

International Internal Discussion Bulletin

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**The World Political Situation
and the Tasks of the Fourth International,
Draft Resolution for Fifth World Congress
Since Reunification (11th World Congress),
Submitted by Majority of the United Secretariat**

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Editorial Note

The general line of the following draft resolution was adopted by the majority of the United Secretariat of the Fourth International for consideration by the delegates at the next World Congress. With its publication in the International Internal Discussion Bulletin, it constitutes part of the material on the agenda for pre-congress discussion by the sections and sympathizing organizations of the international.

Among other scheduled draft resolutions, two have likewise been placed before the membership for discussion: "Socialist Revolution and the Struggle for Women's Liberation" [IIDB, Vol. 15, No. 4, May 1978] and "Socialist Democracy and the Dictatorship of the Proletariat" [*Intercontinental Press*, Vol. 15, No. 28, July 25, 1977].

THE WORLD POLITICAL SITUATION AND THE TASKS OF THE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL

[Draft resolution adopted by majority of United Secretariat]

The most important developments in the world political situation since the 1974 World Congress of the Fourth International can be summarized as follows:

1. A further shift in the international relationship of class forces to the detriment of imperialism as a result of the weakening of world capitalism owing to the defeat of American imperialism in Indochina and the first worldwide recession since 1937-38.

2. While the colonial and semicolonial sector remains highly explosive, the preponderant weight and impact of the class struggle in the imperialist countries upon the world revolution continues to increase—a process which began in 1968. This means a growing tendency of the world's mightiest class contestants to engage in open confrontations, the revolutionary upheaval in Portugal in 1974-75 constituting the most striking recent example.

3. A trend toward proletarian predominance not only in the mass political struggles in the imperialist countries but also in the class struggle in the semicolonies and the degenerated or deformed workers states.

4. A growing crisis of the class-collaborationist bureaucratic apparatuses that control the mass parties and unions of the working class in the imperialist centers and many semicolonial countries. A vanguard of radicalized workers is emerging that on certain key issues opposes the capitulationist line of the bureaucrats. However, this politically heterogeneous layer of the working class has not yet been able to organize a class-struggle left wing in the trade-union movement or present an overall socialist alternative within the mass parties, neither of which can be accomplished without the growth of the influence of the revolutionary Marxist movement.

5. A continuing tendency of the revolutionary process to resume the pattern initiated by the Russian revolution, which was characterized by intensification of the class

struggle, organization of the working class and its allies in councils and committees, a battle between contending political tendencies for a majority in the workers organizations, and a struggle for power by these class organs under the leadership of the Bolshevik Party.

6. A crisis of world Stalinism connected with the crisis of capitalism and imperialism. In the degenerated or deformed workers states, political opposition continues to rise, notably in the working class. Related to this is the growing boldness shown by dissidents in seeking openings to resist repressive measures.

7. Increasing interaction between the three sectors of the world revolution. The national liberation struggles in the Portuguese colonies precipitated the downfall of the Salazar-Caetano regime in imperialist Portugal. The opening of the revolution in Lisbon in turn helped the victory of the struggles for independence in the Portuguese colonies. The repercussions affected the class struggle in Southwest Europe, in Southern Africa, and in Ethiopia. The widening liberation struggle then made Africa itself the center of the colonial revolution for the time being. Another example is the development of a more direct linkage between the rising political opposition in the "people's democracies" like Poland and Czechoslovakia, the phenomenon of "Eurocommunism" in Western Europe, and the radicalization of the workers in the imperialist countries. Still another example is the spreading of the women's liberation movement from the industrially advanced capitalist countries to the colonial and semicolonial world.

8. The world political situation as a whole thus indicates an increase in opportunities for the growth of the Fourth International centering on winning cadres in the decisive layers of the industrial working class and the labor movement.

The Crisis of Capitalism and the Prospects for a Socialist Revolution

1. The end of the prolonged postwar boom in the beginning of the 1970s aggravated the crisis of capitalism qualitatively. Objectively, it meant reduction of the resources needed to restore capitalist stability in those countries where it was deeply shaken either by a grave economic crisis or by a strong upsurge of the working class. Interimperialist contradictions and competition have sharply increased. Nixon's "New Economic Policy" of 1971 opened a drive to reverse the declining position of the United States in interimperialist competition. In the 1974-75 international recession, when European capitalism, especially Italy, Britain, Spain, and Portugal, required aid on the scale of the Marshall Plan, Washington haggled over the needed loans and attempted to force West Germany and the petrodollar sheikhdoms to provide the credit instead. The ability of the bourgeoisie to soften the class struggle by granting substantial concessions to the masses is significantly lessened under these circumstances.

From the subjective angle—that is, the political understanding of the proletariat—the end of the postwar boom has made it easier to expose the myth that "full employment" and a "continual rise in the standard of living" can be achieved under contemporary capitalism. This incapacity is all the more marked, inasmuch as the end of the boom signaled the beginning of an offensive against the labor movement, an offensive that constitutes one of the key means of restoring the rate of profit. The reappearance of massive unemployment, and a general attack on real wages, including social-security benefits, have further undermined the myths advanced by the apologists of the capitalist system. The same is beginning to happen to the credibility of those who argue that capitalism can be reformed and made to operate to the benefit of the masses.

2. Although not so severe as the crises of 1929-32 and 1937-38, the international recession of 1974-75 was the gravest since then. As in all capitalist economic crises, it resulted from a tendency of the average rate of profit to fall and the productive forces to outgrow the purchasing power of consumers as limited by the capitalist relations of production and distribution. "Excess capacity," it is clear, has hit many key branches of the international capitalist economy. The 1974-75 recession and the subsequent period of restricted recovery included particular aspects like continuous inflation, and a succession of credit crises that risk precipitating an international panic.

While the duration of the recession was limited by massive deficit spending, especially in the United States, Japan, France, Britain, and Italy, and to a lesser extent in West Germany, this fact only underscores the dilemma confronting the bourgeoisie. Recessions cannot be mitigated without fueling inflation. Permanent inflation, however, becomes less and less a motor and more and more a brake on expansion. The blows dealt to the international monetary system, plus the permanent crisis of the dollar, combine in turn with exacerbated protectionism to limit expansion of world trade, even provoking new contractions of the volume of international exchange. The contradictions of the system erupt all the more violently after having been partially contained by decades of neo-Keynesian inflationary techniques.

Evidence has thus accumulated showing conclusively that with the end of the 1960s the capitalist world economy entered a period of slower rates of growth, shorter and weaker upturns, and deeper recessions than in the previous two decades. The nature of the upturn after the 1974-75 recession is uneven, hesitant, inflationary, and lacks momentum.

This does not signify a perpetual economic crisis without periodic new upturns in production and employment. And it does not mean that international capital is incapable of efforts to restore the rate of profit and resume capital accumulation. Such attempts not only involve a worldwide offensive against labor. They also involve intensification of competition and intensification of the concentration and centralization of capital in which less profitable firms and even entire branches of national industry are eliminated in favor of more profitable ones. These drives mean attempts at restructuring both international capitalist production and the capitalist world market, including massive transfers of capital between various sectors of the international imperialist economy, and between the imperialist sectors and a few of the stronger semicolonial ruling classes. The growing internationalization of capital and the emergence of the so-called multinational or transnational corporations as the typical organizational form of the biggest trusts facilitate these moves to restructure the international capitalist economy.

What must be stressed above all is that neither the scope of these moves nor the results obtained from the worldwide antilabor offensive will make possible a qualitative increase in the average rate of profit, thereby facilitating capital accumulation and productive investment. The forces of stagnation remain deep and predominant. They can only be partially neutralized by measures undertaken by the bourgeoisie. To radically reverse the trend, major defeats of the masses would be required. These would open the way to a great increase in armaments expenditures, placing on the agenda world wars aimed at recovering some of the areas lost to capital through victorious socialist revolutions. However, such catastrophic defeats of the anticapitalist forces on a world scale remain extremely unlikely. In any case, attempts to impose them would touch off such intensified class struggles as to place on the agenda fresh opportunities for victorious socialist revolutions.

3. One of the most significant aspects of the world situation is the continual weakening of American imperialism's domination of international capitalism. Compared to the postwar situation of 1945-1970, this decline has assumed striking proportions, of which the erosion of the dollar by inflation is but one manifestation.

American imperialism has lost its position of absolute technological superiority to at least one competitor in most branches of industry. And in some, where this superiority still survives (nuclear industry, aviation, production of satellites, and manufacture of computers), the challenge of competitors is mounting. First place in the export of manufactured goods has now been taken by West German imperialism, and the Japanese are close to taking second place. In the average industrial productivity of labor,

American imperialism is being overtaken by its main competitors. It is now being challenged even in capital exports and international banking. The European and Japanese multinational corporations are coming close in number to the American ones. They compete ferociously, not only in other continents but in the United States as well.

To be sure, the overall political and military superiority of the American imperialists over their competitors-partners remains of key importance in that struggle. Washington's dominance is based on the massive size of the American economy, a relatively greater access to global raw materials, especially oil, and the tens of thousands of nuclear weapons kept in firing position by the Pentagon. In 1977-78, for example, West Germany's combat aircraft fleet stood at 642. The U.S. "SAC" nuclear bomber fleet was 644 planes, and the U.S. military forces had 5,796 additional combat planes on top of these "strategic" bombers. This superiority is being used again and again by American imperialism to gain economic, financial—and political—advantages. Of greater significance than the numerical superiority of the American air force is the general weakness of European capitalism in face of the Soviet Union. This would become glaringly apparent in any real showdown.

While the European Common Market has withstood the test of the first recession involving all its member countries, it has not made any progress toward further economic, monetary, and political integration. It is stagnating. This is ascribable, among other reasons, to the dominant role played by all those factions in the capitalist class that rely, and will continue to rely, on the institutions of their own state in any explosive crisis. However, the survival of the Common Market testifies to the growing interdependence of all the member countries' capitalist economies. Dissolution of the Common Market would be a disaster for most of them. It is significant that the most important recent "successes" of the Common Market have been in the field of protectionism, such as the organization of steel and petrochemical cartels and the limitation of textile imports from semicolonial countries. Of similar significance is the fact that there is no possibility in sight of replacing the ailing dollar with a common European currency. Although the specific weight of West German imperialism has undoubtedly increased inside capitalist Europe, the political obstacles to West German domination in Europe remain formidable. No European "superpower" is about to appear.

The idea that American imperialism is able by itself, or in collusion with the Soviet bureaucracy, to stop revolutions in the imperialist or semicolonial countries does not represent a serious assessment of what is going on in the world. The historical trend is toward reducing—not increasing—imperialism's preponderance. The evidence of recent years shows the capacity of the masses to meet the challenge of imperialism successfully. What the small population of Cuba or the peoples of Indochina have been able to accomplish can surely be emulated by the powerful proletariat of the imperialist countries themselves.

The end of the postwar boom undoubtedly increased the sharpness of interimperialist competition, but this does not mean that the imperialist alliance is going to break up, placing interimperialist wars once again on the agenda. All these conflicts and strains occur within the imperialist

alliance, an alliance set up to counter the successes of the world revolutionary process and the strength of the workers states, which represent mortal dangers to the survival of imperialism and capitalism. The various imperialist powers try to alter the relationship of forces within their alliance; they haggle, resort to blackmail, seize every advantage, ruthlessly seek to weaken their competitors. The near collapse of world credit in 1974 illustrates how far anarchic competition between these powers can push them toward the financial brink, before stepping back and invoking common action in an effort to salvage the world capitalist banking system. But they do not seek to break up the common front against the advance of the socialist revolution. They act in collusion to stem it.

4. The biggest danger to world capitalism resides in the fact that the end of the postwar boom and the opening of a prolonged slowdown in its international economy coincide with increased organizational strength and a rising level of militancy of the proletariat in nearly all the imperialist countries. At the same time, the depth of the social and political crisis excludes the possibility of the capitalist class buying off the working class through massive social concessions and reforms of a "New Deal" type.

