the pressure of financial necessity. Parliament creates an army for its defence. The army gradually concentrates within it all the most active, manly, resolute elements. Just because of this fact, Parliament capitulates to the army. We repeat: just because of this fact. By this we mean that Parliament capitulates not merely to armed force (it did not surrender to the king's army), but to the Puritan army of Cromwell, which voiced the demands of revolution more boldly, more resolutely, more consistently, than did Parliament.

"The adherents of the Episcopalian, or Anglican (half-Catholic) Church, were the party of the court, the nobility, and, of course, the higher clergy. The Presbyterians were the party of the bourgeoisie, the party of wealth and education. The Independents and the Puritans in general were the party of the petty bourgeoisie, and the petty independent landowners. The Levellers were the incipient party of the Left wing of the petty bourgeoisie, the plebs. Under the integument of ecclesiastical disputes, under the form of a struggle for the religious structure of the Church, there proceeded a social self-determination of classes, a regrouping of classes on new, bourgeois foundations. In politics, the Presbyterian party stood for a limited monarchy; the Independents, also sometimes called "root and branch men", or - in the language of our day - "radicals", were

for a republic. The lukewarm nature of the Presbyterians was fully in accord with the contradictory interests of the bourgeoisie, vacillating between the nobility and the plebs. The party of the Independents, which had dared to carry its ideas and slogans to their logical conclusion, naturally forced the Presbyterians into the midst of the awakened petty bourgeois masses of city and country, which had become the most important force of the revolution.

"The course of events evolved empirically. Fighting for power and for property interests, both sides were hiding under the shadow of legality. Guizot presents this situation rather neatly:

'Then commenced, between the Parliament and the King (Charles I), a conflict previously unexampled in Europe. ... Negotiations were still continued, but neither party expected any result from them, or even had any intention to treat. It was no longer to one another that they addressed their declarations and messages; both appealed to the whole nation, to public opinion; to this new power both seemed to look for strength and success. The origin and extent of the royal authority, the privileges of the Houses of Parliament, the limits of the fidelity due from subjects, the militia, the petitions for the redress of grievances, and the distribution of public employments became the subjects of an official controversy, in which the general principles of social order, the various nature of governments, the primitive rights of liberty, the history, laws and customs of England, were alternately quoted, explained, and commented upon. In the interval between the disputes of the two parties in Parliament, and their armed encounter on the field of battle, reason and learning intersposed, as it were, for several months, to suspend the course of events, and to put forth their ablest efforts to obtain the free concurrence of the people. ... When the time came for drawing the sword, all were astonished and deeply moved. ... Now, however, both parties mutually accused each other of illegality and innovation, and both were justified in making the charge; for the one had violated the ancient rights of the country and had not abjured the maxims of tyranny; and the other demanded, in the name of principles still confused and chaotic, liberties and a power which had until then been unknown.'

(Guizot: "History of Charles the First and the English Revolution")

"As the civil war came nearer and nearer, the more active royalists

deserted the Westminster House of Commons and the House of Lords, and escaped to York to Charles's headquarters: the Parliament was split, as in all great revolutionary epochs. Whether the "legal" majority in one case or another happens to be on the side of revolution or of reaction, it is not a decisive element in such situations.

