

PROLETARIAN UNITY



Theoretical journal of
the Canadian Marxist-Leninist
Group IN STRUGGLE!

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**IRAN:
the revolutionnary crisis**

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PROLETARIAN UNITY is the theoretical journal of the Canadian Marxist-Leninist Group IN STRUGGLE!. The journal is published every second month and contains theoretical articles and analyses dealing with all the fundamental questions of the communist program and the Canadian revolution.

"Without revolutionary theory, no revolutionary movement." This statement made by Lenin is still true today in the conditions pertaining to our country. Since the Communist Party of Canada degenerated into a revisionist party having completely betrayed the interests of the working class, the Canadian proletariat has been without a revolutionary program and without its vanguard Marxist-Leninist party. **PROLETARIAN UNITY** represents the positions of the Canadian Marxist-Leninist Group IN STRUGGLE!, and its task is to intensify the ideological struggle around all the questions of political line and the communist program, questions that will help the building of the Canadian proletarian Party move forward.

The Canadian proletarian Party, the vanguard contingent of the Canadian proletariat, can only be created on the basis of a truly Marxist-Leninist program that will resolutely demarcate from revisionism and all forms of opportunism. This struggle has been taken up by **PROLETARIAN UNITY**, and we invite all our readers to participate in it by writing, by sending your criticisms, by making the journal known to your comrades at work and your friends, and finally, by supporting the journal financially.

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front page: Iranian women photographed when the political prisoners were released in Iran.

Editorial

"LEFTIST", "RADICAL" AND "EUROCOMMUNIST" SOCIAL DEMOCRACY

At the end of the sixties and in the early seventies, the New Democratic Party had to grapple with its "radical" wing. These leftist social democrats, better known as the Waffle, wanted to "radicalize" the NDP program. By means of agitation during conventions and propaganda in certain "leftist" journals, they brought about a confrontation with the social-democratic "establishment".

At that time, the Waffle put forward a mainly nationalist line: no socialism without the independence of Canada, no true independence for Canada without socialism. In short, the struggle against U.S. domination would take a little extra muscle. It was necessary to develop Canadian industry and to free Canadian unions from the stranglehold of U.S. unions. To put this program into practice they claimed that the NDP would have to be transformed into a "truly socialist party".

But times have changed... Class struggle, and in particular the struggle between the working class and the bourgeoisie, which has grown sharper as the crisis has continued to develop, has somewhat taken the punch out of nationalist slogans. For the most conscious sectors of the working class, and for an ever increasing portion of this class, the "national colours" of Capital blend into one single colour: the gray of growing exploitation, of the deterioration of working conditions, lowering wages, unemployment and inflation, and of the rise of reaction which is characterized by the growing erosion of democratic rights and freedoms.

This situation is partly responsible for the fact that these "leftist" social democrats were not able to maintain any political cohesion after their expulsion from the NDP in 1972. The Waffle fell apart even before becoming a national political formation. Following this, most of the top "wafflers" preferred the NDP to the prospect of an uncertain political future within a disorganized "left". But some of the more convinced elements remained outside of the NDP. They carried on their work in the labour movement and in magazines like **Canadian Dimension** and **Next Year Country**. (*)

(*) Two social-democratic journals published in Winnipeg and Regina respectively.

Since then, "leftist" social democrats seem to have been on the lookout for a new political platform and a new political "forum" capable of bringing together everything left of the NDP. Today, it seems that they are on the verge of shouting "Eureka! We've found it at last!" Some of them, among the most determined, have found in "Eurocommunism" an ideological envelope, a strategy, a tactic, and organizational forms which measure up to their class interests.

* * *

It is therefore not simply out of intellectual curiosity that **Canadian Dimension**, the most influential organ of the social-democratic "left" for the past thirteen years, put out a special issue in December 1978 on the question of "Eurocommunism" (1). Nor is it a pure coincidence that this issue includes an article by Cy Gonick, outlining what the strategy of "structural reform" advocated by "Eurocommunists" could mean if applied to Canada. We would be wrong to think that this is a mechanical transplantation. The soil in which **Canadian Dimension** has laid its new seed has been considerably turned over lately. The title of Cy Gonick's article, **Strategy, Strategy, Who has the New Industrial Strategy** is quite revealing, indeed, the article takes up in a debate which concerns not only the union movement, but also some of the highest spheres of Canadian monopoly capital. This debate is taking place amongst the various proponents of a **new industrial strategy for Canada**.

On one hand, there is the NDP-CLC current which wages a steady campaign for the restructuring of Canadian industry in such a way that the State would give increased subsidies to **homegrown monopolies**. This current advocates the consolidation of the Canadian manufacturing industry and would like to see greater part of profits reinvested within the country. State intervention, which they consider to be "socialist" by nature, could mean direct subsidies or tax benefits for Canadian monopolies on the condition that they agree to create more jobs in Canada by reinvesting their profits in Canadian industry. However, the NDP is not the only one to propose a **new industrial strategy**.

Indeed, the State itself, through the Science Council of Canada, is exploring new paths of development for Canadian industry. In 1978, the Science Council proposed a plan for restructuring certain economic sectors along the following lines: subsidies for monopolies in key sectors, the encouragement of mergers so as to create new monopolies capable of meeting foreign competition, and greater State participation in seeking new international markets.

In the face of these two "industrial strategies", Cy Gonick presents himself as the **real** defender of the interests of the "rank and file", the working class and all those oppressed by Canadian capitalist society. Instead of the slogan "planning for people" put forward by "rightist" social democrats and the labour leaders of the CLC (which he condemns for tripartism), he puts forward the slogan "planning with people". He does not want the industrial structure of Canada to be rationalized at the expense of the people and for the benefit of the monopolies alone.

To this end, Cy Gonick believes that the aim of economic planning must be "full employment" and the "elimination of crises". It must involve "worker representation at every level

where decisions are made" (2). It must involve "the rapid expansion of the non-profit sector" (3), thanks to the "nationalization of about "200 giant corporation" in "manufacturing, mining and forestry", together with "the larger banks and finance companies, and a few dozen companies in distribution, transportation and communication". (4)

This strategist "of the people" reassures those who may think that this sounds like a revolutionary program and those who are sarcastic or hysterical at the very idea of socialist revolution, with the following words:

"This is far from being a revolutionary program, it should be seen for what it is — a program of structural reform. It aims to remove from the profit sphere the key centres of economic and financial power and make them politically accountable." (5)

By what magic stroke is Cy Gonick going to achieve his economic objective? How is he going to wrestle all economic power from the bourgeoisie? He claims that he does not have a very clear opinion on the subject. However, he is convinced that it will not be done in a revolutionary way, but through reforms, and not just any reforms, but "democratic" reforms. All these ideas — democratic socialism (as opposed to the dictatorship of the proletariat), nationalizations, workers' participation in the management of business industrial strategy, the rejection of revolution as a crazy, leftist, and dogmatic idea — do not go beyond social-democratic reformism. But they are more ambitious, more "radical", more attractive in the eyes of those who aspire to a profound transformation of society. For this reason they are more insidious. Under the cover of radical criticism of the NDP, and by referring openly to "Eurocommunism", this "left" social-democratic tendency in Canada can succeed in winning over certain strata of the working class disillusioned by the repeated betrayals of the NDP, while still maintaining them in the rut of reformism.

Cy Gonick's new industrial strategy may seem more radical than the NDP's for it puts more emphasis on workers' control and nationalization than the NDP — why it even criticizes the NDP's strategy! But this is just appearances... These two strategies lead the working class to the same political dead-end. And it is precisely at this point that these two reformist projects join hands. Nationalizations of big corporations, workers' participation in business management, reforms, even "structural" ones; all these "projects" lead to reforming capitalism while leaving the bourgeoisie's State power intact, while maintaining the bourgeoisie's dictatorship over the working class. It's all a game of make-believe that aims to peddle dreams within the working class, criminal illusions that have time and time again led it to failure. The Chile experience is but one example of this. So maybe Cy Gonick's proposal is more radical than the NDP's... What does it change in reality? Nothing, since it is built on the same undermined conception that defends capitalism's reform. This strategy neglects to attack the bourgeoisie's political power, to attack the capitalist State. This is why it is only a strategy aiming to reinforce capitalism, to camouflage the bourgeoisie's dictatorship.

* * *

Unlike other countries such as France, Italy, and Spain,

Canada does not have a "mass" revisionist party. The "anti-monopoly" opposition, represented by the NDP and the Canadian Communist Party, has not been able to draw up a program as attractive and as coherent as those of the French and Italian Communist Parties. Hence, there are many so-called "left" tendencies which are searching for what Cy Gonick calls "a political vehicle that is capable of wresting power away from the corporations and their allies". (6)

We know that the European revisionist parties have become political machines at the service of wage-earning intellectuals, business managers and engineers of large monopoly capital, and of what are generally called the middle classes. The real class basis of these parties is not the proletariat but those elements partly declassed by large capital and the top strata of the working class. (*)

In Canada, the revisionist Canadian Communist Party has not been able to make this "break-through" with as much success. It has not yet taken the measures, like the criticism of the USSR and the official abandonment of Marxism-Leninism that would have given it the support of these strata. It is not impossible that the CP will follow the example of how other "leftist" social democrats have created their "political vehicle" and modify its game plan. It could even use its famous project for a "mass federated party".

On the other hand, the NDP-CLC's spinelessness, treason and arrogance towards the most militant strata of the Canadian labour movement has brought about a crisis which has been considerably deepened by their recent betrayal of the postal workers. Entire sectors of the CLC stronghold criticize the leadership, not only on questions of union tactics, but also on fundamental political questions, like Quebec's right to self-determination. This crisis has led to an upsurge of all the trends which operate in the Canadian working-class movement. And leftist social democrats have no intention of standing by in silence.

In a situation such as this, it would not be surprising if Cy Gonick's ideas multiplied, not only in important sectors of the Canadian labour movement, but also in the Quebec labour movement, where some of the critical supporters of the PQ are desperately searching for a more attractive political lifebuoy.

For the sectors of the working class disillusioned and disappointed by the betrayal of the NDP-CLC, leftist social democrats wave around the idea of "leftist Eurocommunism" (radicalism forever), especially that of "structural reforms" in industry through worker participation in the management and that of political union activism. For the labour aristocracy, wage-earning intellectuals, and what is called the middle classes, leftist social democracy offers a program of peaceful and "democratic" (i.e. parliamentary) transition to socialism, backed up by a campaign of disparagement of the dictatorship of the proletariat and socialist revolution.

This is how, in the present Canadian political and economic context, leftist social democracy intends to go about creating "the political vehicle" which certain factions of the petty

(*) In this respect, it is revealing that the special issue of *Canadian Dimension* on "Eurocommunism" devotes an article to the description of the life of a cell of the PCF (French Communist Party) which is composed almost exclusively of what French sociologists call "ITC", that is, engineers, technicians and managers! Probably so as not to scare off their readers...

bourgeoisie and of the labour aristocracy need to maintain their hegemony over the working-class movement.

* * *

Articles like that by Cy Gonick often tempt us to do nothing but demonstrate that those ideas are but the childish dreams of the petty bourgeoisie, that they are but illusions designed to deceive the working class. The claim to wrest the main economic and political levers from the monopoly bourgeoisie, "peacefully and democratically", by means of "structural reforms", is indeed laughable. History has proven that such illusions are either doomed to stagnate in the minds of recognized ideologues of the petty bourgeoisie; or else, when they are able to influence the working class movement during a revolutionary crisis, they are responsible for the failure of a revolution. As for the "structural reforms" advocated by "Eurocommunists" and Cy Gonick, monopoly capital has shown that it is not at all opposed to the idea, and that it can even put it into practice itself and use it to recuperate the demands of the people.

It is especially important to remember that leftist social-democratic ideology (or "leftist Eurocommunism") in Canada represents the class interests of certain social strata searching for a "political vehicle". They do not see anything laughable or dreamlike in their plans. Indeed there is nothing funny about their desire to step over the proletariat to pull themselves up to the higher ranks of a "socialized" and "planned" capitalist State, and to become the **managers** of it. It represents, however, a great danger for the proletariat, especially in a country in which a revolutionary party has not yet been built.

This latest political move of leftist social democrats clearly indicates that the aspirations of Canadian workers for socialism and revolutionary ideas are growing. The fact that they feel obliged to attack Marxism-Leninism on the basis of "what is Marxist and what is not", as in the special issue of **Canadian dimension on Eurocommunism**, indicates that the ideas of scientific socialism are penetrating within the masses of our country. Just like the course of history forced them to tone down their nationalism, so today it forces them to put on a "socialist" and a "more-Marxist-than-thou" mask. We must tear away this mask and lay bare what lies behind: the two faces of social democracy and revisionism.

* * *

Left-wing social-democrats have practically taken up the same calls as the NDP and CTC. The NDP calls for the reinforcement of Canadian monopolies. Not to be outdone, the social democrats put forward the reinforcement of State monopolies decked out in "structural reforms" and workers' control. To make a long story short, left-wing social democrats, like the Canadian Central Labour Congresses, are trying to tie the workers' movement to the NDP's coattails in the upcoming elections. Cy Gonick's "left-wing" strategy has not given itself a "political vehicle". This fact leads us to correctly presume

that, in the immediate future, it will simply put forward a "critical" support to the NDP — the same kind of critical support that has characterized the stands of both the defunct Waffle and present journal **Canadian Dimension**.

There are several reasons why the political importance of this new tendency in Canada must not be underestimated. It comes at a time when "rightist" social democracy (NDP-CLC) and "pure" nationalism have lost their appeal for major sectors of the working class and of the petty bourgeoisie. The reformism, democraticism, hatred for revolution and the dictatorship of the proletariat, and latent nationalism of this tendency are custom-made for the intellectual petty bourgeoisie, the labour aristocracy, and some new strata of the proletariat which have come from the ranks of the petty bourgeoisie.

1. *Canadian Dimension*, Vol. 13, no. 4, November/December 1978
2. *Ibid*, p. 11
3. *Ibid*.
4. *Ibid*
5. *Ibid*, p. 19
6. *Ibid*, p. 19

Another move to make PROLETARIAN UNITY a powerful weapon against the ideas of the bourgeoisie

In the context of the defence of the **Draft Program** put forward by IN STRUGGLE!, we have often used lengthy articles which dealt with every aspect of fundamental theoretical questions, such as the State, classes and socialism. Although this type of article may have been necessary in the past, it took some of the edge out of the journal as a polemical instrument against the ideas and theories of the bourgeoisie. So, from now on, we intend to make greater use of short articles like some of the ones in the last issue. Moreover, we would like to increase the journal's capacity to intervene on all the burning questions in the Canadian and international situation. The struggle against revisionism and for the defence of Marxism-Leninism will be all the more successful because it will be at the heart of the polemic.

We have begun this rectification in this issue of **PROLETARIAN UNITY**. In the editorial, we take a stand on the new orientation of the "leftist" social democrats who are pushing "Canadian-style" Eurocommunism in the magazine **Canadian Dimension**.

On the occasion of International Women's Day in March, we will look at the fundamentally reactionary nature of feminism: the dismissal of class struggle and of the leading role of the proletariat. For the first time in the journal, we are using an interview format to give our

readers facts which are essential for understanding the revolutionary crisis in Iran.

There is also a short article to warn the readers of the journal against petty-bourgeois and revisionist criticisms of revisionism, like that in Bettelheim's recent book on the degeneration of the Communist Party of China. Finally, two other articles deepen the criticism of revisionism, and in particular the revisionism of the present Chinese leaders. One of these articles, in the form of "theoretical notes", examines a fundamental debate: the question of the relationship to be established between the productive forces and the relations of production, that is, between revolution and the development of production. The second article engages in polemics with the Chinese revisionists by responding to their reactionary call to bow down before the law of value.

This illustrates how our Group has begun to work to transform **PROLETARIAN UNITY** into an incisive weapon of class struggle on theoretical questions. We intend to keep up and intensify these efforts in the coming months. We call upon our readers to take part in these efforts by sending in their comments on the form of the journal, or by directly taking part in the debate to defend the revolutionary theory of the proletariat.

The Editorial Board of PROLETARIAN UNITY



Letters

APPEAL TO OUR READERS

The communist press isn't the private property of a few editors or of a few big financiers seeking profits. No! The communist press is above all a tool to struggle against the ideas of the bourgeoisie and to assert the point of view of the working class. The same is also true of a theoretical journal which wages the struggle for the defence and assertion of the **revolutionary theory of the proletariat**, the indispensable guiding light in the class war, the guide which sheds light on our daily struggles by providing us with the concentrated experience of more than one hundred years of struggle by the world proletariat.

In the struggle between the theory of Marxism-Leninism and the theories of the bourgeoisies, the theoretical journal is the indispensable tool that we must **all** build and test. The objective analysis of Canadian society, and the formulation of the strategy for the socialist revolution can only be done in the heat of action, in the forefront of the class struggle. Comrades, that is why the correspondence we receive at the journal is so important. Our ideological weapon will be worthless if each and everyone of us does not take upon himself to give it firing power and to point it towards the enemy camp.

We musn't be scared of controversy. On the contrary,

we must seek it because we communists know that correct ideas, the truth, cannot be dissociated from struggle, from the struggle against incorrect ideas, no matter where they come from and no matter what mask they are wearing. To write to the journal, to express openly one's point of view on one or another aspect of the decisive questions of the program, on one aspect or another of the present situation and also on the form, the orientation, the lessons and the weaknesses of the theoretical journal, is not only a necessity but a duty for anyone who has at heart to make truth triumph against the falsifications of those who seek to stop our march forward.

Who may and must write to the journal? Everybody! Whether it be a friend of the Marxist-Leninist movement, a progressive group or an individual; all should take the initiative of writing to the journal to express their agreement or their disagreement, to give an account of the debate that occurred during the study or the discussion of the journal, to point out its shortcomings, to complete or rectify arguments in the light of their own practical experience or their personal knowledge. To write to the journal isn't simply to write to the editors, it is primarily to open a debate throughout Canada to make this important guiding light shine even brighter, this guiding light that will lead us to victory.

We are printing two letters received from readers. Both letters address the question of the struggle for the proletarian revolution against revisionism, but they take opposite points of view.

The first letter is written by a comrade who has doubts about his commitment in the revolutionary struggle. He expresses a defeatist point of view in the face of the temporary defeats inflicted on the revolutionary movement in China as well as in Vietnam and Kampuchea (Cambodia). We felt it opportune to answer his letter given the many distortions and deformations it contains.

The second letter was written following a discussion held by several sympathizers of the communist movement on the question of

revisionism. This letter correctly takes up the struggle against the defeatism of some as a reaction to the present confusion in the international communist movement. The letter tries to analyse this situation clearly in order to defeat revisionism.

We hope that our readers will be

Some questions on socialism and revolution

...One of the basic principles of dialectical materialism teaches that the fundamental contradiction in class society is between the mode of production and the ways that goods are distributed. In other words, the fundamental contradiction in capitalist society is between the

inspired by the struggle attitude that characterizes the authors of the second letter in their fight against defeatism. Such an attitude is not idealistic. Rather, it is based on the profound conviction that the future belongs to the working class and the proletarian revolution in every corner of the world.

private nature of the ownership of the means of production and the social character of production itself.

It therefore follows that as the productive forces develop, so does the antagonism between the private character of appropriating goods and the social character of produc-

tion. It follows that this contradiction can only be resolved through the revolutionary overthrow of the old order and the establishment of a new society...

However, when we look at the evolution of society since the advent of capitalism, we observe three main phenomena:

- that socialist revolution only occurs in economically backward countries where the productive forces are scarcely developed;
- that in those countries which have gone through proletarian revolution, capitalism has always been restored; and
- that socialist revolution has never taken place in an economically developed country.

In the case of the USSR, China, or even Albania, for example, a backward state of economic and industrial development where the conditions of workers were horrible gave way to a socialist State where the working and living conditions of workers were gradually improved through the socialization of the means of production... The fact is that thus far all socialist revolutions have occurred in backward countries. That, I think, is an irrefutable fact.

But there is another fact which quickly comes to mind. Once these countries reached a certain degree of development **because of the socialization of the means of production**, capitalism was restored. I admit that Albania may be used as a counter example. However, we know very little about what is happening in Albania and is it not also true that it is trying to develop trading relations with capitalist countries, especially in Western Europe? Is it not also true that it was through the development of trade links with capitalist countries that socialism was initially undermined in those countries that we called socialist in the "good old days"?...

If we accept the fact that society

must go through a relatively long period of socialist development before attaining the stage of communism, should we not also admit that backward societies must go through a period of capitalist development before going on to socialism in order that the development of the productive forces always corresponds to the appropriate form of society? This would be in agreement with the Marxist-Leninist principle which states that to each degree of development of the productive forces there **necessarily** corresponds a certain form of society or a certain form of social organization.

At this point, however, we must introduce the third observation that I mentioned above. Since there must be a certain form of organization corresponding to each degree of development of the productive forces, there must therefore exist a degree of development under capitalism where the society is ripe for socialist revolution...

And it is totally clear that no advanced capitalist country has ever undergone socialist revolution.

We thus find ourselves faced with the following alternative. Either the productive forces have not reached a sufficiently high degree of development for the socialist organization of society anywhere in the world, or else the process of social evolution as described and explained by Marx and Engels is no longer valid for capitalist society.

We may try all we want to convince ourselves and the working class that imperialism is the eve of revolution, but ceaselessly repeating this cannot obliterate concrete reality, which shows that socialist revolution is further way in the advanced capitalist countries, the imperialist countries, than anywhere else...

A reader of
PROLETARIAN UNITY

Reply of PROLETARIAN UNITY

The theoretical errors and superficial analysis in this letter are enough to warrant a reply. But a reply is much more necessary given the pretension of the author to use Marxism to prove that Marx and Engels were wrong, to question the necessity of socialist revolution, and to suggest the liquidation of the revolutionary organization.

The author thinks that he has summed up the Marxist-Leninist conception of history when he states that "as the productive forces develop, then so does the antagonism between the private character of appropriating goods (or the private ownership of the means of production — Editor) and the social character of production. It follows that this contradiction can only be resolved through the revolutionary overthrow of the old order and the establishment of a new society." In other words, **revolution appears in history because of the development of the productive forces.**

We have always believed the opposite — that revolution, or a "revolutionary era" to use Marx's expression, comes about because of the non-development of productive forces. In other words, **revolution is on the agenda when the relations of production themselves hinder the development of production.** While it is true to talk of the necessity of revolution at the end of a phase of development of the productive forces, it is quite erroneous to state that the inherent contradictions of a mode of production grow sharper because of the development of the productive

forces. Rather, it is because the productive forces can no longer develop and that they stagnate within the confines of the outdated relations of production, that they oppose these relations of production, and unleash the phenomenon of revolution.

Let us try to sort out all of this. If socialist revolution has been first successful in economically backward countries, it is because of the extreme tension there between the relations of production and the development of productive forces. The tension in these countries is often heightened by the existence continued of feudal or semi-feudal relations along with all the contradictions of capitalism at its highest stage — imperialism. Before capitalism could even mature in these countries, they felt the contradictions and exploitation of imperialism. This combination makes for an explosive and revolutionary situation.

But why a socialist revolution? Why not a bourgeois revolution with the aim of developing capitalism? For the simple reason that these countries, capitalism cannot really lead to social and economic progress. Indeed, it is not uncommon in many of these countries to see the imperialists and the feudal reactionaries share the same political point of view. Only socialist revolution can get these countries out of the imperialist chain where they would remain forever dominated, poor and underdeveloped. Only socialism can free the productive forces and solve the economic and social problems.

Let us now look at the advanced capitalist countries where the revolution to overthrow capitalism is slow in coming.

The author of the letter, instead of giving a concrete analysis of this problem, is simply content to present an "alternative". Either, he says, conditions are not yet ripe for socialism or else Marx and Engels were wrong. That's a real help.

The author has undoubtedly heard something about the link between opportunism in the working-class movement and revisionism. He must also be aware of the fact that imperialism is able to corrupt a strata of workers in its own country precisely because of its super-exploitation of the peoples of the world. This fact is fundamental in explaining the slow development of the necessary conditions for revolution. It is this central aspect of the problem which we examine here, because the general economic conditions of capitalism long ago reached their maturity, the stage beyond which revolution became both possible and necessary.

The author's contention that a greater development of the productive forces is necessary before socialist revolution can be envisioned in these countries is patently absurd. The economic system in these countries can only be maintained by slowing down the development of the productive forces to some extent. This is done through crises and war.

The author also analyses the return to capitalism in once-socialist countries from an

abstract and metaphysical point of view. He attempts to find an answer to the question as to why so many of these countries have abandoned socialism. While there undoubtedly are some similarities and general lessons to be drawn, it would be erroneous to try to explain everything with one single hypothesis. This is especially true of the author's "theory of the developing productive forces".

The example of the USSR demonstrates well our point of view. Lenin saw very well that the socialist revolution had not broken out in the advanced countries. He demonstrated that, under such conditions, building socialism in Russia would be very difficult. It could not be accomplished without detours, hesitations and errors. But there was no other way. Our author's "alternatives" only existed in the heads of people like Kautsky, with the results we know.

The revolutionary proletariat must deal with the fact that there have been major setbacks. It must draw lessons from them for the battles to come. Like all other revolutionary classes in history, it has no choice. If anyone knows of another path, they should speak out. But we have little sympathy for their "alternatives" and their "confusion", especially when they try to use Marxism-Leninism to liquidate the revolution.

The Editorial Board
of PROLETARIAN UNITY

Communists only study revisionism for one reason: to defeat it

That was the theme of a study session we participated in recently, and it explains the essence of

what we learned.

It is clear to us that the Chinese Communist Party is get-

ting increasingly bogged down in revisionism. This treason made many of us feel discouraged and demobilized.

Many of us asked the same question. How can a young and relatively inexperienced Group like IN STRUGGLE! hope to be able to struggle effectively and succeed in defeating revisionism when big and experienced parties like the ones in the USSR and China eventually betrayed the interests of the proletariat, even after they had gone through civil war and had succeeded in seizing power in their respective countries.

Once we put the question like that, we concluded that revisionism was an inevitable historical process.

Moreover, our concrete knowledge of the development of revisionism in China, for example, was quite limited. Some of us concluded that erroneous policies must have been put into practice before for the present situation to arise. Others, although they were aware of the recent policy of the Chinese Communist Party, could not understand the sudden about-face of the leaders and the importance of revisionism in our country at the present time.

The study session allowed us to comprehend the various forms that revisionism has taken historically. We saw that the basic thing was the refusal to apply Marxist-Leninist principles, while hiding this behind the red flag. Pretexts like the "special conditions" to justify nationalism or the "new era" proclaimed by the upholders of the three worlds theory were used to hide the basic revisionism.

It is easy to repeat principles mechanically without really understanding how to apply them in our country. There are numerous examples of this mechanical application. For example, the present Chinese leadership is now consolidating wage differentials and generalizing material incentives on the pretext that the principle guiding wage policy under socialism is "from each according to his capacities, to each according to his work" and that the motto "from each according to his ability, to each according to his needs" can only be applied under communism. **But they are quick to forget that socialist period is one of struggle to attain communism and not a period to consolidate bourgeois right!...**

Despite this, and despite many questions on revisionism answered by the session, many questions still remain. For example, many people interpreted the period of the Cultural Revolution as the "great Chinese happening". But was it not really a huge mass movement directed against the revisionist leadership of the party? What role did the party play in this? These two questions raise the problem of the leading role of the party and the application of democratic centralism.

Nearer to home, in Canada, there are many questions that remain to be clarified on the degeneration of the Communist Party. For example, there is the question of its united front policy which led it to support King against Bennett, on the pretext that King was the "lesser evil". As a result, the proletariat was weakened and our national bourgeoisie was strengthened in

Canada and throughout the world. This was a direct result of the world anti-fascist united front.

These questions are of fundamental importance for the Marxist-Leninist movement and they should not be left in the hands of a few intellectuals or specialists. It is the duty of everyone to study them. That is an essential in order to avoid the degeneration of a communist group or party.

To conclude, we must add that the study session allowed us to see that revisionism does not appear automatically and that there are objective reasons for its development. A solid conviction that Marxist-Leninist principles are correct is the best way to defeat it. The study of revisionism then gives us the necessary means to understand its sources, identify its various manifestations and thus be able to fight it consciously.

To reach this objective, it is not enough just to develop a concrete consciousness of the class struggle. It is also necessary to be convinced that only Marxism-Leninism can lead the working class to victory over the exploiters. And it is important never to get discouraged.

We must not remain honest but passive spectators to events in China, events in international arena or events in this country.

Instead, we have to adopt a fighting attitude towards revisionism and solidly base our offensive on Marxist-Leninist principles. We have to develop our knowledge of revisionism and unmask it wherever it may appear.



A new offensive begins against imperialism

Between the time when these lines are written and the time that they are read, many more clashes will have taken place in Iran. Perhaps even some governments will have fallen. Perhaps the fascist machine guns will have sprayed the streets with blood. When we met with the Iranian comrades to prepare this article, the Bakhtiar government was still holding on by a thread. Shortly afterwards, the people in arms rose up again to cut that thread. What comes out strong and clear from our discussions with the Iranian comrades is that behind the daily headlines there is an unmistakable long-term trend — the Iranian revolution is on the march. That revolution marks the beginning of revolutionary storms on a world scale.

The imperialist powers, headed up by the U.S. and USSR, engage in bitter rivalry in Iran as elsewhere. The reactionaries and fascists fire on the people with their tanks and machine guns. And the people, who have been held down for too many long years now, rise up like the fiery flame of a volcano.

The fall of the supposedly impregnable "King of Kings" and his front man Bakhtiar hit the imperialists like a bombshell. The Pentagon and the CIA simply didn't see it coming. That is why they have had to string together such an incredible series of clumsy lies and dredge up whatever ancient and discredited myths and bugbears that they could find. They must at all costs cover up, with such complexities, a simple truth that they can never acknowledge: the revolution. That is how such fairytales as the prevalence of religious fanaticism and even a "cult of death" among the people are born — their objective function is purely and simply to prevent people from seeing the heroism of the Iranian proletariat and people.

We are happy to disappoint you, imperialist Sirs. The spirit in the hearts of the Iranian people which makes them brave cannon fire is not the Holy Spirit or a "cult of death". It is the indestructible desire to put an end to the misery and extreme oppression for which you, fine Sirs, are responsible.

This article, which is based on an interview with some Iranian comrades, demonstrates that reality very clearly. The revolutionary crisis in Iran is not a temporary thing, due to some scattered pockets of disaffection which will dissipate in time. It is a reflection of very profound class contradictions. The way to understand these class contradictions, and the events to which they have given rise, is to grasp what the economic conditions are which move these classes to act. The number one thing to look at is the fact of imperialist domination.

This article is also a first effort at making a concrete analysis to try to shed some light on the economic situation of the countries which remain under-developed and dependent on imperialism. That situation is one which has often remained somewhat abstract for the people of Canada including communists. The facts mentioned by the Iranian comrades should help to clarify the role played by the different social classes in Iranian society. They should make it easier to see what historical task faces the Iranian proletariat today.

It is to make the proletarian revolution and to lead the exploited masses in Iran to end forever all forms of imperialist domination. It is to lead the Iranian revolution onto the road of socialist revolution.

Bread, shelter and liberty

The first question we asked our Iranian comrades was a bit of a naive one: what do the Iranian people want? What demands are being put forward in the demonstrations and strikes?

"That depends on what class you are talking about!... Of course, there are some immediate demands which identify the common denominator of misery and oppression which is experienced by all the classes opposed to the Shah's regime..." That was the reply to our question given by one of the comrades who reminded us of the slogan that boomed like rolling thunder from the first moment it was unleashed in the great mass demonstrations — bread, shelter and liberty.

