

What after independence?

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I

BEFORE the Second World War the majority of people in the world were ruled over by the representatives of the Western imperialist powers or by governments subservient to them. Today, the majority of the people, irrespective of the social or political system under which they live, have their own national governments, and the relatively small area of the world where imperialist political power still rules is shrinking daily. This is a measure of the great change brought about in the world through the growth of the movement for national independence.

Although there are factors common to all these nations winning independence, there is such an immense variation in their history, traditions, class structure, class relations and stage reached that one must be exceptionally careful not to throw a single all-embracing blanket over the lot.

There is, in fact, no pure prototype, nor a pure transition from one stage to another. Class relations are never static and the pattern of advance is in constant change.

It is in the midst of these very complex, changing and varying phenomena that one has to trace certain common features and certain guiding principles which have a general validity for all these countries. The remarks which follow are in respect of those countries which have won *political* independence, but where the working class is not yet the established leadership of the national movement, and where the task of *economic* liberation from imperialism remains to be carried out.

II

What is the character of the movement expressed in this immense, world-wide upheaval of peoples to win their independence? How would one define the nature of these revolutionary changes? What class forces comprise this movement, and what is their inter-relationship? What class forces stand in the way of the fight to win, maintain and strengthen independence?

These questions must be clearly answered before one can go on to consider what are the perspectives opening up for countries which have gained their political independence, and what tasks confront the working class and its Party in this second, important stage of the struggle.

The character of these movements is clearly indicated by the policies pursued by the classes and parties embraced by them, by the slogans they launch and the demands they make.

The national movement faces two ways—outwards and inwards. As a *national* movement it faces outwards against the external enemy, *imperialism*, because it is imperialist rule which is hindering national development. But imperialism has traditionally allied itself with a class force inside the oppressed nation—feudalism, which is mainly expressed in the feudal ownership of the land. Thus the national movement faces inwards, too, against imperialism's main ally, *feudalism*.

Imperialism has a secondary ally in those sections of the local capitalist class which are mainly connected either with feudal landownership and money-lending, or with imperialist trading or with both. Such capitalist sections see their destiny as linked with the existing system, and therefore they, too, must be dealt with as if in the imperialist camp.

Thus the struggle is anti-imperialist, and anti-feudal; for national independence, and for democracy, the antithesis of feudalism. The struggle for national independence and sovereignty is not just a struggle for a slogan but a concrete struggle to establish a national state, with its own constitution and parliamentary forms, its own national flag and national anthem, its own national armed forces, its own national language and culture, and, above all, its own national industry and developed agriculture.

The class forces which comprise the national movement arise from the very nature of imperialist exploitation. Imperialism uses colonial countries as agrarian appendages of imperialist industry, as sources of cheap raw materials (minerals and agricultural materials) for the metropolis, as controlled markets for imperialist manufactured goods, and as profitable spheres of investment.

This system demands the ruin of the previous forms of subsistence agriculture, the virtual destruction of local handicrafts industries, and the creation of a large army of propertyless peasants who, through the ruin of their previous forms of economy and subsistence, are compelled to take up wage labour in imperialist enterprises (mines, plantations, docks, transport, building, etc.). The industrial development of the oppressed nation is held back, monopoly control established over

imports and exports, and the peasantry not allowed to flourish.

For the mass of workers and peasants this means the most appalling conditions of life—low standards, slum housing, disease, undernourishment, illiteracy—since there are no profits to be made by imperialism in abolishing these evils.

The stunted, distorted economies which are the consequence of this policy, give rise, too, to stunted, distorted forms of social and cultural life. Only a small intelligentsia can evolve—and even for that, the imperialist economy has few openings; for technicians it is the European who is given preference. It was common to find before the war Indians who were trained engineers, with all the necessary qualifications for a technical job, compelled to take up employment in their own country as simple garage mechanics and other similar jobs.