"At the decisive moment, the political history of the destinies of 'democracy' depended not on Parliament, but - what a frightful thought for the scrofulous pacifists! - on the cavalry. In the first period of the struggle, the Royalist cavalry, the most significant arm of the service in those days, put the fear of the Lord into the Parliamentary horsemen. It is of interest to note that we find similar situations in later revolutions, particularly in the Civil War in the United States of America, where the Southern cavalry in the first stages was indisputably superior to the Northern horse, and finally, in our revolution, in whose early stages the White Guard cavalrymen inflicted a number of hard blows upon us before our workers learned to sit firmly in the saddle. By reason of its origin, cavalry is the most aristocratic branch of the army. The Royalist cavalry was therefore more close-knit and resolute than the Parliamentary horsemen who had been gathered hastily and at random. The cavalry of the Confederate States was, so to speak, the native arm of the Southern planter troops, while the trade-industrial North had to learn to ride a horse. Finally, in our country (Russia - Ed.), the natural training-ground for the cavalry was the southeastern plains, the Cossack Vendee. Cromwell very quickly learned that the destinies of his class were being decided by horsemen. He said to Hampden: "I choose people who will not lose the fear of God from their minds, who will know what they are doing, and I vouch for it they will not be driven back" (Guizot, "History of Charles the First, London 1854). The words addressed by Cromwell to the free Landholders and artisans picked by him are very interesting: "I do not want to deceive you; I shall not try to convince you, as I am ordered in the instructions, that you will be fighting for King and Parliament. Whatever enemy I may be facing, whoever he may be, I shall shoot at him with my pistol, as at any other enemy; if conscience prevents you from acting thus, go serve elsewhere" (ibid.). In this manner, Cromwell constructed not only the army, but also a party; his army was to a great extent an armed party, and precisely this element gave it its strength. In 1644, the "holy" battalions of Cromwell were already winning splendid victories over the Royalist horsemen, earning for themselves the name of "Ironsides". Revolutions are always in need of "Ironsides". The English workers may learn much from Cromwell in this connection.

"The remarks made by the historian Macaulay on the army of the

Puritans are not without interest: "A force thus composed might, without injury to its efficiency, be indulged in some liberties which, if allowed to any other troops, would have proved subversive of all discipline. In general, soldiers who should form themselves into political clubs, elect delegates, and pass resolutions on high questions of state, would soon break loose from all control, would cease to form an army, and would become the worst and most dangerous of mobs. Nor would it be safe, in our time, to tolerate in any regiment religious meetings, at which a corporal versed in Scripture should lead the devotions of his less gifted colonel, and admonish a backsliding major. But such was the intelligence, the gravity, and the self-command of the warriors whom Cromwell had trained, that in their camp a political organisation and a religious organisation could exist without destroying military organisation. The same men, who, off duty, were noted as demagogues (Macaulay means revolutionary agitators - L. Trotsky) and field-preachers, were distinguished by steadiness, by the spirit of order, and by prompt obedience on watch, on drill, and on the field of battle" (Macaulay, "History of England"). And further on: "In his camp alone the most rigid discipline was found in company with the fiercest enthusiasm. His troops moved to victory with the precision of machines, while burning with the wildest fanaticism of Crusaders" (ibid., p. 120).

"All historical analogies must be drawn with the greatest possible care, particularly when we are comparing the Seventeenth and Twentieth Centuries; none the less, there is no harm in pointing out a few of the obvious traits of resemblance in the mode of life and character of the army of Cromwell and the Red Army. To be sure, in the former case everything was based on the belief of predestination, and on a harsh religious morality; here, in our country, we are animated by a militant atheism. But under the religious mantle of Puritanism, there proceeded a preaching of the historical meaning of the new class and the doctrine of predestination was the religious prelude to historical causality. Cromwell's warriors felt themselves to be in the first place revolutionists and communists and in the second place soldiers. But the traits of difference are even greater than those of similarity. The Red Army, created by the party of the proletariat, is the latter's armed organ. Cromwell's army, embracing his party within it, was itself a decisive force; we have seen how the Puritan army begins to adapt Parliament to itself and to revolution. The army succeeds in excluding from Parliament eleven Presbyterians, i.e., representatives of the Right wing. The Presbyterians, the Girondists of the English Revolution, try to raise an insurrection against the English Parliament. The truncated Parliament seeks safety with the army and thus subordinates itself still more to the latter; under the pressure of the army,