The factor which sparked the peasantry, the majority class in Iran (*), to oppose the Shah's regime was from the beginning the appalling misery that pervaded their daily lives. This was particularly true, as we shall see, after the "White Revolution" launched by the Shah — or to be more exact by U.S. imperialism and twelve economists from Harvard — had destroyed Iran's agriculture and dispossessed tens of thousands of peasants of their lands.

What brought the workers into the streets was working days that went on for 10, 12 or 14 hours in the worst conditions imaginable. It was the sound of machine gun fire caused by soldiers who were trying to suppress the right to strike. It was the cold reality of massive unemployment and hunger.

(* The peasantry is estimated to be between 50% to 60% of the Iranian population (i.e. about 35 million people).

The revolutionary crisis in Iran

The driving force which pushed the urban petty bourgeoisie, along with the other oppressed classes, into the fray was the housing crisis. Rent increases were in the order of 100%. Inflation in general soared to 50% per year.

The national bourgeoisie was in the street too. It was there because its class was being ruined by imperialism which sucked the surplus extracted from production out of the country. The imperialists are doing their utmost to make dependent countries like Iran bear the brunt of the economic crisis, which continues unabated nevertheless.

What pushed all of these classes into the opposition movement, even if they each had their own different objectives, was the rallying cry of "liberty" from the bloody repression that was the symbol of the Shah's regime. The Shah held 10,000 political prisoners captive and built up the SAVAK, the dreaded secret police force which took a back seat to no one, including Hitler's Gestapo. The Shah's regime was symbolized by horrors like the brutal mass murder at Abadan where the Shah organized the burning alive of 800 movie-goers. In 1978 alone, 30,000 people were killed in Iran.

Those are the factors which brought the masses into the streets. But there is something which lies behind the immediate political demands which rallied the mass of the people around a single objective. It is the different economic situation in which each social class finds itself and the consequently very different political objectives that each sets its sights on obtaining.

What did the Shah's regime represent? How did the imperialists use that regime to reduce Iran to a semi-colony? These are the questions which led us to

ask the comrades to speak a bit about the nature of the Iranian ruling class, the comprador and bureaucratic bourgeoisie (*).

From one imperialist to another

"Around 1856, the second half of the 19th century, Iran became a semi-colony. At that time the main colonial powers were Russia and Great Britain. These two colonialist, and later imperialist, powers were virtually neck in neck in terms of the extent of their influence in Iran. Geographically, at certain times, the north of the country belonged to the Russians and the south belonged to the British.

There was even a formal agreement in 1907 between the Russians and the British to divide the country in half — the north for the Russians, the south for the British. But Iran never became a colony and that's mainly due to the people's struggle. They did not allow their country to become a colony of any one power.

The expression semi-colony is a more accurate one to describe Iran because the Iranian monarchy was maintained as a national form of government. Furthermore, the imperialist powers never had complete control of Iran. It was different, for example, from India and most other countries under Britain's thumb. In India, the British had their own men there at various points ruling the country what with the chancellor to India and so on. But Iran never became like that.

It came very close mind you. Especially around the early 20th century, 1907 and then 1911, with the Russians and the British dividing the country. But no one country was ever in complete control. They were in rivalry. It was only after the

Russian Soviet revolution that Lenin cancelled all the imperialist contracts that Russia had over Iran.

So it was after the Russian revolution the British were to become the main power. Now let's go back to the compradors. At those times when the two countries were dominating Iran they started a process of what you might call growing agents inside the country. First, they brought their goods. At that particular time, the second half of the nineteenth century, the national bourgeoisie was just beginning to grow. There was small industry — very small — and there was some sort of commerce. But from the moment the two foreign countries entered Iran the national bourgeoisie pretty well stopped its growth right there. Just a certain part of it could survive side by side with imperialism but it could not really compete with it. They were the ones who decided to make the revolution in the early 20th century, 1905-1906. The national bourgeoisie, at that time, was mainly a merchant bourgeoisie.

The leadership at various points went to the petty bourgeoisie at the early stages of the revolution. That was the time when it was turned into a very radical armed revolution against the British and the Tsarists. But at the later stages of this revolution the upper national bourgeoisie, which were in a lot of cases connected with one or the other of the imperialist countries, took over the revolution. They stopped the revolution and made compromises, especially with the British. The national bourgeoisie evidently did not have a clear understanding of what imperialism was at this time. Most of them thought that Tsarist Russia was imperialist and riding on their backs but they believed the English were different.

So for example there were two religious leaders, representatives of the merchant bourgeoisie, who went one time to the British Embassy. They sat there and asked for help. They really thought the British were different because the British were playing a smart game pretending to support the revolution against Tsarist Russia.

(* The term "comprador", in the sense used by our Iranian comrades, refers to the bourgeoisie which has no independent interest of its own other than to manage imperialist capital, drawing various benefits within the framework of a vast system of corruption. The term "bureaucratic" designates that section of the comprador bourgeoisie which manages the State apparatus. The term "semi-colony" describes the situation in Iran whereby the country has been dominated by one or another imperialist power for over a century without ever being annexed politically as was the case with Algeria, Indochina, etc.

At the height of the people's struggle that forced the Shah to flee, office employees and bank workers massively participated in the strike movement. The workers of the Bank Markazi (Central Bank of Iran) systematically made extracts from the banks' records to list the main crooks of Iran just before they walked out. Since they had to stop somewhere they limited their list to some 180 names of people who left Iran when the Shah's downfall became imminent. Each of these persons stole a minimum of \$1.4 billion from Iran. Here is a reproduction of a part of this list published by the newspaper **Resistance** of the Confederation of Iranian Students (National Union) in the U.S. (December 1978, p. 13).

NAME	POSITION	AMOUNT OF THEFT
Hushang Ansari	Director of Nat'l Iranian Oil Co.	\$68.5 million
Jamshid Amouzegar	Ex-Prime Minister of Iran	\$6.0 million
Mehrdad Pahlbod	Shah's Br. in Law; Ex-Min. Culture & Art	\$223.0 million
General Khatemi	Dir. Iran Air; killed by the people	\$9.1 million
Two sons of the Shah's twin sister, Ashraf	owners of large industries	\$113.0 million
Shah's niece		\$41.1 million
General Gholam Oveisi	Head of Martial Law-Tehran	\$17.0 million
Parviz Sabeti	Recent Deputy Chief of SAVAK	\$19.0 million
Name not disclosed	a key Cabinet Minister (in power)	\$40.0 million
Senator Ali Rezai	Industrialist (steel); in Majlis	\$53.0 million
Reza Fallah	Member, Bd. of Directors, NIOC	\$115.0 million
Zarghami	Ex-chief of Imperial Iranian Army	\$50.0 million
Ahmad Khayami	Wealthy Industrialist (Comprador)	\$271.0 million
Safie Asfia	Ex Cabinet Minister	\$45.0 million
Shams-ol-Molook Mosaheb	Senator	\$28.0 million
Jahan Shah Saleh	Empress Farah's personal physician	\$37.0 million
Dr. Diba	Uncle of Empress; Ex-Min. Health; Ex Chancellor of Tehran University	\$44.0 million
Dr. Ayadi	Shah's personal physician	\$270.0 million
Nori Esfandiari	Former Government Official	\$80.0 million
Ahmad Kashani	Wealthy Industrialist (Comprador)	\$85.0 million
Sali Nikpour	Wealthy Industrialist (Comprador)	(221.0 million
Ahmad Nabi-pour	Former Government Official	\$16.0 million
Jaffar Mansourian	Former Government Official	\$21.0 million
Fatimeh Kazineh Alam	Relative of Ex-Prime Minister	\$27.0 million
Admiral Zelli	Admiral of Imperial Iranian Navy	\$37.0 million
Hooshang Arbebi	Deputy Secretary of Civil Aviation	\$32.0 million
Hossein Ramzi Atai	Ex-chief of Imperial Iranian Navy	\$35.0 million
Dr. Ram	Ex-Minister of Interior	\$23.0 million
Dr. Ali Amini	Ex-Prime Minister	\$27.0 million
Vahab Zadeh	Wealthy Industrialist (Comprador)	\$62.0 million
Hooshang Sabeti	Top Executioner of SAVAK	\$17.0 million
General Ehtemad Moghadam	Imperial Iranian Army	\$21.0 million
Manoucher Rezali	Wealthy Industrialist (Comprador)	\$16.0 million
Rahim Ali Khorram	Deputy in Majlis	\$79.0 million
Yassini	Wealthy Industrialist (Comprador)	\$87.0 million
Farman-Farmaian	Wealthy Industrialist (Comprador)	\$47.0 million
Esfandiari	(Comprador) Wealthy Industrialist	\$37.0 million
Ahmad Akhavan	Wealthy Industrialist (Comprador)	\$27.0 million
Hossein Doha	Senator in Majlis	\$21.0 million
Cyrus Arjmand	Factory Owner	\$95.0 million
Rasoul Rahimi	Former Government Official	\$82.0 million
Dr. Seyyed Hassan Emami	Chief Mullah of Shah's Court	\$21.0 million

TOTAL \$2,836,000,000

This sum doesn't include the \$1.8 billion robbery by a Shah's nephew, son of Ashraf, in 1978. Also, this sum doesn't include the Shah's banking account which has been evaluated to \$25 billion.

Of course, that story repeats itself before 1953 with the National Front. The National Front did not have a proper understanding of imperialism either. They thought that the U.S. was different than the British, so much so that they even asked for help from the Americans against the British. Experience showed that reality was just the opposite. The U.S. went to the aid of Britain and carried out a coup d'état against the national bourgeoisie in 1953. The national bourgeoisie's failure to unders-

tand imperialism has thus cost us two chances for revolution — the Constitutional revolution of 1906 and also the period before 1953. The U.S. has been the main imperialist force in Iran since 1953.

Before the constitutional revolution, the family that built the monarchy was a very corrupt family. They were famous for keeping harems and spending the country's money on themselves. They used to go to Europe and sell the country out for a few thousand pounds.

The British literally bought them and their collaboration. One of first contracts *Cajario* signed with England gave them the authority to handle the entire tobacco trade in Iran. The U.K. would deal directly with the producers, sell the raw tobacco and make all the profit. It was this that actually brought about the first anti-imperialist movement in Iran. The people organized a boycott on consumption of tobacco. But one of the religious leaders — in fact the same one we were talking about earlier — went to the British consulate right in the middle of the boycott and started smoking. He was an agent of the British. He was one of the leaders of the Constitutional revolution in its second phase when the Western bourgeoisie took over. At that time most of the vital sectors of the economy were handed over to those countries in exchange for a few bribes here and there, most of it going to the Royal Family.

So the customs offices in the south were given to the British and in the north they were given to the Russians. The authority to build railroads was granted to the British and the fishing rights went to the Russians.

Where are the compradors at, nowadays? Industry in Iran is mainly run by the compradors. Take for example the automotive industry. The main capital there is American, Japanese or French. Chevrolet has a branch producing under an Iranian name but everything is imported to make the cars. Renault, Chrysler, Citroën, Fiat — they are all "made in Iran". Same thing with Pepsi and Coke. It's an Iranian who formally owns Pepsi-Cola but all the money and capital is from the banks — Chase Manhattan holds 30% of the shares. These compradors are agents for the Americans. They get some shares for themselves, make a little money and reinvest it. It's all joint ventures and cooperation with the foreign powers."

After the Iranian comrades had painted this picture of the real face of the comprador bourgeoisie, we raised an obvious question. Couldn't the "Iranian capital, amassed out of the profits going to the locals as a byproduct of the imperialist pillage, be the basis for a new kind of national bourgeoisie owning its own finance capital? The comrades replied to this question by showing how imperialism had always developed in Iran by ruining the national bourgeoisie.

"The first thing the Americans did was to ruin what was supposed to be the Iranian national bourgeoisie. That's what provided the ground for them to come in on. Like at the time of the so-called White Revolution in 1963 the U.S. had control already of many sectors of the economy.

The U.S. entered the Iranian economy about 1911 or so and by 1953 they had complete control. Their goal was not to create a national bourgeoisie but to enable the imperialists' financial sector to penetrate still deeper into the villages.

But there is another part of the movement to talk about and that's the bureaucratic bourgeoisie. That is the section of the compradors who are ruling the country directly, the people in the government apparatus. One of the important contradictions in the country is always the contradiction among the reactionary classes. As we can see, these contradictions are at times very sharp.

There is also the fight between the Royal Family and the other sections of compradors. Three or four years ago, for example, the Shah sent a few of the compradors to prison. He claimed to be waging an anti-corruption struggle. In fact, the campaign had two principal aims. The first was to eliminate the petty bourgeoisie, what there was left, and thus to further monopolize more sectors of the bourgeoisie. Take the example of the meat markets. In Iran it has always been composed mostly of butchers with small scale operations. It's not like here in Montreal where Steinberg's controls most of the meat market. The compradors thought they could make more money by monopolizing this. So they brought in this anti-corruption law and applied it to the butchers claiming that they were asking too high a price for their meat. They padlocked the doors of the butcher shops. The butchers had to come up with \$2000 in fines or else go to jail. On top of all that there were other laws which said that there shouldn't be so many small butcher shops. Soon the whole sector was monopolized with all the small-scale butchers going bankrupt. What happened to the butchers was repeated in other sectors as well on the same basic pattern.

The anti-corruption thing was aimed at small enterprises. It also hit the rivals of the Shah's family. A few of them were dispersed to different cities from Tehran mainly to the south. They were sent to prison for three or four months. The tax people were pounding at the door etc. That was the time when these contradictions were very sharp. Actually some people called it the coup d'état of the Royal Family against the other compradors. And the Rastakhiz (*) Party was the vehicle which materialized this on the political level. After that, all the "real patriots" were expected to join the Rastakhiz party. But that didn't last long — in the Anbouzegar government, for example, you find compradors from the private sector being made ministers of

portfolios like Economics or Commerce."

Corruption — the national industry of the compradors

This explanation of the facts of the situation by the Iranian comrades helps us better understand just how imperialism was able to implant itself in Iran by relying on a class of agents. These agents worked overtime to help foreign capital realize its profits while they themselves got fat from the exploitation of the working class and the pillage of the country's resources. It comes as a surprise to no one that the Shah is one of the richest people in the world. However, for those of us in Canada, this picture of the comprador bourgeoisie has remained a bit abstract. Hence, the comrades we talked to took it upon themselves to talk a bit more about some of these sinister characters and about what must be regarded as their "national industry", corruption.

"It's the system of the ruling class. Most of them are U.S. educated. There's one family, for example, which controls most of the services in Iran — the Fermayan's. One is the head of the central planning organization, a bureaucrat. Another was head of the Iranian central bank. Still another was chief of Parse Oil which is one of the most important companies in the oil business. Another has a very big engineering consulting firm. The original father of this family was a bourgeois. In his will, he said that any of his eleven sons who failed to get his Ph.D. would lose his share of the will. Naturally, they all got their Ph.D.'s and became rulers of the country. Those are the type of compradors who have been solidly lined up with the Royal Family. When you're head of the main government planning organization, or the central bank, that means you are necessarily working to organize things to serve the interests of the Shah.

"Who is part of the Royal Family in practice? Of course, it includes mainly the blood relations, the cousins and so on. But there are others too who are very close to them like the Fermayan family we just talked about. The time would come when the Shah's government would decide to nationalize some industries: the main metallurgical factories, tractors and things like that. Those were the times when the Royal Family and its bureaucrats felt strong enough to try to grab everything and take it into their own hands. But at other times, under pressure of the recrimina-

tions of the other compradors, the government was obliged to propose the distribution of some State investments to the private sector.

But the Shah and his family do not have control just through the State. They are big in the private sector too. For example there is the Pahlavi Foundation. One of Iran's major banks belongs to the Shah 100%. And his sisters and brothers have not only their own investments, but they usually get a large cut of all the private investments made in Iran. Because one way of guaranteeing your investment, that a lot of people caught onto pretty quickly, was to give a few shares cheap or even for free to a member of the Royal Family. So maybe you give 30% of the shares of a new thing you are investing in to the son of the Shah's sister. That way you soon have the State working for you — you don't pay taxes, you import things without paying customs, the government sends you customers etc. Everybody in the Royal Family is involved in the corruption business, even the Shah's nephews and nieces. They all are worth millions of dollars.

Obviously, the Royal Family is quite strong in the top echelons of the police and army. The Air Force was run by the Shah's sister-in-law for years. The Air Force was important for making coups d'état and stuff like that. The husband of his sister was an army general. He was killed when the investigation started up in the States into corruption connected to American airplane companies like Lockheed. The general died conveniently at that time in a jet crash that was billed as an unfortunate "accident". The Shah's family always gets bribes for these kinds of major government purchases, like for the F-14's for example. Once the bribe is paid, the contract is not long in coming.

One thing that is quite famous is the drug trafficking, which is controlled by the Shah's sister. It brings money into the country. They legalized the trafficking of opium, the quality of which is reputed to be quite good in Iran. Everything is controlled by the State. And who is the State? The Shah!"

A national bourgeoisie which is less and less anti-imperialist

The history of imperialist domination in Iran is, as the analysis made by the

(*) Rastakhiz is Persian for "National Renaissance". It was a fascist party which the Shah imposed as the sole legal political party.

comrades confirms, the history of the people being dispossessed of everything that was or might have been theirs. It is equally a history of the failure of national capitalism and the national bourgeoisie. This failure, while it pushed the national bourgeoisie to oppose the Shah's regime, just as quickly robbed that opposition of any strength or consistency. As the comrades from Iran put it, "the national bourgeoisie is mainly a merchant bourgeoisie, not an industrial one. This is because when industry started to develop in Iran the colonialists and imperialists arrived on the scene and acted as a brake on future development of the national bourgeoisie."

There used to be a national textile industry but that's ruined now. In the north, there are some small manufacturing outfits processing sugar, tea and matches. As imperialism penetrated further, so to the same degree, the national bourgeoisie lost its industrial character. All the goods are in imperialism's hands now. So all of the bourgeoisie's links are with the imperialists. That's why it has been gradually losing its anti-imperialist character. It is an essentially commercial bourgeoisie. They are not rooted in their own national industrial base which is conterminous to the interests of the imperialists. The profits made by these bourgeois come directly out of the sale of commodities produced by the imperialists. However, they are not compradors. They are not supported by imperialism.

There are some factions of the national bourgeoisie who own small industries, like textile or shoe factories (although the Japanese have just recently invaded the market and bankrupted the shoe industry). The carpet industry is also controlled by the national bourgeoisie. But the State apparatus is taking that over too. There is a carpet corporation which looks after exporting and generally controls the whole process. That sector of the bourgeoisie is very repressive. They go into the villages and hire on small children. Most of the kids working in those industries become sick working as they do from early morning to late at night. The workshops are often cut off from any sunlight. These children are crippled by the time they reach the age of 10 or 12. Quite often they are missing one or several of their fingers. The bourgeoisie is very repressive. Traditionally the users (the people who loan the money — just rich people not banks) have been very active in the carpet industry too. They have the money. They go around to the different villages, set up workshops for the carpets, employ people very

cheaply, get their quota of carpets and then get out just as quickly".

The "White Revolution" a counter revolution

This picture of how capital and imperialism dominate Iran is incomplete. Another important aspect was the reactionary offensive of the Shah and imperialism to help foreign capital penetrate the country's economy even further: the "White Revolution". On February 27, 1963 the Shah announced U.S. imperialism's new discovery, the "revolution from the top down"! This new "concept" is explained in an article recently published by the Confederation of Iranian Students (National Union) in the U.S. (ISAUS):

"Twelve Harvard economists had been assigned the task of studying and analyzing the political and economic conditions and forces in Iran in order to recast the entire structure to absorb capital, create the most favourable conditions for profitable exploitation, and guarantee the permanent "stability" of possible. Those who wanted land were required to borrow money — and from where? From the Central Bank, of course. Thus, the peasants who did rent or buy land were completely mortgaged to finance capital. This accomplished the tying of the feudal system directly to Iran — the permanent prevention of revolution". (1)

Why? Because at the beginning of the sixties, with Kennedy as head of U.S. imperialism, the domination of finance

capital in Iran is running into quite a few problems.

"By the end of the 50's, capital investment in Iran had reached its limit within the existing economic system. Why? Because Iran was a backward, agricultural, semi-feudal country of 20 million people — of whom 80% were peasants. The basis for feudalism was precisely this predominance of agriculture and small scale production, natural economy, in which peasants worked the land of huge estates owned by the feudal landlords. The source of the exploitation of the Iranian peasant was his attachment to the land and the political force of their oppression came from the feudal landowners individually and as a class, with the Shah and his family dominant over all as the largest feudal landowners in the country. The resistance of the peasants to these conditions was a serious threat to the power of the regime". (2)

The so-called "White Revolution" consisted of a series of programs and "reforms" that were in fact destined to consolidate the regime. For example, some of the Shah's troops were sent to the country to "help out"; the wage system was re-organized to include a "productivity clause" disguised as profit sharing. But the most important reform of all was the agricultural reform.

The first measure taken by the regime? Reorganize the banking system in Iran by creating a national bank, the Central Bank of Iran (Bank Markazi). At the same time the Industrial Development Bank was also created. This private financial consortium served as a finance market for capital loans. But what did land reform have to do with banks, with capital concentration? "... the Shah's "land reform" was led by the bankers who intended the transformation of feudal relations to the extent needed for their maximum profit and the transformation of the wealth of some of the big landlords into 'investment capital'". (3)

According to our Iranian comrades, the imperialists had no intention of abolishing feudalism; rather, they wanted it to serve their interests. As the Iranian comrades pointed out in the interview, it was a question of "replacing the feudal landlords' direct exploitation with the ground rent that would have to be paid to the banks".

"Moreover, where some land was given away, it was such poor land that literally nothing could be grown on it. It became clear that where 'giving away' of such land was concerned, the proposal to the peasant was to 'pay in cash'. Clearly, for the vast majority of peasants to come up with cash for land was im-

perialism and instead of the 'development of agriculture', its complete destruction and Iran's dependence on imported food. Despite the backward production that existed before this onslaught, the Iranian peasantry managed to produce enough food not only for the entire population of Iran, but a surplus for export as well. (In 1977, the Iranian private sector admitted that if the imports of food to Iran were suddenly cut off, local agriculture could produce only enough for 32 days).

Finally, 'confiscation of all private lands' means the confiscation of hundreds of millions in capital belonging to the big feudals and transferring it to the banks. Given the relationship already discussed between the banks and the State, the transfers that took place further consolidated the wealth and political power of the Shah's family and the dominance of foreign finance capital over Iran.

Many of the former feudals, meanwhile, made their own deals with imperialism and became compradors, directly linked to and dependent on the fortunes of foreign capital." (4)

Our Iranian comrades also gave us a few supplementary examples to explain how the agricultural reform was in fact a gigantic put-on. First, as they pointed out, "the biggest feudal landowner of them all was the Shah himself who, of course, was never touched by the agricultural reform". Another example is how the regime loved to boast about the development of agricultural machinery in Iran. In reality, the machinery was not destined to the thousands of Iranian villages, but rather to the big agricultural complexes on the best land, gigantic capitalist farms controlled by foreign monopolies and mainly devoted to a single export crop like strawberries that the Iranian people do not eat...

Last but not least, there was also the Shah's "nationalization" of forests or of livestock. This only impoverished the peasants even more since they now had to pay to have their cattle eat off the "nationalized" pastures. As a result of the "White Revolution" the peasants lost their land and agriculture went bankrupt. As our Iranian comrades pointed out: "Before the 'White Revolution', Iran was self-sufficient in rice, wheat and cotton. Today, everything is imported. Those are the results of the 'White Revolution'."

"If you visit the villages, you will see that they have to buy their eggs from the city. These eggs are imported from Israel. Statistics on the agricultural situation in Iran speak of disaster. Last year, Iran imported \$1.7 billion worth of food stuffs. And this year, according to the

regime's statistics, food imports will reach an estimated \$3 billion! This is one of the main reasons why the regime went bankrupt".

According to our Iranian comrades, the imperialists used the "White Revolution" to infiltrate the villages, to infiltrate every nook and cranny of the country with their finance capital. This was done to broaden their market with the banks' help. They believed that this would enable them to build themselves a stronghold in the countryside amongst those who benefited from the land distribution. They wanted to build a koulak class, i.e. a class of rich peasants, in order to use the old feudal system to strengthen their domination.

But the imperialists' strategy of using a counter revolution — the "White Revolution" — to ward off a "red revolution" has backfired badly. The failure in agriculture and the dispossession of the peasants has only heightened the revolutionary crisis. Iran is now like a volcano that is about to erupt.

That, in a nutshell, is the economic basis of the Iranian revolution. The revolution that has already cast off the "King of Kings", the Shah, his SAVAK, his 40,000 U.S. military councillors, and his 282,000-men army, from his precious throne adorned with 26,733 gems. What is happening in Iran has nothing to do with an isolated conflict instigated by a bunch of religious fanatics. The Shah and his bloody gang are not the only ones who are trembling under the people's blows. Imperialism itself is being shaken to its roots. Imperialism, with the USA leading the way, has tried to save itself from its crisis by trying to export it to the under-developed countries, to Iran in particular. Imperialism has just received the first boomerang blow of its action. One thing is certain: the revolutionary crisis in Iran is only the springboard of a new wave of revolutionary crises throughout the world. The thunder of proletarian revolution is rumbling.

In a future issue, we will examine the political characteristics of the Iranian crisis. We will see how in all the classes presently involved in the struggle, only the working class, the proletariat, is taking up the peasants' demands and how it, and it alone, can lead Iran towards proletarian revolution.

What in heaven's name did the Shah do with the billions of petro-dollars he amassed thanks to imperialism's plunder of Iran? The following list gives us a clue of the type of multibillion-dollar contracts the Shah's regime signed with imperialist big Capital. But most of all, the list reveals how these contracts, by their very nature, in no way benefited the Iranian people. They only brought more riches for the rich and more poverty for the people. This is only a partial list of the contracts that the Shah had to cancel because of the people's resistance (taken from *Resistance*, December 1978, p. 6). It is important to note that the list does not contain the \$12.5 billion arms deal with the U.S. or the \$15 billion nuclear contract with Westinghouse. (N.B. Iran is right on top of a major fault that could unleash devastating earthquakes.)

Program	Description	Approximate value of cutback
1. Shahestan Pahlavi Project	Huge housing development on the northern outskirts of Teheran where all government officers were to be relocated a sort of Brasilia in the Middle East	Several billion dollars
2. Teheran Metro	Iran's first subway, which was to be built by a French company	\$5 billion
3. Isfahan Aryamehr Iron and Steel Complex	Expansion of this industrial plant to a capacity of 10 million tons a year from current capacity of	Not available
4. Astara-Gorgan Highway	A 470-mile, six-lane highway running along the Caspian Seacoast	\$2 billion
5. Abadan Lube Oil Plant	A joint venture between the National Iranian Oil Company and the Shell Oil Company	\$300 million
6. Peugeot-Citroën Plant	A joint venture with the Iran National Car Company, Peugeot-Citroën, expected to produce 100,000 Peugeot 305 sedan a year at the facility	\$450 million
7. Volkswagen Plant	Another joint venture with the Iran National Car Company, the plant that would have produced 300,000 Rabbits a year	Not available
8. Shah Reza Industrial Park	A complex to be built south of Isfahan as a joint venture between West Germany's Krupp and Iran's Industrial and Development Renovation Organization	\$3.1 billion
9. AWAC Airplanes	The planned purchase of seven sophisticated air surveillance Boeing airplanes	\$1.7 billion

1. U.S. Involvement in Iran, 1900-1963, Part one, Imperialist Disguises and Liberal Illusions, Iranian Student Association in the U.S. (ISAUS), December 1978, p. 68

2. Ibid, p. 68

3. Ibid, p. 70

4. Ibid, p. 71

Feminism, the bourgeoisie's standard-bearer in the women's movement

Montreal, March 1978. The working-class and communist movement gets ready to celebrate International Women's Day, while the feminists who call themselves "radical", having decided to do their own thing, organize what they themselves call their "non-mixed and non-bureaucratic day" (1). Leaving aside the much too "masculine" question of engaging the masses of women in the combat of the working class, they devote their day to women's questions (2) to solemnly affirm their "Independence". "We have affirmed that we do not belong to any ideological group whatsoever" (3). Of course, these bourgeois agents, disguised as "women freedom fighters for women" don't belong to an ideological group...

Toronto, March 1978. A coalition of feminists, led by Trotskyists, plan a rally and march to celebrate International Women's Day. Made up of petty-bourgeois women, the Coalition puts the "solidarity of all sisters" ahead of the struggle of women workers against their oppression and exploitation under capitalism. The Coalition insists men march in the back of the demonstration — a fine way to build the unity of the working class. After two long and bitter debates with 40 "radical" lesbians who want men barred from the demonstration and left on the sidewalk "so we can spit on them", the Trotskyists suggest that men be forced to march in the rear... Not once did they defend the principle that men and women workers have the same enemy, the same struggle. The only four women factory workers in the audience declared they were revolted by the meeting and walked out.

But while the workers slammed the door shut on the feminists and Trotskyists, some "people in high places" — the most corrupt labour bosses in the working-class movement — saw their "value" and supported the feminist demonstration. They included David and Steven Lewis (NDP), Grace Hartman (Canadian Union of Public Employees), Jack Murray (president of the Ontario NDP), Cliff Pilkey (president of the Ontario Federation of Labour).

There are many tendencies to be found among bourgeois feminists. Some are openly reformist and want women to believe that their liberation can be guaranteed through a few legal reforms within the

capitalist system. Their role is to get women to back the "official" bourgeois parties — Liberal, Conservative, NDP, "Communist", etc., and to promote the careers of women politicians, professionals and business women, so that bourgeois women can take full advantage of their class, and of the exploitation of the working class and people of the world.

There are also so-called "radical" feminists for whom men, be they capitalists or workers, are the enemy. They say that men are agents of male ideology and power who profit from the patriarchal system. These feminists defend rigorous non-mixing in clubs, organizations, discussions, and demonstrations. Women's problems are for women, with women, no matter what their class — of course.

Finally, there are those who want to reconcile the irreconcilable, the "Marxist feminists", who borrow a few ideas from Marxism — so as to better deform it — in order to cover a bourgeois point of view with a revolutionary mask.

And in addition to all of these, we must add another variation, which is very hard to distinguish from the others. These are the Trotskyist groups which loudly clamor about the leading role of the proletariat, and in the same breath affirm that the working class cannot consistently defend women's specific demands. Consequently, they say, women must organize in an autonomous manner, independent from the class struggle of the proletariat, in order to place the question of their liberation in their own hands.

But fundamentally, all feminists, in their role as defenders of the bourgeoisie within the women's movement, share the same basic hypothesis. They say that society's division into two sexes, men and women, dominates society's division into social classes, and that therefore, women's interests as women and as opposed to men's interests as men, give rise to the necessity of an ideology, a line and a political program which belong to women, as women, and as distinct from men.

(1) The list of workshops at the March 11 feminist celebration in Montreal gives us some idea about "women's questions": Rape and battered women, abortion and contraception, lesbianism, sexuality, prostitution, daycare, women and work.