Although the ruling classes in the imperialist countries have scored some gains (the results of the November 1975 events in Portugal being the most striking example), not a single decisive or even large-scale defeat has been inflicted on the working class. Despite the lag in political consciousness of the working class in countries like the United States and West Germany, despite mass unemployment and the reinforcement it gives to the international anti-labor offensive, and despite the support given by the treacherous labor bureaucrats to the austerity policies promoted by the bourgeoisie, the proletariat has retained its inherent fighting capacities everywhere. The coal miners' strike in the United States as well as the strikes of the West German dockers, printers, and metalworkers early in 1978 demonstrate that even in the more stable imperialist countries when the capitalists step up their offensive, the working class proves capable of responding with powerful defensive measures. The gradual extension of the struggle for a thirty-five-hour week in several imperialist countries bears witness to this trend.

In the final analysis, of course, a spontaneous eruption by the workers against the combined offensive of the employers and the bourgeois state cannot by itself gain lasting success. In Italy, rank-and-file reactions of unusual militancy and duration have now occurred for nearly ten years without being able to prevent the renewed and more dangerous attack now being mounted by the capitalist forces. In fact, if no perspective is opened for a socialist solution to the crisis, prolonged instability can itself create demoralization among the workers. The degree of success of working-class resistance to the bourgeois offensive and the capacity of the workers to go over to a clearly anticapitalist counteroffensive that could place the overturn of capitalism on the agenda hinges on the following broad lines of development:

a. The appearance of a growing layer of radicalized workers.

b. Their organization into a class-struggle left wing opposed to the class-collaborationist policies of the bureaucratic leaderships of the trade unions and the Social Democratic and Stalinist parties.

c. The mobilization of this proletarian left wing in a struggle to replace the class-collaborationist leaderships.

d. The drawing of these militants at each stage, as they gain in political understanding, into building a revolutionary party.

The combination of these indispensable elements has not yet appeared in any imperialist country. It is this subjective factor and not the greater objective strength or resilience of capitalism that explains why the bourgeoisie succeeded in extricating itself for the time being from the extremely dangerous situation it confronted in Southwest Europe in 1974-77 (Portuguese revolution, upsurge of working-class struggles in Spain and Italy, new rise of radicalization in France).

The capitalists have not succeeded in stabilizing the situation as they did in the period following World War II. Far from it. Sharpened class struggles will continue in the immediate future, especially in Southwest Europe but also in Britain and other imperialist countries. While a show-down may be delayed for a time, with successive ups and downs of the class struggle, the general situation remains explosive. The character of the period ahead thus favors the emergence of a militant layer of workers capable of combating the class-collaborationist orientation of the Social Democratic, CP, and trade-union bureaucracies, and of moving in a revolutionary direction. This means big opportunities for building stronger revolutionary Marxist organizations.

5. The political crisis of the bourgeoisie and their government apparatus constitutes another source of instability. Several historical trends are interwoven in this crisis of leadership.

The weakening of the absolute hegemony of American imperialism over the capitalist world which was won in World War II, coupled with the effects of the defeat in Vietnam, has created a partial paralysis that no other imperialist power, or any combination of imperialist powers, has been able to overcome. This has led to procrastination and incapacity to impose decisions in various fields of world politics and economics, as was shown in a striking way during the 1974-75 recession and the monetary crisis accompanying and following it.

The giant trusts ("multinational" corporations) continue to press for superprofits no matter what the effect may be on the stated policies of their own governments. American multinationals use their massive liquid reserves to speculate against the dollar. West German multinationals defy their government's declared policy of reducing unemployment, and increasingly export capital. British multinationals do the same thing on an even larger scale. The French nuclear and aviation industries are entering into joint ventures with other European firms, Gaullist rhetoric notwithstanding.

The massive increase of state expenditures and revenues—required since the 1930s to stimulate capital accumulation, guarantee monopoly profits, expand the military machine, and reduce social tensions—increasingly demands the loading of a larger part of the tax burden onto the backs of the workers. In conjunction with the antilabor offensive, they are making inroads on social security and cutting down on public services and other conquests of the workers. They must do this because deficit spending on a huge scale feeds spiraling inflation and threatens a collapse of world credit. But this course

runs headlong into the expectations of the masses that years of governmental concessions on public welfare and other social measures have created.

These unpopular acts occur in face of widening skepticism over the nature of bourgeois politics (corruption, interlocking of "legitimate" and "illegitimate" business, scandals like Watergate in the United States, Lockheed in Japan and Italy, and so on). The credibility of the bourgeois political parties is further eroded when economic circumstances oblige them to carry out "austerity" measures.

Again, this crisis in bourgeois political leadership, which reflects in the last analysis the deep structural crisis of capitalism, should not lead to complacency among revolutionary Marxists. It does not mean that the bourgeois politicians are incapable of grappling with the challenges arising with increasing frequency. It does not mean that they are no longer capable of launching onslaughts on democratic rights and on the labor movement as a whole. In fact, the general trend is toward strengthening the repressive state apparatus and taking away fundamental democratic rights; that is, to move toward imposing a "strong state."

Yet nowhere has the imperialist bourgeoisie either assembled the political forces or weakened the working class to the degree needed to impose a military or fascist-like dictatorship.

While the crisis of the bourgeois political order in a series of European imperialist states—especially Southwest Europe, partially also in Britain, Belgium, Denmark—emanates from the threat of a direct anticapitalist confrontation with the working class, its origin is more complex in the United States and Japan.

In the United States, this crisis is a result of overlapping waves of mass radicalization in the 1960s and the 1970s in which the ruling class has been incapable of finding solutions that would satisfy the masses. American capitalism still has tremendous reserves and remains richer than any other sector of the world capitalist system. It is still able to co-opt leaders of mass movements not guided by a clear Marxist understanding. Many Black, Chicano, women, and student leaders have been bought off in this way. The capitalists, through their two-party setup, will attempt to do the same with the growing layer of radical unionists, who must fight to build a revitalized and democratized labor movement and for an independent labor party as the key political component of a class-struggle alternative to the current bureaucracy.

Despite its wealth, American imperialism lacks the resources needed to simultaneously overcome the crisis of accumulation of capital, defend its positions on the world market, play the role of world cop for the capitalist system, and grant concessions on such a scale as to derail emerging mass movements in their entirety. The way in which the Vietnam War was pursued and then ended; the way in which the rulers are moving to take back concessions granted earlier to the Black and women's movements; the way in which a general onslaught has been launched against living standards, working conditions, and union rights; the way in which mass unemployment, especially youth unemployment, is being institutionalized; the way the Carter administration has been unable to overcome the deep distrust which the Watergate scandal and the Vietnam War generated toward the presidency and other

capitalist institutions; and the growing class polarization, including the growth of rightist demagogy, are clear indications of these narrower limits of adaptability with which the U.S. capitalist class is confronted. Most important of all is the growing reflection within the industrial unions themselves of the broader social and political questions posed by the resistance of the oppressed and the social protest moods in the United States.

The growing crisis of the Canadian federal state, as well as the inability of the Parti Québécois, now in power in Québec, to satisfy the basic national and social demands of the Québécois toiling masses, and the growing resistance moods in the Canadian labor movement fundamentally express the same trends.

The remarkable reappearance of Japanese imperialism as one of the world's leading industrial and financial powers, after its crushing defeat in World War II, has been highlighted for more than two decades by a certain number of basic trends: a close military and political alliance with American imperialism; extremely limited military outlays; job security for one-third of the Japanese working class under conditions of rapid expansion of output and productivity of labor; great internal political stability (rule by the same political party, the Liberal Democrats [LDP]); slow expansion of capital exports into East Asia and Southeast Asia, avoiding stirring up local anti-Japanese sentiments going back to World War II, and clearly overshadowed by the sensational successes of Japanese commodity exports not only to Asia but also to Australia, the United States, and certain parts of Latin America.

These seemingly permanent characteristics of reborn Japanese imperialism have now run into increasing difficulties as the result of all the changes in the world situation that have occurred since 1973. The Japanese-American relationship is shaken by the sharpened competition between these two imperialist powers. The rate of expansion of commodity exports cannot be maintained in the long run, without a vigorous expansion of capital exports, which have already reached an unprecedented level. Job security cannot be guaranteed any longer to the workers even of the large trusts. Military outlays will have to grow significantly. All these changes signify a deep crisis for the LDP-dominated political system, which could already have been overturned during the Lockheed scandal were it not for the dismal default by the reformist labor bureaucracy. The inability of the labor bureaucracy to present a radical alternative as a credible way out of the crisis of Japanese capitalism is the main factor enabling the Japanese bourgeoisie to combine its anti-working-class offensive and its aggressive drive toward new fields of capital export in the whole Pacific area with a gradual adaptation of its political system of government without running the risk of short-term political and social explosions threatening to overthrow it. But even more than in the United States, the limits of adaptability have become narrower. The instability of Japanese capitalism will be strikingly confirmed by a succession of crises in the coming years.

6. What we are faced with is a general crisis of all bourgeois social relations and institutions that predates the reversal in the international economic climate. The turning point in capitalist Europe was the May-June 1968 events in France and subsequent developments in Italy

and elsewhere. It was foreshadowed by the radicalization of the 1960s and early 1970s in countries like Italy, the United States, Japan, Australia, and West Germany. The forces feeding this radicalization, and undermining the stability of bourgeois institutions, include the women's liberation movement, the movement of youth and students, and the antinuclear movement. Of special importance are the Irish struggle against British imperialism, and the liberation movements of oppressed nationalities like the Québécois in Canada, the Basques and Catalans in Spain, and the Blacks and Chicanos in the United States.

This general crisis of bourgeois social relations and institutions has been nourished by the very successes which capitalism was still able to achieve in the postwar period (economic expansion; increasing proletarianization of the middle classes; technological progress; relative rise in the standard of living and the level of culture of the working class). The objective need to introduce planning in the further development of the tremendous productive forces built up under capitalism clashes more and more with the limitations imposed by capitalist social and productive relations. Even more glaring is the clash between the rising needs and expectations of the masses and the incapacity of capitalism to fulfill them (peace, freedom from want, self-determination, emancipation of women, meaningful education, protection of the environment, elimination of the dangers of nuclear contamination, and so on). Environmental destruction has now become a permanent and cumulative problem regardless of the ups and downs of the business cycle.

The radicalization and increasing proletarianization of the allies of the working class is a significant indicator of the depth of the economic and political crisis faced by the bourgeoisie. Enormous forces extending beyond the proletariat are involved. These include the oppressed nationalities, women, youth, working farmers and poor peasants, and rank-and-file soldiers. Layers of these allies overlap with and in some cases make up weighty components of the working class. Their battles affect the labor movement, helping to radicalize the ranks by raising new issues that call for united action. The allies of the working class are affected by the attitudes of the trade unions and mass workers parties, above all by the powerful aid that can come from this source. It is the doubly oppressed components of the proletariat that have been hit the hardest by the austerity offensive. In every country the rulers have sought to deepen the divisions in the working class.

Out of fear of uncontrollable explosions, the class-collaborationist bureaucrats are opposed to fostering and tightening links with labor's natural allies. Revolutionary Marxists, on the other hand, champion progressive demands raised by these allies and urge the labor movement to throw its power behind their struggles. The aim is to advance the socialist revolution, which combines the main goals of all these forces. These are freedom from exploitation and freedom from oppression.

The mounting challenge to bourgeois values and institutions (the family, the educational system, the army, the government and state, the hierarchical structure of capitalist institutions and especially the factory) reflects the objective crisis of the bourgeois order.