The national capitalists (i.e., those who are not allied with imperialism), too, are affected by imperialist domination. As capitalists they are naturally concerned with profits. To make profits they need control of their own, domestic market, and they need an expansion of that market. No less, they require to build up their own industry in order to make the goods to supply to that market. But everywhere the national capitalist turns he finds the imperialist holding the controls in his hands, dominating the market, owning the raw materials of which he robs the country, and shipping in the manufactured goods with which he floods and monopolises the market. Even where the national capitalist owns raw materials he finds himself at a disadvantage, for the imperialist monopolies, which control the world market, compel him to sell at a low price but to pay highly for the manufactured goods he purchases from them.

Thus workers, peasants, intellectuals, national capitalists—all find their development stifled. To maintain this economic exploitation of a whole people, imperialism stations its troops on the native soils, sets up military bases, and clamps down its own system of arbitrary law and despotic rule which severely restricts the people's democratic strivings.

It is the very nature of imperialist oppression itself which gives rise to *national* revolt, the revolt of a whole people who have divergent class interests but who are united in their opposition to imperialism which denies them the possibilities of growth and development.

III

A key role in the national struggle is played by the national capitalists. What is this role, and how is it to be explained?

As Lenin pointed out, there is a fundamental difference between capitalists in oppressing countries and those in oppressed countries. In oppressed

countries the capitalist can play an objectively progressive role because he can become part of the anti-imperialist front. Desire for profits is the economic motive which brings the national capitalist into the anti-imperialist fold, even though, in his own mind, it is his genuine patriotic feeling which may be uppermost. As a capitalist his first concern is to control and exploit his own market. But this domestic market is restricted by the poverty of the workers and peasants, and even by the relative poverty of other classes and strata. Furthermore, as we have seen, this very limited market is dominated by imperialist monopolies, which not only flood the market with their own goods, but actually own or control a lion's share of the actual trading services, not to mention the allied transport, shipping, banking, insurance and so on.

Therefore the national capitalists have a very real conflict with imperialism.

But the national capitalists, to make profits, do not have to fight only the imperialist monopolies. As capitalists, if they are to make profits, they must exploit their own workers. If the workers obtain too much power and are able to exert sufficient pressure to obtain substantial economic and social concessions (e.g. higher wages, shorter hours, pensions, better social services) then the sphere of exploitation by the national capitalists will be restricted. Hence the national capitalists strive to keep their own working class in check, limit their democratic rights and organisation, and deluge them under a barrage of purely nationalist ideology so as to persuade them to identify their cause completely with that of their own capitalists, and thus abandon their class outlook and specific class demands.

This, in itself, is a contradiction for the national capitalists, since they are too weak to fight the imperialists on their own and have to rally the people, especially the workers and peasants. The very act of rallying the people, of stirring them up, increasingly raises the whole question of the democratic mobilisation of the people, the logical outcome of which, more power for the people, the national capitalists fear.

Thus the national capitalists, like Janus, face two ways—with their own working class against the imperialists; but *against* their working class if they find their own capitalist class interests are affected or in danger. So the national capitalist class vacillates and is not wholeheartedly anti-imperialist (it even has some economic links with imperialism and feudalism; and politically, is alert enough to recognise that the world march to socialism endangers its own aims of profit-seeking).

Inevitably, therefore, the national capitalists have a tendency to backslide in the national struggle, to hesitate, to slow up the independent action of the workers and peasants if they feel it is getting out

of hand and likely to pursue a course more decisive and to a further point than the national capitalists wish to go. This tendency of the national capitalists to vacillate in the face of the imperialists, is not a subjective factor but a purely political and economic one which arises from the contradictory, facing-two-ways position of the national capitalists.

The extent to which the national capitalists vacillate in practice can be seen in the twentieth-century history of China where the united front of the workers and capitalists was constantly broken, and just as constantly rebuilt until the firm alliance of workers and peasants led by the Chinese Communist Party proved strong enough to win the cooperation of the national capitalists to march along the high road of liberation to the building of socialism.