Social classes and sexual division

Despite all their efforts to avoid it, there is one question which feminists are forced to ask and answer, at least implicitly: just what is the relation between the division of humans into two sexes and their division into social classes? Or to be more specific, **what is the relation between women's oppression and the domination of the exploiting classes over the exploited classes?**

Confronted with the scientific positions of Marxism-Leninism on the appearance of social classes and the simultaneous appearance of women's oppression, many feminist theoreticians have tried to find a theoretical foundation for their sexist hypothesis about "male power" in the works of Marx and Engels. Two texts, one from Quebec called **Les fondements sociaux du sexisme** (The Social Foundation of Sexism) by Chantal Kirsch, and the other from English Canada, **Feminism and Marxism**, by Dorothy E. Smith, clearly illustrate the ambiguity of their position

"I felt — as I hope do other feminists — the need to search for a basis in Marxism. This proved very difficult to find." (2)

"So, despite our efforts to avoid it, this study has underlying confusion between the specific domination of men over women and class oppositions" (3).

We have to admit that the theoreticians of feminism have to their credit the unmasking of the scientific pretensions of theories which attempt to base the social inferiority of women on some sort of biological inferiority.

"... the alleged cause of social inequalities between the sexes is almost always found in phenomena which are seen as being outside the social sphere. These are the biological factors. However, with human beings (given the social character of their productive activities), biological factors are directly molded by social factors. They cannot exercise a determining and immediate influence on them (in their social relations we would presume, Editor's note). Consequently we must look for the cause of the sexual division of labour and women's inferior status in the entire complexity of social relations" (4).

Now, these are remarks which should logically lead our theoreticians to cast aside the sexist hypothesis which states that biological sexual differences are not just the pretext used by certain classes to maintain their power but rather the very cause of their oppression, and that consequently, the basis of their unity to put an end to this situation. But paradoxically, our feminists only criticize these sexist hypotheses by chauvinist theoreticians, in order to take them up again, only this time, backwards. Having shown, that in the end, there's no other difference between men and women other than the latter's capacity to give birth, they then try to find the material basis for the social inferiority of women in the very function of procreation. On that basis, our "Marxist feminists" try their utmost to rebuild society, one piece at a time: from the woman who gives birth to the family, from the family to the patriarchal society, and from the patriarchal society to politics and "male power" which must be opposed by women's politics, feminism.

This is what leads Kate Millet, whose works have become best-sellers and who in any case doesn't even have the pretension of basing herself on Marxism, to talk about a "patriarchal government (which is) the institution whereby that half of the populace which is female is controlled by that half

which is male" (5). Instead of a class State, we end up with a male State. And as for women, "women are a dependency class who live on surplus" (6) and "whose existence is parasitic to its rulers" (7). And to complete this reactionary schema of the struggle of all women against all "males" and their patriarchal society, Millet has no hesitation about deploring the existence of classes which — horror upon horror — divide women: "One of the chief effects of class within patriarchy is to set one woman against another" (8). This type of argumentation can appear extreme. However, as we will see, its conclusions hardly differ from the conclusions of the "Marxist-feminists".

Despite their diversity, attempts by feminists to find a basis for their sexist prejudices in Marxism, seem to follow two main directions. For some, the basis for the female condition must be sought in woman's biological capacity to have children, that is to biologically produce new labour power. For the feminists, what is at stake in the opposition between the sexes is the control over children and the women who give birth to them. For others, the "Marxist-feminists", the social basis of sexual discrimination must be sought in some sort of domestic mode of production which turns women, who are considered as housewives, into an exploited class.

In reality, these two positions inevitably come together when they identify the family unit, and more particularly the patriarchal family — the family based on the authority of the father and husband — as being the very foundation of the capitalist society. As well, whether they base themselves on housework, on childbearing, or both at once, the theoreticians of feminism end up considering that women, as women, and more precisely as housewives working within the family, constitute a leading revolutionary force, and even the vanguard, since they attack the family (8) (which is seen as the privileged place for their action).

In political terms, this means that the characteristic of the women's movement is to wage its specific struggles while remaining politically and organizationally autonomous from the "male" or mixed working-class and communist movements. In any case, "male" or mixed, it all boils down to the same thing since, for the feminists, it means they are dominated by men. Limiting their struggles to the control of their bodies and against the patriarchal family, means that the masses of women should not engage in the political struggle of the entire working class and its allies against the bourgeoisie, on an equal footing with male workers.

Further still, since they consider that the proletariat and its party cannot play a leading role in the struggle for women's liberation, as an integral part of the struggle for socialism, feminists advance the objective of establishing a relationship of power vis-à-vis the revolutionary movement of the working class, and this, on the basis of dividing the women's movement from the working-class movement. The leaders of the feminist movement are often Trotskyists, though not all of them admit it, and their class base is mainly the petty bourgeoisie. By bargaining, over their "solidarity" with workers' struggles, they hope to find social support among women. In this way, they hope to impose their bourgeois conceptions of the struggle of the sexes on the working-class movement. This includes repudiating the leading role of the working class and socialism, abandoning the dictatorship of the proletariat over the bourgeoisie.

(5) Mariarosa Dalla Costa, an Italian feminist, sums it up like this: "The women's liberation movement considers the community as first and foremost the home and considers therefore the woman as the central figure of subversion in the community" (The Power of Women and the Subversion of the Community, Falling Call Press, Bristol, England, 1972, p. 13)

But, now let's take a closer look at some of the attempts made by feminists to demonstrate the "revolutionary" nature of their reactionary ideology.

From chauvinist sexism to feminist sexism

In a university thesis which greatly influenced feminists in Quebec, Chantal Kirsch furnishes us with a typical example of the kind of acrobatic stunts feminists have to resort to, in order to find a Marxist foundation for their theory. Chantal Kirsch opposes the chauvinist theories on the biological origin of women's social inferiority, which dictate that women have a natural inclination to passivity and submission, whereas men are naturally aggressive and domineering. Instead, she claims "it is the capacity to bear children itself which constitutes the essential difference between women and men" (10). And she goes on to specify that this is but "a simple biological fact which has no particular implication, no determinant consequence. The only significance is that it is a social phenomenon" (11). But just how does Chantal Kirsch interpret this "social phenomenon"?

"The human being is a social being who, in order to survive, must work in collaboration with other human beings. Human beings are borne by women. As we have already seen, it's the mode of material production which determines the development of all social formations and their social relations. It is thus the mode of production which determines the conditions in which childbearing, that is, the fabrication of the human beings necessary for the reproduction of the social relations of production and the relations of production themselves, takes place" (12).

Up to this point, it seems to be a rigorous argument. Kirsch reiterates a fundamental postulate of Marxism:

"The mode of production of material life lays the conditions for the general fabric of social, political and intellectual life" (13).

It is also undeniable that the mode of production of material life determines the conditions for the reproduction of labour power, that is, the conditions under which human beings daily reproduce their physical force, as well as how they give birth to and educate the future labour force — children. Using the fact that biologically it's women who bear children, and despite the fact that procreation demands, at the very least, minimal collaboration on the part of the man, Kirsch adds: "procreation is controlled solely by women" (14).

And since it is probable, based on the example of non-human primates, that females have always been the ones who looked after the children, she concludes that "women thus had a considerable advantage" (15) since, as producers of the new labour force, they could have done without the productive labour power of men who would have been reduced to the ranks of a marginal group, or, pushed to the extreme, to playing the role of stud. This leads Kirsch to go on to say:

"The only way that men could counter this threat was to appropriate this labour power which they didn't want to be deprived of. It was thus necessary that they gain control over the children. To do so, they first had to assure their control over the women, that is, be certain that women would be incapable of using their children's labour power to their own ends, or even in their own in-

terest. The subordination of the female sex to the male sex was thus necessary and the latter wanted to protect themselves from the possible takeover by women. It was necessary to neutralize this threat. If men could attain a sufficiently important role in production so as to become indispensable to the group, the danger was partially averted. And to become indispensable, it was necessary that certain specific tasks be reserved for them." (16).

So there we have some logical reasoning... Unfortunately, it is fairy-tale logic, the logic of pure idealistic invention. And, it is in perfect contradiction with Marx's materialist postulate which Chantal Kirsch claims to base herself on. How, in fact, could women in primitive society have done without the labour power of men, when, given the primitive character of the productive forces, everyone's hard labour was the very condition for survival and when raising children who were incapable of working must have been an enormous economic burden which certainly condemned many children to a premature death? And how is it possible to imagine that children were the private property of women, since during the time when children couldn't be active in social production, they were an economic burden, and not a social resource. In fact, taking care of them undoubtedly required the combined effort of the entire community. And for Kirsch's fairy-tale version of things to have survived for more than a generation, it would have taken some kind of magic — possibly maternal love — used by women to assure exclusive control over children old enough to work. Finally, how can anybody claim to uphold Marx's materialist hypothesis and then in the same breath affirm that the sexual division of labour, far from corresponding to the necessities of the "production of material life", was instead but a pure invention of men's consciousness, because supposedly they wanted to avoid the threat caused by women's capacity to bear children which was hanging over their heads. That's just chauvinism upside down. Here we have men oppressing women as a legitimate defence against the potential superiority held by women due to their sex! So, first you have the sexism of chauvinist male theories exiting stage left, only to have it come galloping down centre aisle in the new feminist drama...

And as we could have imagined, the denouement is on a par with Kate Millett. Blow after blow, we're informed that:

"in all societies, men control labour power" (17);

"women are exploited and oppressed because of their very femininity" (18);

"in all social formations, men hold political power" (19).

And for a real curtain call, Kirsch ends it all by admitting:

"It is very complicated (sic!) to simultaneously analyse the class relations which provide the background to sex relations and the specific domination on the male sex over the female sex."

But be that as it may, because:

"This confusion is also part of sexist ideology which results in women of different classes, races or ethnic groups recognizing very little common ground among themselves. It thus serves as well to divide the group of women." (20)

So there we have it again, it's classes which divide up women! So, slaves weren't controlled and owned by the slave-owner class, but by men. And political power is not held by a class; it's held by men. Well, what do you know, we've finally rectified that horrible confusion in sexist ideology and have succeeded in uniting into one and the same sex the slave and master, the serf and seigneur, and the worker and capitalist...

It is quite clear that this entire idealist fabrication which claims to base itself on Marxism, is, on the contrary, completely based on the most vulgar falsification of Marxism. For, within the logic of this theory, child-bearing and maternal care for young children replace the "mode of production of material life" which, above and beyond the economic demands of child-bearing, includes the entire social organization which permits a human community to assure its subsistence on the basis of collaboration and the social division of labour among the members of that community. And even though child-bearing is certainly the condition for the survival of the race, it is not the condition which permits men, both adults and children, to assure their daily survival, to eat, clothe themselves, etc.

So, if we are going to look for the objective and material basis for the social divisions which exist in society between the sexes, between age groups and between classes, we should examine the mode of production of material life, and more specifically the economic basis of this mode of production. And if we follow this scientific procedure, we will see just how right Chantal Kirsch was to accuse sexist ideology of maintaining "confusion" between classes and sexes, with the slight exception that she "forgot" to point out that feminism is clearly in the centre front row of the reactionary sexist ideology concert and that, just like chauvinism, it contributes to the creation of confusion between classes and sexes.

Despite all the historical imprecisions which people look for in Engel's work *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State*, it clearly established the link uniting class society and women's oppression. During the era of primitive communism, that is, at the time when human society's capacity to produce was so low that it did not allow for the production of a surplus which could be accumulated in the form of riches, the material basis for the division of society into social classes or for the domination of one sex over the other could not exist. The work of all was absolutely essential for the survival of each and every one.

Undoubtedly, a certain division of labour between the sexes due to the demands of child-bearing and rearing existed at this epoch. Despite the doubts she raises concerning this hypothesis, Chantal Kirsch has to admit that "it is thus probable that such an arrangement (the mother looking after the young, Ed. note) was adopted by the first groups of humans" (21). And it would be totally idealist to imagine that in a society which required the continual labour by all to assure survival, this "arrangement" did not lead to some sort of technical division of labour, in the same way that other differences, age for example, contributed to the organization of social production. But this first appearance of a primitive technical division of labour in no way implied discrimination or social oppression, to the extent that no one function could be valued on the basis that it was a source of particular wealth.

Once the productive capacities of the first human societies had developed enough to permit the production of more than was necessary for immediate consumption, there existed the material basis for the appearance of the first class societies. With the appearance of a surplus, of social riches, came the possibility for the private control of these riches by a human group distinct from the collectivity. Further, what was at stake was the control of the source of these riches, that is, labour, or more precisely, workers, the means of labour and natural resources, for this is what made the production of surplus possible. This is how the material bases for the appearance of social classes which could be discerned by their place in social

production, by their relation to the means of production and by their role in the social organization of labour were constituted (*). This is how private ownership (i.e. private ownership by a particular class within society) of the means of production, and the apparatus of control and repression which became necessary to maintain this order based on inequality, that is, the State, came into being.

We could think that the activities of the first exploiting classes were mostly the pillage, and the private appropriation of the riches produced by the entire tribe or by other tribes whose defence force was weaker. However, it is just as plausible to imagine that what rapidly became the stakes in the class struggle was the appropriation not only of the riches, but also of the producer of this wealth, that is, the human beings who, taking part in the most productive labour, were able to produce and reproduce a social surplus which could be hoarded by the exploiters. This gave rise to slavery, which likely started with the forceful submission of members of weaker tribes to the dominant classes of more powerful tribes.

On the other hand, as we have already indicated, the appearance of private ownership, made possible by the formation of social riches, took place in the conditions of a certain technical organization and division of social labour. The development of productive capacities did not take place in all spheres of social production but rather within certain economic activities which historically proved to be the motor for the development of production: for example, husbandry and agriculture. And the first activities which proved to be the source for economic development in terms of a surplus were not activities which women were involved in, given the demands imposed by child-rearing. Domestic work, performed mainly by women, although essential, was socially devalued, since it was neither this kind of work nor these kind of workers which allowed the new exploiting classes to cream off a social surplus.

So, alongside the appearance of the private ownership of the means of production and the first forms of State, we find the marginalization of domestic work and those particularly involved in this kind of work, that is, women. That is how women's work was eliminated from the sphere of social production to become a private service within the family. This is how sexual differences and the technical division of social labour which they led to, became the pretext for social division and discrimination with regard to women. Institutions like inheritance, and the type of family and family laws which it gave rise to, were integrated into the superstructure with the State at its centre.

This is what Marx's materialist point of view that "the mode of production of material life conditions the general process of social, political and intellectual life" (22) means. In other words, "It is not the consciousness of men that determines their existence, but their social existence which determines their consciousness" (23). This means that in the primitive communities, the division of labour between men and women was not an invention by "jealous" men, frightened by the fact that biologically speaking women put children into the world, but rather an economic reality which, in the context of the social relations of production based on the private appropriation of the means of social production by an exploiting class, gave rise to discrimination and social oppression.

(*) For a more detailed explanation of these concepts, see PROLETARIAN UNITY, no. 12, p. 23

A new invention: "the domestic mode of production"

The thesis developed by Chantal Kirsch and others that "the main cause of the specific domination of men over women is the necessity for men — as a group — to appropriate the labour power of children" (24) was taken up by other feminists. They try to flavour it with new "Marxist" seasoning which consists of turning women into a social class submitted to a class of men in the context of what we might label a "domestic mode of production". As Mariarosa Dalla Costa explains, the family is seen as a "centre of production" (25). And just what is the production in this "social factory" (26)?

"The commodity they produce, unlike all other commodities, is unique to capitalism: the living human being — the laborer himself (27). "This is how labor power is produced and reproduced when it is daily consumed in the factory or the office. To describe its basic production and reproduction is to describe women's work." (28)

So, while Kirsch found the source of women's oppression in their role as the biological producers of children, Mariarosa Dalla Costa adds their role as the reproducers of the husband's labour power within the family. But in both cases, our feminists reduce the Marxist concept of the "mode of production of material life" to the strict limits of domestic economy. But the point is that class society is what transformed it into a private affair placed under the authority of the husband. By jumping from the sphere of **social** production which forms classes on the basis of their place in the mode of production, to the **private** sphere of family relations, the feminists adopt a point of view which leads them either to ignore classes, or else to create a so-called class of women on the basis of private family relations.

What we end up with is some sort of theory of the "producer of the producer" which turns women, considered solely as housewives, into productive workers grouped together in an autonomous class, the class of women. It's not hard to imagine the political consequences of this analysis. "... in this system (which is made up of) husbands and wives in antagonist classes" (29), quite obviously the main enemy is men, independent of their class. And the conclusion is inevitable:

"As women destined to become 'the wife of' someone, women, destined to the same relation of production, form but one and the same class" (30).

So, by substituting the struggle between the sexes for class struggle, feminists have transformed women — women of all classes — into a perfect vanguard, since their "social production" is, after all, vital.

"When previously so-called Marxist said that the capitalist family did not produce for capitalism, was not part of social production, it followed that they repudiated women's potential social power... If your production is vital for capitalism, refusing to produce, refusing to work, is a fundamental lever of social power." (31)

Which leads us to the already quoted conclusion:

"(The women's liberation movement) considers the community as first and foremost the home, and considers therefore the woman as the central figure of subversion in the community." (32)

So, here we have, superimposed on the thesis of women's potential superiority because of their biological capacity to give birth, that of women's political superiority as a "vanguard class" which is the very heart of social subversion.

But to make their "medicine" easier to swallow, the "Marxist feminists" try to co-opt the revolutionary impact of Marxism-Leninism and make it serve their own ends. So it's a good idea to take a look at their arguments. As they attempt to prove that women housewives form a class, our theoreticians set themselves the task of proving that women participate in social production, and that they form a class because of their specific relation to social production. They also try to prove that women are exploited as producers of surplus value within the "social factory" formed by the family.

Putting aside some of the variations, the reasoning generally goes like this: the female houseworker (for feminists, that means all women) is a productive worker because domestic workers are necessary to society, and if women didn't do this job, we would have to buy this labour. In short "these are social services in as much as they serve the reproduction of labour power." (33) Served up in a savoury sauce as only university "armchair Marxists" can do, the whole thing looks like this:

"... simple material reproduction is all those parts of social production which permit the collectivity to continue to produce, to constantly renew the cycle of production and consumption... it also includes the procreation and rearing of children and finally the renewal of the producers' labour power: food, clothing, various care, etc. A more important part of this social production..." (34).

What a lot of words to say such a simple thing: housework, which is mainly done by women, is socially useful, as is the "procreation and rearing of children". And it is by basing themselves on this social usefulness that feminists conclude that women, by this very fact, become productive workers fully engaged in **social** production. Why?

Because women's work is completed in the context of the patriarchal society constituted by the family. The social relations, which women find themselves in are slave or servant relations, (both terms are used) since women produce without receiving any remuneration.

Here is where the feminists teach us that women work on **capital** — their domestic instruments — **that they produce commodities** — the workers — and that they don't own their means of production, etc. And finally, they don't control their labour since "the husband and children, through their loving involvement, their loving blackmail, become the first foremen, the immediate controllers of this labour." (35)

In short, all the guile in the argument consists of employing Marxist concepts as empty words which have absolutely nothing to do with what they truly designate. Take the concept of **productive labour** for instance. In capitalist society, this concept signifies producing **surplus value**, that is, labour which is superior in quantity to the wage which is paid. Here this is used synonymously with any labour which produces some sort of end result. In the same way, the word **capital**, becomes synonymous with domestic instruments, with machines, when in reality, capital is a **social relation**, a relation which is established between the capitalist and the worker who produces surplus value. A machine owned by an individual for personal use is not capital, while the same machine if used by a capitalist in his activities, becomes capital. Giving birth and doing domestic chores are also spoken of as producing **commodities**, that is, workers. As if a worker, or his labour power,

was a commodity **in and of itself**, as if the characteristic of being a commodity was attached to him the way his head is attached to his body. But in point of fact, labour power, like any good or service, only becomes a commodity to **the extent that it is produced to be sold** on the labour market and bought by a capitalist which will make it produce surplus value, etc. etc...

A woman who gives birth to and raises her children, feeds and looks after her husband, does not accomplish these tasks with the aim of drawing money or profit from them. Nor are they activities which place her in competition with other producers, etc. It is a private activity which is situated outside the market and social production. So, even if it is true to say that the housewife produces labour power (or more exactly, a part of labour power, since the latter also includes technical qualifications, experience, etc.), she produces it simply as **use value** for her concrete use, and not as an exchange value, as a commodity. This activity doesn't make her an active participant in social production, in the same way that a carpenter who produces chairs for himself and his family or an inventor who keeps his inventions for himself are not active participants.

All and all, the so-called feminist demonstration on the existence of women as a class engaged in social production boils down to an eclectic deformation of the Marxist concepts which it aims to base itself on.

The fundamental error of this point of view is to have exchanged Marxism-Leninism for bourgeois sociology, to have replaced the primacy of capitalist relations of production by the primacy of secondary social relations, with which they have built a sand castle. As Lenin has pointed out, "if you recognize class struggle, you have to recognize that it is this struggle which plays the determining role in History." (36)

But instead of starting with the struggle of the classes which confront one another in the capitalist system, they start with the social relations between men and women established within the family, in the private sphere. As well, they establish, at least for women, that this is the most important sphere. So they'd like to have us believe that what is determinant in a woman's life is the patriarchal mode of production and not the capitalist mode of production.

And this is exactly where we find our "left wing feminists", the Trotskyists, who pretend to recognize Engel's analysis on the origin of women's oppression, only to completely falsify it. When you get down to basics, there is nothing to distinguish the Trotskyist program from the feminist positions. Because even though the Trotskyists, in an effort to give themselves a Marxist aura, timidly admit that the existence of a patriarchal family is linked to the appearance of class society, they hurry to add that the cause of women's oppression must be sought, not in the private ownership of the means of production, but rather within the "family system (which) is the institution of class society that determines and maintains the specific character of the oppression of women as a sex" (37). In other words, "the underlying cause of the oppression and subordinate status of women lies in the very foundations of the family..." (38)

So taking up as their own the story that women are oppressed because they give birth, in **total** contradiction with Marxist analysis, the Trotskyists write "... women as a sex became valuable property. Like cattle, they were a source of wealth. They could produce new human beings whose labour could be exploited" (39). And there you have precisely Kirsch's point of view. And our Trotskyists, those great leaders of bourgeois feminism, also take up as their own the theory of the "domestic mode of production" specifying that "the family is the basic

unit of class society" (40). Thereby completely reversing the order of things. The family — it should be noted that it's not even a question of the patriarchal family, just the family in general — is no longer considered as a **consequence** of class society but rather as its **basis**.

The Trotskyists even feel justified in condemning Marxists who affirm that "women will be liberated... by the socialist revolution" (41). On the contrary what women must do is to "organize as women fighting for their own demands" (42). Seeing their sex, as the source of women's oppression, the Trotskyist feminists solemnly declare: "Women's control over their own bodies is a precondition to their liberation." (43)

Having thus defined the path of women's liberation, the Trotskyists also trace the path to "socialism" for us:

"The replacement of the patriarchal family system rooted in private property by a superior organization of human relations is the prime objective of the socialist revolution." (44)

So it now becomes easy to understand why the Trotskyists have so heavily invested in the feminist movement. Like Mariarosa Dalla Costa, they consider that the family is the best place for "social subversion", their rebaptized name for "socialist revolution", and consider that women, on the basis of their sex, are at the heart of this struggle....

Despite their diverse variations, all of the "Marxist feminist" theories are based on a fundamental falsification of Marxist science. "Marxist"-style feminists do not base their analysis on the "mode of production of material life" which must be established on the level of an **entire** historically determined human society. They do not start with the Leninist point of view that social production forms classes as "large groups of people differing from each other by the place they occupy in a historically determined system of social production, by their relation (in most cases fixed and formulated in law) to the means of production, by their role in the social organization of labour, and, consequently, by the dimensions of the share of social wealth of which they dispose and the mode of acquiring it." (45)

On the contrary, the feminists start with the **private** relations established within a couple or a family and they falsify the very idea of social production, production which is established on the basis of the entire society. Instead, they try and make us believe that procreation and the housework done within the narrow framework of the family is in itself social production. However, Marxist analysis is very clear on this question. Housework, in the context of the family, isolates women and objectively cuts them off from **social** production, no matter how useful it may be for society that they bring children into the world and take care of domestic tasks. As Engels said, with the individual monogamous family:

"Household management lost its public character. It no longer concerned society. It became a private service; the wife became the head servant, excluded from all participation in social production. Not until the coming of modern large-scale industry was the road to social production opened to her again — and then only to the proletarian wife." (46)

This quote from Engels sheds light on the problem which feminists so delight in muddling up, and that is that domestic work is **private** work, which in the immense majority of cases, is executed by women. It is its private character which has cut housewives off from the rest of society by excluding them from social production. So the path to follow is not to add a little glit-

ter to the prison by remunerating the labour, but rather to socialize this work and help the masses of women participate in social production.

And it's significant to mention that it was precisely at the moment that this integration began to take place with capitalism, that "the woman question" came out from the Middle Ages.

We must be very clear on this. Housework per se can in no way serve as a basis for determining a particular class for housewives. Housewives are only part of classes as an extension, in the sense of the "working-class family", which in no way implies that each member of the family is a worker.

Does that mean that by affirming that housewives do not form a class, Marxist-Leninists are saying that they are independent of classe? On the contrary. First, contrary to feminists who put an equal sign between woman and housework, Marxists consider that women who work outside the home, who take part in social production, are members of the class determined by their place in social production. A woman who works in a factory is working-class because, in the "mode of production of material life" she is placed in the proletariat. In the same way, a woman who is a minister in the bourgeois parliament, a businesswoman, etc. is a bourgeois because she acts as a member of the capitalist class in social production. Certain housewives must be considered as unemployed workers who are waiting for work, even if they are not included in official unemployment statistics. (*) They thus are part of the reserve labour army of the proletariat, and are working-class.

Division, the feminists will cry. Social classes "divide" women. Yes, it's true. Social classes "divide" women, just like they "divide" men. But hiding behind this feminist exclamation we find the idea that the social division of humans into two sexes is the fundamental division in society while their division into classes is only secondary, for the women, at least. So instead of class struggle we now have the battle of the sexes as the motor force in history. (**)

But, contrary to what feminists (and nationalists) affirm, Marxism has allowed us to establish in a scientific manner that from among all the contradictions on the basis of which men are constituted into distinct groups — sex, nationality, age group, trade, etc. — the fundamental contradiction or division, the one which allows us to explain the evolution of human history up to the present, is the division of society into social classes, vast groups of men and women constituted on the basis of their place in social production. That is why the existence of the social division between men and women, and the history and outcome of the struggle against women's oppression, cannot be understood outside of the existence of class society, outside of the history and result of class struggle. In brief, the appearance and the disappearance of women's oppression can be directly attributed to the appearance and disappearance of class society and the exploitation of man by man.

That is why we can say that if women, as women, do not form a social class which produces a surplus appropriated by the exploiting classes, they have been, however, socially devalued and reduced, so to speak, to the state of domestic servants. And this has been their lot since the beginning of class society.

It is no doubt true out that the wives of slave owners, women in the courts of the king (and queens), and women members of the bourgeoisie today, suffer sexual discrimination. Except that in these cases what this discrimination means is that they cannot fully benefit from their class advantages — advantages which are based on exploitation by the exploiting classes, in-

cluding their women. Female slaves, peasants and workers, on the other hand, suffer particular oppression. Undoubtedly, in their role as "domestic servants" they render certain private services to their husbands, but those who most benefit from this oppression, have been primarily the slave masters, the court aristocrats and the capitalists, including the women. This is what is meant by the statement that the division between the sexes is secondary in relation to class division.

So there is only one way to understand the genuine struggle for women's liberation. It is a struggle for social equality. And this equality can never be fully and completely attained without the abolition of the private ownership of the means of production and the historic struggle for the elimination of social classes, the struggle for communism.

The struggle for women's liberation is an integral part of the struggle for socialism and communism

In the end, the political alternative facing the women's movement is Marxism or feminism. For, despite all the attempts on the part of the so-called "Marxist" feminists and the Trotskyists to reconcile the two ideologies and the two political programs, the reactionary objective of feminism is clear: isolate women from the struggle against the source of their oppression, which is none other than the private ownership of the means of production by the exploiting classes. And in the entire history of class society there is but one group, one class and one political program capable of eliminating the system of the private ownership of the means of production and of finally attacking the very existence of social classes and women's oppression. This class is the working class and its program is the communist program.

In opposition to all other social revolutions, which have preceded it, the proletarian revolution does not only have the goal of simply replacing the domination of one class by another. Its aim is the seizure of power by the oppressed masses. At their head will be the working class. The collective work of this class has arrived at a level of socialization never achieved before in history and this heralds a new mode of production, communist society. And within this revolution, the struggle for the total and complete emancipation of women is an absolute requirement. Communism — the disappearance of the private ownership of the means of production, of classes and of the State itself — requires the full and equal participation of everybody in social production, men and women of all nationalities. It is on the basis of this equality within the "mode of production of material life", that all social relations and ideologies which are based on discrimination and systematic constraint exercised on classes and social groups by the State and the legal institutions attached to it, including the family, will disappear.

(*) For more information, see PROLETARIAN UNITY, no. 14 (vol. 3, no. 2) December 1978 — January 1979, p. 50-55

(**) The Chinese revisionist Deng Xiao-ping speaks of the struggle of the third world as the motor force of history. What a coincidence that nationalists and feminists use the same procedures when it comes to promoting class collaboration.

Communism's objective inevitably includes the emancipation, not only of the classes, but also of the social realities which have been built on the basis of class society. In particular we should mention national oppression and women's oppression. Nevertheless, the struggle to achieve this objective — revolution and the construction of socialist society up to communism — **absolutely** and **urgently** requires the struggle for the most complete equality between men and women. For that is how all the oppressed, no matter what their sex or nationality, can be mobilized. That is why we affirm that the struggle for women's liberation is an integral part of the proletarian revolution, led by the working class and its communist party.

It is by becoming completely involved in this historic struggle for communism that the mass of oppressed women will gain the respect of male workers. It is thus that men will become aware that all the chauvinist ideas propagated by the bourgeoisie are nothing but lies and demagoguery. By participating in production and the social combat, by rallying to the communist banner, oppressed women, particularly women workers, will clearly and materially show that a free woman can only live in a free society. The liberation of the classes requires the liberation of women. The working class and oppressed masses can win no victory whatsoever if women do not participate.