As part of its antilabor offensive, the bourgeoisie has organized a counteroffensive on the level of ideas (anti-Marxism, "new philosophers," "zero growth" and "right-

to-life" theorists). This offensive has been powerfully assisted by the Social Democratic and Communist Party bureaucracies, which have repeatedly capitulated ideologically, politically, and in the will to fight in face of the capitalist offensive. It has been helped especially by the bankruptcy of Stalinism in ideology and in morale, and by the repulsive image of the existing "socialism" of the bureaucratic castes in the USSR, China, and Eastern Europe.

If the crisis turns out to be prolonged because of a failure of the labor movement to replace the class-collaborationist bureaucrats and to campaign for a credible radical reorganization of society, social frustration will rise. Radicalized elements—including unemployed youth—that could be mobilized as allies of the working class can become demoralized and turn to desperate lines of action such as terrorism. Ultimately such social frustration will favor the growth of right-wing forces. The criminal responsibility of reformism, Stalinism, and business unionism in paving the way for this danger cannot be overstressed.

For the time being, however, the trend is toward increasing radicalization of the masses; and this opens encouraging possibilities. For instance, the rise of the struggles of the oppressed nationalities is helping to politically awaken, activate, and radicalize other oppressed layers as well as a major part of the proletariat. The rise of the women's liberation movement has given impetus to struggles against other aspects of sexual oppression, especially the oppression of homosexuals that exists in every country. As proponents of progressive demands raised by gays and lesbians, revolutionists participate in campaigns against all forms of discrimination against them. The radicalization of the youth, which includes an important part of the working-class youth, has had a similar effect. Growing unemployment among white-collar workers has begun to radicalize this increasingly unionized sector of the working class. Working farmers and poor peasants constitute additional sources of strength. One of the goals of revolutionary Marxists is to combine these distinctive forces into a powerful anticapitalist movement.

Along with these forces should be added defenders of the interests of consumers, battlers on the ecological front, opponents of nuclear weapons and those who are protesting nuclear installations because they cannot be made safe. Antinuclear demonstrations numbering in the tens of thousands began in 1977, particularly in Western Europe and Australia. In the United States also the movement has spread rapidly, giving rise to militant demonstrations. In France and West Germany the antinuclear movement took on such proportions as to become a new political force. The direction of the antinuclear movement goes against capitalism and its governments. The protesters in general are aware of government responsibilities in this matter. The movement also implicitly raises the question of capitalist organization of the economy, since it spotlights dangers inherent in the profit motive at this stage of the development of technology.

There are three aspects to the antinuclear movement. (1) It opposes the construction of nuclear plants. Since the problem of waste disposal remains unsolved, the protest is bound to rise as the extent of the danger becomes known in greater detail to the public. (2) It opposes the construction, testing, stockpiling, and use of nuclear weapons. This creates the potential for mass action in the tradition of the

antiwar movement, which the Fourth International has every reason to encourage. (3) It puts a spotlight on the limitations of bourgeois democracy by proving that big decisions are made outside of the control of the people concerned, as well as indicating the trend toward answering protest by use of police force.

7. The working-class vanguard has a clearer understanding of what a socialist revolution in the industrially advanced countries will be like not only as a result of practice both in the protest movements of workers and their allies and in prerevolutionary mass struggles but also as a result of programmatic clarification and advances in Marxist analysis. While the main lessons were demonstrated in France in May 1968, Portugal 1974-75, Italy 1969 and 1974, and Spain 1975-76, valuable experience was also acquired from the various mass movements in Britain, Japan, West Germany, Canada, the United States, and other imperialist countries.

The industrial proletariat is the most powerful social force in capitalist society. Once it begins moving massively, the attraction it exerts on all its potential allies becomes immense. The proletarian forms of struggle, beginning with such actions as strikes and demonstrations, quickly spread and mount in intensity in certain volatile situations. A multi-faceted struggle erupts between the class collaborationists and the class-struggle forces for leadership of the unions and mass organizations. These developments occur in conjunction with a tendency to press the class struggle along the lines of self-organization—union committees, elected strike committees, broad factory committees, and councils that extend beyond the plants to encompass the allies of the working class in the highest form of the united front. As events like these occur, a process of selection unfolds that makes possible the swift growth of a revolutionary Marxist party, the decisive element in winning a majority of the workers to the revolutionary perspective and guaranteeing a victory.

There is no contradiction between the self-organization of the working class and building a mass revolutionary Marxist party. The tasks are complementary. Without the mobilization of the masses, victory is impossible. A party cannot substitute itself for an insurgent population in which the workers must take the revolutionary initiative. On the other hand, the mass struggle—whatever the heroism of its participants—cannot succeed without the correct policies advanced by a revolutionary Marxist party. It is through the interaction of these complementary forces that an irresistible combination is forged.

Issues that tend to come to the fore as the working class engages in head-on resistance to the capitalist antilabor drive are trade-union democracy, union independence from the government, and workers control of production (control of hiring and firing, safety rules, pace and organization of work, length of workday and workweek, and so on). Workers control becomes a school for planned economy, pointing toward workers management.

The working class is profoundly democratic in its aspirations. This is shown, most clearly, by its sympathetic response to struggles in defense of democratic rights and by its concern for democracy inside the unions and mass parties. The working class is all the more attached to democratic rights as a result of its experience with the twin horrors of fascism and Stalinism.

Thus in their struggle to conquer and consolidate political power, the workers will develop institutions to bring the different proletarian layers together in the most cohesive and effective way. As historic experience demonstrates, the workers seek to construct committees and councils that guarantee, among other things, the right to strike and to form independent trade unions, and on the political level the right to freely debate policies and actions through the formation of various parties. For the revolutionary Marxists this creates the possibility of winning a majority for their proposed course of action and building a mass party, one of the requisites for bringing a revolutionary situation to a successful conclusion. A majority of the working class will hesitate at overthrowing bourgeois state institutions without first being convinced that workers power signifies an extension and not a restriction of the political rights of the oppressed.

This view was set forth in the resolutions of the first four congresses of the Communist International and in the Transitional Program adopted by the founding congress of the Fourth International.

A socialist revolution will signify a radical upheaval of all social relations, involving more than a deepgoing overturn in property relations, relations of production, and state institutions.

During the transition period from capitalism to socialism, the workweek will be shortened while wages will be increased and unemployment eradicated. Social services will be greatly expanded, particularly in the field of medicine (research, construction of hospital facilities,

training of personnel), so that a widening range of social services becomes available to everyone as a basic human right. The effects of centuries of discrimination against women and oppressed nationalities will be countered at every level. The scourge of worldwide hunger will be overcome. In conjunction with these advances, education will be transformed, shaped to the needs of all age levels, and tied in with technological needs on the one hand and the growing leisure time at the disposal of the workers on the other. The shortening of the workweek and development of social services and education on a massive scale will be more and more recognized as basic requisites for workers management of the economy, the conversion of equal rights into actual social practices, and the eventual withering away of the state.

From the outset a powerful internationalist dynamic will be set in motion. A socialist revolution in an imperialist country will give great impetus to the liberation struggles of the superexploited colonial peoples and oppressed nationalities on the one hand, and the struggles of the oppressed masses of the degenerated or deformed workers states on the other. The example it sets will offer fresh inspiration to revolutionists in other imperialist countries. And it will transcend national borders with its new insistence on integrating resources and instituting planning. It will foster wider and wider international federations. All of these repercussions point to the only way in which the basic problems of our time can be effectively and ultimately resolved: through a world federation of socialist republics, through the Socialist United States of the World.

II.

The Crisis of the International Imperialist System and the Prospects of the Colonial Revolution

8. The defeat suffered by American imperialism in Indochina resulted in a decline in Washington's ability to serve as world watchdog of imperialism. This opened a new stage in the crisis of the world imperialist system.

The heroic Indochinese masses, while unable by themselves to inflict a decisive military defeat on the imperialist army, proved able to stand up for a protracted period against the most frightful modern weapons, especially aerial bombing on a massive scale. The stubborn resistance of the Indochinese destroyed the perspective of an easy victory entertained by the White House; it also eroded the morale of the American troops. Powerful mass antiwar sentiment in the United States itself made the political risk of continuing the war of aggression unacceptable. The American antiwar movement thus became the strongest ally of the Indochinese revolution. These changes led to the withdrawal of American imperialism from Indochina.

These factors added to the crisis of Stalinism. The Sino-Soviet conflict, in which Moscow and Peking jockeyed for position, and the restlessness of the rank and file in many Communist parties, who were affected by the prestige of the Indochinese, made it impossible for the Stalinists to block the revolutionary victory of the Vietnamese masses. With the elimination of capitalism and the fusion of the two halves of Vietnam, a single deformed workers state has been established there.

The deterioration in the relationship of forces at the expense of imperialism is especially striking in Africa where the Soviet Union has been able to extend its influence. The antiwar sentiment in the United States made it impossible for Washington to intervene openly on the military level against the revolutionary developments in Angola and in the Horn of Africa. The Cubans, recognizing Washington's temporary paralysis, sent material aid with Moscow's acceptance, including thousands of troops to Angola, Ethiopia, and other countries in Africa. Ford and subsequently Carter threatened reprisals, which they are prepared to carry out. However, Havana accepted the risk, winning the gratitude of most anti-imperialist fighters in Africa. The contrast between the standing of revolutionary Cuba and counterrevolutionary America among the insurgent peoples of Africa could hardly be more dramatic.

As a sequel to the imperialist defeat in Indochina, the Ethiopian monarchy was overthrown, and political independence was won in Angola, Mozambique, and Guinea-Bissau; this in turn strengthened the mass liberation struggles in Zimbabwe, Namibia, and South Africa.

The defeat makes it more difficult for Washington to engage in a new adventure on the mainland of Asia or Africa (where the sympathies of Afro-Americans constitute an additional formidable obstacle). Not a single other

imperialist power—neither Japan, West Germany, Britain, France, nor any combination of them—is strong enough militarily and politically to escalate aggressions in Asia or Africa to the level reached by imperialism in Indochina, Algeria, or even Malaya.

This does not mean that the imperialists are incapable of engaging in military actions such as those that were initially used in the war in Indochina. Quite the contrary, as is shown by the steps taken by France in Chad, Zaïre, Western Sahara, Djibouti, and the Comoro Islands; Belgium, France, Britain, and the United States in Zaïre; Britain in South Arabia; South Africa in Angola; Israel in Lebanon; and the involvement of imperialist troops under the United Nations flag in Lebanon.

The weakening of imperialist capacity to smash the colonial revolution by military means does not, however, reflect a decline in military striking power. The weakness is on the political level. One of the ways Washington is attempting to overcome this political weakness is by reorganizing the international imperialist alliance and assigning others greater “responsibility” for supplying surrogate forces. Eventually this would involve Japan in East Asia, and West Germany in North and Central Africa. They are grooming South Africa to play an increased role in Southern Africa and Israel in its border zone in the Middle East. Meanwhile, evidence has mounted that Israel has become a junior nuclear power, and that South Africa has the same goal.

While the Japanese and West German imperialists are considering joining the nuclear club, the domestic and international political obstacles they face remain formidable. Strong countertendencies must be noted; for example, Washington’s fear that West Germany and France (with Britain and Japan as possible junior partners) might challenge the American lead in the production of advanced nuclear weapons and delivery systems, one of the strategic domains in which American imperialism still holds a near monopoly in relation to its allies-competitors.

9. Because of the repercussions of the American defeat in Indochina, the Soviet bureaucracy has gained a greater margin for maneuver. It is utilizing this margin to strengthen its bargaining position within the framework of an overall policy of “peaceful coexistence” or “détente” with imperialism. Its moves include granting military aid to certain national liberation movements which the Kremlin believes will advance its diplomatic interests.