It should be appreciated that the support of the national capitalists for the anti-imperialist alliance does not prevent their later desertion towards the side of imperialism; but neither does this latter inclination preclude their later return to the anti-imperialist fold. History is replete with examples of such vacillations. It is the special task of the working class to *struggle to maintain the alliance* in the face of these weaknesses, hesitations, manoeuvres, fears (both of imperialism and of their own workers), and even downright treachery of the national capitalists.

This vacillating, two-way-facing attitude of the national capitalists has been a natural phenomenon of the national struggle ever since it began. In the twentieth century, however, the national struggle takes place under new conditions, and this cannot but have an important influence on sections of the national capitalists, as shown in the statements made and policies pursued by some of their most enlightened spokesmen. The significance of the birth of the Soviet Union, so decisive for the advance of the formerly oppressed peoples, was fully understood by that patriotic leader of the Chinese national capitalists, Sun Yat-sen, who, in his last declarations called for unity between China and the Soviet Union, as well as for an internal united front with the Chinese Communists. In our own day other leading spokesmen of the national capitalists—Nehru, Kassem, Nkrumah—have shown, each in his own way, and in varying degrees, a considerable understanding of the world in which they live and their need to pursue policies which, to a certain extent, face up to this changing world.

In this respect, perhaps it is President Sukarno of Indonesia who has given clearest voice to the appreciation by the national capitalists of the forces moving the world today.

Addressing a meeting of university students in Indonesia on April 3rd, 1958, President Sukarno said: "I am not a Communist, but we must see clearly the current of our times." The President went

on to say that after the First World War the Soviet Union emerged, and since the Second World War thirteen more socialist countries had emerged and the movement for national independence in Asia had arisen. It should be said, he added, that the twentieth century was an era when many nations gained independence, the era of the establishment of the socialist countries, the era of the sputnik and atomic energy. *Whoever could not see clearly this current, emphasised Sukarno, would be crushed.*

IV

It is against this general background that we now need to consider what tasks confront the working class and its Party on the morrow of winning political independence.

We have seen that the national capitalists, with all their weaknesses, are drawn into the anti-imperialist, anti-feudal struggle by their own class interests; and that it is these same class interests which compel the national capitalists to strive to retain their domination of the national movement in order to hold their own masses under control and so realise the profits in their home market for which they are basically fighting.

The working class supports the alliance with the capitalists, since, despite their different fundamental class interests, they both have a common interest in defeating imperialism and destroying feudalism. In the course of this struggle for national independence and democracy the working class strives, step by step, to win over the leadership of the national struggle in order to prevent any temporising or compromising by the national capitalists, and in order also to hasten and safeguard independence, defend the class interests of the workers, push forward the struggle for independence to its conclusion, complete economic, political and military liberation, and so open up the path of advance to socialism.

Therefore the working class, whilst allying with the national capitalists, is also in contest with it for the leadership of the movement. It should be clearly understood that class alliance is not class collaboration. *Class alliance, in fact, is a very highly developed, complex and testing form of the class struggle itself.* In class collaboration the working class submits to the domination of the capitalists, accepts capitalist leadership and follows capitalist outlook and policy in despite of its own class interests. The capitalists work for and welcome this relationship with the working class.

In taking part in a class alliance, however, the working class and its Party insists on playing an independent role, putting forward its own policy on *all* questions affecting the national struggle and the workers' own interests, fighting to win support for this policy, *defending its own class interests in a*

way which does not upset the alliance, while striving to establish its own leadership in the alliance. The national capitalists do not want this form of relationship with the working class, they try to avoid it, and take special measures whenever they feel that their undisputed leadership is endangered.

Thus, for example, Nkrumah did not hesitate to purge militant leaders from the Convention People's Party; nor has Nasser hesitated in suppressing and throwing into prison those patriots who wish to ensure that the benefits of the national struggle in the U.A.R. are not reserved solely for the national capitalists.