1. *Pluri-elles*, bulletin de liaison des groupes autonomes de femmes (liaison bulletin of autonomous women's groups), vol. 1, no. 5, p. 9 (our translation)
2. *Pluri-elles*, *ibid.*, p. 14 (our translation)
3. Dorothy, E. Smith, *Feminism & Marxism, A Place to Begin, A Way to Go*, New Star Books, Vancouver, Canada, 1977, p. 9
4. Chantal Kirsch, *Les fondements sociaux du sexisme, thèse présentée à l'Université de Montréal*, p. 403-4 (our translation).
5. Kirsch, *ibid.*, p. 202 (our translation).
6. Kate Millet, *Sexual Politics*, p. 25
7. Millet, *ibid.*, p. 38
8. *ibid.*, p. 38
9. *ibid.*, p. 38
10. Kirsch, *op. cit.* p. 270 (our translation)

11. *ibid.*, p. 270
12. *ibid.*, p. 271
13. Karl Marx, *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*, Preface, International Publishers, New York, p. 20
14. Kirsch, *op. cit.*, p. 272 (our translation)
15. *ibid.*, p. 274
16. *ibid.*
17. *ibid.*, p. 280
18. *ibid.*, p. 284
19. *ibid.*, p. 312
20. *ibid.*, p. 336
21. *ibid.*, p. 273
22. Marx, *op. cit.*, p. 20
23. *ibid.*, p. 20
24. Kirsch, *op. cit.*, p. 376
25. Mariarosa Dalla Costa and Selma James: *The Power of Women and the Subversion of the Community*, The Falling Wall Press, Bristol, England, 1972, p. 6
26. *ibid.*, p. 7
27. *ibid.*, p. 6
28. *ibid.*, p. 7
29. Christine Dupont, *La libération des femmes, année zéro*, Maspéro, p. 112-113 (our translation).
30. *ibid.*, p. 133
31. Dalla Costa and James, *op. cit.*, p. 6
32. *ibid.*, p. 13
33. *ibid.*, p. 31
34. Nicole Laurin-Frénette, *La libération des femmes*, Socialisme Québécois, no. 24, March 1973, p. 51 (our translation)
35. Dalla Costa and James, *op. cit.* p. 33
36. Lenin, *Collected Works*, volume 29, *A Great Beginning*
37. *Women's Liberation and Socialism*, Revolutionary Workers League Papers no. 1, Documents of the 14th International, Vanguard Publications, Toronto, 1977, p. 10
38. *ibid.*, p. 15 (translator's note — In the article we have used our translation of the French version since the English version is not at all the same. In English it reads "The underlying causes of the oppression and subordinate status of women lies in the very foundations of class society itself and women's special role within the family.")
40. *ibid.*, p. 11
41. *ibid.*, p. 14
42. *ibid.*, p. 14
43. *ibid.*, p. 8
44. *ibid.*, p. 8
45. Lenin, *A Great Beginning*, *Collected Works*, volume 29, p. 421
46. Engels, *The Origin of the Family, Private Property, and the State*, International Publishers, New York, 1975, p. 136

Revisionism is capitalism without explicit private ownership of the means of production

The Marxist-Leninist movement has recently been confronted with the policies of the new leadership of the Communist Party of China. Quite a few of the measures adopted in China deal with the relationship between the productive forces and the relations of production, as well as with the relationship existing between the superstructure and the infrastructure (or base). The new leadership has introduced these changes to re-establish harmony and balance and, above all, "order". It says that from now on the development of the productive forces must be given first priority. This is seen largely as a policy of enhancing the role played by specialists, scientists, professors, etc.

There is nothing new about the problems which are raised by the policies advanced by the Chinese party's new leadership. Indeed, debate has been going on incessantly for over a hundred years now on the questions of how the links and contradiction between the productive forces and the relations of production, should be understood and what the relative importance is of the action of the superstructure on the base.

Revisionists have always used seemingly very materialist arguments to deny the necessity of making revolution, of overthrowing the bourgeoisie ideologically and politically, and of exercising the dictatorship of the proletariat in all aspects of social life under socialism. The revisionists point out that the productive forces are decisive in determining how the relations of production evolve. They do so, however, only in order to hinder and put an end to the revolutionary transformation of the relations between men in production.

There are a large number of questions, many of them quite complex, which need to be studied in order to understand and criticize the politics of the revisionists. There is no use in pretending that it can all be dealt with in one fell swoop. In this issue of PROLETARIAN UNITY, you will find two articles on this subject.

One approaches the problem from a theoretical viewpoint and in light of a concrete analysis of what is going on right now in China. This piece takes a closer look at some of the economic policies adopted by the new Chinese party leadership. It tries to draw out the main characteristics of the political line which serves as the foundation and guiding line for these particular policies.

The second article is a brief presentation of a number of key concepts in Marxist political economy. Hopefully, this will be of use to readers in deepening their understanding of the basic scientific concepts which are indispensable to a serious study of the various questions placed on the agenda by the emergence of modern revisionism.

This should help develop the criticism of revisionism as it is being expressed in today's China still further.

The leaders of the Communist Party of China are taking China down the capitalist road

While the so-called Canadian Communist League is working very hard at defending the "socialist principles" which explain and justify the sale of Coca-Cola to China (*), the leaders and theorists of the Communist Party of China (CPC) are busy with other, more serious tasks. Deng Xiaoping (Teng Hsiao-ping), for example, recently realized a "dream" he'd cherished "for many years, at least" when he flew off to the United States, looking for technology, management know-how and a more solid alliance with one half of the "first world", the half that's part of the "united front against hegemonism and for the defence of world peace, security and stability" (1). Deng's U.S. tour was more than a "diplomatic visit". It was a cornerstone of China's strategy to win itself a choice place on imperialist markets. It also provided another opportunity for the proletariat and peoples of the world to size up the "powerful China" that the country's leaders want to build by the year 2000: a China powerful enough to play a major role in inter-imperialist contention.

While activities on the diplomatic circuit are a clear indication of the political line of the current leaders, they are overshadowed by the internal upheaval instigated by the

theorists and leaders of the CPC and consecrated by the Third Plenary Session of the Central Committee elected by the Party's Eleventh Congress (2). This upheaval has affected every facet of the life of people in China, including the economic base, and especially relations of production in factories; politics; culture; science; military doctrine; and the relationship between the city and the countryside. All these measures touch the basics of building socialism, especially relations of production, which are the economic basis of all socialist construction.

The particular thrust the Chinese leaders lend to this task is clear in the communique issued after the Third Plenary Session of the Central Committee. In it, "the socialist modernization" of the country (3) is equated with the "construction of the motherland" (4), which "all patriots" — without distinction

(*) See *The Forge*, vol. 4, no. 3, January 26, 1979, p. 9: "On the question of Coke in China". Among the article's gems of wisdom is the following product of deep reflection: "The Coke produced will be supplied to the major cities like Shanghai and Beijing (Peking), principally to serve the growing number of foreign tourists who are visiting China. The increasing tourism is allowing many people from all over the world to see first-hand the accomplishments of the Chinese socialist revolution." So, says *The Forge*, "there is nothing unsocialist" about this. In other words, Coke has become a vehicle for building socialism in China.

as to class — are exhorted to participate in. After all, "all patriots are from the same family" (5).

The communique also reveals that "there is every condition needed... to shift the focus of our work to the field of the economy and technical revolution" (6). This is based on an analysis of the Central Committee to the effect that "the large-scale turbulent class struggles of a mass character have in the main come to an end" (7). And this is understandable, since the class enemy has been reduced to "a small handful of counter-revolutionary elements and criminals" (8). All this means that the class struggle has indeed melted away to very little and from now on the masses can devote their full energies to production instead of wasting time fighting a practically negligible enemy. In light of all this, it should come as no surprise that the Central Committee has decided to accord "independence as is appropriate" to "procuratorial and judicial organizations" (9). The message is all too clear: the masses should concentrate on production and the judges will take care of the class struggle for them.

This, in a nutshell, is the springboard, the ideological and political framework for the reconstruction of the Chinese economy. It provides an excellent clue as to how the current Chinese leaders perceive the link between the development of the productive forces and the relations of production and, more importantly, how they intend to deal with those relations. For them, it is necessary to stop "wasting" time with "large-scale turbulent class struggles" and put it to better use by devoting more time to production. And what better way to tie a worker to his machine than to use the management techniques developed in the major capitalist countries?

To justify their "four modernizations" program, the leaders and theorists of the CPC have formulated a theoretical argument based on **the objective nature of economic laws** and **the regulating function of the law of value under socialism**. They use their argument to justify a greater role for economic methods and organizations like banks, specialized corporations, the "contract system", production bonuses, sanctions against people who don't produce enough and increased autonomy for factory managers.

The CPC's Central Committee claims that this line will consolidate the dictatorship of the proletariat and socialist construction and that it is a rigorous application of Marxism-Leninism. But a serious analysis of the speeches and resolutions of Chinese leaders clearly indicates that they have radically revised

Marxism-Leninism and that their line and their justifications can only lead to the restoration of capitalism in China.

How "the objective nature of the laws of economics" justifies the "theory of productive forces"

Since Marxism proved its overwhelming superiority over all other theories and world views that claim to point the way to socialism, many people have tried to rob Marxism of its scientific and fundamentally revolutionary character. Many have tried to pit one aspect of Marxism against another on the pretext of adopting it to a concrete situation but in the hope of discrediting the entire theory.

Of these revisionist distortions, the "theory of productive forces" is no doubt one of the most tenacious, the most dangerous and the most difficult to expose, because it hides behind the appearance of strict materialism. Historically, this theory evolved as a rejection of political revolution on the pretext that economic evolution itself would lead to socialism and that therefore the political task of the working class should be confined to fighting for social reforms which, combined with the evolution of the economy, would make capitalism "outmoded". It is summed up in Bernstein's famous phrase, "the movement is everything, the final goal nothing", which today is the basic strategy and tactic of social democrats and revisionists.

The "theory of productive forces" claims to be based on the Marxist tenet that, **in the final analysis**, the economy determines political, ideological and legal forms. The theory also invokes the basic Marxist tenet which says that economic laws are not the product of man's imagination, dependent on his mood or intelligence, but that they are objective, independent of the consciousness of men. They are historical in character to the extent that they exist in conditions which are not immutable, conditions which are constantly changing, and which bring with them modifications in the laws.

In short, the "theory of productive forces" claims to be based on a **materialist** conception of the world as formulated by Marx and Engels. The

problem is that it denies other aspects of Marxism, namely dialectics and the historical perspective. It denies or largely downplays the fact that political forms and consciousness interact with the economic base and that this interaction can determine the **form** of that base, either by speeding up its development or slowing it down. This denial of the importance of political and ideological struggle in the name of materialism is a trait of most revisionist currents, and it characterizes the current conceptions of the CPC's leaders and theorists. All their economic and political measures stem from this anti-Marxist and fundamentally anti-revolutionary conception.

The speech we examine below is proof of this.

In July 1978, Hu Chiao-mu, President of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, delivered an important speech before the State Council. The speech, entitled "Observe Economic Laws, Speed up the Four Modernizations" (10), outlined an overall plan to reorganize the Chinese economy. An examination of the communique, issued after the Third Plenary Session of the Central Committee, indicates that Hu Chiao-mu's major ideas and recommendations have been adopted by the party leadership, and we will therefore use the speech to analyse the CPC's view on economic development.

In the speech, Hu Chiao-mu describes his objectives as "fighting the pernicious influence of Lin Piao and the Gang of Four" as well as of those "who either do not recognize the objective nature of economic laws... or refuse to take (them) into account", the people who "take the will of society, the government and the authorities as economic law which can be bent to political expediency." (11). With this initial erroneous interpretation of Marxist theory on the relationship between the economic base and the superstructure, between economics and politics, one might expect the author to go back and set things straight by offering a correct version of the relationship between economics and politics, especially under socialism. There is all the more reason to expect this since the author of the speech, Hu Chiao-mu, quotes Huo Guofeng (Hua Kuo-feng), Chairman of the CPC Central Committee, on the importance of "studying, mastering and applying the **economic laws of socialism**" (12).

Clearly we are not talking about just any economic laws; we are talking about the economic laws of socialism, in opposition, no doubt, to the **economic laws of capitalism**. At least, this is the general impression given by the speech. Alas, there is a substantial difference between

what the author implies he will deliver and what he does in fact deliver.

How the "objective nature of economic laws" is used to deny the role of political struggle and weaken the dictatorship of the proletariat.

The first three sections of Hu Chiao-mu's speech are entitled "1. Objective nature of economic laws; 2. Observe economic laws; 3. Expand the role of economic organizations and economic means." Already, the outline of the author's logic emerges. It consists first of dwelling on the objective nature of economic laws and the fact that we are subjected to them just as we are subjected to the laws of nature. The second step consists of describing socialism only in terms of it being the historical period when man can act consciously in accordance with these laws — this alone would distinguish socialism from capitalism. Finally, the last step consists of proposing that the role of **economic** methods and organizations be increased — after all, the laws we are dealing with are **economic laws** and the economy is the **decisive factor** in society. This logic appears coherent, and it is easy to be left with the impression that the problem has been dealt with.

In fact, the dice are loaded from the word "go". By dragging us into a debate on whether or not economic laws are objective in nature, this CPC theorist is trying to hide the real question, which is the relationship between economics and politics under socialism, in particular how these laws operate under socialism. Do these laws operate the same way under socialism as they do in the capitalist mode of production?

Yet, even the most careful re-reading of the theoretical part of this speech will only turn up **unilateral** insistence on the objective character of economic laws and the need to conform to them. Of course, the author refers to Marx and Lenin but, he could hardly do otherwise in present-day China. The fact remains that his use of Marxism-Leninism in approaching such an important problem is superficial in the extreme. It is based on two quotations.

From Marx comes the following lines:

"No natural laws can be done away with. What can change in historically different circumstances is only the **form in which these laws assert themselves**" (13).

From Marx's words we can deduce that what can be changed in different historical circumstances is precisely what is relative in the economic laws. So even if they cannot be completely done away with, they can undergo modification, depending on the particular historical situation. So the statement that economic laws are objective, as are the laws of nature, is an absolute truth. However, like all truths, it also has a **relative aspect**.

But all Hu Chiao-mu retains from this quotation is the absolute character of economic laws. He totally ignores the relative aspect, the fact that these laws are dynamic and **historical**.

When Marx speaks of "the **form** in which these laws assert themselves", he is referring to this historical and relative aspect of the laws in question. It is far more than a simple question of style. The form, or rather the various forms, these objective economic laws have taken in history, is what distinguished history's successive economic regimes and corresponding political regimes. For example, the commodity form of the products of labour and the circulation of commodities emerged long before the capitalist mode of production. The general laws of commodity production had an impact even on feudal economic life. But the impact remained within the context of the **forms and limitations** of the feudal regime both in economic and political terms. The feudal regime, of course, was based on landed property. And the limits within which the commodity economy operated — which included the limited use of wage labour, the limited nature of production itself and feudal fetters on the free circulation of commodities — had a primordial impact on the "form in which" the laws on commodity production operated.

Contrary to Hu Chiao-mu's contention, this is not secondary. In fact, the **form** in question is what shaped the feudal mode of production to a large degree from an economic point of view. In historical terms, it was precisely the abolition of this **form** taken by the laws of the commodity economy under feudalism, with all of its manifold limitations, that led to the rise of the capitalist mode of production and, ultimately, its definitive victory.

In essence, the transition from one form of application of economic laws to another form of application — that is to say, the modification of the relative and historical aspect of these laws as opposed to their absolute aspect — explains the transition of one mode of production to another. This, clearly, is more than a simple secondary aspect of

economic laws. In fact, this succession of **forms** is the very evolution of society down through history. Yet this is the type of little "details" our theorist has slipped into the presentation of his case. Why he resorts to these acrobatics will become clear when we look at his conception of how economic laws operate under socialism. Already, though, there is the hint that according to Hu Chiao-mu the difference in the operation of economic laws under capitalism and socialism is slight indeed.

But before we move on, let us look further at the question already before us, the relationship between economics and politics, and specifically, their relationship under socialism.

Just as he falsifies the ideas of Marx, Hu Chiao-mu deforms Lenin. In this case, he inserts the question of the relationship between politics and economics more explicitly.

Look at how he represents Lenin's position:

"Lenin pointed out that the economic formation of society does not allow 'all sorts of modification at the will of the authorities (or, if you like, at the will of society and the government)', that its development is 'a process of natural history' while its laws of development are 'not only independent of human will, consciousness and intentions, but, rather, on the contrary, determining the will, consciousness and intentions of men'." (14)

Earlier on, the author dwelt exclusively on the absolute nature of the fact that economic laws are objective. Here, in an equally **absolute** way, he makes the absolute nature of the economic laws the determining factor in politics.

Of course no Marxist-Leninist would challenge the validity of the materialist tenets of Marxism. The problem here is that the author comes up with the right answer — to the wrong question. The question here is the relationship between economics and politics, not in general, but specifically under socialism, and more specifically in contemporary China. The answer we get is once again simplistic, unilateral and ultimately **dogmatic**. Yet the only proper and scientific way to answer this complex question is to use **historical** and **dialectical** materialism.

The "simplistic" approach we are treated to by the author of this speech is not a simple error. It is a viewpoint which serves a specific political cause. In fact, Hu Chiao-mu uses only the part of Marxism-Leninism that "suits" him, namely its materialist aspect, which maintains that the consciousness of man as well as political and legal forms are

determined by his material living conditions. By dwelling only on this, the author, supposedly a man of science, in fact robs Marxism of its **scientific** quality, its materialist character, which is simultaneously historical and dialectical. This is what led him earlier on in the speech to present the objective economic laws as laws **outside of history**, as if they undergo no significant modification in the changeover from one mode of production to another... aside from a slight modification in **form**. Here is what Engels said about this type of "Marxist" interpretation:

"...According to the materialist conception of history, the **ultimately determining element in history is the production and reproduction of real life. More than this neither Marx nor I have ever asserted. Hence if somebody twists this into saying that the economic element is the only determining one, he transforms that proposition into a meaningless, abstract, senseless phrase**". (15)

Indeed, with "meaningless, abstract, senseless phrases", any conceivable viewpoint can be justified. Anything — like the idea that the objective economic laws apply equally in all social form throughout history.

Let's examine this contention by looking at the phenomenon of revolution in history. The situation in a revolutionary era is precisely a situation where the superstructure (politics, the political struggle, legal forms, etc.) plays a preponderant role. Before — and after — the revolutionary class seizes power, the **political aspect** (that which concerns the superstructure and all forms of consciousness) plays a major role. There was no doubt in Engels' mind about this, as he explained later on in this letter to J. Bloch, part of which we have already quoted.

"The economic situation is the basis, but the various elements of the superstructure — **political forms of the class struggle and its results, to wit: constitutions established by the victorious class after a successful battle, etc., juridical forms, and even the reflexes of all these actual struggles in the brains of the participants, political juristic, philosophical theories, religious views and their further development into systems of dogmas — also exercise their influence upon the course of the historical struggles and in many cases preponderate in determining their form**". (16)

Engels delves into the context after the revolutionary class seizes power to ex-

plain how elements of the superstructure (including political theories, etc.) can be decisive. And this is what he means when he speaks of the "form" taken by the "course of the historical struggles". Once again, it is important to note that the notion of "form", used earlier by Marx, is more than a simple "ornament". The "form" taken by "the course of the historical struggles" designates the great moments in the history of class struggle. It means, for example, the **revolutionary form** of overthrowing one class by another. It also means the political forms and the political structures through which a given class consolidates its hold on society and liquidates the reactionary class. In short, to say that the superstructures can act on "the course of the historical struggles" and "preponderate" in determining their form in many cases is to say that in given historical conditions, in particular during a revolutionary era, politics can play the principal role.

What, then, is left of the theoretical outpourings of Hu Chiao-mu and his political bosses who repeat like a broken record that economics is what is decisive, that objective economic laws are absolute, and that "politics itself cannot create other laws and impose them on the economy" (17)? What remains is a vulgar attempt to debase Marxism-Leninism and justify political opportunism. What remains is an attempt to liquidate revolutionary proletarian politics and to promote bourgeois politics, all on the pretext that the economy is the primary base for the consideration of all things and that everything must be made to conform to objective economic laws. This bourgeois policy is interested in imposing on the proletariat any "economic laws", including capitalist ones.

The Third Plenary of the CPC's Central Committee clearly delineated the new phase of the "Chinese revolution": "to shift the focus of our work to the field of the economy and technical revolution" (18). The theoretical section of Hu Chiao-mu's speech is aimed at explaining the framework the Central Committee has in mind for the new phase. Based on it, the situation indeed looks bleak for the Chinese people.

Towards a socialism of "experts" and "managers"

When politics means the economy and the economy is politics, and further, economics determines politics, isn't it logical to transform political organs into

appendages of the bodies in charge of economic management? Didn't Lenin say, as Hu Chiao-mu points out, that "politics is the most concentrated expression of economics" (19)? Yet for the author, economics is synonymous with objective economic laws. And so having a correct viewpoint on economic development simply means applying economic laws as faithfully as possible. Once done, the economy will develop, pulling politics along behind it.

Presto, this is how Lenin's sentence, "Politics is the most concentrated expression of economics", is used as the basis for the Chinese economists' justification of the "theory of productive forces".

To do this, Hu Chiao-mu first has to rid economics of its dynamic facet — the **relationship between men** — and consider it only as a set of laws to be discovered and applied.

This distortion of economics amounts to robbing economic life in society of its **political relationships** and only considering political struggles as a sidelight to the life of a society. This is how Hu Chiao-mu ends up concluding that it is necessary to "expand the role of economic organizations and economic means" (20). The question of the orientations assigned to these "economic organizations and economic means" is no longer related to politics as far as he is concerned. He is not interested in which class is using these economic means and organizations. His only concern is whether they are being used "rationally". Thus, the political economy of the Chinese leaders has reduced classes and class struggle to naught; "reason" and reason alone henceforth guarantees the correctness or error of the economic policies of the Chinese State!

But who is in a position to deliberate on this "rationality"? The experts. The scientists. The factory managers. The specialists in economic planning. In short, all these people who, if they get the chance (and if they are "rationally" compensated for their work), if they get the tools to translate their initiatives and sense of responsibility into practice, will indeed come up with solutions to the social and economic problems of the Chinese masses. Not only that, they'll also solve the problems much more **quickly and efficiently** than if the workers took care of these questions! "Couldn't it be more effective if we entrusted a large part of the economic administrative work... to some economic units to handle through economic means?" (21) asks Hu Chiao-mu.

Why? Because:

"We have overextended the scope of relying on purely administrative means to do our work and, moreover, have unnecessarily set up many over-staffed, inefficient organs, so much so that they hinder us from making use of simplified ways of economic management left us by capitalism and hinder us from running economic affairs according to economic laws" (22).

When people are as convinced as the Chinese economists are that economic laws are "universal" and transcend time, there is no problem in considering **efficiency** as being equally "universal", something independent of specific class interests. So it is then entirely "natural" to consider that:

"It is imperative that we transfer the greater portion of our economic work from government administration to the field of enterprise management. The enterprises themselves must curb the running of business by purely administrative measures and expand management through economic means" (23).

The **administration** referred to here includes the government organizations, the **political organizations** that are some of the ways the masses exercise power in economic life. The **administrative measures** within enterprises are the ways the Chinese working class intervenes (or used to intervene) in the management of the factories (one example is the revolutionary committees set up during the Cultural Revolution in the 1960's). When Hu Chiao-mu invokes administrative slowness and unwieldiness, he wants to do away with all these administrative means. Henceforth, time "lost" in collective decision-making about how production should be organized will be drastically cut back. Decisions will be left in the hands of the organisms and managers charged with "management through economic means".

By "management through economic means", the author means "simplified ways of economic management left us by capitalism". Why Deng Xiaoping himself saw it with his very own eyes at Ford factories in the USA: the vast American industrial complex works very well indeed. There, the managers have total freedom in applying "objective economic laws". There, efficiency is not upset by movements of the masses who want to take part in the planning and organizing of production. Deserving managers, the ones who succeed in milking the maximum amount of work

out of the workers, are rewarded. This stimulates them to show more initiative and imagination in running the factory — one of the famous **economic methods** Hu Chiao-mu is talking about. These economic methods (which are neither capitalist nor socialist), are the wave of the future, the guarantee of the increased productivity of labour. Enough of cumbersome "political methods" like revolutionary committees. From now on, sound efficient "management through economic means", in conformity with objective economic laws (neither capitalist nor socialist) will play the central role.

Two particular measures give us a good idea of what this means: one deals with strengthening "the role of banking" (24), and the other consists in "developing economic legislation and enforcement" (25). Concerning banks, Hu Chiao-mu writes:

"The bank is the nation's centre for settlements, credits and receipts and payments, and has branches all over the country. It is thus capable of engaging in economic management in many fields in place of the State. This way, things can be done with greater flexibility and effectiveness than through administrative means. It is in a position to promote or supervise each and every managerial operation of an enterprise" (26).

From this reasoning stems the necessity to "reactivate and strengthen the functions of banking" (27).

A brief summary of the author's main arguments may be helpful here. The bank is in a better position than the State to "engage in economic management" because: 1) it has "branches all over the country"; 2) its methods offer "greater flexibility and effectiveness"; 3) it is "in a position to promote or supervise each and every managerial operation of an enterprise". It's true that, if a socialist State is incapable of having as many "branches" throughout the country as a bank, if, **by definition** (since Hu Chiao-mu poses the problem in these terms), it is ineffective and rigid, if finally it can in no way "supervise" or "promote" the managerial operations of an enterprise, then such a State undoubtedly deserves to be supplanted by a bank in economic matters. But if a bank is able to replace the State on this level, it is because **the bank is seen as a separate entity operating according to its own rules and regulations**.

Hu Chiao-mu refers back to Marx and Lenin to justify this conception. Didn't Marx speak of the bank as a "powerful lever" in a socialist economy? As for Lenin, didn't he declare that the bank in

a socialist society is "the country-wide bookkeeping, country-wide accounting of the production and distribution of goods... something in the nature of the skeleton of socialist society" (28)?

It is important to note that Hu Chiao-mu is concerned solely with Marx's and Lenin's technical description of the bank's role under socialism. He has very little interest in the other aspects that characterize the bank in a socialist society. For example, Lenin, in the same text, specifies that banks must be **democratic** and that they are a **State apparatus**, subject to the ruling policy of the State. "Our task here", says Lenin, "is merely to lop off what capitalistically mutilates this excellent (State) apparatus..." (29). If we were to give this sector the autonomy Hu Chiao-mu recommends, if — rather than political organisms — banks were entrusted with the control and supervision of entire sectors of socialist economy, we would just end up reintroducing capitalism's "efficient" bureaucracy, which cuts the people off from the economy's vital centres.

When Hu Chiao-mu refers to administrative unwieldiness, he has in mind specifically the fact that the dictatorship of the proletariat subjects the capitalists and new bourgeois elements (found amongst management, scientists, technicians and others) to political "worries". Not once does he even mention the possibility of mobilizing the people to fight "bureaucracy" and administrative unwieldiness. On the contrary, he insists solely on the need to "strengthen" economic legislation and jurisdiction. If conflicts occur on the economic level, they must be settled by "judicial organs according to law" (30). What Hu Chiao-mu cannot achieve by calling upon the workers' class consciousness and discipline, he wants to achieve by constraint and dealing with "things conscientiously and strictly" and by meting out "proper punishment" (31). And there we have the essence of truly bureaucratic management. Revisionists have a way of simplifying **management** problems: it's just a question of knowing how to use the carrot (bonuses) and the stick (economic legislation) to achieve higher productivity. No wonder they were so eager to import management methods from the USA and other advanced capitalist countries.

This "policy" consists, in fact, in **putting economic measures in command**, and reduces the working class and peasantry to the level of a meek and down-trodden **productive force**. But this doesn't seem to worry Hu Chiao-mu and Deng Xiaoping. Economic matters are economic matters, politics is a different

story. And politics is the sum total of the objective laws that we must discover and learn to comply with rationally. So economic means can replace political means, which makes it all much less "bureaucratic" and much more "efficient".

Thanks to Hu Chiao-mu, we have made many very important discoveries about socialism. We now know that Marx and Engels were wrong when they thought that **relations of production** formed the basis of economics or, more exactly, the economic basis of society. As Engels wrote, these relations of production are "*in the final analysis, relations between classes*" (32). If Marx and Engels had read Hu Chiao-mu, they would have understood that the economy is simply a matter of objective laws that we have to understand and apply rationally. They would also have understood that the working class simply constitutes a **quantity of labour power** to be used as efficiently as possible. To do this, to use this labour power to its full capacity, society has to entrust the job to experts, the specialists in economics who, having discovered the economic laws, can now subject labour to these natural imperatives.

As far as Chinese revisionists are concerned, there is no distinction between the economic laws of a socialist society and those of a capitalist society

As far as they are concerned, there are only general, objective economic laws. These laws are equally valid (in the same way and the same form) for all historical periods and all modes of production. This being the case, it is irrelevant to worry about transforming relations of production under socialism. The objective economic laws are the key to everything. Learn to understand and use these laws, say the revisionists, and all will be well, including relations of production. How? Why, it's quite simple, according to Hsueh Yung-ying's article entitled **The Four Modernizations: a Deep-Going Revolution** (33):

"... because the productive forces are the ultimate, decisive factor in promoting the development of history, and in changing the relations of

production, the superstructure as well as the physiognomy of society" (34).

But what will guide the transformation of the relations of production? What stage has this transformation reached in China today? What are the economic laws that govern the transformation of the relations of production? The Chinese revisionists are only concerned with one of these questions: the question of economic laws. They never even mention the revolutionary transformation of the relations of production. To fully grasp the way they have chosen to deal with the relations of production, it is necessary to analyse their conception of economic laws and their action in the economic life of Chinese society. One of the most important laws in the eyes of the Chinese revisionists, is the **law of value**.

The law of value: a tool to plan and manage or a tool to regulate social production?

Throughout his speech, Hu Chiao-mu deals with the questions of lowering the unit-cost of production, of making "*strict economical use of time*" and of combining "*the expenditure of labour and material*" (35) to obtain better economic results. According to Hu Chiao-mu, it is also important to make sure that "*prices correctly reflect value*", because "*a fair price will bring greater profit to its production units, otherwise, there will be less profit*" (36). (Some will probably wonder who will suffer from "less profit"? Does the author oppose the "profits" of society in general to those of production units? Precisely so, as we will see a little further on.) Concerning prices, Hu adds:

"We should apply the law of value to our price policies so that our planned prices will facilitate rational adjustments in the relationship between the interests of the state, the collective and the individual as well as between the workers and the peasants, and will play a positive role in regulating social production" (37).

What exactly is this law that regulates production and must determine merchandise prices?

"The law of value is the universal law of commodity economy. Its essential feature is that the value of every commodity is determined by the socially necessary labour time required to produce it. Commodity prices are based on value and commodities are exchanged on the principle of the ex-

change of equal values. Under socialism, the production and circulation of commodities will continue for a long time; they should be greatly developed in our country and the law of value will continue to play an indispensable part in our economic life" (38).

It is interesting to note that the author never mentions the reasons that justify the need to "greatly develop" the "production and circulation of commodities".

So the law of value should regulate China's economic life. That's fine and dandy! But how can this be justified in a socialist country where production is planned? Hu Chiao-mu prefers to remain silent on this question. Instead, he makes general statements and tries, as usual, to make a relative truth into an absolute one: if the law of value is a universal law of commodity economy and if a socialist economy is a commodity economy, then the law of value plays the same role in a socialist economy as in any other commodity economy. But what happens when the law of value is applied to such an extent that it regulates social production?

If the law of value is fully and thoroughly respected in all domains of social production, the products of labour must be considered above all as commodities, that is, as the material form of value. If the State and, especially, the "production units" are mainly concerned with the value of commodities, it then becomes necessary, as Hu Chiao-mu points out, to ensure that commodities are sold for the price of their value. This entails making sure that the prices decided upon reflect this goal. But we know that in China the prices of certain commodities have remained the same for many years. The new policy will put an end to this situation, and prices will start to climb. Quoting Hua Guofeng in a speech on agriculture, Hu Chiao-mu declares that "*we must appropriately raise the purchasing prices of agricultural products*" (39). There are no two ways about it: either prices are controlled and the law of value plays a limited role, or the law of value plays a regulating role and prices start to climb.

If the law of value is as important in determining prices as Hu Chiao-mu suggests, and if production units organize their activities primarily according to the law of value, in order to make as much profit as possible, we can easily expect the State's role as centralized planner to become less and less important. Thus, the "initiatives" taken by the production units become more and more important as the driving force of social production.

This line transforms production units (factories, people's communes, production brigades and others) into commodity producers whose relations are regulated by the action of the law of value. This opens the door to the possibility that the interests of each and every production unit become more important than the collective interests of the country as a whole. This is what Hu Chiao-mu calls facilitating "*rational adjustments in the relationship between the interests of the state, the collective and the individual as well as between the workers and the peasants*"! (40)

What class interests does such a policy serve in practice? Does it serve the interests of the urban and rural Chinese workers? We seriously doubt it. Such a policy best serves the interests of those who are busy cutting themselves a big piece of the cake, busy building themselves small economic empires. The "managers" want an open field, they want to free themselves from political restraint and controls that hinder their ardour and initiative as entrepreneurs.