Washington seeks to stop the Soviet and Chinese bureaucracies from giving any material aid to national liberation struggles. It wants them to join in overall “settlements,” the aim of which is to strangle the revolutionary mass movement. This policy has scored some successes in the Middle East with regard to the Palestinian revolution. It seems to be succeeding in areas where the Chinese bureaucracy previously aided local guerrilla forces. Imperialist pressure for similar turns in Africa has already made significant progress in enlisting the Chinese bureaucracy. Washington will tighten the squeeze on the Kremlin in the near future in association with the general haggling over armaments.

One should not be taken in by the periodic negotiations on “disarmament.” Both imperialism and the Soviet bureaucracy require a certain degree of control over escalation of the arms race, since it imposes bigger and bigger strains on the economy, above all on the economy

of the Soviet Union, which still is substantially below the productive power of American capitalism. However, the basic trend is not toward disarmament but toward the development of ever more fiendish weapons. Imperialist expansionism is the root cause of this race that threatens to end in nuclear war. The worse the overall economic, social, and political situation of capitalism becomes, the more sharply this trend will emerge, as Carter’s brandishing of the “neutron bomb” shows.

It is the duty of revolutionary Marxists to warn the masses that any hope that an uneasy but lasting peace can be established through a balance of fear or balance of deterrents only furthers the risk on nuclear annihilation. This risk will hang over the world as long as capitalism survives. It can be eliminated only through a victory of the socialist revolution in the United States and in the other capitalist countries possessing nuclear weapons.

The fact that there can be no lasting peace as long as capitalism survives should not lead to the conclusion that the “détente” policies pursued by the imperialists and the Soviet bureaucracy are just maneuvers to fool the masses of the world. Not only do both of these reactionary social forces have a common interest in maintaining the worldwide status quo despite their different social nature and historical interests, but the very weight of the armaments race and the real threat of triggering a nuclear world war make it imperative for these forces to attempt periodically to *organize* the arms race, which they are neither willing nor capable of stopping.

Thus in the 1969-73 period a series of limited agreements between Washington and Moscow were reached, of which the SALT I agreement was the high point. But quantitative limitations on the arms race inevitably increased the premium upon qualitative advances. Hence the push toward cruise missiles, neutron bombs, “classical” weapons of destructive capabilities comparable to those of the first A-bomb, and the search for radical new advances in arms technology. Hence also the crisis over SALT II and the spate of anti-Soviet propaganda and imperialist black-mail motivated in part by the economic crisis and the rise of the African revolution.

However, the very nature of a nuclear war indicates that a final phase antedating a third world war has not been reached. The situation is not desperate enough to cause American imperialism to choose that way out. In particular, the key political and social preconditions for a catastrophe of that scope do not exist. No crushing defeat of the Western, above all the American, proletariat has been administered. The toiling masses of these countries are not demoralized or atomized. Their combativity is such that they will not join their ruling class in a mad scheme of collective nuclear suicide. Those who talk about the inevitability or imminence of World War III criminally underestimate what is at stake for all of humanity, and irresponsibly consider that the key battles of the world proletariat have already been lost without a fight.

10. The regimes of the stronger semicolonial countries are continuing to play their role as regional supplements to the imperialist police, for which they are lavishly equipped with modern weapons as in the cases of the Brazilian army in Latin America, the Iranian and Saudi Arabian armies in the Middle East, and the South Korean army in East Asia. Brazil and Iran have indicated their desire to become “nuclear powers.”

The emergence of such regimes is based on advances in industrialization. A series of semicolonial countries have now reached an intermediary position between the highly industrialized and the most backward countries. This applies to Brazil, Mexico, and Argentina, and to a lesser degree to South Korea, Iran, and Saudi Arabia. By the size of the working class, weight of industrial output, amount of exports, rate of capital accumulation, and the appearance of native banking groups capable of participating in finance-capital operations, the ruling classes of these countries today have at their disposal a much broader material basis than in the past.

One should not conclude from this trend that these countries have become independent imperialist, "subimperialist," or semi-imperialist powers. Quite the contrary. Their social structure remains that of semicolonies, not that of imperialist powers. And as a result of semi-industrialization, their technological dependence on imperialism is greater than ever, their "national" bourgeoisie is engaging more and more in "joint ventures" with imperialist multinational corporations, and their indebtedness to imperialist banks and monetary institutions is constantly increasing.

Likewise, the social and political instability of these countries and the narrow political base of rule cause the regimes to lean heavily upon military and political support by imperialism. This instability is increased and not reduced by their successes at semi-industrialization. These successes generally follow a pattern of economic development (sometimes referred to as the "Brazilian pattern") in which the standard of living of the industrial working class and the poor is initially lowered in a draconian way—the function of the dictatorships ruling these countries is to make such a lowering possible. The narrowing of the internal market for industrial goods resulting from this pattern makes long-term cumulative capitalist growth unattainable in these countries, and demonstrates that they cannot pass beyond the state of semi-industrialization as long as capitalism endures. In recent years, the overall gap in per capita income between the imperialist and semicolonial countries has increased, and this increase is all the more striking if one takes into consideration the huge social inequalities which exist in semicolonial countries.

In the 1973-74 global upsurge of inflation and in the world recession that followed, the semicolonial economies suffered far more severe setbacks than the economies of the imperialist powers. In the industrially advanced countries inflation hit 10 percent to 15 percent levels; in Latin America, Africa, and Asia, inflation reached 25 percent and higher. The downturns were sharper. In a series of Asian and Black African lands, there was mass starvation. Foreign indebtedness mounted, and the stability of many neocolonial regimes—from Zaïre to Peru—was shaken.

The emergence of more powerful ruling classes in some of these countries does not change any of the fundamental strategic tasks of permanent revolution facing the masses. But it does create new facets of political struggle involving tactical questions. In general one can state that the appearance of bourgeois nationalists like Cárdenas and Perón, who sought support against imperialism through mobilizing the masses, is quite unlikely. The last thing they want is to spark a process leading to another

Cordobazo. Part of the explanation for this is the increased fear of the bourgeoisie in face of the proletariat's rising social weight in the class struggle. However, the political tasks facing the proletariat in these countries are more difficult than in the past because the imperialists have learned to move forcefully against the first manifestations of a revolutionary upsurge.

Under these circumstances, socialist revolutions are precluded without the leadership of mass revolutionary Marxist parties. The building of such parties is a precondition for the successful overthrow of both imperialist domination and the rule of the indigenous ruling classes. The absence of such revolutionary Marxist leadership explains why counterrevolutionary coups like the ones in Indonesia, Brazil, Uruguay, Chile, and Argentina, could win and why the Indian bourgeoisie has been able to maintain its class rule virtually unchallenged since 1947 despite recurrent deep economic, social, and political crises.

After crushing defeats, the mass movement can rise again more rapidly in the semicolonies than in the imperialist countries because of the more explosive nature of many social and economic contradictions found there. But as long as the proletariat does not gain political independence and hegemony over the revolutionary masses as a whole (the peasantry, the urban petty bourgeoisie, and the poor), the danger remains acute of a repetition of the upsurge, test of strength, defeat, dictatorship cycle, which has been strikingly exemplified in Bolivia and Argentina, where this cycle has been repeated three times in the last twenty-five years.

11. In the main areas of the semicolonial world some general features of the struggle between revolution and counterrevolution should be noted.

* * *

Latin America constitutes that part of the semicolonial area displaying the greatest semi-industrialization, growth of the proletariat as a class (i.e., percentage of wage earners in the total population), urbanization, and change in composition of the ruling "bloc of classes" (with a mounting predominance of indigenous monopoly capitalists linked both to foreign "multinationals" and to the state bureaucracy that is administering an important sector of the economy). The traditional forms of working-class mass organizations (essentially mass trade unions) such as those in Argentina, Mexico, and Bolivia have remained under the predominant political influence of bourgeois nationalist demagoguery or reformist misleadership. But the political control of these leaderships over the working class is coming under challenge as a result of the growing weight of the proletariat, its periodic explosive combativity, and the very nature of the austerity policies that the Latin American bourgeoisie has to apply under present circumstances in order to step up capital accumulation, and that leave little room for even temporary economic concessions to the masses. Hence the inability of the Latin American bourgeoisie at this stage to find a basis for their rule in the consent of the masses.

The deepening class contradictions between the Latin American proletariat and the indigenous bourgeoisie offer favorable conditions for the conquest of political class independence. This is now the main point on the agenda

after the big defeats of the Latin American revolution.

The contradiction between the mounting strength of the proletariat and its lag in political class consciousness and independence, owing to the influence of Stalinism, the Social Democracy, and petty-bourgeois nationalism, plus the failure of the leadership of the Cuban revolution to project a revolutionary Marxist strategy, opens the possibility for reactionary dictatorships to win and to temporarily consolidate their rule. At the same time, the necessity to resort to coups indicates the shaky character of these dictatorships and the possibility of their early disintegration and collapse in face of an upsurge by the masses. The capacity of the mass movement to rise again and to challenge both the dictatorship and the employers undermines the usefulness of the dictatorship in the eyes of the bourgeoisie, increasing the probability of "liberalization" maneuvers and even reconquest by the masses of basic democratic rights.

The series of defeats of the Latin American revolution, opened by the establishment of the Brazilian military dictatorship in 1964 and reaching its most murderous pitch with the Pinochet coup in Chile in 1973, seems to have come to an end with the military coup in Argentina in 1976. While the coup there signified a severe defeat for the Latin American proletariat, and through murder, arrests, and massive layoffs largely broke up the layer of vanguard workers that had come to the fore in the factories and the unions from the Cordobazo up to the general strike of 1976, it did not succeed in crushing in a fascist-like way the organized Argentine workers movement as did the coups in Brazil and especially Chile. The Argentine working class has been able to engage in organized defensive struggles, as exemplified by the strikes of 1977 and 1978. This in turn has favored a rebirth of the mass movement, especially in Brazil, Bolivia, and Peru, where the masses are rising again in broader and broader struggles that are wresting important concessions from the military dictatorships, thus undermining them.

Attempts to return to constitutional and civilian rule cannot be excluded under these circumstances; it is even possible to visualize this or that "liberal" military dictatorship taking a permissive attitude toward working-class organizations. But in view of the explosive social and economic contradictions, long periods of relatively stable bourgeois democracy are not on the agenda in Latin America.

* * *

In Black Africa, with the defeat of Portuguese colonialism, the transfer of governmental power to the Black ruling classes has been completed throughout the continent, with the notable exception of most of Southern Africa.

Angola constituted one of the main battlefields. Washington sought to intervene through use of the CIA and through backing a military invasion mounted by the racist regime in South Africa. These efforts were beaten back by the MPLA government in Angola with the assistance of Cuban troops. The aid of the Cubans was decisive in defeating Washington's imperialist scheme and in driving the South African invaders out of the country.

This gave a huge impulse to the struggle in Southern Africa. The position of the white settler regime has become unviable, and imperialism has been forced to intensify its

attempts to find a neocolonialist solution that will protect its interests and that can be presented as embodying Black majority rule. But London and Washington have so far failed to persuade the Zimbabwe liberation fighters to give up their struggle, which destabilizes the whole region and thwarts the attempts by imperialism to reestablish its dominance in Southern Africa. In Namibia, too, imperialism is obliged to undertake the same neocolonialist venture. But the struggle of the South West Africa People's Organisation, in the context of the stubbornness of the white settlers and the Vorster regime in defense of their privileges, is making such a solution very difficult.

In Zimbabwe, Namibia, and South Africa, the last bastions of colonialism in Africa, the rise of mass struggles has signaled the beginning of the end of racist rule. The unfolding struggles in industrialized South Africa—where an indigenous white bourgeoisie and its racist state are pitted against a powerful Black working class and its allies—will be especially important for the course of the African revolution as a whole.

The Haile Selassie regime was toppled by mass struggles and mass mobilizations of the previously superexploited serfs and oppressed nationalities of the feudal Ethiopian empire. These have continued on a scale not previously seen in Africa. A case in point is the development of the Eritrean struggle for independence. The fact that the Dergue regime is not willing to break with either world capitalism or private property does not lessen the importance of the mass mobilizations that have made Ethiopia a unique example of national and class struggle.