"There is no doubt," said Khrushchov, "that the majority of Arabs have common interests in the struggle against colonial slavery. But after a country has rid itself of foreign domination, the interests of the people cannot be ignored. Indeed, the interests of all Arabs cannot coincide. Therefore the attempts made under cover of nationalism to ignore the interests of particular sections of the population, the interests of the working people, are untenable."

(Speech at a reception for an Iraqi Government delegation, Moscow, March 16th, 1959.)

These remarks of Khrushchov's hold good for all countries winning political independence. In all of them one finds the national capitalists, or sections of them, trying to use the cloak of nationalism to divert the workers from their own class interests or, if that fails, suppressing their trade union and political rights in the name of nationalism. Thus in Malaya, Burma, most Arab countries, and in Africa, the workers' own party, the Communist Party, is denied legal existence. In others, such as Sudan, for example, the trade unions, too, are suppressed. Another method used by the national capitalists to subordinate the working class to their domination is the setting up of separate trade unions controlled by the party of the national capitalists; this is the case in India, with the Indian National Trade Union Congress led by the Congress Party, and similar attempts have been made in Ceylon, Burma, Indonesia and Egypt. The new Industrial Relations Act in Ghana also represents a move on the part of the national capitalists, notwithstanding the "socialist" language with which its presentation has been accompanied, to limit the rights of the trade unions and to bring them under the undisputed domination of the government and of the party led by the national capitalists, the Convention People's Party.

It is therefore clear that to establish an alliance with the national capitalists is no easy task for the working class. The national capitalists welcome the support of the workers; they are prepared to let the workers fight and die for the national cause

as long as the latter do not strengthen their own class identity and outlook but are willing to follow tamely in the wake of the national capitalists, and accept their leadership in all things.

The alliance and struggle between the working class and the national capitalists, this complex unity of opposites, is a root question of the struggle for political independence and, even more so, in the phase following on the attainment of that goal.

The working class and its Party does not establish its leadership of the national movement by proclaiming itself the leadership or by simply demanding it. The question as to whether the working class or the national capitalists will lead the nation is a very definite though complicated form of struggle. It is only in the course of this struggle itself, in the course of the battle to win, defend and strengthen national independence that the two contesting, though allied, classes and their parties are tested.

And this testing takes place around a whole series of specific questions.

These include first a number of political questions—the new state structure and its composition, the form of government and parliament, democratic and trade union rights, the withdrawal of foreign troops, national defence and security, and foreign policy.

Secondly, there are many social questions—national language and national culture, better working and living conditions (higher wages, shorter hours, pensions and social security, health services, housing), and education.

Thirdly, there are a number of economic questions—the agrarian revolution, industrialisation, nationalisation of foreign monopolies and property, the workers' attitude to production and strikes, and questions of foreign trade and foreign economic aid.

This whole series of problems, it should be remembered, although the subject of the testing ground on which the working class and the national capitalists are competing, takes place under conditions in which the main task is to complete the national liberation. *This means that at this stage, too, as in the pre-independence phase of the struggle, the main enemy is imperialism. The major conflict is between the nation and the imperialists. The minor contradiction between the workers and the national capitalists is one that has to be solved within the framework of the continuing alliance of these two classes, and in conditions in which imperialism and its agents strive to break up the alliance by aggravating differences between the workers and the national capitalists, using "left", sectarian elements and slogans on the one hand, and beating the big drum of "the Communist danger" on the other.*

This clearly demands a high quality of political leadership and experience, a mature understanding and an ability to use the utmost flexibility without

forsaking principles. This underlines the essential need for Communist Parties in such countries.

V

In the economic sphere there are two basic questions which must be solved after the winning of political independence. First, the building of a national industry; secondly, the ending of feudal landownership and the building of a rich agriculture.