particularly of its Left, more resolute, wing, Cromwell is obliged to execute Charles I. The axe of the revolution is curiously wreathed with psalms; but the axe is more convincing. Then Cromwell's Colonel Pride surrounds the Parliament Building and drives forth eighty-one Presbyterian members by force. Only the rump of Parliament is left. It consists of Independents, i.e., those sympathising with Cromwell and his army; but for this very reason, Parliament having inaugurated an immense struggle with the monarchy, at the moment of success ceases to be the source of any independent thought and power. The concentration of both is in Cromwell alone, whose strength is in the army directly, but in the last analysis, his decisive strength is drawn from his bold solution of the fundamental problems of revolution. A fool, an ignoramus, or a Fabian may see in Cromwell only the personal dictator. As a matter of fact, we here find, under conditions of profound social upheaval, that the dictatorship of a class assumes the form of personal dictatorship, which alone is capable of freeing the kernel of a nation out of the ancient impediments. The English social crisis in the Seventeenth Century unites within it the traits of the German Reformation of the Sixteenth Century and those of the French Revolution of the Eighteenth Century. In the person of Cromwell, Luther clasps hands with Robespierre. The Puritans were not averse to calling their enemies Philistines, but the actual matter at issue was the class struggle. Cromwell's task was to inflict as many crushing blows as possible on the absolute monarchy, the court dignitaries, and the half-Catholic Church, which had been reduced to serve the needs of the monarch and the dignitaries. For such a blow Cromwell, the true representative of the new class, was in need of the strength and passion of the masses of the people. Under his leadership, the revolution acquires all the scope it needs. Whenever it exceeds - for instance, among the Levellers - the limits of the demands of the renovation of bourgeois society, Cromwell mercilessly berates the "madmen". After his success, Cromwell begins to construct a new state law, combining biblical texts with the pikes of the "holy" soldier; the decisive word being spoken always by the pikes.

"On April 19, 1653, Cromwell threw out the remnants of the Long Parliament. Conscious of his historical mission, the Puritan dictator hurled biblical epithets at the retreating miscreants: "Thou art a drunkard," he shouted to one; "thou art an adulterer!" he reminded another. Thereupon Cromwell created a Parliament of the representatives of the God-fearing elements, i.e., essentially a class Parliament; the God-fearing people were the middle class, which, with the aid of an austere morality had achieved the work of accumulation and with the

texts of holy writ on their lips, were proceeding to appropriate the world for themselves. But even this fastidious "Barebone's Parliament" was under the thumb of the dictator, who deprived it of the necessary liberty of action in the difficult internal and international situation. At the end of 1653, Cromwell again purifies the House of Commons with the aid of soldiers. If the remnant of the Long Parliament, driven out in April, was inclined to lean to the right, to the side of the remnants of the Presbyterians, the "Barebone's Parliament" was inclined in certain questions to follow in too straight a line the path of Puritan virtue and thus rendered more difficult for Cromwell the achievement of a new social equilibrium. The revolutionary realist Cromwell was building a new society. Parliament was not an end in itself; law is not an end in itself; Cromwell himself and his "holy" troops considered the realisation of divine commands to be the true end, but in reality the latter were merely the ideological conditions for the construction of bourgeois society. Dispersing Parliament after Parliament, Cromwell thus revealed as little reverence for the fetish of "national" representation as he revealed an insufficient respect for the monarchy by the grace of God in his execution of Charles I. Nevertheless, it was Cromwell who paved the way for the Parliamentary and democratic methods of the two succeeding centuries. In revenge for Cromwell's execution of Charles I, Charles II had Cromwell's body suspended on a gibbet. But no Restoration could re-establish the pre-Cromwellian society. The work of Cromwell could not be liquidated by the predatory legislation of the Restoration. For the pen can never eradicate that which has been written by the axe. This reversal of the popular proverb is much more correct, particularly when we speak of the axe of revolution.

"As an illustration of the relation between "right" and "might" in epochs of social upheavals, the history of the Long Parliament will always be of exceptional interest. This Parliament for twenty years experienced all the vicissitudes of events, it served as a target for the impact of class forces, was driven to the Right and to the Left, first rose against the king, and then suffered suppression on the part of its own armed servants, was twice dispersed and twice reconstituted, it dictated and was humiliated, before it was finally enabled to pass the resolution abolishing itself.

"We do not know whether the proletarian revolution will have its "long" Parliament; it is quite probable that it will content itself with a short Parliament. However, it will achieve this end the more surely, the better it learns the lessons of Cromwell's era."

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