But there is also more to it than that. Indeed, if everything is to be considered from the point of view of the commodity relations that must be "greatly" developed in China, then the law of value will have to be just as rigorously applied to policy on wages, for in a commodity economy, man's labour-power is also a commodity. As a commodity, the value of man's labour-power is determined in the same way as that of all other commodities. If the law of value is applied here integrally, it will necessarily widen the existing differences in wages. This will in turn develop **social disparities**, to the detriment of manual labour. Why?

Because if the value of a commodity is determined by the labour-time that society must spend to produce it, the value of the **labour-power** of the engineer, the technician or the intellectual will usually be greater than that of the manual worker, since society will have invested more time in their formation than in that of the worker. All this is quite logical when we look at things strictly from the point of view of the law of value in a commodity economy.

But certain questions arise with which the Chinese revisionists would rather not deal. Is there no difference between socialism and capitalism? Is a socialist economy merely a more "rational", centralized commodity economy, as the new leaders of the CPC would have us believe? Can economic laws be applied under socialism in the same way as they are under capitalism? The art of revisionist reasoning resides precisely in the ability to confuse these things and to

make absolute that which is relative and historical in economic laws.

For example, because the production and circulation of commodities continue to exist under socialism, the Chinese revisionists conclude that this phenomenon is in no way modified under socialism. The result? They completely deform what socialism is and what distinguishes it from capitalism. For, although the law of value continues to play a role under socialism, it most definitely cannot be the same as that which it plays in an ordinary commodity economy. In a socialist society, the law of value is a tool to **measure** and **account** for the distribution of labour-power in the different economic sectors. It is not a tool that serves to regulate.

In **Economic Problems of Socialism in the USSR**, Stalin explains this in the following manner:

"... our enterprises cannot, and must not, function without taking the law of value into account.

Is this a good thing? It is not a bad thing. Under present conditions, it really is not a bad thing, since it trains our business executives to conduct production on rational lines and disciplines them. It is not a bad thing because it teaches our executives to count production magnitudes, to count them accurately, and also to calculate the real things in production precisely, and not talk nonsense about "approximate figures", spun out of thin air" (42).

Stalin also recognizes that the law of value influences the setting of prices even under socialism, and that this action closely resembles that in a capitalist society.

So the question is not whether or not we can do without the law of value under socialism. The question is to what extent and under what limits and forms the law of value intervenes in the production and distribution of goods. In other words, it is a question of what distinguishes socialism from capitalism as far as the law of value is concerned. Stalin poses the question and answers it.

"But does this mean that the operation of the law of value has as much scope with us as it has under capitalism, and that it is the regulator of production in our country too? No, it does not. Actually the sphere of operation of the law of value under our economic system is strictly limited and placed within definite bounds. It has already been said that the sphere of operation of commodity production is restricted and placed within definite bounds by our system. The same must be said of

the sphere of operation of the law of value. Undoubtedly the fact that the private ownership of the means of production does not exist, and that the means of production both in town and country are socialized, cannot but restrict the sphere of operation of the law of value and the extent of its influence on production" (43).

Stalin also adds two other factors that limit the action of the law of value under socialism: the "*law of balanced (proportionate) development of the national economy, which has superseded the law of competition and anarchy of production*" (44), and that of economic planning. But the Chinese revisionists disagree with Stalin.

"Stalin was going too far when he said that the law of value had no regulating function in the production under socialist system but at most some influence on production. Marx said (in Capital), "After the abolition of the capitalist mode of production, but with social production still in vogue, the determination of value continues to prevail in such a way that the regulation of the labour time and the distribution of the social labour among the various group of production, also the keeping of accounts in connection with this, become more essential than ever" (45).

One has to either completely ignore the laws of commodity production or be totally opportunist to conclude that Marx's position implies that the law of value must regulate social production under socialism. There is an important difference between using the law of value as an **instrument to plan production and the distribution of labour-power** on a country-wide scale and using it to **regulate social production**. When Marx talks of the necessity of regulating labour time, he examines the **conscious** organization of the distribution of labour on national scale. To do this with maximum efficiency, the quantity of available labour must be calculated in relation to the needs. The most useful tool for calculating this is the value, that is, the time socially necessary to produce each category of product needed. By calculating this value with precision and rigour, labour-power is not wasted. But when value is calculated, it is calculated from the point of view of the collective interests of society, and not from that of a particular group of producers or production units.

The situation is quite different under capitalism, where the law of value is blindly to regulate social production. In a commodity economy of this kind, the law

of value regulates production on the basis of the market and competition. It can regulate production, in as much as competition and the fluctuation in prices that stem from it, exist. Price fluctuations tell producers what products exist in excess of the population's capacity to pay for them and which ones are in insufficient supply. Prices fluctuate around their value and thus spur producers to expand or restrict production in given sectors. That is how the law of value regulates commodity production based on the private ownership of the means of production. That is how the law of value regulates the distribution of labour-power and the means of production in a capitalist society.

In a socialist society, production is regulated. But this regulation is not due mainly to the action of the law of value, but rather to the conscious planning of social production as a whole. The law of value thus becomes a tool to account for different aspects. Consequently its action is limited. It is in a way **tamed** and **subjected** to the decisive action of a national production plan.

But the Chinese revisionists do not see things this way. For them, the commodity economy under socialism is the same as under capitalism. According to this theory, there would be no difference between feudalism and capitalism, or even between feudalism and socialism, because in each case we find a commodity economy and the law of value!

By denying that the law of value is a **historical category** that is applied differently depending on the economic regime, Hu Chiao-mu and his friends **theoretically justify the restoration of capitalism in China**. They are pushing the country down a road where the laws of capitalism will have their effects sooner or later, effects like unemployment, price hides and social disparities. A new ruling class will appear. Though it will not legally own the means of production, it will nonetheless have all the characteristics of the bourgeoisie (economic privileges, control over production, political power, and so on). When the law of value regulates socialist economy, the door is thrown wide open to the anarchy that characterizes the capitalist system, and the path is paved for the return of the crises that are the inevitable consequence of capitalist anarchy.

Hu Chiao-mu's line of reasoning concerning the objective nature of economic laws and the necessity of complying with them cannot lead to anything else. It is aimed at subjecting the Chinese working class and peasantry to the laws of capitalism.

On the economic level, socialism corresponds to the revolutionary transformation of the relations of production and not to "more rational" commodity production!

It is now easier to understand how the theorists and leaders of the CPC conceive of socialism. In a speech given at the State Council meeting, Hu Chiao-mu defines socialist economy in the following manner:

"...socialist economy means highly socialized mass production based on public ownership" (46).

To this characteristic, he adds that the *"production of socialist society is consciously and socially regulated through state planning" (47)*. This conscious regulation and *"the possibility of doing things according to objective economic laws" (48)* combined with "public ownership" and "highly socialized mass production" are what distinguish socialism from capitalism. As for the "rest", namely **commodity production, the law of value**, how and on what basis work is remunerated, the forms and development of the **division of labour** (between the country's different regions, between the city and the countryside, and within each production unit) — in other words, the **production relations that exist between men** and the **forms of commodity distribution** — for all these "details", there is no difference between socialism and capitalism.

As for socialism being a transitional period between capitalism and communism, Hu Chiao-mu says nothing. Nor does he breathe a word about socialism being a

"period of struggle between dying capitalism and nascent communism — or, in other words, between capitalism, which has been defeated but not destroyed, and communism which has been born but is still very feeble" (Lenin) (49).

This "omission" is, to say the least, rather surprising in a speech that is supposed to explain economic characteristics of socialism! But this same "omission" comes as no surprise when we realize that this speech aims to liquidate the socialist transformation of the relations of production.

What is most striking about the con-

cepts defended by the theorists and economists of the CPC is that their definition of socialism only mentions the form of ownership of the means of production. They completely ignore two other important aspects of the relations of production: a) the place men occupy in production and their relations, between each other; and b) the form of commodity distribution. It would seem that, for the CPC's economists and theorists, the only difference between capitalism and socialism in terms of the relations of production is the public ownership of the means of production.

It is important to note that the author is not dealing here with a given period or stage of building socialism in China. He is talking about what distinguishes capitalism from socialism, from the economic point of view. It would be an entirely different story if the problem was that of the historical development of socialism in a given country, at a given period. If such were the case, we would have to concretely analyse the different stages of development on the basis of the concrete conditions prevailing in the country. For example, it would then be possible to declare that, during a given period, the revolutionary transformation of the form of ownership of the means of production is the decisive factor. The history of building socialism in the world has taught us that the revolution's first task on the economic level is to expropriate the exploiting classes and establish socialist public ownership. This task must be basically realized in order to transform fundamentally the other aspects of the relations of production. In other words, to change men's relations in production, it is necessary to expropriate the capitalists and big landowners. If this is not done, nothing can be changed. And the combination of both these factors is necessary if production is to develop enough to render obsolete the commodity form of the fruits of labour (this will only be completely possible under communism). But it is a completely different matter to declare that socialism has been achieved solely because "public ownership" has been established. Though this first step is indispensable to build socialism, it is nonetheless insufficient. To reduce socialism to this step is to deny its distinctive characteristics and undermine socialist construction.

Socialism is a period of transition, a period often referred to by Marx as the inferior stage of communism. As such, this *"transition period... must combine the features and properties of both these forms of social economy"* "that are capitalism and communism (Lenin) (50). But this original **combination** of the

"features and properties" of capitalism and communism is **in no way static**. There is no "peaceful coexistence" of capitalism and communism under socialism. Nor does capitalism become extinct, or peacefully integrate itself into communism. The combination of the "features and properties of both these forms of social economy" is in fact a **struggle** to liquidate the remnants of capitalism and develop the embryonic forms of communism.

The CPC leaders deny the distinctive features of socialism and present it as a **static melting-pot** of certain aspects of capitalism and certain aspects of socialism. This melting-pot can be summed up in the following equation: **public ownership + planning + socialized mass production + law of value + commodity production = socialism**. Stir, and there you have the recipe for developing productive forces. This development should in turn automatically entail the eventual development of the relations of production...

For the Chinese revisionists are forced to take a stand on the relations of production. Twenty years of struggle to build socialism in China cannot be discarded that easily. It is thus necessary to proceed cautiously, step by step. This is why Hsueh Yung-ying wrote in the article **The Four Modernizations: a Deep-Going Revolution**:

"At present, the socialist relations of production in our country are basically in correspondence with the development of the productive forces. However, these relations are still far from perfect, and this imperfection stands in contradiction to the steady growth of the productive forces. In the process of carrying out the four modernizations, these contradictions will crop up one by one for us to solve as we go along. Take agriculture for instance. With the development of large-scale modernized farming, the existing relations of production will no longer suit the developed productive forces and this will call for a corresponding readjustment in the relations of production" (51).

Hu Chiao-mu's article would seem to indicate that the present imperfections in the relations of production do not re-

quire greater revolutionary transformation of these relations but rather a slackening-off in their transformation. Thus, workers participate less and less, if at all, in the management of enterprises, and are increasingly replaced by the leaders and economic organisms. Intellectuals and cadres will once again hold a choice position in economic organization and planning... So, the material basis for the preservation and development of the bourgeoisie in China is to be found here, in the relations of production that constitute the basis of the whole social structure.

This is the price China will have to pay if it follows the path of the "four modernizations". This is the price China will have to pay to become a "great power" in the coming decades. Any other way of looking at the development of the productive forces can only lead to failure, declare Deng Xiaoping and his theorists. As far as they are concerned, all that is important is to speed up "development". The revisionists are not the least bit concerned about the fact that this type of development will lead to the inevitable consequences of capitalism, e.g. unemployment, relative overproduction, increasing social disparities. China will be caught up in the imperialist network of competition, financial dependence and inter-imperialist political struggle, up to and including imperialist war, because of this "development"; but no matter — it is of no consequence as long as China is "powerful"! There will indeed be development in China; but it will be the development of capitalism and imperialism, not the development of socialism.

1. See the interview with Deng Xiaoping in *Time*, February 5, 1979.
2. See *Peking Review* no. 52, December 31, 1978.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 7
4. *Ibid.*, p. 9
5. *Ibid.*, p. 9
6. *Ibid.*, p. 9-10
7. *Ibid.*, p. 11
8. *Ibid.*, p. 11
9. *Ibid.*, p. 14
10. Speech published in no. 45, 46 and 47 of *Peking Review*, 1978.

11. Hu Chiao-mu, *op. cit.*, *Peking Review*, no. 45, 1978, p. 8
12. *Ibid.*, p. 7 (our emphasis)
13. Karl Marx, *Letter to Kugelmann*, July 11, 1868; as quoted by Hu Chiao-mu in *Peking Review*, no. 45, 1978, p. 7 (our emphasis)
14. Hu Chiao-mu, *op. cit.* *Peking Review*, no. 45, 1978, p. 7-8
15. F. Engels, *Letter to Joseph Bloch*, September 21, 1890; in Marx, Engels, *Selected Works*, New World Paperbacks, International Publisher, New York, 1968, p. 692
16. *Ibid.* (our emphasis)
17. Hu Chiao-mu, *op. cit.* *Peking Review*, no. 45, 1978, p. 8
18. "Communique of the Third Plenary Session of the 11th Central Committee of the Communist Party of China", *Peking Review*, no. 52, December 31, 1978, p. 9
19. Lenin, *The Trade Unions, the Present Situation and Trotsky's Mistakes*, in *Collected Works*, Vol. 32; quoted by Hu Chiao-mu, *op. cit.* *Peking Review*, no. 45, 1978, p. 8
20. Hu Chiao-mu, *op. cit.* *Peking Review*, no. 47, 1978, p. 13
21. *Ibid.*, p. 13 (our emphasis)
22. *Ibid.*, p. 13 (our emphasis)
23. *Ibid.*, p. 14
24. *Ibid.*, p. 16
25. *Ibid.*, p. 17
26. *Ibid.*, p. 17 (our translation and emphasis)
27. *Ibid.*
28. Lenin, *Can the Bolsheviks Retain State Power?*, *Collected Works*, Vol. 26, p. 106
29. *Ibid.*
30. Hu Chiao-mu, *op. cit.*, *Peking Review*, no. 47, 1978, p. 17
31. *Ibid.*, p. 17
32. F. Engels, *La Contribution à la critique de l'économie politique de Karl Marx*, in Marx, Engels, *Etudes philosophiques*, Editions sociales, Paris, 1974, p. 131, our translation
33. *Peking Review*, no. 36, 1978, p. 10
34. *Ibid.*, p. 11
35. Hu Chiao-mu, *op. cit.*, *Peking Review*, no. 46, 1978, p. 18
36. *Ibid.*, p. 18
37. *Ibid.*, (our emphasis)
38. *Ibid.*, p. 17-18 (our emphasis)
39. Hu Chiao-mu, *op. cit.*, *Peking Review*, no. 47, 1978, p. 18
40. Hu Chiao-mu, *op. cit.*, *Peking Review*, no. 46, 1978, p. 19
41. *Ibid.*, p. 18
42. Stalin, *Economic Problems of Socialism in the USSR*, Foreign Language Press, Peking, 1972, p. 19
43. *Ibid.*, p. 20-21
44. *Ibid.*, p. 21
45. Hu Chiao-mu, *op. cit.*, *Peking Review*, no. 46, 1978, p. 19
46. Hu Chiao-mu, *op. cit.*, *Peking Review*, no. 45, 1978, p. 9
47. *Ibid.*, p. 8
48. *Ibid.*, p. 9
49. Lenin, *Economics and Politics in the Era of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat*, in *Collected Works*, Vol. 30, p. 107-108, (our emphasis)
50. *Ibid.*, p. 107
51. Hsueh Yung-ying, *Peking Review*, no. 36, 1978, p. 11-12

Some theoretical points about Marxist political economy

Marxist political economy is not a series of cut-and-dried definitions. It is a coherent, scientific theory which explains the structure of society and the laws governing its development. It is impossible to talk about Marxist political economy without making reference to the fundamental perspective of dialectical and historical materialism on the development of human society.

The Marxist view on society and how it develops

Marx sums up the approach of dialectical and historical materialism in his **Preface to A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy** (1859). He explains his basic materialist thesis in a passage which is a veritable model of clarity and conciseness.

"My investigation led to the result that legal relations such as forms of state are to be grasped neither from themselves nor from the so-called general development of the human mind, but rather have their roots in the material conditions of life... the anatomy of civil society is to be sought in political economy.

"The general result at which I arrived and which, once won, served as a guiding thread for my studies, can be briefly formulated as follows: In the social production which men carry on they enter into definite relations that are indispensable and independent of their will; these relations of production correspond to a definite stage of

development of their material forces of production. The sum total of these relations of production constitutes the economic structure of society — the real foundation, on which rises a legal and political superstructure and to which correspond definite forms of social consciousness. The mode of production in material life determines the social, political and intellectual life processes in general. It is not the consciousness of men that determines their being, but, on the contrary, their social being that determines their consciousness." (1)

This fundamental thesis advanced by Marx explains how his theory and worldview are based on **materialism**. Ideas don't fall from the sky; they are the product and reflection of the concrete, material activity of men. The political and legal forms which men develop are determined by the degree of development of the productive forces and by the relations of production within which men produce the necessities of life.

The productive forces are the material expression of man's ability to master and transform Nature. These forces include man himself as well as the means of production, the instruments of labour (techniques), and so on. The relations of production are "the economic structure of society" (the form of the system of ownership, the relations between men, the form of distribution of products). They are the "real foundation" upon which the legal and political "superstructure" (which comprises both the political system and the ideology which corresponds to it) rests. That is the fundamental materialist thesis of Marxism. But Marx doesn't stop there. Having clarified the how his worldview is based on materialism, he goes on to explain how

human society is changed. He explains the dialectical law governing the passage from one form of society to another. This explains how society evolves as well as the place and function of revolution in that evolution.

"At a certain stage of their development, the material forces of production in society come in conflict with the existing relations of production, or — what is but a legal expression for the same thing — with the property relations within which they have been at work before. From forms of development of the forces of production these relations turn into their fetters. Then begins an epoch of social revolution. With the change of the economic foundation the entire immense superstructure is more or less rapidly transformed." (2)

There we have a scientific explanation of the process of the evolution of society, of how a given society engenders within itself the material conditions for the new society. The new society comes into being through a **social revolution** which overthrows the former relations of production, which are outmoded. This revolution also overthrows the legal and political framework, the superstructure which was built up to serve the old economic base by setting the legal and political norms governing the relations between men in the old society. Such is the objective process of revolutionary transformation of society and the birth of a superior form of society.

But the process is not an automatic, mechanical one. The role played by the subjective factor, the consciousness of men, needs to be appreciated in order to really understand it.

"In considering such transformations a distinction should always be made between the material transformation of the economic conditions of production which can be determined with the precision of natural science, and the legal, political, religious, aesthetic or philosophic — in short, ideological forms in which men become conscious of this conflict and fight it out. Just as our opinion of an individual is not based on what he thinks of himself, so we cannot judge of such a period of transformation by its own consciousness; on the contrary this consciousness must be explained rather from the contradictions of material life, from the existing conflict between the social forces of production and the relations of production. No social order ever disappears before all the productive forces for which there is room in it have been developed; and new higher relations

of production never appear before the material conditions of their existence have matured in the womb of the old society itself. Therefore, mankind always sets itself only such tasks as it can solve; since, looking at the matter more closely, we will always find that the task itself arises only when the material conditions necessary for its solution already exist or are at least in the process of formation". (3) (our emphasis)

There are two things worth noting here. First, the conscious factor (the "ideological forms") intervenes in the revolutionary process. It **'fights out'** the conflict between the productive forces and the relations of production. Marx explains that the conscious factor has its source in the material conditions of existence. However, he does not reduce this to a **passive** and **mechanical** reflection of the economic base. To repeat, the conflict between the productive forces and the relations of production is **'fought out'** by and through the consciousness of men. The revolutionary process *"more or less rapidly"* transforms *"the entire immense superstructure"*, i.e., all parts of the State apparatus, the old laws, and so on. Given this, it is clear that the consciousness of men must be considered an **active factor** in history and in revolution.

As a general rule, the revisionists downplay the active role of human consciousness in history and revolution to an extreme degree. They do so with the flimsy rationale that Marx, when speaking about history **as a whole** said that men *"enter into definite relations that are indispensable and independent of their will"*. They work to slow down and finally completely sabotage the revolutionary process, inspired in their labours by a vulgar and mechanical interpretation of Marxism.

The second thing worth noting is Marx's observation that the material conditions of existence of the new society must already be present before the passage to a higher form of society is possible. However, Marx is careful to add **"or (be) at least in the process of formation"**. That qualification closes off another avenue for the vulgar materialists and revisionists. They would like nothing better than to be able to infer from Marxist theory that the socialist revolution can only take place in societies that are highly industrialized, etc. A one-sided and mechanical application of Marxism like that leads people to explain the restoration of capitalism in the Soviet Union as a **necessary** development. Thus the political line of Lenin and Stalin becomes an "adventurist" leap in the

dark that flies in the face of the "historical necessity" of passing through a stage of capitalism in Russia. That opportunist perspective is the essence of the **theory of productive forces**, which states that the material development of the society is everything and the forms of consciousness and the conscious ideological and political struggle are nothing. We will see shortly what the truth is about the relationship between these factors.

There is one conclusion which we can and must draw from Marx: **In any revolutionary period, and thus throughout the entire period of socialism**, which is the period of the passage from capitalism to communism, **the revolutionizing of the relations of production plays the main role in unfettering the productive forces**. As Marx put it, either the relations of production are the forms of **development** of the productive forces or they are the **fetters** blocking this development. Developing the productive forces under socialism is only revolutionary insofar as the revolutionary transformation of the relations of production remains central. The new relations of production are the "forms" of development of the productive forces. That is what makes them revolutionary.

What political economy is really about

When the bourgeois economists talk about "capital" they are referring to a particular **thing**: a sum of money, the value of certain machines and factories, the tools used by craftsmen, farmers or small-time fishermen. Marx, on the other hand, **demonstrated that capital is not a thing but a social relationship**. A given sum of money, for example, only becomes **capital** to the extent that it is invested in production or in the circulation of commodities, not in order to be used up (spent) but in order to grow. This is the process known as the accumulation and reproduction of capital. It is accomplished by exploiting wage labour.

The sum of money itself is not capital, or rather it does not remain capital, except insofar as it remains in the sphere of reproduction of capital. Otherwise, it is simply a sum of money, nothing more, nothing less. The activity or active process within which a sum of money can be considered to be capital is the economic activity of producing and exchanging goods, where man's own labour-power (capacity to do work in both the qualitative and quantitative sense) is itself a commodity. Thus a sum of money is not capital except insofar as

it links the possessor of the means of production, the capitalist, to the wage labourers. These workers produce, through the expenditure of their labour-power, a **surplus value** which is creamed off by the capitalist who adds it to the capital he started off with.

The true nature of the capitalist mode of production and economy cannot be understood outside this **relationship between men**. Engels summed it up like this:

"(E)conomics deals not with things but with relations between persons, and, in the last resort, between classes." (*)

So, to study the relations of production is to study the relations between the men involved in the activity of social production. In class society, this means studying the relationship between classes, between the possessors of the means of production and those who are dispossessed of the means of production. In capitalist society, it means studying the relationships which exist between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat in the main. In socialist society, the task is to liquidate the capitalist relations of production and to replace them with communist relations of production. Hence, the study of relations of production is in fact a matter of studying how the proletariat liquidates the old relations of production. In other words, it is the study of how the working class eliminates the capitalist class and capitalism. The basic subject matter then is the class struggle.

It comes as no surprise then that the revisionists battle away with all their might to block the revolutionary transformation of the relations of production. Their aim is quite simply to hold back the class struggle of the proletariat. After all, the goal of the class struggle waged by the proletariat is to abolish capitalism in all its aspects, to eliminate all of the capitalist social relationships and relations of production. These bourgeois relationships are found in both the realm of the relations of production and in the superstructure. To get an idea of just how broad a scope the task of socialist revolution encompasses, we must look now at what exactly the relations of production are, what the productive forces are, and what the relationship is between the superstructure and the base.

What is meant by the relations of production

"Production relations consist of three

aspects: (1) the ownership pattern of the means of production; (2) people's roles in production and their mutual relations; (3) the pattern of product distribution. The ownership pattern refers to who owns the means of production (including means of labour, such as machines, plants, and land, and objects of labour, such as raw materials). In production relations, the most important aspect is the ownership pattern of the means of production. It is the basis of production relations. The ownership pattern of the means of production determines the nature of production relations. Primitive society, slave society, feudal society, capitalist society and socialist society in human societal development are classified according to the differences in their ownership patterns of the means of production. The ownership pattern determines people's roles in production and their mutual relations and thus the distribution pattern of products." (5) (our emphasis)

The socialist revolution replaces the private ownership of the means of production with social, or socialist, ownership. Every socialist revolution in history has attacked the system of ownership of the means of production. The bourgeoisie and the other exploiting classes (like feudal landlords in places where they still exist) are expropriated. The expropriation of the bourgeoisie is the first major step of the socialist revolution in the economic sphere. Until and unless that task is carried out, the proletariat cannot really tackle the other aspects of social and economic life.

But the revolution cannot stop there. The relations of production are not just a matter of:

- 1) the pattern of ownership of the means of production;
They also involve:
- 2) the place occupied by men in production and their mutual relations;
- 3) the pattern of distribution of the products.

Thus, the abolition of the private ownership of the means of production also corresponds to a revolution in the roles played by men in production and their relations to one another. This part of the relations of production includes such things as the relationship between mental and manual labour, the method of management and control of production, the organization of work. In the capitalist system, these are the relationships which exist between capitalist and worker, foreman and worker, between technicians, managers,

engineers and intellectuals of various sorts on one side and the working class on the other.

Revolutionizing the relations of production cannot end with the expropriation of the bourgeoisie and the conversion of the private ownership of the means of production into social ownership. The proletariat in power must also grapple with this other aspect of the relations of production — the place occupied by men in production and their relationship to one another. Earlier we saw how, for Marx and Engels, the relations of production are the relations which prevail between classes. The revolutionary transformation of the relations of production in the area of the relationships existing between men in production is also a form of the class struggle against the bourgeoisie.

The same kind of revolutionary process must necessarily be carried out in the area of the distribution of products, the third aspect of the relations of production. In the capitalist system, the form which the distribution of products takes is the exchange of commodities. The fruits of labour are distributed as commodities. Goods can be obtained in exchange for something of equal value. The quantity of products or commodities that can be procured is thus determined by the quantity of value that you have in hand. The revolutionary transformation of the relations of production in the sphere of how products are distributed means eliminating the market economy, abolishing commodities, and thus eliminating the material basis for the value which is used to procure those commodities, money.

With socialism, labour-power ceases to be a commodity in the strict sense of the term. Wages remain the general form of remuneration for work performed. However, the wage system, in the sense of a system of exploitation of the labour-power of the worker and of the extraction of surplus value which is creamed off by a minority of exploiters, disappears. The profits realized in the various sectors of the economy become the property of the society as a whole and serve its development. Remuneration is based on the principle of "to each according to his work". The continuous revolutionization in the way in which products are distributed begins to reduce the gap between wages paid to different groups of people well before communism is reached. This process leads inevitably towards communist society where there will be no markets, no commodities, no money and where wages as a form of remuneration for

work will therefore be abolished. Here at last the principle of "to each according to his needs" will be applied.

It is important to avoid the error of reducing the revolutionary transformation of the relations of production to just dealing with the form of ownership of the means of production. Such a position would mistakenly claim that socialism had been fully achieved because there was no longer any private ownership of the means of production, because there was 100% State ownership, etc. This error amounts to reducing the contents of the relations of production to the legal form of ownership and neglecting the real relationships which exist between men in production. The progress made in building socialism, or to look at it from another angle, the decline in capitalist forms in the relations of production, is also measured by how much the characteristic features of capitalism with regard to the role of men in production and their relationships to one another and the specifically capitalist ways of distributing products are cut down.

It should be noted that the last two aspects of the relations of production can provide the avenue for the reintroduction or maintenance of the exploitation of man by man. This is true to the extent that a specific category of people are able to monopolize control over social production and the surplus value generated by the working class. This is entirely possible to do when there is no legal private ownership of the means of production such as exists in the form of capitalism we are familiar with here in Canada.

The capitalist State — whether led by the new or old bourgeoisie — is increasingly a direct exploiter itself, a **collective capitalist** whose various economic and political functions contribute **directly** to the realization of value and the accumulation of capital. Not only is a capitalist State without legal or explicit private ownership of the means of production possible, it already exists in the Soviet Union. When there has been a certain amount of development of capitalist-type social production, in particular when the highest monopoly stage is reached, the exploitation of the working class by the capitalist class can carry on without the legal private ownership of the means of production. It can persist mainly, indeed exclusively, through the medium of the State which becomes a collective capitalist in the hands of the bourgeoisie. This is why the question of which class holds State power is of such vital importance when analysing a socialist country.

The productive forces

"To produce, it is necessary not only to have relations among people but also relations between man and Nature. Man must conquer and transform Nature. The power which man uses to conquer and transform Nature is called productive forces. Productive forces are composed of men and materials (namely, means of production). In productive forces, tools of production are the most important. The types of tools used for production reflect the magnitude of man's power to conquer Nature. But we cannot regard tools of production as the determining factor in productive forces. 'The determining force is man, not materials.' (Mao Tse-tung)... Without man, there would be no tools and no know-how. Without the union of men and tools, even the best 'automatic' tools are never really 'automatic'." (°)

When we talk about **productive forces**, we must never forget that we are talking about two things: **man**, his manual and intellectual labour-power, the attributes of this labour-power (division of labour, skills, specialization, etc); and the **means of production** (machines, tools, factories, land, raw materials).

When we talk about the productive forces, we are thus again talking about the human factor in production. To simply accuse the revisionists of being exclusively concerned with productive forces is a partial and incomplete criticism of their distortion of this aspect of Marxism. It is true that the revisionists give priority to the material factors of production and neglect the human factor — the creativity of working people, their level of consciousness and knowledge, etc. But they are unable to simply ignore this human factor. The way they secondarize it in theory is merely a cover for the way they pay definite attention to it in practice, dealing with it from the point of view of capitalism. This capitalist viewpoint on what the productive forces are is expressed in the policy of having experts predominate over the masses. It leads to the policy of cultivating elitism among certain strata of workers and according special treatment to the intellectuals, managers and senior technicians. It translates into a policy of establishing systems of supervision and organization of work which are beyond any control exercised by the masses themselves.

To sum up, the revisionist "theory of productive forces" is in fact a theory which promotes capitalist relations of production on the pretext of increasing

the quantity of products produced. They will always say, of course, that they don't want to preserve or establish capitalist relations of production. They will try to prove it by citing facts and figures until they are blue in the face about how much State ownership there is. But in reality their whole approach to the question of productive forces and their development is based on a capitalist understanding of what the relations of production are.

We talked earlier about the contradiction which exists between the productive forces and the relations of production. It can be seen from the preceding analysis that it is also important to look at their dialectical unity. The way in which the development of the productive forces is understood always corresponds to a specific way of looking at the relations of production and the human factor in the productive forces. It is therefore also connected to a definite approach to the links between the relations of production and the forces of production. Breaking this dialectical unity between the relations of production and the forces of production, putting the productive forces in first place and stressing the material factors over human ones among the productive forces — to do all that is to deny the fact that in a revolutionary period the relations of production and their revolutionary transformation play the main role.