The gains made by the Ethiopian revolution up to now are substantial. They include: (a) A far-reaching agrarian reform. (b) A drive to eliminate all vestiges of slavery and feudalism. (c) A series of nationalizations, including banking and credit, public utilities, natural resources, and some industry. (d) The separation of church and state. (e) The spread of primary education as part of an initial drive against illiteracy.

While opposing all attempts by imperialism and its stooges to stop, reverse, or channel the revolutionary process in Ethiopia, it is the duty of revolutionary Marxists, here as elsewhere in the semicolonies, to struggle for independent organization of the workers and poor peasants, self-determination for the oppressed nationalities, and defense of their specific rights against all their opponents, including the Dergue.

Under the present circumstances of growing imperialist aggression against the African revolution and stepped-up ideological war against Cuba and the Soviet Union, it is imperative that anti-imperialist and revolutionary Marxist forces everywhere in the world combine their defense of the African revolution with strong support for the right of independence for the Eritrean people. The Cuban and Soviet governments should reject participating in any invasion of Eritrean territory or any attempt by the Dergue to reestablish Ethiopian rule in Eritrea. Withdraw the Ethiopian troops!

Cuban recognition of the right of the Eritreans to decide their own fate would strengthen the defense of the Cuban workers state against imperialism. To follow an opposite course would lead to negative results, injuring not only the Cuban revolution but also the important revolutionary gains made in Ethiopia itself. World imperialism, with increased capacity to maneuver in the region, would be the ultimate gainer.

In all the independent Black African countries the government and state are bourgeois. The transfers of power have resulted in a shift from direct to indirect imperialist rule, with imperialism still maintaining super-exploitation through its key positions of economic power. However, marked unevenness both in the development of classes and in the accumulation of private capital makes it necessary to distinguish those countries marked by the rule of an emerging bourgeois class, allied or not to precapitalist ruling strata (Nigeria, Ivory Coast, Senegal, Kenya, Gabon, and Zaïre are examples), from those where it would be more precise to speak of the rule of the nationalist petty bourgeoisie (Tanzania, Ethiopia since the downfall of Selassie, Guinea-Bissau, Angola, and Mozambique). However, the links which this petty bourgeoisie maintains with imperialist monopolies, its dependence upon the capitalist world market, and its attachment to private property (including on the land) make it a culture medium for the development of a propertied indigenous bourgeois class.

Thus the Marxist analysis of classes, the government, and the state in the independent countries of Black Africa destroys any justification for believing that there exists an "African socialist" road different from that of building a revolutionary party based upon the proletariat.

* * *

In the Arab world, the Palestinian resistance movement has ended in a political blind alley following defeats suffered under the combined blows of Zionist terrorism, imperialist intervention and pressure, repression by reactionary Arab forces like the Hashemite monarchy and the Maronite reactionary militias in Lebanon, and the tolerant passivity of the other Arab governments as well as of the Soviet bureaucracy.

The difficulties were compounded by Sadat's capitulation to Begin, which gave a green light to the Israeli government to launch its long-planned blitzkrieg against Lebanon.

The crisis of the Palestinian resistance movement was deepened by Sadat's capitulation to Zionism, the growing willingness of Syria to likewise arrive at a *modus vivendi* with the Zionist state, and—under the pressure from the Arab ruling classes, American imperialism, and the Soviet bureaucracy—the growing inclination of Fateh to adapt to these pressures, its verbal protestations notwithstanding. All these forces see in the mass resistance of the Palestinian Arabs against the Zionist state the main if not the only obstacle toward "stabilization" of the status quo in the Middle East, i.e., consolidation of Israel, and recognition of the domination of American imperialism. They are ready to maneuver with any political apparatus, including that of the PLO, in order to achieve the goal of putting an end to that resistance. While Begin and the Zionist establishment exercise a degree of tactical autonomy, which enables them to embarrass the White House at times, they do not have the power to alter imperialism's grand design for the Middle East. In fact, they agree with that design and understand their role as chief agents in carrying it out. Thus a whole cycle of Arab petty-bourgeois nationalism, which reached its height with the radicalization of the masses in the late 1950s and the early 1960s under the label of "Nasserism," is coming to an end.

The coalition of hostile international forces which the

heroic Palestinian resistance has had to face is so formidable that a military victory cannot be achieved against them by the relatively small forces of the Palestinian Arab masses themselves scattered in Lebanon, Jordan, and the Zionist state.

These objective difficulties have been compounded by a political line that places reliance on material support from the Arab regimes, guerrilla war, and token aid from Moscow.

While material aid should be sought from all sources, the best course open to the Palestinian resistance is to try to help mobilize support among the millions of workers and poor peasants from Morocco to Iraq. Such support on a sufficient scale, combined with the struggles of other Arab workers and peasants, can change the relationship of forces in favor of the Palestinian resistance. But such a broadening of revolutionary ferment is irreconcilable with a policy of political subordination to the ruling classes and governments of the Arab states. A strategy that accords with the process of permanent revolution is required. This means above all the construction of a mass revolutionary Marxist party whose program would foster the development of independent organization and mobilization of the workers and peasants against imperialism, Zionism, and the Arab ruling classes.

Points of support for the Palestinian resistance movement should be sought everywhere, including among the Israeli masses. The appearance of a peace movement within the Israeli settler state itself proves that the population is uneasy over Begin's war policy. This antiwar sentiment can expand swiftly into political opposition, and shake the stability of the Israeli government.

Another point that should be noted is a shift of public opinion in the United States. Suspicion of the Israeli regime and criticism of its policies have been fueled by aggressive actions such as the Zionist invasion of Lebanon and by the continued Israeli occupation and colonization in the West Bank, Gaza Strip, and Sinai peninsula. Israel's deepening international isolation and the continuing resistance of the Palestinian masses living under Zionist occupation will help to keep the issue of Palestine in the center of world attention.

The emergence of a powerful and increasingly restive and active proletariat in Egypt—as shown by the massive antigovernmental demonstrations in January 1977—and the appearance of proletarian class struggles in the three Maghreb countries (Tunisia, Algeria, Morocco) are further indications of the new opportunities facing revolutionary Marxists in the Arab countries. The upsurge of workers struggles in Egypt is related to the crisis of petty-bourgeois Arab nationalism. Besides a reaction to the massive American buildup of Israel's military forces after 1973, it is both an expression of the fact that Sadat's economic "liberalization" policy did not reduce but rather increased the tremendous misery of the Egyptian masses and an expression of the refusal of these masses to accept a life of misery in return for anti-Zionist and anti-imperialist rhetoric. Sadat's desperate maneuver to reach an understanding with the Zionist state is an attempt at finding an economic solution to this crisis by reducing the burden of military outlays and increasing the involvement of imperialist and Zionist capital in the development of Egyptian capitalism. But it has failed to suppress mass discontent and mass militancy.

In Iran a series of massive antiregime protests began at the end of 1977. The protests spread beyond the campuses and intellectual circles to the streets of the largest cities of Iran. The army was required to put them down.

The combination of accelerated semi-industrialization, expansion of the bourgeoisie and proletariat, decomposition of the traditional village, large-scale urbanization, uprooting and pauperization of huge layers of the population, mounting explosiveness of the national question, and the erosion of the dictatorship of the Pahlavi dynasty is creating favorable conditions for an upheaval which, if it succeeds in overthrowing the hated shah, will accelerate the spread of revolutionary upheavals throughout the Middle East.

* * *

On the Indian subcontinent, the working class has suffered serious defeats as the result of the treacherous class-collaborationist and government coalition policies of the Communist Party of India and Communist Party of India (Marxist), and of the Lanka Sama Samaja Party and the Communist Party in Sri Lanka. The application of this policy at the end of the 1960s and beginning of the 1970s shattered a widening class-struggle offensive, divided and demoralized the working class and peasantry, and enabled the bourgeoisie to gain the initiative and open a general reactionary anti-working-class offensive despite the severity of the economic and social crisis and its own inner divisions.

The pattern of right-wing offensives that emerged in the subcontinent has been extended to Pakistan and Bangladesh as well, where the ruling military dictatorships are severely repressing workers struggles, workers organizations, and the right to strike.

These offensives reflect the fundamental inability of the ruling classes to seriously challenge the backwardness and stagnation inherited from colonialism. In the best of cases they have applied only stopgap measures. The constant increase in the number of landless peasants and rural laborers, the huge dimensions of unemployment and underemployment (especially among the youth), the absence of any tangible effects of industrialization on the standard of living of the masses (which has declined and continues to decline in most areas), and the continuation of national oppression make any durable stabilization of reactionary regimes unlikely. However, the reemergence of powerful mass movements, especially of the working class, depends increasingly on leadership changes in the organized labor movement and the reappearance of a militant mass working-class movement capable of offering a convincing socialist alternative to bourgeois politics.

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In Southeast Asia and East Asia, the pernicious effects of the Stalinist policies of both Moscow and Peking are canceling the stimulating effect of the victory of the Indochinese revolution. Peking's policy of treating "Soviet social imperialism" as the main enemy—a reactionary bureaucratic answer to the Kremlin's no less reactionary refusal to consider Peking's claims in the disputed issues—has already led to reconciliation with the reactionary ASEAN bloc bourgeois governments. This has further isolated the Thai, Burmese, Malaysian, Filipino, and New

Guinean forces engaged in guerrilla war. The military conflict between Cambodia and Vietnam, and the growing conflict between Vietnam and China, have also dealt a heavy blow to the attractiveness of the Vietnamese revolution among the working people in the area. These are the logical consequences of the Stalinist theory of building "socialism in one country," which the respective bureaucratic castes in each of these countries hold in common.

In Thailand mobilizations of students, workers, and peasants of exceptional scope occurred from 1973 to 1976. This explains the violence of the coup d'état in October 1976. The current development of the anti-imperialist struggle is not only an echo of the American defeat in Vietnam; it also reflects such changes in Thailand as a growing agrarian crisis, exodus from the countryside, increase in the number of wage earners, unemployment and massive underemployment, and aggravation of the unevenness of regional development.

However, the rottenness and violently repressive nature of many of the governments (especially the Thai, Indonesian, and South Korean dictatorships) have made them highly unpopular. Hence the negative consequences of Stalinist policies will slow down but not reverse the trend toward rising mass resistance against the ruling classes.

12. Despite its efforts, imperialism has not succeeded in establishing economic, social, and political stability in the semicolonial countries. There will not be, and cannot be, any "new world economic order" so long as world capitalism exists. The capitalist system cannot provide a basis for any order other than the one based upon exploitation, which involves superexploitation of the weakest.

The rise in strength of a handful of indigenous ruling classes because of semi-industrialization and an increase in revenues from oil resources (in the cases of Iran, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia both phenomena coincide) means a limited redistribution of the total mass of surplus value extracted from wage earners on a world scale to the advantage of these ruling classes and at the expense of weaker neocolonial bourgeoisies and the imperialists. This is the price which imperialism has to pay in the long run for the switch from direct to indirect rule in the colonial world under the pressure of the insurgent masses.

But imperialism is seeking to shift these losses upon the masses of the imperialist countries and of the weaker semicolonies themselves, thereby adding to the motor force impelling the workers and their allies to move in the direction of socialist revolution in both sectors of the international capitalist world. Thus the international crisis of capitalism aggravates the instability of the regimes in the so-called Third World. Nonetheless, the semicolonial world is at present undergoing the deepest crisis of anti-imperialist leadership since World War II because of the role played by the Soviet and Chinese bureaucracies.

Peking's capitulation to the White House was a blow to the entire struggle for national liberation. In Latin America, the defeats resulting from the guerrilla strategy during the 1960s, and the evolution of Cuba's policy with regard to some regimes and the Communist parties on the continent, have eroded the influence of Guevarism. In the Arab world, the bankruptcy of the petty-bourgeois nationalist leaderships has isolated the struggles in South Arabia and placed the Palestinian resistance in a political blind alley.