It is often not realised in the West, and even in the British Labour movement, the extent to which the newly independent countries are still economically dominated by the former imperialist rulers. As a result of this foreign domination, even after ten and more years of independence, the pattern of the economy in these countries is still basically colonial, little industrial development has taken place, feudal relations still exist on the land, and the growing of crops for export or the extraction of minerals remain the principal element in the national economy. The result of this is the continuing poverty of the workers and peasants, the hampering of the democratic revolution, and the limited growth of the national capitalists.

Imperialist economic interests are safeguarded not only by their direct economic grip, their monopoly ownership of key sectors of the economy, but also by their continuing political influence in the form of "advisers" and "experts" to the new governments. One example will suffice to show how British imperialism utilises its political positions in Africa to safeguard its economic positions, and to delay the industrialisation of its present and former colonies.

A recent report on Africa (*Africa: A Continent in Turmoil*) issued by a West End firm of advertising agents, reveals the struggle which has been taking place between what it calls "the politicians" on the one hand and the economic advisers to the Ghana Government on the other. "All forms of industrialisation . . . remain 'the Fetish of the politicians'," complains this report. But "Dr. Nkrumah's top economic experts—nearly all of them *European* experts" are pushing the idea of a "second bulk crop" to be developed alongside cocoa, on which Ghana mainly depends. The report states confidently: "It was our impression, for what it's worth, that *finally* the advisers will have their way". In other words, these European advisers are utilising their positions of alleged assistance to Ghana to actually hold up her economic development by preventing her rapid industrialisation. Needless to add, the report referred to is directed to British manufacturers and British investors.

In Nigeria, the *West African Pilot* has pointedly asked, in reference to the domination of the new Nigerian National Shipping Line by the British-controlled Conference Lines: "Political independence

will come next year, but when do we have economic independence?"

In the light of such experiences—and they could be repeated many times—it is understandable that in newly independent countries the questions of industrialisation (with its essential basis in heavy engineering, and the manufacture of machines and machine tools), of foreign aid and advice, are fundamental to economic development. Today such countries have a much more favourable situation in which to build up their economies, since they can receive the generous economic aid of the socialist countries. This aid is fundamentally different from the so-called aid of the imperialist countries. In the latter case the "aid" and "advice", whether it comes in the form of technicians, loans, investments or trade, is directed towards a continuation of the robbery which is a hall-mark of colonialism, and is accompanied by political strings as well as by manoeuvres to ensnare the country in military alliances. When an imperialist monopoly invests money or builds an enterprise in a foreign country, that enterprise belongs to the monopoly. Above all, imperialist "aid" is concerned to prevent or, at least, slow up, industrialisation in independent countries for it realises that industrialisation strengthens independence and means less profits for imperialist monopolies.

Socialist aid is quite different. It is aimed at genuine assistance, carries no political strings or military entanglements and is prepared to help in every possible way the genuine industrialisation of the developing countries. When the Soviet Union builds, as it has done in India, a steel plant, that plant belongs to the Indian people who will derive all the benefits from it. Similarly, Ceylon's first iron and steel plant, which is to be built with Soviet aid, will belong entirely to the people of Ceylon.¹

The very fact of this type of socialist aid is even modifying imperialist aid policies towards newly developing countries, and, as Khrushchov has said, compelling them "to make certain concessions in dealing with these countries". Soviet example in India, in fact, has compelled British imperialism to abandon its traditional policy and to help build India's steel industry.

A further key question which confronts the newly independent countries is that of the nationalisation of foreign monopolies. Nationalisation is a particularly sharp issue in Latin America where giant American companies own the key resources—oil, tin, copper, sugar, bananas, and so on, together

¹ Valuable information on Soviet aid to economically developing countries is contained in a *Soviet News* booklet, *Foreign Trade of the U.S.S.R.* by V. Alkhimov and V. Mordvinov.

with shipping, transport, electricity, banking, insurance and trade. In the past thirty years a number of these American undertakings have been nationalised, but the commanding heights of the economy are still in American hands, and the question of their being taken over by the various Latin American governments is in the centre of the programmes of the national democratic movements and a major question of current political discussion and agitation.