It is not unusual to hear revisionists cite general truths in order to deny revolution in practice. They invoke the decisive role played by the productive forces in the evolution of the relations of production in order to block the **conscious** revolutionary transformation of the latter. They make reference to the decisive role of the forms of ownership of the means of production to oppose carrying out the revolution in the other aspects of the relations of production — for a revolution in those other spheres requires conscious action which plays havoc with the interests of certain categories of persons. Revisionists are quite agile when it comes to these opportunist "theoretical" manipulations of words and concepts. The goal (and the effect) of such manoeuvres is to preserve the status quo and maintain the exploitation of man by man.

Superstructure and base

In the long quote from Marx cited at the beginning of this article, it was stated that:

"The sum total of these relations of

production constitutes the economic structure of society — the real foundation, on which rises a legal and political superstructure and to which correspond definite forms of social consciousness." (°)

The superstructure thus includes the political system (the forms of State power, the army, police, legal system, the law, etc.) and the ideology which corresponds to it (philosophy, literature, school system, etc.). The economic base consists of the relations of production.

We have already noted that revolution occurs when the relations of production become a fetter to the development of the productive forces. But we have not as yet explained how this revolutionary transformation that liquidates the outmoded relations of production and replaces them with new ones more in tune with the development of the productive forces takes place. In order to explain this process, we must clarify the relationship which exists between the superstructure and the base.

The changing of the former relations of production, their liquidation and replacement by new ones are all within the sphere of class struggle. Indeed, the relations of production are relations between men, which are, in the final analysis, relations between social classes. To liquidate the capitalist relations of production is to liquidate the form that the ownership of the means of production takes under capitalism (private property). It is to eliminate capitalist relationships in work. Finally, it is to abolish the structure for the circulation of products in capitalist society (the market). To do that, the means by which the capitalists maintain and reproduce these relations of production must inevitably be attacked and destroyed. Thus the capitalist superstructure must be attacked — its State, army, police, ideology, schools, judicial system, etc. — in order to replace it with a superstructure which makes possible the birth and development of the new relations of production. That is the Marxist idea of socialism and the place of conscious revolutionary action in the superstructure. Marx wrote this about it:

"This socialism is the declaration of the permanence of the revolution, the class dictatorship of the revolution, the class dictatorship of the proletariat as the inevitable transit point to the abolition of class differences generally, to the abolition of all the productive relations on which they rest, to the abolition of all the social relations that correspond to these relations of production, to the revolutionizing of all the ideas that result from these social connections." (°)

Thus, although the economic base is ultimately the decisive factor in the contradiction between superstructure and base, the superstructure plays an essential role at times. This role may be to maintain the existing economic conditions or to radically change them. As Stalin wrote:

"The superstructure is created by the base precisely in order to serve it, to actively help it to take shape and consolidate itself, to actively fight for the elimination of the old, moribund base together with its old superstructure."
(9)

The concrete reality we are talking about here is the relations which exist between classes, between groups of men. Some want to maintain the base and superstructure of capitalism and others want to abolish them. In particular, the bourgeoisie uses its State to perpetuate the same economic, ideological and political conditions of the exploitation of man by man which are the basis of its power and wealth. The proletariat organizes to overthrow this superstructure with the goal of taking up the revolutionary transformation of the economic base. This is the general relationship that exists between the superstructure and the base in the revolutionary struggle. This is how the revolutionary classes of history 'fight out' the conflict between the productive forces and the relations of production. In these conditions, namely in a revolutionary period, action at the level of the superstructure plays the decisive role. It is the condition for the transformation of the economic base, for the revolutionization of the relations of production and the freeing of the productive forces from the fetters which bind them.

The economy under socialism

"Theoretically, there can be no doubt

that between capitalism and communism there lies a definite transition period which must combine the features and properties of both these forms of social economy. This transition period has to be a period of struggle between dying capitalism and nascent communism — or, in other words, between capitalism which has been defeated but not destroyed and communism which has been born but is still very feeble....

"The economic system of Russia in the era of the dictatorship of the proletariat represents the struggle of labour, united on communist principles on the scale of a vast state and making its first steps — the struggle against petty commodity production and against the capitalism which still persists and against that which is newly arising on the basis of petty commodity production." (10)

After what we have just seen, it is understandable that the "struggle between dying capitalism and nascent communism" which Lenin talks about here, and which he insists on twice over, necessarily carries on in the three spheres of the relations of production. Socialism, for the revisionists and defenders of the "theory of productive forces", is characterized above all by its greater productivity of labour. For them, it is defined by the fact that production can be planned and by the widespread existence of highly socialized large-scale production. In other words, in their eyes socialism is typified primarily by the growth of the productive forces. If you follow this logic, any measure whose immediate goal is to build up certain productive forces is socialist.

That's the rationale that was used when the Yugoslav revisionists "imported" great amounts of capital, technicians and management methods from the capitalist countries. It was the explanation for giving full powers to managers in the factories and using various economic means to stimulate production (such as the system of production bonuses). All of this was

justified with the pretext that these were the best ways, in the short run, of increasing the productive forces in their "developing" country. We know now that this "modernization" was accomplished at the price of massive unemployment, a massive exodus of manpower to the countries of Western Europe and a process of social differentiation where the "cooperativist" bourgeoisie enjoys perfectly capitalist privileges.

The revisionist view of socialism liquidates the struggle to revolutionize the relations of production. It eliminates the very essence of socialism in the economic sphere. Revisionism thus opens the door wide for the restoration of capitalism — or to be more precise, it beats a path in that direction on grounds that are not always that evident, namely the relations between men in production and the form of distribution of products.

Although socialism certainly also aims at developing the productive forces, and this development is important for the very process of changing the relations of production, its main objective is the complete revolutionizing of society and the former relations of production. What counts, in other words, is to fight against and to eventually overcome "capitalism which has been defeated but not destroyed".

1. Karl Marx, A Preface to A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy, in Karl Marx: Selected Works in Two Volumes, Moscow, 1935, p.335-356
2. Ibid., p. 356
3. Ibid., p. 356-357
4. Frederick Engels, On Marx's Critique of Political Economy, in opus cited above, p. 369.
5. Fundamentals of Political Economy, M. E. Sharpe Inc, ed. G.C. Wang, New York, 1977, p. 4-5
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7. Karl Marx, op. cit., p. 356.
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On Charles Bettelheim's book China since Mao

The dictatorship of the proletariat cannot exist without a proletarian party

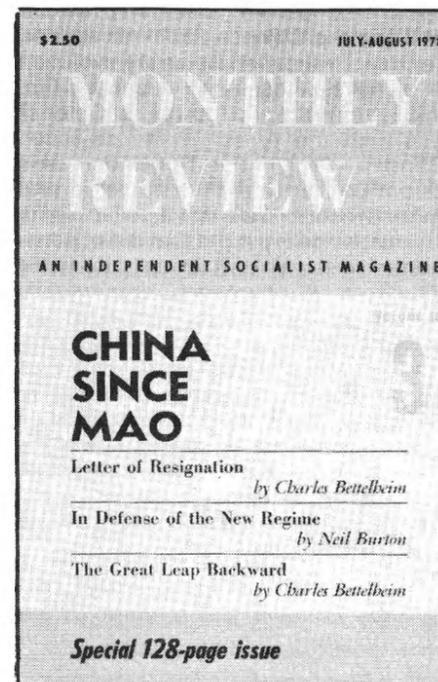
The path to socialism is strewn with pitfalls, and there can be no major proletarian victory without temporary setbacks of longer or shorter duration. Today China, more than any other example, illustrates this reality. The enthusiasm formerly aroused by the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution in many capitalist countries, particularly among youth movements, has today given way to the disillusionment kindled by the Communist Party of China's (CPC) repeated acts of betrayal. Deng Xiaoping's (Teng Hsiao-peng) trip to Washington and Chinese aggression in Vietnam are but the most recent examples. So the enthusiasm, which we must admit was often very childish, has been replaced by substantial confusion within the Marxist-Leninist and working-class movements.

In the face of this confusion, many people have begun to pose questions about the fundamental principles of socialism and the communist program. And it's true that we mustn't hide our heads in the sand — opportunism has won a temporary victory not only in China, but in Vietnam as well, where the leaders of the country seem more interested in serving the expansionist interests of the USSR than in promoting the unity of the Indochinese peoples, a unity born in the common struggle against imperialism. This sort of situation creates conditions which favour the mushrooming of a whole series of interpretations foreign to Marxism-Leninism. All of these positions work away at trying to show the working class and the peoples that Marxism-Leninism is incapable of leading the proletariat to victory. And leading the parade of these theories, we find the Trotskyists front row and centre. They claim that the current situation confirms their counter-revolutionary point of view, which denies the leading role of the proletarian party in the revolution and the defence of the dictatorship of the proletariat. Similar positions are also put forward by many critics, including Charles Bettelheim, who present themselves as "left-wing critics" of revisionism.

This is what makes Charles Bettelheim's latest book, *China since Mao*, so significant. It is a striking example of a criticism of revisionism which itself leads to revisionism.

Some people perhaps recall that when the author of this book resigned as president of the France-China Friendship Society in May, 1977, he became one of the first well-known "friends" of China to denounce the new leadership of the Communist Party of China. The author has written numerous books on economic planning in India and China, as well as on class struggle in the USSR. This has earned him a certain reputation in academic circles in France and America. First an expert on Soviet affairs, and now an accomplished

"Chinawatcher", Charles Bettelheim would have very little influence if his ideas were limited to the context of bourgeois universities and intellectual circles. But this has not been the case. Although he is not widely known *per se*, his ideas have had a non-negligible influence. This is due to the fact that they hide behind a Marxist facade and raise the most widely held prejudices on socialism and the dictatorship of the proletariat to the level of theory. And they do so while claiming to struggle against revisionism. Today it is no longer



enough to try and deceive the masses and fight socialism with the most reactionary scarecrows of "left-wing dictatorship". No, today those kinds of ideas have to be dressed up in something that resembles Marxism-Leninism or, worst yet, something that resembles the struggle against revisionism. And as we will see, this is precisely the role played by Charles Bettelheim, particularly with his most recent book, *China since Mao* (*).

(* For some background on Charles Bettelheim, the reader can refer to the first part of Claude Varlet's book *Critique de Bettelheim, La Révolution d'Octobre et les luttes de classes en URSS (A criticism of Bettelheim, The October Revolution and Class Struggle in the USSR) Volume 1*, Editions NBE, Paris, 1978, p. 39-98. There we learn that Charles Bettelheim defended both the Trotskyist criticisms of the dictatorship of the proletariat in the USSR in the thirties, and then later the conclusions of the XXth Congress of the CPUS (b), which marked the beginning of the restoration of capitalism in the USSR.

Charles Bettelheim, particularly with his most recent book, *China since Mao* (*).

Twenty days that shook the world

China since Mao sets out to try to explain the major changes which have taken place in China since the death of Mao. As Bettelheim himself puts it, it is "a first effort at systematic reflection on the political changes which have taken place in China since October 1976 and on the conditions which prepared the way for them". (1)

Charles Bettelheim doesn't mince words. The current leadership of the CPC and the Chinese State has revised the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution on all levels, thanks to a coup d'Etat which brought it to power in October 1976 with the arrest of the so-called "Gang of Four". For Bettelheim, this coup d'Etat is simply the outcome of a longer process. Well, that at least seems obvious, since a coup d'Etat is not some sudden misfortune which falls from the sky. It is a bourgeois, bureaucratic political act that results from a certain degree of development in the exacerbation of class struggle. Bettelheim thus tries to identify the source and analyse the causes which could have led to such a policy on the part of the leaders of the CPC. In short, he tries to identify the sources of revisionism in China.

Here is how Bettelheim explains the origin of the coup d'Etat:

"This process (which led to the coup d'Etat - Ed. note) was favoured by the priority given to forms of organization led from above over mass movements with many different forms of organization. It was connected to the abandonment of the political form of the commune". (2)

We should point out right away that the commune to which Bettelheim refers here is the experience of the Commune of Shanghai which took place in January and February of 1967. In the largest industrial centre in China, the rebel masses destroyed the city's municipal council and established what Bettelheim calls "a new organ of power" (3), based essentially on the mass revolutionary organizations which had sprung up as a direct result of the Cultural Revolution.

The Shanghai Commune only lasted twenty days. The communal form was replaced by revolutionary committees. These were organs of power which brought together representatives from the masses, communist party cadres and cadres from the People's Liberation Army (PLA). (*)

In Bettelheim's eyes, the twenty days during which the Shanghai Commune existed were the twenty days that shook the world most profoundly. It is no exaggeration to say that in the example of the Shanghai Commune and the decisions which led to its disappearance, Charles Bettelheim believes he has found the conditions which led the CPC onto the path of revisionism and the Chinese State onto the path of capitalist restoration.

For Bettelheim the elimination of the Shanghai Commune form of power led to "the withering away of the mass movement".

"These decisions (to replace the Commune by revolutionary committees — Ed. note) led to the withering away of the mass movement and to an increase in the influence of the PLA leaders in the apparatus of the party and the state... The mass movements — characteristic of the first years of the Cultural revolution were replaced by criticism campaigns from above". (4)

All of the problems concerning the Shanghai Commune stem from the fact its elimination hindered the development of the spontaneous mass movement to the benefit of "criticism campaigns from above." And just what is this apparatus "from above" which seems to be such an obstacle for the mass movement in China? None other than the Communist Party! Indeed, Bettelheim has no qualms about posing the fundamental question which is at the heart of his entire book:

"The party's contradictory relations with the masses also bring up this question: Is power in the hands of the masses, of their organizations and advanced elements, or is it in the party's hands? Or, putting it another way, is power wielded by the working people or is it wielded for them (assuming that the ruling power can remain in the service of the working people without being placed under effective control by them)?" (5)

So there we have the terms of the debate. According to Bettelheim, the question is not whether it is the bourgeoisie or the proletariat that exercises power, but rather whether it is the working people or the party, that does so, since the party irremediably enters into "contradictory relations" with the masses. To put it more simply, we could formulate his question this way: under socialism, is the dictatorship a dictatorship of the proletariat or a dictatorship of the party? This implies that the party and the State are necessarily

apparatuses which are placed above the masses and which enter into contradiction with their aspirations.

But just why would the party end up maintaining "contradictory relations" with the masses? Why would it oppose the development of the mass movement? Could it be a question of political line? Is it perhaps due to the fact that the party has abandoned the fundamental interests of the working class to in fact defend those of the bourgeoisie? No, not at all. Once again the Shanghai Commune provides Bettelheim with the answer:

"This attitude on the part of most of the old cadres (who opposed the Shanghai Commune, according to Bettelheim, Ed. note), and the desire to maintain the unity and existence of the party, led the Political Bureau to 'narrow the front of attack' and 'designate individual targets'..." (6)

The cause? Of course, there's the old party cadres who oppose the development of the revolution, but there's also "the desire to maintain the unity and existence of the party", a desire which leads to "narrow(ing) the front of attack" and to "designat(ing) individual targets". What Bettelheim is attacking here is the unity and very existence of the party. Further on, he does not hesitate to raise his point of view to the level of theory and make an affirmation considered valid for all social formations. The communist party's unity of thought and action becomes the symbol of "monolithism" and "totalitarianism", no matter what line guides the party:

"These observations... apply to all social formations in which the actual political line is regarded as being defined and fixed by the highest instances of a ruling party, and in which it appears as having been so fixed. This appearance, connected with the existence of certain political relations, may engender a myth of 'united leadership' and 'monolithism', or as its counterpart, a myth of 'totalitarianism'." (7)

To the debate over party or workers' power, Bettelheim adds the debate between dictatorship and democracy. And evidently, he implies that party power is synonymous with dictatorship while workers' power is democracy — or, better yet, "thoroughgoing democracy" (8).

It's easy to see that the terms of the

(*) On this subject, see the article in the newspaper *IN STRUGGLE!* no. 112 (vol. 5, no. 17), April 13, 1978, p. 16, Ten years ago Mao Tse-tung took up the defence of revolutionary committees in China.

debate are in no way original. However, it's still a good idea to come back to them once again, especially because this time they're being passed off disguised as the struggle against revisionism and its newest version, Chinese revisionism. Posing the debate in these terms boils down to opposing the party to the masses and democracy to dictatorship, while taking great care to avoid posing the question in terms of class positions and on the level of political line. All reference to the question of which line is guiding the party is very carefully avoided. In the same way, the question of which democracy and which dictatorship we are talking about — that of the bourgeoisie or that of the proletariat — is also scrupulously avoided. Instead the questions are posed in an abstract way, as if democracy could exist above and beyond classes without being the democracy and dictatorship of a class, as if the fundamental question of the link between the party and the masses isn't, in the final analysis, a question of which line and which class positions guide the communist party.

Perhaps the Shanghai Commune represented the birth of a new power in China, but the fundamental questions which it raises for Bettelheim are not particularly new.

"A renovated and transformed party"?

In explaining the CPC's mistakes, Bettelheim says:

"The limitations imposed in this sphere upon mass social experimentation blocked the road to the discovery of forms of unity which could assure a dominant role for the mass organizations, while not ruling out the possibility of a renovated and transformed party playing a leading ideological role". (9)

It seems that this is another lesson which we are supposed to draw from the historic experience of the Shanghai Commune. We certainly cannot reproach Bettelheim for dreaming of a society where all power comes from the masses, a society of "thoroughgoing democracy". This is the ideal of all Marxist-Leninists, a communist society which has rid itself of classes and where the State, the domination of one class over another, has disappeared and, with it, the party. In the communist program, this constitutes the ultimate objective of the struggle of the working class and is based on a rigorous analysis of the laws of history. But in Bettelheim's head, this all becomes pure utopia, a pretext, to all

intents and purposes, for denying the leading role of the proletarian party throughout the entire period of socialist construction. This is what is hidden behind the statement about a "renovated and transformed party" which must play "a leading ideological role": Bettelheim in fact denies the leading role of the proletarian party and even questions its very existence.

But of course, Mister Bettelheim is not an idiot. Taken one by one, some of the things his book says about the party and its relation with the masses seem justified. This is the case for example, when he warns against the privileges granted to those who hold positions in the party and State and the danger that this be the basis for the constitution of a new bourgeoisie. His remarks about the danger of the State and the party becoming bureaucratized are another example. These are indeed conditions that could slow down the revolution and even pave the way for a return to capitalism. We in no way deny that these factors may have played a role in the restoration of capitalism in the USSR and in the fact that the CPC is today following in its footsteps. A more detailed analysis of the mistakes which favoured the rise to power of a revisionist clique within the CPC in China remains to be made. Nevertheless, we should not hesitate to point out that the points of view advanced by Bettelheim are contrary to Marxism-Leninism and run counter to the lessons which can be drawn from the proletariat's historical experience. Taken as a whole, his affirmations lead the reader to conclude that for Bettelheim, any hierarchical relations in the party and State are by their very nature bourgeois relations, and that the leading role of the party can only be an obstacle to the proletariat's struggle to build socialism.

This means that Bettelheim explains the fact that a clique of revisionists has taken over the leadership of the CPC and the Chinese State by the inability of the revolutionary leaders to rid themselves of the party in order — or so it seems — to leave the power to the masses.

His entire argument revolves around liquidating the leading role of the party on the pretext of promoting the full development of the mass movement without restraint — that is, without a leading party:

"Preventing progress in the activity of the masses means opposing the continuation of the revolution. The latter cannot go forward when the freedom of organization of the working people is hindered, when attempts are made

to impose upon the masses and upon the members of the party, 'unified thinking'..." (10)

Not only is the party of the proletariat not supposed to be a leading party, a practical and political leader of class struggle; as well, it mustn't try to "impose upon the masses, and the members of the party, 'unified thinking'." And what else can this "thinking" be but Marxist-Leninist thinking, the ideology of the working class? It would seem that it is harmful to unite as one on the basis of this thought to spread it and turn it into an arm in the hands of the working-class. We now have a much clearer picture of the "renovated and transformed party" which Bettelheim proposes and the "leading ideological role" which he wants it to play.

But things become even clearer when Bettelheim explains the origin of this concept of the party as a bureaucratic body placed above the masses that seems to exist at their expense. The origin of these deviations is supposed to come more specifically from the Soviet Union during the thirties:

"The existence of bourgeois political relations, accompanied by a system of privileges, forms one of the bases on which degenerate and altered forms of the Bolshevik ideology are reproduced. (The forms of the Bolshevik ideology which resulted from the transformation of this ideology during the 1930's served in the Soviet Union to defend similar privileges). I think that the existence of these relations explains — given the absence of a mass movement radically challenging them — why the criticisms made in China of Stalin's 'mistakes' were never pursued consistently and given systematic form" (11).

Stalin's mistakes are the root of all our problems! We finally have a clearer idea of what ideological boat Bettelheim places himself in... Trotskyism. Now that's certainly something which is very hard to cover up, and we must admit that he did a very subtle job!

But if we gather all the pieces together — negation of the leading role of the communist party, the reduction of its role to an ideological role, the exaltation of the spontaneous mass movement, the identification of all organs of power with bureaucracy, and finally, the identification of the source of all these errors as being the Soviet Union in the thirties — we have a very coherent portrait of the Trotskyist position on the question of the proletarian party. The Trotskyist movement developed in the thirties, raising the freedom of factions to the level of a

principle. In the years which followed, this movement was to become a real tool for imperialism in the struggle to combat the dictatorship of the proletariat in the USSR, particularly during the Second World War. On all these questions, Bettelheim's positions and those of the Trotskyists demonstrate remarkable similarity.

Bettelheim's positions like those of the Trotskyists, can be characterized by their "democracy", their demands against "unified thinking" and action in the communist party, against the prohibition of factions and even against the prohibition of bourgeois parties under socialism. Further on in his book, Bettelheim criticizes the revisionist Chinese leaders not for having re-established the rights of the old "democratic" (read bourgeois) parties, but because they are nothing but "old mummified parties which no longer represent anything, since they no longer recruit" (12). Moving to the right of Hua Guofeng, Bettelheim deplors the fact that these parties are no longer as vigorous as they once were. This example clearly illustrates that a class point of view is hiding behind the freedom which the Trotskyists, including the variation represented by Bettelheim, proclaim so energetically. The point of view they defend is freedom of speech, not for the proletariat, but for the bourgeoisie.

This is what must be understood when Bettelheim criticizes the Chinese revisionists for not having been sufficiently encouraging the re-emergence of bourgeois parties. This is also what must be understood when Bettelheim criticizes the proletarian party for acting on the basis of unified thinking, on the basis of Marxism-Leninism, the ideology of the working class. He would, in practice, transform freedom of speech in socialist society into freedom of speech and organization for the bourgeoisie. The same freedom, applied within the party, would become the freedom to develop conceptions which are foreign to Marxism-Leninism and the interests of the proletariat.

And to top it all off, Bettelheim claims to be struggling against bureaucratism, which constantly threatens to corrupt the party. The moves are the same. Just as freedom is raised to an absolute, so bureaucratism is presented by Bettelheim as an absolute phenomenon, independent of social classes and inherent to all forms of the State:

"Again, according to the conceptions developed by the Bolshevik Party during the 1930's, the revolution was supposed to have ensured the existence of a ruling authority based fundamen-

tally on "proletarian political relations", which obscured the existence of a state machine separated from the masses and therefore reproducing bourgeois political relations". (13)

Here, the State becomes synonymous with "bourgeois political relations", and this goes for all States since the State is always an instrument of coercion in the hands of a class, "a power standing above society and 'increasingly alienating itself from it'" (14), as Lenin said. But bureaucratism isn't an inevitable phenomenon inherent to all States. On the contrary, bureaucratism represents a very specific ideology, bourgeois ideology and all the parasitism which that implies. Under socialism, bureaucratism represents a danger not because it is inherent to all forms of State, but precisely because it is the inevitable consequence of the infiltration of bourgeois ideology into the ranks of the party and the State.

In the same way, the opposition between the party and the masses is not something absolute, as Bettelheim suggests. If this opposition exists and persists the cause must be sought not in the very existence of the party and its leading role, but rather in its program. Here again Bettelheim avoids the fundamental political question. If the party is in contradiction with the class of which it is supposed to be the vanguard, it is because its program has moved away from the interests of this class and from Marxism-Leninism.

And how, according to Bettelheim, should the masses and communists struggle against inevitable bureaucratism, against this manifestation of bourgeois ideology in the party and State? Why, quite simply by encouraging the expression of the bourgeois point of view, by setting up what are this time genuine bourgeois parties and above all, by breaking the iron-clad unity of the party around its Marxist-Leninist program, a program whose only aim is to defend the interests of a single class, the working class.

We can take all the time we want to examine professor Bettelheim's reasoning from all possible angles, we will still end up with the same conclusions. Bettelheim invites the proletariat to struggle against the manifestations of bourgeois ideology by encouraging the expression of the bourgeois point of view both in society in general and in the party. As if bourgeois or petty-bourgeois ideology had the miraculous virtue of combatting its own effects!

No, Bettelheim's point of view has but one objective: to invite the proletariat to

throw itself into the war — for socialism is precisely that, a class war which is even more difficult that seizing power — without its battle headquarters, without unified leadership capable of uniting the vital forces of the proletariat and the oppressed masses in the struggle against the remnants of capitalism.

From the Shanghai Commune to the Paris Commune: to maintain or abandon the dictatorship of the proletariat

The role of the proletarian party, as the leader of the proletarian revolution, in preserving and developing the dictatorship of the proletariat in all walks of life is not a secondary question. On the contrary, it is the fundamental question of whether the dictatorship of the proletariat over the exploiting classes will be maintained or not. Bettelheim knows this all too well — that is why he pays such attention to the question. He devotes the best part of his energies to opposing democracy to dictatorship, the unified leadership of the proletarian party in class struggle to the growth of the mass movement. The only thing which distinguishes him from a bourgeois democrat or Jimmy Carter defending human rights is his long practice in the art of being a university armchair Marxist.

It is not out of ignorance that he tries to make us believe that Lenin himself, and before him Marx, denied the leading role of the proletarian party under socialism.

"For Marx, in The Civil War in France, the Commune is the organ of power, the political form of the dictatorship of the proletariat. Similarly, for Lenin, in State and Revolution, the soviets are the organs of power of the working people. In these two works the leading role of a revolutionary party is not even mentioned." (15)

So we should criticize Lenin for not having written a book on the party instead of **The State and Revolution**, a work which precisely was never finished because the development of the revolution in Russia demanded that Lenin and the CPUS(b) devote themselves entirely to the tasks of leading the proletariat's struggle. Without this leadership, the proletarian revolution could never have triumphed in Russia.

The reader will realize what a lie such a statement is, particularly in the case of

Lenin, who declared:

"The dictatorship of the proletariat is a persistent struggle — bloody and bloodless, violent and peaceful, military and economic, educational and administrative — against the forces and traditions of the old society. The force of habit of millions and tens of millions is a most terrible force. Without an iron party tempered in the struggle, without a party enjoying the confidence of all that is honest in the given class, without a party capable of watching and influencing the mood of the masses, it is impossible to conduct such a struggle successfully." (16)

And Lenin added:

"Repudiation of the party principle and party discipline... is tantamount to completely disarming the proletariat in the interest of the bourgeoisie. It is tantamount to that petty-bourgeois diffuseness, instability, incapacity for sustained effort, unity and organized action, which, if indulged in, must inevitably destroy every proletarian revolutionary movement." (17)

And where did Lenin draw his lessons from? From the historical experience of the proletariat, particularly the Paris Commune. Quite obviously, the Paris Commune holds much less interest for Mister Bettelheim than does the Shanghai Commune precisely because the Paris Commune demonstrated to the working class that it is impossible to take power and more important, to keep it, without a leading party which constitutes the indispensable instrument that enables the proletariat to exercise its dictatorship over the exploiting classes.

Perhaps this essential lesson for the proletariat was not demonstrated by the Shanghai Commune. Nevertheless, it has been shown by over 100 years of history — in the USSR and in Albania, and in the negative example of Allende's Chile.

Lenin teaches us something very simple here. The revolutionary war waged by the proletariat is not an opening night at the opera. If it is to be successful, this war requires the most rigorous and systematic organization of all the proletariat's forces. Victory depends on this. In the same way that we wouldn't

throw ourselves from a plane in flight without a parachute, there can be no question of the proletariat throwing itself into the revolutionary struggle without a revolutionary party which bases itself on the science of class struggle, on Marxism-Leninism. This is a very down-to-earth question, a life-or-death question, so to speak. If, on the contrary, we believe that men will attain communism "naturally", spontaneously, "unconsciously", then we must believe in some sort of providence that will guide them there.

In the same way, the necessity of unified thinking and action in the proletarian party is not a fanciful invention. It is an indispensable condition, governed by class struggle under socialism. This also implies that the existence of factions is incompatible with the unity of the proletarian party.

"Of course, the parties of the Second International which are fighting against the dictatorship of the proletariat and have no desire to lead the proletariat to power, can afford such liberalism as freedom of factions, for they have no need at all for iron discipline. But the parties of the Communist International, which base their activities on the task of achieving and consolidating the dictatorship of the proletariat, cannot afford to be "liberal" or to permit freedom of factions. The Party represents unity of will, which precludes all factionalism and division of authority in the Party". (18)

Paradoxically, unity within the party and the prohibition of factions is far from being synonymous with bureaucratism, as professor Bettelheim and all the Trotskyist groups would like us to believe. On the contrary, historical experience indicates that it is precisely in the absence of unified leadership that castes and personal empires are formed, and that this is what hinders the exercise of democracy within the party. Democratic debates on the fundamental questions of program and political line are replaced by backroom negotiations which take place behind the backs of party members and the masses. The democratic decisions of the congress are not respected, and the conscious discipline which adherence to the party presupposes is replaced by blind grade-

school discipline. This leads to the progressive disappearance of the bonds which are supposed to unite the party and the broad masses. They are instead replaced by the reinforcement of the State apparatus and the legal apparatus, as it is presently the case in China.

* * *

The opportunism of Charles Bettelheim's ideas lies precisely in the fact that they lead directly to the opposite of the growth of the revolution and the victory of socialism that Bettelheim claims to defend.

It is true that the mistakes of the Chinese revolution must be analysed. It is also true that Deng Xiaoping's rise to power is certainly not the result of spontaneous generation. However, we must not undertake this assessment from Bettelheim's point of view. The assessment must be made on the basis of Marxism-Leninism. It must aim to analyse whether the CPC was truly the leading party of the Chinese proletariat, whether it was able to maintain the necessary unity within its ranks on the basis of a Marxist-Leninist program. If we adopt the point of view of Bettelheim and the Trotskyists, we are at the same time casting aside more than 100 years of experience on the part of the revolutionary working class, experience which time and again has shown the necessity of a leading Marxist-Leninist party as the essential instrument for maintaining the dictatorship of the proletariat.

1. Charles Bettelheim, *China since Mao*, In *Monthly Review*, July-August 1978, p. 8; published by Monthly Review Press, New York and London.
2. *Ibid.*, p. 104
3. *Ibid.*, p. 101
4. *Ibid.*, p. 104
5. *Ibid.*, p. 105
6. *Ibid.*, p. 103-104
7. *Ibid.*, p. 85
8. *Ibid.*, p. 112
9. *Ibid.*, p. 111
10. *Ibid.*, p. 113
11. *Ibid.*, p. 110
12. *Ibid.*, p. 113
13. *Ibid.*, p. 127
14. Lenin, *The State and Revolution*, Foreign Languages Press, Peking, p.9
15. Charles Bettelheim, op. cit., p. 105
16. Lenin, "Left-wing" Communism, an Infantile Disorder, Foreign Languages Press, Peking, 1970, p. 32
17. *Ibid.*, p. 31
18. Stalin, *Foundations of Leninism*, International Publishers, New York, 1974, p. 121

THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNIST MOVEMENT ON THE MARCH



The documents published in this column are documents which we consider important to bring to your attention, either because of their political or historical value, or simply because of the information which they present. The Editorial Board of PROLETARIAN UNITY cannot be held responsible for these articles, apart from the presentation and commentaries which accompany them.