The ensuing vacuum has enabled Moscow to take the initiative temporarily and recover from its loss of influence in various liberation movements. The guerrilla actions undertaken by some of the Communist parties in South-east Asia and by the anti-imperialist movements in a number of Asian and African countries cannot mask the depth of this overall crisis of political leadership in the colonial and semicolonial world, a crisis marking the close of the chapter in the history of national liberation struggles that opened as one of the consequences of World War II.

The general trend of revolutionary development in the semicolonial countries can be determined by the formula of the permanent revolution. Our political tasks are basically determined by that pattern. We endeavor to build mass Leninist-type parties in order to accomplish these tasks. In most of these countries, many mass struggles and the revolution itself can start around issues belonging historically to the tasks of bourgeois-democratic revolutions:

agrarian reform, democratic rights, Constituent Assembly, separation of church and state, national liberation, and unification of the country.

Because of the degree of industrialization and proletarianization reached in several of these countries, however, revolutionary mass struggles do not always start around such issues. They can be touched off by issues typically advanced by the proletariat in the class struggle. Revolutionary Marxists understand the logic of permanent revolution in the semicolonial countries, which includes the struggle for immediate gains. While never abandoning the struggle for anti-imperialist and democratic goals which figure among the key revolutionary tasks in these countries, they stubbornly fight for the organizational and political independence and unity of the proletariat of all nationalities as a necessary precondition for the conquest of power by the proletariat allied to the poor peasantry. Without a workers state, the anti-imperialist and democratic tasks of the revolution cannot be fully realized.

III.

The Crisis of the Bureaucratic Castes and the Prospects of Political Revolution

13. The recent evolution of the Soviet Union, East European countries, and China strikingly confirms the Trotskyist analysis of their social relations, state structures, and dialectical development of the basic contradiction between their planned economies on the one hand and the parasitism of the bureaucratic caste on the other.

a. The noncapitalist nature of the economy of these countries is underlined by the fact that alone among the industrialized countries of the world, the USSR, Czechoslovakia, East Germany, Hungary, and Poland were not drawn into the worldwide recession of 1974-75. They did not undergo an overall reduction of industrial output; they experienced no massive unemployment. At the same time, these societies proved unable to insulate themselves from the effects of large-scale fluctuations of prices and trade on the international capitalist market. The recession helped expose once again the reactionary Stalinist myth that "socialism" has been established there, and that these economies could develop without fundamental internal contradictions, in isolation from the world economy and the international class struggle.

The productive forces in the Comecon countries are hampered more and more by the national framework in which they developed. Rapid and balanced development in Eastern Europe, the USSR, and China requires an international division of labor. Hence the growing pressures to dismantle the old Stalinist autarchic framework. But the expansion of economic links with capitalist economies brings the world market into conflict with economic planning. Insofar as the governments of Eastern Europe continue to seek stepped-up production of consumer goods through increased imports of advanced Western machinery, their direct dependence on Western capital and their vulnerability to the effects of capitalist crises increase. For this reason, these bureaucracies are forced to maneuver ever more desperately between the demands of the working

class at home and the pressures of the imperialist bourgeoisies. The blowup in Poland in 1976 was a good example of this. In anticipation of increased exports, the bureaucrats borrowed heavily from Western banks. With the failure to realize these plans owing to the recession in the capitalist world, the bureaucrats cut back food subsidies; and the workers responded in their own way, staging militant mass demonstrations.

Within Comecon itself, the development of cooperation through a system of genuine international planning is blocked by the nationalist framework within which the Stalinist bureaucracies operate. This means that any decisive step forward toward international planning could be established only by *one* of the bureaucracies (clearly the strongest one, the Soviet bureaucracy) destroying the relative economic autonomy of the others. Yet the relationship of forces between the bureaucracies and the masses in East Europe precludes any attempt at direct and complete subordination of their economies to Moscow without risking a political explosion. Thus no thoroughgoing international division of labor is possible within the framework of Stalinist rule in Eastern Europe and the USSR.

These societies remain in transition between capitalism and socialism. Capitalism can still be restored, while the rule of the parasitic caste with its mismanagement and distortion of all social relations blocks a decisive advance toward socialism.

b. The hope of some currents that the bureaucracy might reform itself and enact radical reforms or carry out a "revolution from above" has proved illusory. The pressing objective need to end bureaucratic rule explains in part the growing differentiation and rifts in the ranks of the bureaucracy. But the ruling caste cannot voluntarily give up the monopoly of power that assures its special material and social privileges. Any reforms granted by the bureau-

crats are designed in the final analysis to maintain their power and privileges.

This is strikingly confirmed in the economic field. In a planned economy—which lacks the economic mechanisms for propelling increases in the productivity of labor such as those provided by capitalist competition—it becomes increasingly difficult to assure a steady growth of productivity without asserting the sovereignty of the direct producers over the planning process and in the management of the producing units. Yet democratically centralized planning presupposes the elimination of the power of the bureaucratic caste. The Stalinist mechanisms of assuring the extraction of a surplus by reducing mass consumption and by police terror become less and less successful with the transition to technologically advanced forms of industrial development, and the resultant development of a working class of heightened skill, cultural needs, and social weight. All attempts by the bureaucracy to reform the system of bureaucratically centralized planning have failed to achieve a qualitative leap in productivity. Only the conquest of workers democracy will make that possible.

c. On the other hand, the parasitism of the bureaucracy, which is more and more flagrant; its complete incapacity to reconcile the needs of social planning with the reactionary defense of its privileges; its inability to develop any specific ideology of its own; the continual appearance of differences in its ranks, show that what we are faced with is neither a new ruling class nor a new class society, but a perversion of the process of building a classless society. At times of extreme political crisis, and even in periods of increased tensions, the bureaucracy tends to split, one wing savagely defending a position marked by the most reactionary ideologies; the other wing bending to the pressure of the masses, who want to establish proletarian democracy. So far as the ruling caste was concerned, this was clearly the basic pattern of the East German uprising in 1953, of the Hungarian revolution in 1956, and of the “Prague spring” of 1968. It is the pattern already discernible in the revival of political life in Poland.

d. Only a political revolution, which eliminates any form of rule by a bureaucratic caste, can reopen the road toward building an international classless society. The coming political revolutions in the USSR, Eastern Europe, and China will not change those elements in the economic system inherited from the October revolution—collective property in the means of production, central planning, and the public monopoly of foreign trade—which are necessary prerequisites for the building of socialism. The introduction of proletarian democracy will, however, radically transform planning and economic management, both in content and form, and will among other benefits restore the friendly, mutually advantageous alliance with the peasantry. The political revolution will not be restricted to the superstructure. It will introduce great changes in the social infrastructure as well, including a decisive assertion of workers management of the economy, and the beginning of a transformation of family life.

e. The intermeshing of the crisis of capitalism and the crisis of the Stalinist bureaucratic castes points up once again the counterrevolutionary nature of Stalinism on a world scale. “Peaceful coexistence” and “détente” do not remove the threat of a nuclear world war. They are intended to help maintain the present division of the world

into “zones of influence” and prevent any decisive advance of world revolution. That objective contradicts the avowed goal of preventing war; for the danger of nuclear war can be overcome only by toppling capitalism in its key centers. The Stalinist bureaucracies cling to class-collaborationist policies, which in the final analysis weaken the defense of the economic base that is the source of their special privileges. This seemingly irrational behavior can be explained only by fear of a new upsurge of socialist revolution. If this should occur in the West, it would inspire a similar upsurge in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union. Not even Peking wants that.

Revolutionary Marxists likewise reject the parallel reactionary propaganda of Maoist origin, according to which two “superpowers” dominate world politics and economics, thus blocking any progress toward socialist revolution in the industrially advanced capitalist countries. This view, like the concept of “peaceful coexistence,” writes off the possibility of a socialist revolution for decades to come. The reactionary nature of this position, and the no less reactionary political conclusions drawn from it, such as justification of alliances with all kinds of bourgeois imperialist forces and reactionary semicolonial regimes, must be sharply opposed.

Revolutionary Marxists uphold the need to defend the Soviet Union against imperialist attack. Any attempt to restore capitalism in the countries where it has been abolished would constitute a giant step backward for humanity. But the conflict with imperialism must be clearly distinguished from the conflict between the oppressed masses in the workers states and the ruling bureaucracies, regardless of any confusion among the political dissidents resulting from the decades of Stalinist dictatorship. Against the bureaucracy the cause of the masses must be espoused.

The necessary defense of the Soviet Union against imperialism does not and cannot imply any form of “ideological united front” with the bureaucracy against its political opponents. In its ideology, the bureaucracy does not offer a “variant of Marxism.” As a parasitic social layer, its ideology covers up its oppressive nature. It has to be overthrown.

f. While the labor bureaucracies of the capitalist world are incapable of offering a future beyond capitalist exploitation and the limitations of bourgeois democracy, and the Stalinist bureaucracies of the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe remain tied to the perspective of “peaceful coexistence,” i.e., the international status quo—the permanent division of the working masses of Europe between East and West—the Fourth International struggles for the historical perspective of a real unification of the continent in a United Socialist States of Europe. In this giant step forward, both imperialism and Stalinism will be replaced by the free association of the laboring masses in an international federation of socialist democracies open to the peoples of all other continents who free themselves from the rule of capital.

14. The fact that a Stalinist bureaucracy has ruled the Soviet Union for at least fifty years, and that similar bureaucracies have ruled Eastern Europe and China for decades, raises theoretical and political questions to which revolutionary Marxists must give clear answers. While it is correct to present the Stalinist government as a regime of crisis in the USSR, one has to add that it has exhibited

greater resistance to mass dissatisfaction, despite repeated crises, than was originally thought possible by revolutionary Marxists. The reasons for this combination must be explained.

The power of the Soviet bureaucracy props up bureaucratic rule in all of Eastern Europe. Through direct military intervention, the Kremlin saved the rule of the bureaucracy in East Germany (1953), Hungary (1956), and Czechoslovakia (1968) when those dictatorships were crumbling under the blows of impetuous mass movements—the beginning of political revolutions. Moscow indirectly saved the bureaucracy in Poland through outside pressure and fear of open intervention in 1956 and again in the early 1970s.

In the Soviet Union, the rise of opposition on an overt mass scale has been slow to reappear since the crushing of the Left Opposition. Fifty years of Stalinist terror have politically and organizationally atomized the Soviet working class. The physical liquidation of cadres broke the continuity of experience with the generations of prerevolutionary and revolutionary Russia.

The defeat of attempted political revolutions in Eastern Europe, coupled with the absence of a successful socialist revolution and the establishment of proletarian democracy in any imperialist country, further hampers the recovery of the Soviet working class. It was precisely for that reason—to prevent an attractive “alternative model” from radically modifying the political situation in the USSR—that the Kremlin took the risk of crushing the “Prague spring.” The price that had to be paid for that crime was considered to be a lesser evil than the repercussions in the USSR and the other East European countries of a triumph of the political revolution in Czechoslovakia, an industrially advanced country with a powerful and politically advanced proletariat.

The uneven development of political consciousness, opposition, mass action, and mass organization, which placed the East European workers at a higher level than those of the USSR, still left the bureaucracy in the USSR powerful enough to block a definitive victory of the political revolution in Eastern Europe. The absence of such a victory in turn has slowed down the militancy of the Soviet proletariat. This was predominant in the survival of bureaucratic rule in the face of deeper and deeper crises.