Imperialism, however, resists strenuously the move to nationalise its properties. This, above all, is its Achilles' heel. It even tries, as at present with Chile's ports, to denationalise enterprises which have been taken over. At the same time, it uses various forms of economic intimidation, together with psychological pressure, to persuade the national capitalist not to nationalise foreign undertakings, threatening to discontinue economic aid, and robbing the national capitalists of confidence by propaganda about the need for Western "know-how" and technicians as well as aid.

It has to be added that this pressure and propaganda is not without effect; and national capitalist leaders, for example in Ghana and Nigeria, have promised not to nationalise foreign enterprises, whilst in other countries, the parties of the national capitalists, even when the question of nationalisation is in their programmes, show a reluctance to apply such a measure.

Yet a move against such properties is essential if the liberation of the country is to be completed. It is noticeable that the imperialists, even whilst prepared to make political concessions to the national movement in cases where it is not under working class leadership, react most strongly when there is a move to nationalise their properties. Thus the move to nationalise the Anglo-Iranian oil company in Iran, the Suez Canal company in Egypt, and the big Dutch properties in Indonesia provoked the sharpest reaction by the imperialists, resulting in Iran in the *coup d'état* against the Mossadeq Government, and in Suez in military aggression by the Western powers. In recent weeks rumours that the Iraqi Government was to nationalise the foreign oil companies in Iraq were enough to provoke a near panic in the City of London.

Immediate nationalisation is not always the essential first step to take. Much depends on the sector of the economy affected, the size of the undertaking, the feeling and the relation of forces in the country, the international situation, and so on. Thus, for example, in connection with oil, the present tendency is for the countries whose oil resources are owned by foreign countries to insist on a bigger share of the revenue as a first concession. In other cases, different measures are

advocated to limit the profits of the foreign monopolies, circumscribe their sphere of action, and compel them to operate in a way less harmful to the national economy. Whatever the specific step taken, the important thing is that it should weaken the economic hold of the foreign monopolies and strengthen the national sector of the economy.

In taking such measures the national movement is carrying forward the fight against imperialism into the economic sphere, tackling the imperialist oppressor in the domain of industry and trade, and not hesitating to take the most drastic measures to wrest control from his hands. The national capitalists, however, are not always prepared to take such steps. Therefore it is a particular task of the working class and its Party to insist on such measures and rally the whole nation to implement them. It is noticeable that during the crisis in Indonesia at the end of 1957, in connection with continuing Dutch control of West Irian, it was the Indonesian working class, specifically its main trade union organisation, S.O.B.S.I., which took the initiative in the taking over of the Dutch properties, a step which the Indonesian national capitalists, by themselves, appeared hesitant to take. Similarly, on the question of trading with the socialist countries, again it is the working class and its Party which must rally the nation to embark on this trading policy.

The need to build up the national economy also carries with it new problems for the working class in the sphere of production. In the previous pre-independence phase, the fight for better wages and conditions, for trade union and democratic rights, was mainly a straight fight against the imperialist monopolies and their government. The workers had absolutely no incentive to increase output since all the benefits of such increases went to the monopolies in the form of bigger profits and helped to maintain the country's colonial status. In these conditions the workers regarded strike action as a major weapon in their armoury and had recourse to it often.

After the winning of political independence, with the national governments embarking on various schemes of development of the national economy, the working class, whilst still guarding jealously its rights, including the strike weapon, and not hesitating to put forward its own class demands, finds it necessary to pursue its policy in a more flexible manner. It takes a positive attitude to increasing production in the national sphere and willingly cooperates with the national capitalists in this particular task.