The Editorial Board of PROLETARIAN UNITY

The economic and financial crisis in the capitalist world

At a time when the Canadian working people is being ravaged by an economic crisis, it becomes ever clearer that to understand the crisis in Canada we must also understand the links that tie it to capitalism's economic crisis on a world scale. To help us do this, we are publishing an article from the November-December 1974 issue of *Albania Today* (no. 6, 19). Though the article was published several years ago, it remains pertinent today and provides a rigorous analysis of the fun-

damental characteristics of capitalism's crises since the Second World War. The era's crises on a world scale, in fact, they have sharpened the antagonistic contradiction between the private property of the means of production and the social character of capitalist production. Our readers will find this article an important instrument in understanding the inter-related phenomena of today's crisis, a crisis which the proletariat and oppressed people are increasingly fighting.

THE CAPITALIST WORLD CONTINUES TO BE TIGHTLY GRIPPED BY THE GRAVE, DEEP ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL CRISIS, OCCURRING IN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE GENERAL CRISIS OF CAPITALISM. THE PRESENT CRISIS HAS SERIOUSLY SHAKEN THE CAPITALIST SYSTEM IN GENERAL AND THE INDUSTRIALIZED CAPITALIST COUNTRIES IN PARTICULAR, IN THE FIRST PLACE, THE EPICENTRE OF WORLD IMPERIALISM, THE USA. THESE UPHEAVALS BEGIN WITH PRODUCTION AND THEN EXTEND TO THE SPHERES OF DISTRIBUTION, EXCHANGE AND CONSUMPTION, TRADE, FINANCES, THE CURRENCY MARKET, THE STOCK EXCHANGE, ETC.

These upheavals do not affect merely the economic and financial sphere of the world capitalist system, they also have an allround political, ideological, economic, social and military character, for they are the largest and gravest disturbances since the end of the second world war. As many bourgeois economic experts point out the capitalist world is rapidly moving towards an economic crisis similar to that of the 30's. Sounding the alarm, the American magazine «Business Week» admitted some time ago that «the states of the capitalist world are now, more than ever, faced with their most serious challenge since

the 30's», while the British review «The Economist» goes even further, saying that «economic breakdown is highly likely. This is not merely a danger of world depression; it has already begun».

The present crisis is not merely an ordinary deepening of the general crisis of capitalism. It is distinguished by the simultaneous outbreak of many large, acute conflicts. The upheavals of this crisis have made the political superstructure of capitalism so unstable that governments are falling one after another, giving the crisis a deep, allround, political, economic and social character. The changes of

personnel in the bourgeois governments are both unsuccessful efforts to justify failures, attributing them to individuals and their mistaken policies, and attempts, to create the impression that the situation is improving. In this framework, they work out programmes, plan measures and make a lot of noise; they also make promises to overcome the difficulties, calling especially for further belt tightening on the part of the labouring masses, and for privations and sacrifices by them.

In september 1971, in a very important speech, comrade Enver Hoxha, touching on these problems, said among other things: «Today the greatest crisis ever seen since the second world war has broken out in world capitalism, and particularly in US imperialism. . . This is a general economic, political, ideological and military crisis of all the capitalist states, their structures and their superstructures, it is a crisis of their regimes and alliances. And this great crisis has just begun; the catastrophe will come later».

The three years that have since elapsed have tellingly confirmed this prediction. Comrade Enver Hoxha depicted, in a clear-cut, well-substantiated way, the actual situation of the crisis that has gripped the capitalist world, and the whole process of its deepening and aggravation. In his speech of October 3 this year, at the meeting with his electors in zone Nr. 209, in the city of Tirana, he said among other things: «Look at what is happening in the world today! A grave economic and financial crisis has gripped all the capitalist countries. Inflation is rampant everywhere and has reached threatening proportions. The reserves of the big banks have begun to be exhausted, debts have grown immeasurably, and foreign exchange speculations have increased enormously. Unemployment, too, has begun to increase and prices are rising incesantly. The cost of living has increased and the situation of the working masses is continually worsening».

The present capitalist reality is a sad and gloomy one. The economic prognosis for the capitalist world forebodes an outbreak of great storms. This reality of the grave and irresistible crisis which has gripped all the structures and superstructures of the capitalist world has increasingly exposed the theories about so-called thriving capitalism, «popular», «democratic», «humanitarian», capitalism, the «consumer society» etc. Capitalism in fact has not changed its nature. It has neither been «renovated» nor «democratized», nor has it become «popular». It remains capitalism, and as such only the proletarian revolution will wipe it out. «The so-called consumer society, so loudly advertised and praised by the bourgeoisie as the «society of the future», comrade Enver Hoxha said in his October 3 speech, «is merely a rotten society in decadence, which is increasingly revealing the old, permanent evils of capitalism which it strove to conceal».

Some of the main features of the present crisis

The acute symptoms of the crisis the capitalist world is now undergoing are neither new nor accidental, neither par-

tial nor temporary. These symptoms do not arise simply from the energy crisis, as the imperialist monopoly and state circles are seeking to make out. This is in essence an allround crisis, which does not originate from oil or the oil embargo, but started long before, towards the middle of the 60'. From the beginning of the 70's in particular, the general disintegration of the capitalist monetary system began when the currencies of all the capitalist countries found themselves caught in the system of unstable rates of exchange. The foreign currency upheavals and speculations kept increasing from year to year, and they have reached now their climax. Crisis engendered crisis. The monetary and foreign exchange crisis cultivated and encouraged speculation with rates of exchange, then this crisis gave rise to the crisis of the banking system. Since last year there has also been the energy crisis.

Before the outbreak of the energy crisis, the capitalist states, the USA included, had been affected by the chronic diseases of inflation, unemployment, and the steady rise of prices. These phenomena have now become still more acute, and are at present deepening and becoming worse:

The present economic and financial crisis of capitalism has particular features which are expressed in some principal aspects:

First, it has gripped both the big centres and the outlying areas of capitalism, like a virus that has penetrated into every cell of capitalist socio-economic life. This crisis, growing in the «hot house» of the general crisis of capitalism, had its beginning in the summer of last year. It is remarkable for its breadth and depth, and its destructive consequences throughout the entire capitalist world. All the structural and conjunctural factors of that world are operating with exceptional force, bringing about fierce political, economic and social conflicts, on a national and international scale.

Second, capitalist reproduction as a whole is sinking into this swamp. Now it is not a question of just one crisis, but a whole complex of crises. Alongside the crisis in industrial and agricultural production, there are the energy, currency, raw materials and other crises. Hardly two years have elapsed since the last crisis

of overproduction, which swept the industrialized capitalist countries, but they are now again heading towards the abyss of depression. These countries are now facing the danger of losing even the results of the short breathing space in the years 1972-1973, which saw a temporary rise in industrial production.

One characteristic at the present moment is that the depression processes going on in the capitalist world are interwoven, and operate in a common, with the processes of inflation, the «energy hunger», the currency upheavals, the marked fall in share prices, the collapse of banks and capitalist firms and other phenomena of this kind. All this is worsening the situation still more, and is making this crisis resemble the 1929-1933 crisis increasingly closely.

Third, The capitalist economy is at present characterized by its irregular development, and the beginning of a decline in the rates of development. These rates are slowing down, by any standards. The most optimistic prognosis for the year 1974, according to those studying the market, predicted that the capitalist economy would mark time. Stagnation and economic decline has swept the USA, Italy, Japan, Britain, Spain, West Germany and the other capitalist countries.

Fourth, crises today frequently appear as monetary crises, inflation, and price rises, i.e. they break out mostly in the sphere of circulation, although they emanate from capitalist production. From the sphere of circulation, they have extended to the sphere of production, interweaving with one another in the process of capitalist reproduction, and inflicting on it new deformations and disproportions. This is connected with the dominating position of financial capital, the growth in the dominating position of banks and bank capital, the strengthening of the dominating position of the imperialist financial oligarchy, the great increase in the export of capital, with all its consequences, the extension of the relations of capitalist credit, the increase in «aid», the financing of wars and aggressions in various countries of the world, capitalist speculations in the imperialist international markets, etc.

Fifth, Another feature of the current crisis is its immediate spread from one ca-

papist country to another, from one branch of the economy to another, from the sphere of production to that of circulation and viceversa – all this is due to the interconnections, interdependence and interstate relations in the world capitalist system.

Sixth, A great negative influence is exerted by the US economic system on the current convulsive development in general and on individual countries due to its dominating position in the world capitalist system, and its role as an international gendarme against the freedom and independence of the peoples and as «creditor» of vassal countries.

Seventh, the present crisis, particularly the speculation with raising prices, has affected the Soviet social imperialists too; in order to cope with their troubles, they are striving to exploit the difficulties of other countries, especially of the COMECON member countries, so as to subjugate and exploit them economically and politically. The speculations of the Moscow chieftains in the international markets concerning oil and gas, their seizure of rare metal resources, such as uranium and titanium, in satellite countries, the purchase of raw materials at low prices from the undeveloped countries, and the sale to these countries of Soviet industrial products at prices higher than those on the international market – all this is common knowledge.

The COMECON member countries are entirely dependent on the Soviet metropolis for raw materials, fuels, principal materials, machinery, equipment, etc. Thus, for instance, in what Czechoslovakia imports 90% of oil, iron ore and nonferrous metals, 80% of grains, over 60% of cotton, over 50% of sulphur various phosphates etc., is of Soviet origin. Not only the economic but also the political consequences, originating from conditions of such dependence are evident.

According to the published data, from the year 1980, the East European countries will need about 150 million tons of Soviet oil annually, which will be supplied by Moscow in exchange for capital investment by these countries in the exploitation of the Siberian oilfields. This means that these countries must decrease their internal investment funds placing them at the

disposal of the Soviet social imperialists, otherwise they will have to experience an «oil famine».

The Soviet social imperialists get supplies of very important products such as non-ferrous metals, long-fiber cotton, natural rubber, vegetable oils, cotton textiles, rice, etc. in a speculative way. According to some statistics, from 1960 to 1971, the Soviet Union has taken from the underdeveloped countries 1.7 billion dollars worth of rubber and 1.6 billion dollars worth of cotton, bought at low prices; whereas from 1973 to 1980, the Middle East countries will repay their debts and trade obligations to the Soviet Union by supplying oil at a price 20 per cent lower than the price on the international market. At the same time, today the Soviets sell oil at high prices to their satellite countries.

By such methods, the Soviet revisionist imperialists are vying with the US imperialists for «cheap» markets in which to invest their capital, sell their goods, and grab raw materials at low prices. Engaged in such competition, the two superpowers proceed with the economic division of the world between them.

The fall in production rates

Falling production rates are a characteristic of almost all the industrialized capitalist countries. In the USA, in the second quarter of this year, production fell by 8,8 per cent, the greatest fall in the last 7 to 8 years. «The country's economic situation has worsened in recent years. It is worse than was thought», an American review wrote some time ago, «and all the conditions exist for a further fall in the rates of economic development».

In the British economy, there have for years been long stagnation periods, alternating in these last 3 to 4 years with perceptible falls in rates of increase in production. The share of British industrial production, in the industrial production of the capitalist world, has now fallen below 6,5%, as against 9,3% at the beginning of the 60's, equal to a decline of over 30%.

At the end of the first six months of this year, many branches of the economy of the Federal German Republic including the

steel, chemical, automobile and other industries, showed a decline of 2.1% in production, in comparison with the corresponding period last year.

The fall in production rates has been accompanied with the chronic under-utilization of productive capacities, a characteristic of the capitalist mode of production. According to admission in the bourgeois press itself, the productive capacities in the industrial branches that produce the means of production, in the USA, Britain, the FRG and elsewhere, have in these last 2 or 3 years been utilized at three quarters of their capacity. An American senator stated recently, in a television interview: «We are now living through great decline. We are not undergoing simply a feverish crisis, but we are condemned to paralysis. Its features are seen among other things, in the decline of production rates».

After the 60's, particularly beginning from the second half of the decade, there is evidently a tendency for the economic and financial position of the USA in the world capitalist market to weaken and a certain «rise» for its rivals in this market. Thus, while in 1955 the USA realized 52 per cent of the industrial production of the capitalist world, in 1960 it realized 47 per cent of this production and in 1972 a little over 43 per cent. This fall in the share of the USA in capitalist industrial production has meant a relative growth in specific fields in the other capitalist countries, as a result of the objective law of the unequal economic and political development of capitalism. As V. I. Lenin said, in the epoch of imperialism, the development of the capitalist countries «not only becomes in general more unequal, but the inequality appears particularly in the rottenness of the countries that are richer in capital». Experience has fully confirmed the correctness of these conclusions.

Marked growth of inflation

Inflation is one of the gravest evils of capitalism, and one of the main aspects of its economic and financial crisis. As a result of inflation, all the channels of monetary circulation are over-supplied with large quantities of currency, originating from chronic budget deficits, conse-

quently, in the first place, from large war expenditure. The excessive money supply causes rise in prices, which constitutes another direction of the present crisis of capitalism.

In the 1971-1973 period, the total amount of the money in circulation, in the industrialized capitalist countries, grew 2,5 times as fast as the annual average of the gross national product and the needs of domestic circulation.

In comparison with the 1966-1970 period, the rates of the increase in inflation, in 1973, were as follows: in the USA about 50 per cent (in the USA, in these last 5 years alone, the money supply has increased by over 40 per cent, at a time when internal retail turnover has increased by only 5-6 per cent), in France about 60 per cent, in Canada 47 per cent, in Japan 25 per cent, in Italy 28 per cent, in Britain about 4 times higher, etc. «It is impossible for the USA», the US Treasury Secretary, Simon, declared some time ago, «to hinder or lower the rate of inflation».

Inflation has become a function of the process of capitalist reproduction. We find its roots, in the first place, in the rule of the monopolies. The giant corporations and trusts, seizing dominating positions in the capitalist market, dictate high monopoly prices always on the rise. Their interference in the process of price setting on the capitalist market has now become a general policy. This predatory policy finds its clearest expression in the great rise in the prices of oil products.

Inflation also originates from the militarization of the economy and from the aggressive, warmongering policy of imperialism. The direct war expenditures of the capitalist states in 1973 surpassed 115 billion dollars, of which about 83 billion was spent by the USA. In 1966 the USA accounted for 45,2 per cent of the military forces and 69,4 per cent of the military expenditures of the industrialized capitalist countries, but by 1973 its share was 49,5 per cent of the armed forces and over 75 per cent of direct war expenditures. The imperialist military expenditures have thus reached colossal sums. In 1973 the aggressive NATO bloc spent 16 billion dollars more than in 1970. This year the US senate has approved the expenditure of about 86 billion dollars

for war purposes, the greatest such amount ever approved in that country's 198-year existence. These budget expenditures, and the deficits stemming from them, create only a parasitic consumption, which the capitalist market can cover only by increasing the devaluated money in circulation, resulting in an immeasurable increase in inflation.4)

The great increase in inflation, and the deformation of the capitalist reproduction cycle, as a direct consequence of the militarisation of the economy, and further imperialist economic and military expansion, have brought about increased unemployment and the further impoverishment of the broad labouring masses in these countries, first of all in the industrialized capitalist countries.

Irresistible rise in prices

Alongside the great inflation, in all the capitalist countries, in the first place in the industrialized countries, one notices an unprecedented rise in domestic prices, particularly in retail prices, and in prices on the international capitalist market. According to reports in the bourgeois press itself, price rises have irresistibly flooded the entire capitalist system, without exception, surpassing even the limits forecast by bourgeois economists and business circles.

The skyrocketing of prices has greatly affected the centre of international imperialism – the USA. Analyzing this problem in the Financial Commission of the House of Representatives of the US Congress, Treasury Secretary William Simon said that the USA is now experiencing the highest price rises it has ever seen, and that such increases have taken such deep root in the country's economy, that the process of mitigating them will be a long and difficult one.

The rise of prices in the capitalist world is not matter of comparing prices over a relatively long period of time (3,5 or more years), but it is a monthly, daily and rapid phenomenon. Now it is no longer a question of prices increasing from one period to another at the rate of 2,3,5 or even 7 per cent, but of an increase of several hundred percent.

Price rises are no longer at levels which «do not arouse concern for the internal

and external capitalist economic situation, but are resulting in the capitalist economy profoundly feeling this rise, with serious, direct consequences for the working class and the broad labouring masses. As such, they bring the aggravation of the social conflicts and antagonistic contradictions of the capitalist society, particularly of the fundamental contradiction between the social character of production and the private capitalist character of appropriation.

For the September 1972 – September 1973 period, the retail prices of industrial products increased by 13% in the USA, 13,5% in Japan, 19,4% in Canada, 28% in Italy, etc., and raw materials prices increased on average in these four countries by 30%-47%, but from September 1973 to September 1974 these increases were twice as great.

In the first six months of this year, the level of prices for mass consumer goods was in the USA 4 times higher than in 1972. From June to July, the prices of mass consumer goods there had increased on average by 14, rents had increased by 11,6%, medical services cost about 10% more, etc. In Italy, the retail price of macaroni, which is the staple food of the Italian people, had increased by over 30% in August this year, in comparison with the same period last year. In Japan the price of rice, which is the staple food there has recently increased by 32%.

There has been a considerable rise in the prices of sugar, meat, edible fats, farm products, fuels, vital services, such as transport and medical services, pharmaceutical products, clothing and footwear, etc. There is no commodity in capitalist markets which is not subject to the continuous rise of prices.

A quite marked, unrestrained rise has been noted in the prices of imports and exports in the capitalist markets. In this market, prices more freely, and exchange rates are implemented which are under continuous pressure from the currency and financial crisis.

A high rise has been registered in the prices of processed goods, such as steel, machinery, instruments, motorvehicles, electrical equipment, petrochemical products, etc. As well, a high increase has

been registered in the prices of food and non-food articles processed by industry, such as sugar, edible fats, and hides, as well as some other products of agricultural origin, such as cotton, grain, coffee, etc. Thus the price of steel has increased 3.4 times over in a year, steel tubing over 3 times, pig iron 2.3 times, sheet iron 2.2 times, zinc products 5.4 times, soldering electrodes 2.4 times, nylon fibres 2 times, hides more than 4.4 times, sugar 3.4 times, edible fats over 2 times, coffee 1.7 times, wheat 1.7 times, etc.

The price rise in the capitalist international markets is extremely rapid. The monopoly circles have continually striven to make the maximum profits from this situation, speculating with prices at the expense of the labouring masses and their partners.

We know how the oil dynasties of the USA and the monopolies attached to them, have sought to exploit the energy crisis in the interests of their business, markedly raising the prices of oil by-products and arousing panic in the capitalist world market for oil. They are trying to extend this in other directions and spheres of exchange, by dictating high monopoly prices which do not correspond at all to the social cost of production. They do this in order to ensure profits, but also to compete with their rivals.

The number of unemployed increases, along with the cost of living

In many capitalist countries the number of unemployed is increasing and is reaching levels which have not been seen for years.

In the USA, the unemployed account

for 6.5% of the country's active population. In the poverty areas (where 29 million people live) the unemployed represent 7% of the active population. Among the blacks the unemployed account for 10.8% of the active black population, and among the young people in these areas, they account for 18.8%.

In Britain there are now over 900,000 unemployed, moving towards 1 million. The recent election victory for the Labourites will not improve this grave situation. The Federal German Republic, which was considered by bourgeois circles to be a country without unemployment, has at present over 900,000 unemployed. During the first fortnight of September alone, more than 50,000 emigrant workers lost their jobs. In Italy, which has become the greatest exporter of labour in the capitalist world, there is at present an army of about 1 million jobless workers.

As a result of the rise in inflation, unemployment, and, in particular, the prices of mass consumer goods and services, the cost of living has risen constantly. In 1973, as compared with 1950 the cost of living in the industrialized capitalist countries had increased 3.5 times, while over the last 10 years it increased in Britain by 73%, in Spain by 104%, in Italy by 57%, in Canada by 46%, in the USA by 45%, in France by 70%, in the FRG by 43%, and in Japan by 80%.

* * *

Our socialist economy does not know such phenomena, which are the accompaniments of capitalism. It develops in a planned way, at stable, rapid rates, harmoniously, and it directly serves the vital interests of the labouring masses, promoting a steady rise in their living standards. Comrade Enver Hoxha said

in his October 3 speech, «Here these things will never occur».

It is a fact that in the conditions when prices in the capitalist world are increasing so rapidly, in Albania they have marked no increase whatever. We have stable prices, planned by the socialist state, for both home produced mass consumer goods and those articles we are compelled to buy on the international market, at prices which have risen. This price increase is coped with by the socialist state so as not to burden our consumers.

However, in order to cope with the influence reaching our economy through the foreign trade relations maintained with capitalist and revisionist countries, particularly concerning import prices and the ensurance of the planned goods, the Party and the Government have set the labouring masses the task of increasing their efforts to fulfill and overfulfill the planned targets in all areas, increase exports, decrease imports and further strengthen the savings programme. Correctly understanding these tasks, the working masses have raised still higher the level of their militant mobilization and enthusiasm at work, in all the sectors and branches of the people's economy. —

1) *The recent anti-inflationist measures proposed to the Congress by president Ford were received with distrust and scepticism by the people, they affect the working masses and the middle strata, without impairing the interests of big monopoly capital.*

KIÇO KAPETANI — *Journalist, specialist in economic problems.*

The class struggle in the political field in the period of socialism

In this article of *Albania Today* no. 2 (39) 1978, our Albanian comrades have synthesized the important lessons of the international communist movement and of the building of socialism in Albania on pursuing class struggle under the dictatorship of the proletariat. Liberalism and bureaucratism are bourgeois ideological trends that can considerably hinder the proletariat's march towards communism and that can favour a new ruling class taking power. Our Albanian comrades teach us that these trends are not inevitable, that they can be fought against, and that their consequences can be eliminated. This is

possible as long as a relentless, unfaltering struggle is waged against them. The leading role of the proletarian party, its steered unity around the Marxist-Leninist line, and its link with the masses are without the shadow of a doubt, the determining factors in this struggle. This contribution of our Albanian comrades is highly important in a period where the international communist movement has the historical task to analyze the sources of capitalism's recurrence in China, in a period when the ICM's task is also that of drawing all the negative and positive lessons from the Russian experience.

THE PARTY OF LABOUR OF ALBANIA HAS WAGED THE CLASS STRUGGLE CORRECTLY IN ALL THE STAGES OF THE REVOLUTION AND IN ALL ITS PRINCIPAL POLITICAL, ECONOMIC AND IDEOLOGICAL DIRECTIONS. AT GIVEN PERIODS, ONE OR THE OTHER FORM OF THE CLASS STRUGGLE HAS EMERGED AS MOST IMPORTANT, BUT IN EVERY CASE, AS THE 7TH CONGRESS OF THE PARTY STRESSED, THIS STRUGGLE HAS BEEN WAGED ON ALL FRONTS AND HAS CENTRED AROUND THE QUESTION OF STATE POWER. IT HAS BEEN A CONTINUOUS AND FIERCE STRUGGLE, THROUGH WHICH THE CONTINUOUS ADVANCE OF THE SOCIALIST REVOLUTION HAS BEEN ENSURED. THE EXPERIENCE OF ALBANIA IS ANOTHER CONFIRMATION OF THE MARXIST-LENINIST TRUTH THAT IN THE PROCESS OF THE CLASS STRUGGLE FOR THE OVERTHROW OF THE OLD WORLD, IN THE STRUGGLE TO DEFEND AND CONSOLIDATE THE VICTORY, IN THE WORK FOR THE CREATION OF THE NEW SOCIALIST ORDER, THE PROLETARIAN HEROISM IS EVEN GREATER THAN THAT REQUIRED FOR THE SEIZURE OF STATE POWER.

Both the establishment of the socialist order and the maintenance and continuous strengthening of it are indissolubly linked with the leading role of the Marxist-Leninist party. It is in this that the leading role which the working class plays in socialist society finds its concentrated expression.

«Only the revolutionary party of the working class, armed with the Marxist-Leninist theory», says comrade Enver Hoxha, «can make the working class conscious of its historic mission and clearly define the objectives of its struggle and the ways to attain them. The Party organizes, educates and mobilizes the working class and all its allies and leads them in the complicated struggle to establish the dictatorship of the proletariat and build socialism.»(1)

This implies that the defence, streng-

thening and the further revolutionization of the Party, the constant enhancement of its leading role in the entire life of the country, in every field and at all levels, constitutes one of the fundamental directions of the class struggle in the political field during the whole historical period of socialism.

1. The class struggle in the political field to safeguard, strengthen and perfect the dictatorship of the proletariat.

The overthrow of the political domination of the exploiting classes and the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat is an indispensable condition for putting an end to the system of oppression and for the construction of the new socialist society. The completion

of this task constitutes the main objective of the class struggle that the proletariat wages in the conditions of the exploiting order, because the essence of this struggle, as the classical writers of Marxism-Leninism emphasize, boils down precisely to the question of state power. From the time of the National-liberation War, which, in the conditions of Albania, assumed the character of a true people's revolution, the PLA, with comrade Enver Hoxha at its head, considered the question of state power as fundamental, closely linked the struggle for national liberation, with the struggle for the creation of the new people's power and merged them into one. Comrade Enver Hoxha says, «The Party never allowed the internal and external enemies to take the power from the people, so that the people's blood would have been shed in vain, but it followed a consistent line, thanks to which it became possible that there was only the new people's power in existence and functioning in Albania, and after the liberation of the Homeland, it began to carry out the functions of the dictatorship of the proletariat.»

The enemies, too, irrespective of the field in which they have waged their struggle, have always aimed this struggle at the state power, with the objective of the liquidation of the dictatorship of the proletariat and the re-establishment of the dictatorship of the exploiting classes, as their activity in the past and the activity of the groups uncovered in recent years has shown.

Hence, the class struggle, which continues throughout the whole historical period of socialism, is, in the final analysis, a struggle over the question of state power, for the dictatorship of the proletariat.

The dictatorship of the proletariat constitutes the fundamental question of Marxism-Leninism, and the attitude towards it marks the dividing line between Marxist-Leninists, on the one hand, and opportunists of all hues, on the other. In striving to preserve the rule of the bourgeoisie where it has not been overthrown, or to re-establish it where it has been overthrown, the enemies of the revolution and socialism have directed their blows against the dictatorship of the proletariat, just as the Soviet, the Yugoslav and other modern revisionists are doing today. To this end, they spread all sorts of «theories», such as those about «the state of the entire people», the «system of direct self-administration by the producers», or «democratic socialism» without the dictatorship of the proletariat. The PLA has continually exposed the anti-Marxist views of the modern revisionists. The 7th Congress of the PLA laid strong emphasis on the great harm that the revisionist propaganda does, and the necessity for stern struggle that all Marxist-Leninists, everywhere in the world, must wage against it.

The dictatorship of the proletariat not only constitutes the essence of the class struggle during the entire historical period of socialism, but is also the main weapon for waging this struggle on all the fronts of socialist construction. In fulfilling its function, it carries the socialist revolution through to the end and performs its historic mission, which is the building of communism. The process of the continuation or interruption of the socialist revolution itself is decided by whether the dictatorship of the proletariat is maintained or overthrown during the waging of the class struggle. Both these possibilities have been confirmed by historical experience, and the Marxist-Leninist summing-up of this experience constitutes an achievement of great importance to the struggle of the international proletariat to carry this struggle forward on the road of success and guaranteed progress, avoiding defeat and barring the way to any turning-back in order to ensure the complete triumph of the cause of the revolution and socialism.

In summing up the new historical experience of the dictatorship of the proletariat, comrade Enver Hoxha has pointed out: «It is completely possible that, once it is established, the dictatorship of the proletariat can be kept permanently unblemished, intact and unshakeable in all its links and directions, while being continuously developed and perfected»(2). The revolutionary experience of the PLA and the PSRA, in which the dictatorship of the proletariat has stood rock-firm, and the socialist revolution has gone steadily forward towards its complete and final victory, has demonstrated this. This experience, which has found its full reflection and synthesis in the new Constitution of the People's Socialist Republic of Albania is a valuable contribution to the theory and practice of scientific socialism.

The Party of Labour of Albania and comrade Enver Hoxha have stressed that it is possible to preserve, strengthen and perfect the dictatorship of the proletariat only by keeping up the class struggle, always leading this struggle correctly, unwaveringly, and with determination. In this vital question it is important to clearly define the objective at which this class struggle for the defence of the dictatorship of the proletariat, both from the **armed counterrevolution** and from the **«peaceful» revisionist counterrevolution**, is directed.

The danger of the armed counterrevolution has long been recognized. It was used to crush the Paris Commune in 1871 and later, after the First World War, the proletarian states which were established in Germany and Hungary, were similarly crushed. But in other instances this counterrevolution has been defeated by the blows of the revolution. Such is the experience of the Soviet state power of the time of Lenin and Stalin, which put down the armed counterrevolution through a protracted struggle. The experience of our country likewise demonstrates the nipping in the bud of any attempt at armed counterrevolution.

Therefore the repelling and complete crushing of the armed counterrevolution is placed before the victorious proletariat as an **indispensable and entirely possible task**. What is required in this direction is the constant maintenance of keen vigilance towards the external and internal enemy and the dealing of prompt and decisive blows at its activity. This the Party of La-

bour of Albania and the Albanian state have always born in mind, considering the struggle against the class enemy as «a task of first rate importance for our Party, state and working people»(3).

The activity of the class enemy is carried on in all directions, and manifests itself both inside and outside the country. Inside the country, it is manifested in the resistance of the class enemies and in their attempts at restoration, whereas outside the country its manifested in the aggressive aims of imperialism, socialimperialism and other reactionaries to strangle and to destroy the socialist order, as well as in the ideological means which the capitalist-revisionist world uses against us.

The external and internal enemies act in close connection and coordination with each other. Wherever the activity of the internal enemy shows up, behind it stands the support and aid of the external enemy, and likewise, wherever the activity of the external enemy appears it encourages and makes use of the activity of the internal enemy, too. The history of the construction of socialism in our country testifies to this merging of the activity of the internal and external enemies in a single united front. Many acts of sabotage, terror, diversion, etc. have been undertaken on the basis of this joint action, going so far as armed revolts, such as those of the enemies in Koplik in 1945 and in Shkodra in 1946. Particularly ferocious was the hostile activity carried on also by armed bands, which were introduced from abroad or set up within the territory of our country in the first post-liberation years, and which amounted to 84 bands of more than 1,500 fugitive criminals. A fierce and bloody fight, in which 463 martyrs gave their lives, was required to annihilate these bands completely.

It was in the same basis of this link up and coordination that the attacks of the external enemy on socialist Albania were carried out; that the brutal interference and the savage provocations of the Anglo-American imperialists and their lackeys were organized; that the sinister schemes of the Yugoslav revisionists, whose aim was the annexation of our country and the elimination of our national independence, were concocted; that the joint

plots were hatched up and the savage blockades of the capitalist and revisionist states, which became even more dangerous with the emergence on the scene of the Khrushchevite revisionists, were undertaken. Under the present conditions, when socialist Albania is holding high the banner of the revolution and socialism, which has been rejected by the modern revisionists, led by the Soviet revisionists, the activity of the external and internal enemy has become very intense, and the coordination of their activity even more dangerous.