However, since the beginning of the 1970s, signs have been accumulating that this pattern is beginning to yield opposite results. The latest phase in the crisis of world Stalinism, marked by the appearance of so-called Eurocommunism, brings in fresh stimulation from abroad conducive to deepening the political challenge to bureaucratic rule. The emergence of movements in Poland and Czechoslovakia in defense of constitutional rights helps in the same way, as does the rising resistance of the oppressed nationalities. The first forms of independent working-class protest have indeed appeared in the USSR, be it on a very modest scale. The continued production of underground samizdat material despite intensive police efforts to stamp it out is another telling indicator. The reduction of opportunities to rise in the Soviet hierarchy takes away another obstacle to the revitalization of the working class—the hope of finding an individual solution to the “social question.” All these developments, combined with approaching revolutionary openings in the imperialist countries, create more favorable conditions for a new

political awakening of the Soviet working class.

These more favorable conditions for challenging the rule of the bureaucracy reflect structural changes in Soviet and East European society. The creation of developed industrial economies, with increasingly large layers of highly skilled workers, has made police terror more costly to the bureaucracy. Economic and social reprisals are used more often than open police repression of the broad masses. But the Stalinist police apparatus moves swiftly to crush any attempt to mount an organized political challenge to the established order.

The Stalinist bureaucracy was able to appeal with some success to the younger generation on the basis of the social and economic transformations in the USSR during the industrialization period and in Eastern Europe after World War II. But today one of the most explosive and intractable problems confronting the Stalinist bureaucracy is a deepgoing ideological and cultural revolt amongst youth.

In and of itself the relative stability of the bureaucratic rule during the last two decades has created an increasing number of political problems. Inasmuch as the leading personnel of the bureaucracy is no longer periodically shaken up by violent purges, it tends to become older, making the problem of succession more and more difficult to solve, especially in the total absence of democracy. This fact, combined with increasingly difficult choices in the allocation of resources—military vs. civilian outlays, expansion of consumption vs. expansion of investment, expansion of the raw material basis vs. expansion of technological renewal—and the active opposition of the caste to the toilers exercising any voice in these decisions, makes the very succession to Brezhnev a complicated and potentially explosive problem for the bureaucracy. The atomization of the toiling masses reinforces the growing isolation of the top layers from society, living in an artificial world cut off from the world of the average citizen.

15. One of the most striking developments in Poland and Czechoslovakia under bureaucratic rule has been the gradual appearance of a political opposition which the bureaucracy handles with a degree of circumspection. This also holds in part for Hungary, Yugoslavia, and even the USSR. In Poland, the opposition movement has become very broad, and oppositionists have gained a fairly continuous experience in public and relatively large-scale forms of political activity.

There are varied reasons for this phenomenon. First of all, the depth of the contradictions, the obvious impasse into which the bureaucracy has steered the economy, the universal bitterness over its repressive measures, the deeply felt need for thoroughgoing democratization of political, economic, and social life have created favorable conditions for a more audacious public expression of political criticism and of more general grievances.

A new generation has grown up with confidence in its capacity to protest gross violations of civil rights and to utilize avenues of public protest. Striking examples of such actions include the demonstration by tens of thousands in Poland in opposition to proposed changes in the Polish constitution at the end of 1975, the widespread demands for a parliamentary inquiry into police brutality after the workers strikes in June 1976 in Poland, the extensive protests against the expulsion of Wolf Biermann from East Germany, the widespread refusal of people in Czechoslova-

kia to participate in the officially obligatory campaign of denouncing Charter 77, the use of the right to strike by 35,000 miners in Romania in August 1977 over pay and working conditions, and the public demonstration in Georgia against the ban on Georgian as the official language of the republic in April 1978. Such an attitude toward civil rights becomes extremely dangerous for the bureaucracy in periods of social instability. The bureaucracy is faced with the dilemma of reverting to massive repression—which itself could produce an even more violent popular response—or tolerating certain opposition currents.

A similar striking development is the more and more prominent role the resistance to national oppression and resentment against national inequalities is playing in the general struggle to break out of the straitjacket of bureaucratic rule. In the Soviet Union, in which barely 50 percent of the population considers itself Russian, the activities of the Ukrainians, the Baltic nationalities, the nationalities of the Caucasus, the Tatars, and the Soviet Jews, for instance, are particularly troublesome to the Stalinist bureaucrats, since they continually raise issues associated with the right to national self-determination. In Georgia, Armenia, and Azerbaijan, demonstrations in April 1978 over the question of national language rights won some concessions from the government.

Moscow's attempt to remove language guarantees shows the intent of the bureaucracy to eliminate all vestiges of the Leninist nationality policy. It also shows that memory of this policy exists on such a broad scale that it cannot be eliminated without great struggles, and that battles in this field can erupt quickly and win concessions.

Similarly in the East European countries, the issue of national liberation has become acute under the oppressive economic and military domination of the Kremlin, a striking example being the struggle of the Czechoslovak people for withdrawal of the Warsaw Pact troops. In Eastern Europe, Stalinist dictatorship and the practice of building "socialism in one country" have not only blocked solution of the national problem but made it more explosive.

A dispute has also arisen over the denial of national rights to the Hungarian minority in Romania. And the Romanian regime itself has renewed claims that the Moldavians incorporated into the USSR are part of the Romanian people. Bulgaria and Yugoslavia sharply disagree over the question of Macedonia.

Another notable development is the decline in both the scope and the effectiveness of repression in the countries under bureaucratic rule. This is the product of many factors: a growing reluctance of large sectors of the bureaucracy to reinstall a Yezhov-type period in which they themselves could become individual targets; growing resistance in all other layers of the population to any form of terrorist measures such as Stalin utilized on a massive scale; growing effectiveness of international protests against repression, especially protests from the international labor movement itself; growing capacity of the victims of the repression to organize resistance, which is a major factor making repression less effective.

To be sure, repression remains heavy and is accompanied by hideous practices such as internment of political dissidents in psychiatric institutions where they are subjected to refined torture. Repressive measures will undoubt-

edly be intensified in the first stage of explosive mass movements. But its effectiveness in atomizing society and the working class, and blocking political dissidence through the use of sheer terror, has been considerably undermined.

In addition, a series of structural changes has encouraged the reappearance of oppositional tendencies. Economic growth and scientific-technological progress require a more liberal climate, at least in the field of the natural sciences and debates over investment and management alternatives. For reasons of economic self-defense, the bureaucracy has been forced to end the sealing off of Soviet society from foreign countries. This holds even more for Eastern Europe. The flow of ideas between the bourgeois countries and the states ruled by a bureaucratic caste has steadily increased. Contacts are multiplying between Soviet, East European, and Western citizens, primarily through scientific collaboration, exchange of students, and tourism.

In addition, industrial collaboration has involved a few contacts between Soviet workers and workers from the West. Thus the possibility of increasing collaborative thought and action between sectors of the Soviet, East European, and West European workers is gradually becoming stronger.

16. The predominant feature of the emerging opposition movements in Eastern Europe and the USSR is their commitment to struggling for democratic rights and civil liberties. They have been marked by a diverse political composition and the inclusion of nonsocialist and non-working-class ideologies. Despite the fact that for decades they have been pursuing a policy of siding with the bureaucracy in blocking any growth of popular mass movements in Eastern Europe, the Western bourgeoisie, in their "human rights" agitation, have painted up some of these antisocialists, the better to use them as symbols in the capitalist war against socialist ideas.

While a restoration of capitalism is still possible in these countries, the motive forces for such a restoration are not to be found among antisocialist ideologues inside the civil-rights movement, but primarily in the ingrained aggressiveness of international capitalism and the imperialist powers—who owe their prolonged survival to the counter-revolutionary strategy of Stalinism and reformism among other things—and in the restorationist forces inside the bureaucracy itself, and in sections of the newly rich among the petty bourgeoisie. Whether restorationist forces prevail depends upon the evolution of the social relationship of forces, both on a world scale and inside Eastern Europe and the USSR. And a favorable evolution of that social relationship of forces depends on the capacity of the proletariat to assert its rights, overcome its atomization, and transcend the discreditment of communism, socialism, and Marxism brought on by Stalinism. For revolutionary Marxists, the fight for civil and democratic rights is of fundamental importance in the struggle to overthrow the bureaucratic castes in Eastern Europe and the USSR.

In suppressing democratic rights, the Stalinist dictatorships regressed below the advances in this field promulgated by the great bourgeois-democratic revolutions that overturned feudalism. Besides upholding the democratic rights fought for in the revolutionary battles of the past, other reasons exist for insisting on the centrality of the struggle for these gains. Against a bureaucratic dictator-

ship in a society without private property, the conquest of self-determination by the masses in the political field necessitates the elimination of the control of the bureaucracy over production and social wealth. It is obvious that the atomized working class, more than any other social force, stands to gain from a conquest of democratic rights in the degenerated or deformed workers states. Anything that fosters a rise in working-class self-organization, self-confidence, and ability to develop independent political action, helps tip the scales in favor of political revolution and proletarian democracy—not restoration of capitalism. If one needed confirmation of this thesis, the balance sheet of the "Prague spring" provides ample evidence.

But precisely because the struggle for civil and democratic rights presents such a challenge to the bureaucracy, those engaged in the battle need to consider a series of overall programmatic and strategic questions. Just as the bureaucracy tries to link its tactics against civil-rights protest actions to the overall defense of its caste interests, so the tactics of revolutionary Marxists engaged in this movement must be conditioned by the requirements of the worldwide struggle for workers power and socialist democracy.

Revolutionary Marxists reject the notion that the masses in Eastern Europe and the USSR can turn to the imperialist governments of the West for help in winning democratic freedoms. Civil-rights campaigns centered on appeals to imperialist governments arouse false hopes as alternatives to mobilizing the masses. Revolutionary Marxists likewise reject all terrorist methods in the struggle for civil rights, since these go against the requirements of patiently working toward broader and broader mass mobilizations.

The struggle for democratic liberties cannot be pursued in isolation from the other demands of the toiling masses in Eastern Europe and the USSR of a political, social, or economic character. Only by combining the struggle for political rights with a rounded struggle in defense of the social interests of the masses can the struggle for socialist democracy be carried through to a victorious conclusion. Those who fail to see beyond bourgeois democracy will be unable to concretely mobilize the masses in a successful struggle for power against the Stalinist bureaucracies.

Revolutionary Marxists seek to establish the broadest possible unity of action around concrete demands. But they maintain their own political identity and independence, struggling for a political revolution, direct workers power, and world socialism. Therefore, they oppose converting ad hoc united fronts into organizations or currents defined by a confused and eclectic political program.

Above all, they combine this united-front activity with a relentless struggle against reactionary bourgeois or pre-bourgeois ideologies and political theories, which objectively help the Stalinist bureaucracy's attempts to smear the rising political opposition as proimperialist, and which represent additional stumbling blocks on the road toward socialist democracy. These tendencies are deeply anti-working-class and antisocialist. As the struggle broadens, drawing in more and more workers, a showdown with these reactionary forces will become increasingly unavoidable.

Revolutionary Marxists base their political perspectives neither upon waiting for spontaneous mass explosions, nor on the isolated conspiracies of small clandestine groups.

They count upon the dialectical interplay of programmatic clarification, organization of the vanguard and the masses, and mobilization of the masses. Without participating in the living struggles of the masses, no development of an experienced and conscious political leadership is possible.

Without conscious programmatic clarification and the organization of a Marxist vanguard, the mass movements themselves will be diverted, contained, and defeated by the bureaucracy. At the present stage of development in Eastern Europe, the USSR, and China, this means combining public actions with clandestine propaganda and the formation of discussion circles on a programmatic basis.

This combined struggle inside the workers states might appear difficult at first sight. But each step gained in independent organization of the workers will make the task easier. Revolutionary Marxists act inside the united fronts for democratic rights not only as the boldest and most effective fighters for genuine socialist democracy. They also act as uncompromising representatives of the immediate and historical interests of their own class—the working class.