It is extremely important for the working class to be clear on this issue. Although the struggle for national independence is an anti-imperialist struggle and is therefore part of the world-wide movement

for socialism in the sense that it is directed against socialism's principal antagonist, world imperialism, yet if the national capitalists are the rulers in these newly independent countries, then such countries are still part of world capitalism. National capitalists are still *capitalists*. Notwithstanding the claims of leaders such as Nehru or Nkrumah to be building socialism, it is capitalism which they are constructing in their countries despite their five-year plans and their state capitalist sectors of the economy. The workers, therefore, whilst co-operating in economic development, since they know that it strengthens the nation and its resistance to imperialism, need to keep their eyes open and not be misled through demagogic talk about "socialism" by the national capitalists into abandoning their own class policy and demands.

It is true that the economic development of newly independent countries is a precondition for their advance, but *economic development is not yet socialism, nor can it, of itself, lead to socialism*. To achieve socialism, a further shift in class power is needed, this time from the hands of the national capitalists into those of the working class in alliance with the mass of the peasantry.

VI

The question of the peasantry is a major one for the national liberation movement. In fact, one can say that the heart of the national democratic revolution is the struggle of the millions of peasants to end their appalling poverty and social misery, to abolish feudal landlordism and win the land for themselves. Throughout Asia, Africa and Latin America the peasantry constitutes the majority of the population. Sékou Touré, a national leader of the Republic of Guinea and President of the General Union of Workers of Negro Africa, has declared that 90 per cent of all Africans are peasants. Figures published a few years ago showed 89 per cent of all those gainfully employed in Thailand to be engaged in agriculture; in Korea, 73 per cent; in Burma, 70 per cent; Indonesia and the Philippines, 69 per cent; India, 67 per cent; Ceylon, 62 per cent; and Malaya, 61 per cent.

Describing the Chinese revolution, Mao Tse-tung has written:

"The Chinese revolution is virtually the peasants' revolution. . . . It is common knowledge to every schoolboy that 80 per cent of China's population are peasants. So the peasant problem has become the main problem of the Chinese revolution and the strength of the peasants constitutes the principal force of the Chinese revolution."

(Mao Tse-tung: *New Democracy*: in *Selected Works*, Vol. 3, pp. 137-138.)

It is not only in numbers that the peasants are important for national independence. Independent

countries cannot develop their agriculture and provide the country with food and raw materials if the impoverished peasantry is too poor to purchase the most elementary implements to improve its farming. Neither has industrialisation any basis in a country where a poverty-stricken peasantry, constituting the majority of the population, is unable to buy even a minimum of goods essential to enlarging the domestic market. As for the workers, they cannot win better conditions as long as there are millions of peasants forced by poverty to leave the land and to become a reserve army of labour, depressing wages. If the majority of the population lives in feudal conditions, democracy cannot thrive. Above all, if feudalism, imperialism's main ally, is to be swept aside, then the peasants, as those most directly exploited by the feudal landlords, must be mobilised and drawn into the struggle. (In a number of countries, such as Malaya, East, Central and South Africa, the Cameroons, Algeria, Jamaica, British Guiana, and certain other colonies, a major factor is the existence of large plantations and farms owned by foreign capitalists. Often these constitute a key sector of the economy such as the coffee plantations in Kenya, tobacco in Southern Rhodesia, sugar in the West Indies, bananas in Guatemala, sugar in Cuba. Peasants usually constitute the seasonal labour which works on these plantations. Thus the mobilisation of the peasantry is important also for the struggle against these economic strongpoints of the imperialist enemy.)

Strictly speaking, the agrarian revolution belongs to the bourgeois-democratic phase of the struggle. The breaking of the power of the feudal landlords and the dividing up of their estates is a task of the bourgeois revolution. Since the national revolution embraces the bourgeois-democratic revolution, the struggle for national independence involves a revolutionary change in landownership. The essence of this revolution, as Liu Shao-chi has pointed out, is "the *confiscation of land of the landlord class for distribution to the landless or land-poor peasants*".