But, besides the armed counterrevolution, history has also known a counterrevolution of another nature, the «peaceful», revisionist counterrevolution, with consequences just as bitter and terrible for the proletariat as the armed counterrevolution. This occurred with the coming to power of revisionist cliques. What Kerensky, Kolchak and Denikin, the Entente or the Hitlerite hordes failed to achieve by the force of arms, the Khrushchevite revisionists achieved in a «peaceful» manner. In the Soviet Union, the dictatorship of the proletariat was overthrown, everything socialist was demolished and capitalism restored. This «peaceful» degeneration took place in the other former socialist countries, too.

As historical experience confirms, there are two main enemies which aid the peaceful degeneration of the dictatorship of the proletariat: bureaucracy and liberalism.

Bureaucracy attacks the dictatorship of the proletariat at its nerve centres. It leads to sclerosis of the party and the working class and undermines its leading role, it disrupts the links of the state power with the people and hinders the participation of the working masses in the government of the country, it paralyses socialist democracy and cultivates conceit in the cadres, with all the evils that this brings, such as «respect» for oneself and scorn for the masses.

Liberalism is just as dangerous. Through liberalism, tendencies to laxity towards the policy and ideology of the enemy, to renunciation of the norms of proletarian morality, to the spirit of conciliation with the bourgeois-revisionist way of life and with shortcomings and weaknesses, etc, penetrate into the Party of the working class, the socialist state, and the masses of working peo-

ple. Liberalism often presents itself with misleading slogans about «freedom» and «democracy», and poses as «an opponent of bureaucracy», with the aim of sowing its poisonous seed more easily.

Bureaucracy and liberalism, as two lethal dangers to socialism, are entangled with each other, complement and foster each other. This can be seen clearly in the negative example of the revisionist countries. In Yugoslavia, the main trend of revisionism and the capitalist restoration was the liberal one, but the bureaucratic apparatus was created along with it. In the Soviet Union, the typical road was that of bureaucratic degeneration, but this was closely connected with the manifestations of liberal-bourgeois degeneration, such as those in the field of culture and art, in the way of life, etc, or the notorious campaign of «destalinization» itself, which began precisely under the slogan of liberalism.

Socialism, due to its nature, does not constitute a source either of liberalism or of bureaucracy. These manifestations are not characteristic of socialism. However, as long as the class struggle continues, as long as the hostile pressure from within and without is active, and as long as the blemishes from the past, together with the essential differences between mental and physical work, etc, are still preserved, these manifestations cannot be completely avoided in socialism. The same holds good also for the other forms of their manifestation such as technocratism and intellectualism, which pose the same potent dangers and which find their expression in the absolutization of the role of equipment, science and the technical intelligentsia, in the overrating of mental work and underestimation of the role of the masses, in the displacement of the working class from the leadership of the state and socialist society.

In its class struggle to constantly strengthen and perfect the dictatorship of the proletariat and to carry forward the revolution and socialist construction, the PLA has struck continual blows against any manifestation of liberalism and bureaucracy. The measures taken against them have been political, ideological, economic and administrative. The teaching of the Party of Labour of Albania and comrade Enver Hoxha on the causes which keep

bureaucracy and liberalism alive under socialism, as well as on how to handle them politically and ideologically, seeing these phenomena as expressions of reactionary world outlooks, and the struggle against them as an important constituent part of the class struggle, are of great theoretical and practical value.

Summing up Albanian and international experience in connection with manifestations of liberalism and bureaucracy in socialist society, the PLA and comrade Enver Hoxha have emphasized that manifestations of bureaucracy and liberalism constitute a great danger for socialism, but when they are not allowed free fields of action and when they are combatted continuously and resolutely then **the consequences of them are fully avoidable**. These consequences came about in the former socialist countries, but they have been avoided in Albania. Thanks to the continuous measures that the PLA has taken, bureaucracy and liberalism have never found the terrain to alter the proletarian character of the Albanian state.

The essence of the class struggle against bureaucracy and liberalism consists of the establishment and implementation of correct relations between democracy and centralism, between the elected organs and the organs of the administration, between the cadres and all other officials, on the one hand, and the masses of working people, on the other, between the freedoms and rights of the citizens, and their discipline and duties towards the state and the socialist society, at all times. All the measures the Party has adopted for the eradication of manifestations of bureaucracy and liberalism, are connected with this essence of the problem.

The organization and functioning of the system of the dictatorship of the proletariat, of all socialist state and social life, are always based on the principle of democratic centralism, the core of which is centralized leadership of the life of the country by the working class through its Party and state. The combination of the centralized direction with the creative initiative of the local organs and the masses of working people. The correct relationship between democracy and centralism, which, in a genuinely socialist country, are in dialectical unity, complement and assist each other, is preserved through the class struggle. In the process of

this struggle, the establishment and implementation of the concrete relationship between centralism and democracy, is ensured on the basis of thorough knowledge of the problem connected with this relationship, which has its own special features, differing at various periods of development, in various fields of life in different countries.

It is also important to maintain correct relationships between the representative organs and the organs of the administration. The representative organs constitute the political foundation of our socialist state. All the executive organs are elected by them, are subordinate to them, and render account to them. This is a major question of principle which has to do with the essence of the democratic character of our state. In this case, our class struggle is aimed at eradicating any manifestation of formalism in the activity of the representative organs, and at the complete and effective subordination of the activity of all other state organs to them.

The correct relations between the cadres and all other office-workers, on the one hand, and the masses of working people, on the other, in the PRS of Albania are determined on the basis of the Marxist-Leninist principle that the class in power, together with all the working people, govern the socialist state, while the cadres are their servants. The Party of Labour of Albania and comrade Enver Hoxha have always emphasized the necessity of the class struggle to protect the cadres from bourgeois-revisionist degeneration, so that they are imbued with proletarian qualities, merge with the people, and place the interests of the people and socialism above everything.

In the class struggle for the maintenance of a proper balance between the freedoms and rights of citizens, on the one hand, and their discipline and obligations, on the other hand, the Party of Labour of Albania has instructed that the struggle must be waged on two fronts: both against the centralist-bureaucratic tendencies to restrict socialist democracy and make it formal, as well as against the liberal-anarchist trends and concepts of democracy, which lead to undermining the dictatorship of the proletariat. Therefore, the struggle is concentrated, on the one hand, against the bureaucratic mani-

festations or some officials and cadres who do not take the rights of the working people into account, in particular, their right to participate in the governing of the country, who adopt arbitrary attitudes and stifle criticism from below; on the other hand, it is concentrated on irresponsible tendencies and actions of some working people, as comrade Enver Hoxha said at the 7th Congress of the Party, think that «being in a democracy, they have rights only and no duties at all, that the state and the society have obligations to them, which they never fail to demand, while they themselves are free to behave and act as they like, to violate discipline at work and social discipline, the laws of the state and social standards, without a care in the world» (9).

The important measures which have been and will be taken in the struggle against bureaucracy and liberalism are not merely organizational, but are outstanding, in the first place for their profound ideological and political content. The ideological aspect of these measures is expressed in their treatment of manifestations of bureaucracy and liberalism as manifestations in practice of the influence of alien ideologies. Their political aspect is expressed in their defence of the interests of the working people, in the deepening of the line of the masses, and in the other measures for strengthening the dictatorship of the proletariat. Finally, the organizational aspect of these measures (which, without doubt, have a deep ideo-political significance) is closely connected with bringing the state power ever closer to the people, with the curtailment of unnecessary links and officials in the administrative apparatuses, with the sending of cadres and office workers to work directly in production together with workers and cooperativists, with the systematic circulation of cadres, etc.

In the struggle for the defence and strengthening of the socialist order, the proletarian control, both that which is exercised from above, through the Party and state, and that exercised from below, the direct workers' and peasants' control, is of great importance. The need to exercise this control from above and below, which responds to the fundamental principle of organization and direction of the entire life of socialist society, democratic centralization, and

its role, are felt in every field of our life. However, in the struggle against bureaucracy and liberalism, the direct control by the working class and the peasantry from below, under the leadership of the Party, has particular importance. From their very nature, bureaucracy and liberalism are anti-popular, therefore, the masses of working people themselves are deeply interested in the struggle against them. The direct participation of the masses of working people in the struggle against liberalism and bureaucracy is the indispensable condition for the development of this struggle with success.

Marxism-Leninism teaches us, and the experience of the socialist construction in Albania has provided confirmation, that the direct workers' and peasants' control is an effective weapon in the class struggle for strengthening the dictatorship of the proletariat and a school for the class to master the art of government. This is the case not only at the time when the new state apparatus has just been set up, but also when the socialist state has achieved a relatively high level of development and the working class in power, in alliance with the cooperativist peasantry, has created a great number of young cadres loyal to socialism.

The direct workers' and peasants' control is indispensable to waging the class struggle successfully, also, in the field of how the officials and cadres carry out their duties, to combat any alien influence and manifestation in the work of our cadres, organs and apparatuses. Implementing the direct control by the workers and peasants puts into practice the great teaching of the Paris Commune that «in order to avoid losing its newly-won power, the working class, must, on one hand, destroy the entire old oppressive machinery, which was used against it, and, on the other hand, protect itself against its own deputies and officials, it must take measures to ensure that «the state and the state organs are not transformed from servants of the society into masters of the society» (9).

Without the organizations of the masses, which are a very important constituent part of the system of the dictatorship of the proletariat, all these problems would be meaningless. When we speak of the strengthening and revolutionization of the dictatorship of the proletariat the strengthening and revo-

lutionization of the organizations of the masses is automatically implied. They have the major task of permanent and active participation in the political field, just as in all the other fields of the class struggle. The waging of the class struggle for the defence, strengthening and perfecting of the socialist state, for the continuous extension and deepening of socialist democracy, is inconceivable without including in the current of this struggle the activity of the mass organizations, which, under the leadership of the Party, play an irreplaceable role in the revolution and the construction of socialism. The role of the organizations of the masses, is in no way diminished under the conditions of the dictatorship of the proletariat, but, on the contrary, is steadily increased.

In the practice of socialist construction, the PLA has clearly defined the place and role of the organizations of the masses in the system of the dictatorship of the proletariat and has exposed the preachings and practices of modern revisionists about the so-called «independence» of the organizations of the masses from the party of the working class, and about their transformation into appendages of the state apparatus. The Party of Labour of Albania has always fought for the continuous enhancement and enlivenment of the role of the mass organizations as important organisms which link the Party with the masses. The essence of this struggle is to link the organizations of the masses closely with the Party, and to ensure the continuous strengthening of the leading role of the Party in them. The Party has never permitted and never will permit any counterposing of the organizations of the masses to the state of the dictatorship of the proletariat, allegedly for the «defence» of the interests of the workers. Any tendency to transform the organizations of the masses into appendages of the state apparatuses and to inhibit the control of the masses over the state organs is also alien to our Party.

2. The class struggle in the political field for the defence of national independence and the socialist Homeland.

The only course for the defence of

national independence and the socialist Homeland just as for the defence of all the other victories of our revolution is that of determined class struggle against any violation or weakening of these victories. The struggle for the defence and strengthening of national independence and the socialist Homeland is waged with particular severity in the conditions of the capitalist-revisionist encirclement of our country. The Party and comrade Enver Hoxha have continually emphasized that this encirclement is by no means passive or merely geographical, but a threatening and active encirclement, which is fighting us in all directions and fields.

To cope successfully with the pressure brought to bear upon us by the capitalist-revisionist encirclement requires that our people have a profound class understanding of the international situations, that they live with these situations and consider all the problems from this angle. They consider this pressure, in all the variety of forms and means with which it is exerted, as an expression of the continuous struggle which the capitalist-revisionist world is waging against socialist Albania, and respond to it with their determined class struggle under the leadership of the Party.

In our class struggle, to break and defeat the encirclement, we do not remain passive. On the contrary, our counter-action is active and our blows are directed both against the efforts of the imperialist-revisionist coalition at bringing socialist Albania to its knees and against the internal enemy, which collaborates with and places itself in the service of the external enemy.

The imperialists and revisionists never relinquish their intentions to strangle or to impede the revolution and socialism. «The imperialists and revisionists», says comrade Enver Hoxha, «have trained their rifles on Albania, but we have our heavy artillery trained on them. This coalition is up and doing, but we are up and doing, too. We have matched our strength against them and we have won, again we are matching our strength against them and again we are winning. And this is what will go on happening in the future. Therefore, the victory will be ours, our people's and our Party's till the end.» (9)

The activity of the internal enemy, old or new, also shows that, despite the powerful blows it has been dealt, it, too, has not given up its counterrevolu-

tionary aims in the field of national independence and defence of the socialist Homeland, or any other field.

Nevertheless, however savage the activity of the internal and external enemy, however coordinated, organized and strongly it is directed against us, its annihilation is completely possible. This requires that we wage the struggle against the internal and external enemies consistently and ever more fiercely.

The Party of Labour of Albania and the Albanian people value our national independence as a great victory and consider the maintenance of it inseparable from the dictatorship of the proletariat. During the National-liberation War, the struggle for the liberation of the Homeland from the fascist invaders was closely linked and merged into one with that for the overthrow of the power of the exploiting class, collaborators of foreign invaders, who had sold themselves to imperialism. But even today, the preservation of the independence of the country is inseparable from the existence and the strengthening of the dictatorship of the proletariat. In the special conditions of Albania, against which the savage capitalist-revisionist encirclement is active, and in an international situation, when the plots and rivalry of the two imperialist superpowers are becoming more and more manifest, it is impossible to have complete independence of the country without the dictatorship of the proletariat. In these conditions, only the people, with the working class and its revolutionary vanguard at the head, are determined to the end and capable of defending genuine independence.

Defence of the independence of the country is an important objective of the class struggle in the political field. This has been expressed in the Constitution, in which it is clearly stated that the Albanian people, under the leadership of the PLA, will defend their socialist Homeland at any cost and in any circumstance, that any aggressor or group of aggressors that lays a finger on socialist Albania will be burned to ashes in the fire of the people's war. In Albania, the signing of any act of capitulation or acceptance of the occupation of the country, or any possible speculation intended to put the independence of the Homeland up for sale, is condemned as treason. Similarly, the road has been barred to

possible attempts by enemy or traitor elements to call for «aid» allegedly in the name of the Albanian people and to «legalize» intervention by imperialism, socialimperialism or other reactionary forces. The solemn declaration that nobody, other than the organs defined in the Constitution, can exercise the sovereignty of the people and any of its attributes in the name of the PRS of Albania, also serves the defence of national independence. The prohibition of the establishment of foreign military basis or forces in the territory of socialist Albania, serves the same purpose.

Independence, which characterizes a genuine socialist state in every instance, can be realized in a non-socialist state also. At the present time, the struggle of various states and peoples to ensure their independence against the plundering neo-colonialist policy of imperialism and socialimperialism, has assumed great impetus. The struggle to win and safeguard the independence of states, even when it is not connected with the struggle for socialism, is important to the general struggle against imperialism and socialimperialism. Therefore, while defending its own independence in all fields and forms, in its foreign policy, socialist Albania also wages a stern class struggle against any form of aggression, colonial exploitation, tutelage, dictate and hegemony, national oppression and racial discrimination. It upholds the principle of the self-determination of peoples, the exercise of complete national sovereignty and the equality of all countries in international relations. In this direction it has denounced any neo-colonialist «theory», such as those on the so-called «interdependence of nations», and «limited sovereignty», with which American imperialism and Soviet socialimperialism try to justify their enslaving practices for domination of the other countries and states. A genuine socialist country, as the PSR of Albania is, does not accept any form of dependence, intervention and dictate imposed from abroad for itself, and opposes their imposition on others.

The defence of the socialist Homeland has been secured and is secured through stern class struggle. This struggle stands out not only in our correct Marxist-Leninist concepts on defence, which are diametrically oppos-

ed to the concepts of our enemies, but also in the particular importance that the question of defence assumes in the conditions of our country.

In leading the defence of the country, the Party has always considered this question as a duty above all duties and has linked the realization of it with the military training of the whole people organized in the Armed Forces. «Our Homeland belongs to the entire people, therefore it is defended not only by the regular army, in uniform, but by the entire armed people, military organized and trained»⁽⁷⁾, says comrade Enver Hoxha. The Party of Labour of Albania has put into practice the Leninist teaching about replacing the «barracks army» with the armed people, making «every citizen a soldier, an every soldier a citizen». It has based the whole military activity and training of the people on the waging of people's war on the principles of the popular military art. This constitutes an important contribution of the PLA to the defence and further development of the Marxist-Leninist ideas on the army and defence.

Historical experience has confirmed that even after the revolutionary army of the dictatorship of the proletariat is created, under certain conditions, it can degenerate and be transformed into a weapon for domination over the people, as occurred in the revisionist Soviet Union and in the other former socialist countries, or as the putschist group in our army, which was discovered and smashed in recent years, endeavoured to do in our country. In the Albanian People's Army the proletarian policy is in command, and this is a guarantee that it will remain a conscious army of the revolution always loyal to the people and socialism.

Putting politics in command, means that in our army of the dictatorship of the proletariat the political factor has superiority over the military factor. This in no way underrates the role of weapons and military training. On the contrary, supplying the army with modern armament and equipment, as well as its military training, are at the centre of attention of the Party and the state of the dictatorship of the proletariat. In the process of the class struggle, the problems of defence have been tackled by the Party at all times from the class political angle, establishing a correct dialectical report between man and weapons, which, as

the Party teaches us, play a major role in the war, but not the decisive one, because this decisive role belongs to man, to his ability and determination, to his lofty consciousness and readiness to shed his blood in the field of battle in order to triumph over the aggressors.

The measures that the PLA took at the proper time for the reestablishment of the function of the political commissar, for the creation of party committees in the Army, for the abolition of military rank, and so on, have contributed greatly to strengthening the defence of the Homeland. These measures found the unanimous approval of the people and, at the same time, aroused the anger and opposition of our enemies, who, as the 7th Congress of the Party stressed, until the day when they were discovered, were trying to introduce the detestable methods and practices of bourgeois and revisionist armies into our Army.

The struggle to strengthen our defence has always been guided by the principle of self reliance. Applying this principle consistently, the Party led the people in the revolution during the National-liberation War and won. And now, relying on the internal factor, on the military readiness of the people to cope with any aggression or coalition of aggressors, at any time and under any circumstance, our defence is secure, regardless of the sacrifices we shall have to make.

The principle of relying on the internal factor in the field of defence assumed particular importance after the betrayal by the Khrushchevite revisionists, who attempted, in the most brutal fascist way, to intervene in the internal affairs and jeopardize the independence of Albania. If these enemies did not get away with the methods which they have used elsewhere with success, this was because they did not find any breaches in the ranks of the Party and the people.

The defence of the country has been strengthened in constant struggle against the external and internal enemies, against their savage criminal activity against the Party and the people. The freedom-loving, valiant and indomitable Albanian people and their Armed Forces have been educated by the Party so that, in case of aggression, they will not limit themselves merely to the task of repelling the enemies, but will fight till their complete and

final annihilation. At the same time, they will always be beside the peoples fighting to win their freedom, or to defend it from the superpowers or from the aggressive activity of other capitalist and revisionist states.

3. The class struggle in the political field for the preservation and strengthening of the unity of the people around the Party

The defence and strengthening of the unity of the people around the Party is an important direction of the class struggle in the political field. Without this unity it would have been impossible to establish and consolidate the dictatorship of the proletariat itself, to secure the independence of the country, and to defend the socialist Homeland. The steel unity of the people around the Party and its Central Committee, with comrade Enver Hoxha at the head, is the source of all the victories achieved up to date and the guarantee of even greater victories in the future.

The Party and comrade Enver Hoxha teach us that the unity of the people and the class struggle are not mutually exclusive. On the contrary, between them there is a dialectical connection, which is expressed in the fact that, on the one hand, the unity of the people around the Party constitutes a powerful weapon for the successful waging of the class struggle, while, on the other hand, the consistent and correct waging of the class struggle itself, is an impulse to the preservation and strengthening of this unity.

The implementation of the line of the Party for the construction of socialism and the defence of the Homeland has been and still is the fundamental question of the class struggle in the political field. At the present stage of the class struggle, it is a task of a very great importance to study the line of the Party ever more deeply, so that this line becomes thoroughly understandable for the masses, not only in its general directions, but in all its aspects, so that the masses become even more solidly convinced of the correctness of this line and mobilize themselves to put it into practice. Socialism is a social order which is built for the masses and by the masses, under the leadership of the Party, therefore

the more conscious the masses become, the more profound their knowledge of the line of the Party which leads them, the more active will they be in the struggle for the construction of socialism and the defence of the Homeland.

The dissemination and implantation of Marxism-Leninism ever more deeply among the masses is another important objective of the class struggle, because only on the basis of the revolutionary world outlook of the working class it is possible to secure the construction of socialism and defence of the Homeland as well as to safeguard the unity of the people around the Party. In Albania, Marxism-Leninism is the ruling ideology. The entire socialist social order, develops on the basis of its principles, and it sets the tone and conditions the entire development of the spiritual life of the country. On the basis of Marxism-Leninism and in stern class struggle against old blemishes and the bourgeois-revisionist ideological aggression, a process of major importance is developing, the most profound and complicated in our whole battle against the old world, the process of the formation and tempering of the new man.

In the stern class struggle against the influences of the bourgeois and revisionist ideology, against the remnants and bad customs from the past, and petty-bourgeois outlooks and psychology, our people become imbued with the proletarian world outlook and morality, in the course of attacking and rooting out any concept and phenomenon which violates the unity of the people. The aim of the class struggle is to ensure that the people always live in revolution, are characterized by a high level of political consciousness, by exemplary heroism at work and the spirit of sacrifice for the interests of the Party, socialism and the Homeland.

The struggle for the protection and strengthening of the socialist property, which constitutes the foundation of the socialist order, is also a struggle for the strengthening of the unity of the people. In this case, the class struggle is aimed at the uninterrupted development of the productive forces and the continuous perfecting of the socialist relations of production, which constitute two aspects of the new mode of production, at the protection and

best possible administration of the socialist property; at the gradual elimination of the hang-overs and blemishes which the socialist relations of production inherit from the past, such as «bourgeois right» in the field of distribution, the distinctions between mental and physical work, and between town and countryside.

The alliance of the two friendly classes, the working class and the cooperativist peasantry, under the leadership of the working class, constitutes the foundation and highest principle of the dictatorship of the proletariat. The class struggle to strengthen the alliance between these two friendly classes is a struggle to strengthen the unity of the people. These two classes make up the overwhelming majority of the people, and the decisive role in the construction and defence of socialism is theirs, just as it was in the National-liberation War.

The preservation and strengthening of the unity of the people around the Party is a continuous process, which runs parallel with the deepening of the socialist revolution itself. This unity is achieved not by artificially covering up the contradictions, but by recognizing them and resolving them correctly through class struggle. If we were to dodge contradictions and fail to wage the class struggle to resolve them, this would have grave consequences for our unity itself. This applies both to the contradictions between us and the enemies, which are mainly resolved by means of violence, and to the contradictions among the people, which are resolved by means of persuasion thorough educational work. Resolving contradictions among the people, too, calls for a constant struggle, never becoming reconciled to shortcomings and mistakes, to alien manifestations and attitudes. If these are covered up and thorough-going criticism of them is not made, allegedly for the sake of unity, it would not be real unity, but a false and formal unity.

Hence, in waging the class struggle to defend and constantly strengthen the unity of the people around the Party, it is important to recognize and resolve the two types of contradictions which exist in socialist society. Failure to understand the character of the two types of contradictions which exist in our society correctly, confusion of antagonistic with non-antagonistic con-

traditions, says comrade Enver Hoxha, harms the line of the Party, by leading to sectarian and opportunist stands, to the detriment of the unity of the people. In waging the class struggle correctly and consistently for the strengthening of unity, it is important that the following two points are always kept in mind:

First, care must be taken to always maintain a clear line of demarcation with the class enemy. There is not and cannot be unity with and a conciliatory attitude towards the class enemy. The contradictions with the enemy are antagonistic and irreconcilable and can never be treated as contradictions among the people. On this issue there must be stern struggle against any tendency for the artificial easing of the class struggle against the remnants of the overthrown classes or new enemy elements. The Party of Labour of Albania not only has maintained a determined, clear-cut and severe stands towards the class enemy in the practice of our revolution, but it has also continually exposed the preaching of modern revisionists about the relaxation or dying-out of the class struggle against the enemy element in socialism. Acting as disguised enemies of the working class, the modern revisionists distort the real nature of the contradictions with the class enemies in socialism and present the question as though they lose their antagonistic character once the basis of socialism has been built, therefore «instead of struggle against them there must be rapprochement and agreement». In reality, however, there can be no talk of any softer attitude towards, or reconciliation with, the class enemy, because such reconciliation would cost the proletariat and socialism dear, just as it did in the Soviet Union and the other countries that followed it.

Second, attention must always be paid to the struggle, on the other flank, against any tendency to treat contradictions among the people as contradictions between us and the enemy. In the process of the class struggle to strengthen and defend unity we must attack and uproot sectarian and liberal stands in the resolution of non-antagonistic contradictions, which might transform them into antagonistic contradictions.

For the correct resolution of contradiction among the people, the

combination of the method of conviction with that of compulsion is very important.

The Party and comrade Enver Hoxha attach great importance to thorough understanding and strict implementation of a correct balance between persuasion and compulsion. The method of persuasion is the main one, because the struggle against negative phenomena which show up at work and in the life of society is, to a large extent, a struggle which is waged among the people. With this fact in mind, Lenin wrote: «First we must convince, and then constrain. We must at all costs first convince and then constrain» (8).

It is necessary to apply compulsion against those, who through condemnable actions, commit acts directed against the laws and regulations sanctioned by the socialist state. The administrative or penal measures taken during the implementation of compulsion by the proletarian state serve mainly to put an end to negative phenomena, be they crimes or mere infringements. They are intended to combat the consequences resulting

from actions contrary to law, but they are not enough to eradicate the roots of the evil which lie hidden in the alien concepts in people's minds. The latter aim is achieved by the method of persuasion.

In the socialist state, the method of persuasion and that of compulsion are realized in combination with each other. Overdoing one or the other method, contrary to the concrete conditions, destroys the correct balance, that must be maintained. Thus, it is erroneous to overlook serious mistakes, or to be satisfied with continuous criticism, allegedly as educational work and conviction, even when the offences are grave or repeated and ought to be punished. Such a stand, which stems from failure to understand that punishment, also, has an educational character, would lead to the encouragement of conduct contrary to the norms of justice and socialist morality. On the contrary, the use of methods of compulsion out of place and neglecting the method of persuasion would lead to friction between the masses and their state, which would have

extremely grave consequences, because it would undermine the unity of the people with the Party and endanger socialism.

1. *Enver Hoxha, Report to the 7th Congress of the PLA, p. 127*
2. *Enver Hoxha, Reports and Speeches 1969-1970, p. 219*
3. *Enver Hoxha, Report to the 5th Congress of the PLA, p. 134*
4. *Enver Hoxha, Report to the 7th Congress of the PLA, p. 121*
5. *K. Marks-F. Engels, Selected Works vol. I, pp. 453, 454*
6. *Enver Hoxha, Reports and Speeches 1967-1968, p. 37*
7. *Enver Hoxha, Report to the 6th Congress of the PLA, p. 119*
8. *V.I. Lenin, Collected Works, vol 32, p. 242*

VAHID LAMA — Deputy member of the Central Committee of the PLA.
GRAMOS HYSI — Jurist.

NOW AVAILABLE

LENIN: OPPORTUNISM AND THE COLLAPSE OF THE SECOND INTERNATIONAL, IMPERIALISM AND THE SPLIT IN SOCIALISM

The two articles which we are republishing today were written by Lenin in 1916, barely a year before the October Revolution and three years before the creation of the Third Communist International.

At the time, the First World War was dragging on, and the revolutionary crisis set in motion by the imperialist war was deepening throughout Europe.

But a victorious revolution requires more than a popular revolt, more than the weakening of the exploiting classes' power. A revolutionary crisis cannot lead to revolution unless the subjective factor is present. There must be leadership, a party armed with Marxist-Leninist strategy and tactics, capable of pointing out the path to victory and guiding the great majority of the oppressed masses along this path.

As we know, only the Russian proletariat was able to profit from the revolutionary crisis provoked by the 1914-18 war. Only the Russian working class, allied with the peasants, was able to overthrow the exploiting classes, establish its class power and preserve this power. Why were no others able to wage a victorious revolution? Because, at this time, in contrast to the Bolshevik Party in Russia, the parties of the Second International, which for more than twenty years had led the struggle for socialism in Europe, had betrayed the revolution. They had abandoned the revolutionary slogan of "civil war against the bourgeoisie". In practice, they advocated class collaboration with the imperialist bourgeoisie, advancing the slogan "defend the fatherland" in the imperialist war.

It is this revisionist betrayal of the revolution which Lenin analysed in the articles reprinted here.

(Excerpt from the presentation).

CPC(M-L), A REVISIONIST ORGANIZATION OF AGENT-PROVOCATEURS

The so-called Communist Party of Canada (Marxist-Leninist) gets a lot of publicity these days. After ten years of systematically sabotaging the struggles of the Canadian working class, this organization is currently masquerading in a new costume — that of the struggle against revisionism and the "three worlds theory". But a rigorous analysis of the political line of CPC(M-L) clearly indicates that, despite the new paint job, the program of CPC(M-L) has changed little since its creation. Its program revises the fundamental principles of Marxism-Leninism. It does not demarcate from revisionism and remains deeply marked by a nationalism that leads directly to strengthening the Canadian imperialist bourgeoisie and crushing the proletariat.

Not only did CPC(M-L) declare itself to be the vanguard party of the Canadian working class in 1970, and proceed to devote its energies to sabotaging the struggle for the unity of authentic Marxist-Leninists in Canada and abroad, but we have strong reasons to believe that this organization is, in fact, riddled with counter-revolutionaries and professional agent-provocateurs.

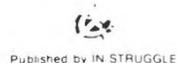
We encourage readers to deepen the criticism of CPC(M-L), which has more in common with fascism than with Marxism-Leninism, by rigorously studying its political line, practice and history.

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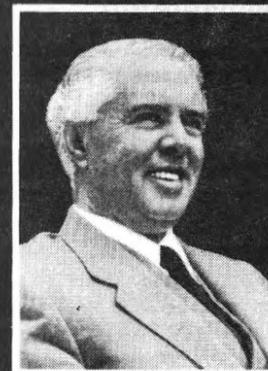


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The present international situation is turbulent, the crisis in the capitalist-revisionist countries is getting worse, the aggressive policy of the superpowers more and more each day is creating new great dangers for the freedom and independence of the peoples and the general peace. The bourgeois and Khrushchevite, Titoite, "Eurocommunist" revisionist theories and, together with them, the Chinese theories, too, are part and parcel of the great strategic plan of imperialism and modern revisionism to destroy socialism and strangle the revolution.

In these conditions, the defence of Marxism-Leninism and the principles of proletarian internationalism, a consistent revolutionary stand towards the major world problems, today constitute a fundamental task for our Party, as well as for all genuine Marxist-Leninists. Our just struggle must build up the confidence of the peoples and progressive mankind in the triumph of the cause of the revolution, socialism and the liberation of the peoples. Our Party is on the correct road and it will triumph because the revolutionaries and the peoples of the world, and the Marxist-Leninist truth are on its side. (excerpt from the conclusion).

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In the end, the League is nothing but a bastion of opportunism and a revisionist organization. In fact, putting aside its Chinese "front", there is nothing to distinguish it from the "Communist" Party of Canada (CPC) and its program. Think back to the CPC's support for the invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968. Isn't the League's support for the Chinese invasion into Vietnam one and the same thing? Both defend imperialism.

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