The national capitalists cannot carry through such a revolution not only because they have economic links with the landlord class, but also because they themselves are anxious to become capitalist landlords and wish to be free to buy and sell land. This is not so easy if the land has been confiscated from the feudal landlords and given free to the poor peasants. Confiscation, too, is a dangerous precedent for the national capitalists, especially as it will be inevitably accompanied by a great awakening of the peasantry assisted by the workers.

Therefore in India, Egypt and other independent countries with governments composed of national capitalists, the type of land *reform* carried through is usually on the basis of the taking over of land above a moderate limit *with compensation*, and its

sale to the peasants on the basis of long-term payments which become, in effect, a new form of rent. The poor peasant is unable to purchase land, so that for him the problem of land hunger remains. Even many of the relatively better-off (middle) peasants soon find that the purchase payments and other expenses become such a burden that they fall into debt as they did under feudalism, and the land is acquired by the new capitalist landlords or by the rich peasants whom these reforms are intended to assist.

It thus falls to the working class in the developing countries to raise the slogan of "land to the tiller", to help the peasants to organise and to help carry forward the struggle against feudal landlordism. In doing this the working class is laying the basis for a firm alliance between the working class and the peasantry. This is important not only in the struggle to win and strengthen national independence, but also in the fight of the working class to win recognition as leader of the national movement. If the working class stands out as the main champion of the peasantry, then the national capitalists are deprived of their mass support, and so pushed further out of the arena of national leadership.

It is around the question—who will win the peasants, the working class or the national capitalists?—that the passing over of the revolution from its national democratic phase to its socialist phase largely depends.

How soon countries winning their independence pass from the national democratic phase to the socialist one depends on both the international and internal relations of class forces. Internationally, with a third of the world in the socialist camp, and the majority of the world in the anti-colonial camp, there is today a favourable situation for advance.

Within each country, the decisive question for the transition is that of the leadership of the working class. In countries such as China, where the working class, as expressed in the role of the Communist Party, won the undisputed leadership of the national movement *before independence was won*, it was easier for the nation to pass with relative speed and peace, though not without intense political struggle, to the building of socialism. Because of its firm leadership and its strong alliance with the peasants, the Chinese workers were able to carry with them a decisive section of the national capitalists who are now helping to construct socialism in China.

In other countries, where the national capitalists

still retain the leadership and control the government, the path forward will be more protracted and devious. But even with the national capitalists in control, the winning of political independence and the steps accompanying it pave the way for socialism. Political independence weakens world imperialism, the main enemy of world socialism. Within the countries, the national struggle leads to the mobilisation of the people, to the formation and growth of the people's organisations, and to the raising of the political consciousness of the many millions who are increasingly drawn into the struggle. The blows against feudalism are a setback to domestic reaction and strengthen the democratic possibilities for the working people. The development of industry gives the basis for improving the workers' standards, economically and culturally, and above all, creates a larger, more stable and more cohesive proletariat. The struggle for the nationalisation of foreign monopolies and the development of a state economic sector lays the basis for the socialist ownership of such nationalised undertakings. The ending of national restrictions and discrimination in the sphere of law, language, culture, education, voting, also aids the workers and provides them with further opportunities for development. The experience of generous aid from the socialist countries, which is the experience of countries winning independence, helps to break down hostility to the ideas of socialism and communism, and this, too, helps the advance to socialism.

It is clear, from all that has been said, that the problems confronting the working class after political independence has been won are so numerous, so complex and so important that only by the utmost understanding of the role of class forces and their dialectical development can the working class advance to power and the building of socialism. This underlines the indispensable role of a Marxist party in such countries.

In the capitalist world, experience has shown that no social-democratic party, despite its professions of "socialism", has ever built a socialist society. In the same way, in countries which have won their political independence, no party of the national capitalists, no matter how many "socialist" slogans it employs, will ever build socialism. For that the working class needs its own party, a party tried, tested and incorruptible, a party based on a scientific understanding of society, a party based on Marxism.