If a political revolution flares up in one of the countries of Eastern Europe before it does in the USSR, the overwhelming military preponderance of the Soviet army does not automatically guarantee victory to the bureaucratic counterrevolution. In the case of Czechoslovakia, the Soviet bureaucracy paid a huge political price for its invasion. It was itself hesitant and divided over launching the attack.

The experience indicates the vital need to strengthen the links of the vanguard of the mass movements across the frontiers of the various East European countries, of the USSR, and toward the workers movements in the West. This increases the possibility of a rapid and powerful internationalist response to any use of troops by the Kremlin against the insurgent masses in Eastern Europe. This could convert the invasion into a disaster for the Soviet bureaucracy: splits within the internationalist bureaucratic alliance, broad mobilization of communist and socialist workers in the West in defense of the political revolution, widespread demoralization of the Soviet occupation forces, solidarity actions in the USSR, and a political crisis within the Soviet bureaucracy itself. Whatever the precise tempo and form of development of the political revolution in Eastern Europe, such an internationalist perspective is required for a definitive victory in the struggle for socialist democracy.

17. The general contents and basic trends of the political revolution in all those postcapitalist societies where it has been placed on the agenda can be judged from the main goals sought by the masses in the series of social explosions that began in the German Democratic Republic in 1953.

The program of the political revolution has thus been hammered out in living struggles. The main points include the elimination of the organs of mass repression, the conquest of political freedom for the toiling masses, the establishment of independence for the trade unions and of genuine proletarian democracy with its real control by the workers; diversity of parties or factions, abolition of the censorship, and assurance of the right to real ideological opposition in all spheres of social life. To consolidate these

gains requires the exercise of workers power through freely elected councils of the masses, the establishment of workers control and workers management, the modification of the decision-making powers of technicians so that they function as consultants and part of a ruling caste, and rebuilding the planning system so that the drain of parasitism is done away with in behalf of fulfilling the needs of the toiling population.

In sweeping away the reactionary bureaucratic structure and replacing it with proletarian democracy, the political revolution will exhibit its social character. It will end discrimination in all forms. The right of oppressed nationalities to exercise self-determination will be guaranteed—as it was under Lenin and Trotsky—up to and including separation if they so choose. The explosive nature of the national question will impose overhauling the relations of the republics in the Soviet Union. The way will be opened for women to come forward with their own special demands and the enactment of these demands into enforceable legislation. The same will hold for the youth, with transformation of the educational system and guaranteed provisions for jobs. As part of an internationalist foreign policy, the army will be democratized and placed at the disposal of the international proletariat as it was when it was built under Trotsky. The workers states will form a united front as a step toward integrating their economies in accordance with scientific planning.

Once this liberating process begins, it will sweep throughout the country, making possible a great new cultural leap and the advancement of science and the arts to an unheard-of level. Under these conditions, science may find a solution to the problem of finding a safe source of nuclear energy.

The impact on the working class in other countries will be greater than anything seen since the October 1917 revolution. Once again the Soviet Union, and with it the other workers states, will stand out as a shining beacon for the international proletariat and its allies.

To be sure, these general formulas do not answer all questions, nor do they cover all variants. The existence of chauvinistic Russian tendencies in the different strata of Soviet society, which oppose self-determination for the oppressed nationalities, but which are nevertheless not inclined to restore capitalism, will create an unpredictable unevenness of development between the social and political goals of mass explosions leading to ideological differentiations within their ranks.

The exact interplay—impossible to foresee at this stage—of socialist revolution in the West and political revolution in the USSR and Eastern Europe will determine the speed with which the Soviet and East European proletarian vanguard succeeds in constructing a revolutionary Marxist party capable of taking the lead in reviving the internationalist aspects of class consciousness and class politics. Any further improvement in the world relationship of forces to the detriment of imperialism would obviously give powerful assistance to that process. On the other hand, grave defeats of the proletariat in the imperialist countries or semicolonies would place new obstacles in the way of the political revolution in the USSR, Eastern Europe, and China. In spite of all these uncertainties, one can today see the main features of the political revolution in the USSR, Eastern Europe, and China not only as a programmatic projection based on the

experience and theory of the Trotskyist movement but as the realization of actual trends in social developments unfolding before our eyes.

18. The death of Chou En-lai on January 8, 1976, and Mao Tsetung on September 9, 1976, precipitated important political changes in the People's Republic of China. To understand the significance of these changes, one has to consider them against a concrete background. A virtually uninterrupted factional struggle had been going on at least since 1959, when Mao was put in a minority at the Lushan Central Committee meeting following the disasters of the "Great Leap Forward." Several of the contending factions successively tried to further their aims by appealing to the masses. On several occasions these mass mobilizations—intended by the various factions of the bureaucracy to remain strictly circumscribed to purposes that did not conflict with the rule of the bureaucratic caste as such—went beyond the intended limits and unleashed genuine mass demands, the dynamics of which pointed toward a political revolution.

First it was the Maoist faction, which in 1966 appealed to the masses against the majority of the Central Committee. With the Red Guards serving as a spearhead, Mao succeeded in mobilizing millions of people, many of whom, contrary to Mao's interests and goals, voiced their fundamental grievances against the privileges and abuses of power of the ruling bureaucratic stratum. But the result objectively was to merely help substitute one faction of the bureaucracy for another.

When radicalized youth started to demonstrate against bureaucratic privileges as a whole, and when workers began to take over plants, the bureaucracy closed ranks. With the help of Lin Piao commanding the army, these advanced sectors were ruthlessly suppressed. Some of the leaders of the "Shanghai group," later touted as part of the so-called left faction of the bureaucracy, won their prestige in the apparatus through the very repressive role they played at that time. The forcible shifting of a large number of Red Guards and other urban youth to the countryside closed that phase of the so-called Cultural Revolution.

Later it was the anti-Mao faction that started to use mass mobilizations on a large scale to further its factional purposes. Whether it engineered the big April 1, 1976, demonstration at Tien An Men Square in Peking—ostensibly in honor of Chou En-lai but in reality against the Mao faction—or whether that demonstration was spontaneous is hard to establish at this point. What is clear, however, is that the violent repression of that demonstration catalyzed not only a new outbreak of the faction fight but widespread mass discontent, which came to the fore with Mao's death and the culmination of the struggle over the succession. Against the faction organized around Mao's widow Chiang Ching, Teng Hsiao-ping and his group—again with the help of the army and the repressive forces—succeeded in reestablishing their position in the top command on the basis of huge mass demonstrations against the "Gang of Four." Hua Kuo-feng, who began by supporting the purge of the Teng Hsiao-ping faction after April 1, 1976, this time switched sides and supported the struggle against the Mao faction. Because of its dismal record following 1968 (purge of the Red Guards, purge of Lin Piao, freezing of workers' wages, curbing of elementary democratic rights), the Mao faction did not receive any widespread mass support when it was purged.

In its bid for popularity and stabilization, the new regime has started a process of de-Maoization. Of special interest are the revelations about the state of the economy under Mao. Instead of the "excellent situation" in production formerly proclaimed by the Chinese press, the regime has admitted that the economy suffered setbacks and made little progress on a per capita basis since 1966. Some concessions have been made to the masses both in lifting wage levels and in restoring higher education. The circulation of some of the classical works of Chinese and Western literature has been permitted. Some political prisoners have been freed, while new ones have taken their place. The fate of the Chinese Trotskyists—imprisoned since 1952—remains unknown.

At the same time, material incentives, premiums, piece-work, and factory profitability are being fostered. Violent repression, including execution of political opponents, continues. Like the victims of the Mao faction yesterday, the victims of the Teng Hsiao-ping and Hua Kuo-feng factions are being slandered, without any of their real views being made known to the masses.

No real "thaw" is to be seen. The bureaucratic caste as a whole continues to rule. "Self-reform" of the bureaucracy is excluded. No turn toward proletarian democracy, toward organs of power democratically elected by the workers and the toiling peasants, has occurred. Oppositional formations are forbidden, protest by the workers or other sectors of the masses remains subject to repression. Hua continues to uphold the banner received by Mao from Stalin of building "socialism in one country."

The continuation of the Mao-Chou foreign policy is especially instructive. After having used a lot of anti-imperialist rhetoric in the early 1960s, reproaching the Soviet bureaucracy for its policies of class collaboration with American imperialism, Mao and Chou suddenly switched over to the policy of the "two superpowers threatening world peace," of which the "latecomer," to wit, the Soviet Union, was painted as the most aggressive and most dangerous. Teng Hsiao-ping later developed the "two superpower" theory into the "three worlds theory," which

provides a cover for the Chinese bureaucracy wooing and collaborating with extreme reactionary bourgeois forces both in imperialist countries like the United States, West Germany, Britain, France, and Japan, and in semicolonial dictatorships (Zaire, Iran, Chile, Argentina, Egypt, and the ASEAN powers.)

The continuation of the interbureaucratic faction fight since Mao's death, which reflects the inability of the bureaucracy to close ranks around the new bonaparte, is, together with the consequences of the mass mobilizations, a feature of recent political developments in China. It is unlikely under these circumstances that the Chinese bureaucratic caste will survive as long as the caste has in the USSR, particularly in view of the increasing pace of the class struggle in many other countries. Likewise it should be noted that for the past decade numbers of workers and youth have openly expressed their desire for proletarian democracy. The pressure in favor of a political revolution, it can be predicted, will continue despite temporary lulls or setbacks.

The Chinese leadership has proved itself incapable of retaining any important influence within the proletariat of the imperialist centers. The larger centrist groupings in capitalist countries that began with a Maoist orientation have been unable to make a major impact on the mass reformist parties. They have wavered between adventurism and opportunist adaptations. A notable case in point was the course followed by the "Mao-centrists" during the revolutionary upsurge in Portugal. In Italy, the Democrazia Proletaria is representative of this type of centrism.

The small sects that attached themselves to Mao Tse-tung Thought now stand in shambles. Whom are they to support, the nefarious "Gang of Four" or the "capitalist roaders" now in power? Are they to applaud the attacks on Vietnam and Albania? What should be said of the shamelessly open sycophancy displayed by both Mao and his treacherous disciples to imperialism? These Maoist groups face the choice of disintegrating and going down to oblivion or turning toward Trotskyism, the only movement that has stood firm on the program of revolutionary Marxism.

IV.

The Crisis of the Class-Collaborationist Labor Bureaucracies

19. The class-collaborationist labor bureaucracies in the imperialist countries firmly counted on unending economic expansion. This was the assumption, for instance, underlying the "Common Program" signed by the leaders of French Stalinism and Social Democracy on June 27, 1972. They were convinced that a "mixed economy" in France could guarantee full employment, eliminate severe business cycles, and provide for steady increases in real wages and social-security benefits. They were as completely unprepared, both ideologically and politically, for the outbreak of the world recession in 1974 as they had been for the radicalization of the 1960s and the May-June 1968 upsurge.

Under these conditions, the "natural" inclination of the labor bureaucrats in the unions, the Social Democracy, and the mass Communist parties in a series of countries was to press their class-collaborationist orientation. These

bureaucracies approved or even directly applied the various bourgeois "austerity" programs, which aim to shift the burden of the crisis onto the working class and obtain an increase in the rate of profit by cutting real wages, social-security benefits, and other social services.

In particular, they have endorsed the bourgeoisie's policy of dividing the working class by not supporting struggles waged by women, workers of oppressed nationalities, or immigrant workers who are attempting to secure their elementary rights (equal pay, union benefits, decent working conditions, etc.). The bureaucrats view these workers as marginal, and in this way foster sexist and chauvinist attitudes against them. In addition, at least a wing of the labor bureaucracy, supporting thinly disguised racist or other reactionary views, endorse "protectionist" measures of big business aimed at exporting unemployment to countries competing with "us."

However, the length and gravity of the overall crisis affecting the international capitalist system, plus the parallel crisis of Stalinism, make it difficult for the labor bureaucrats to unanimously accept responsibility for "managing the crisis" in favor of "their own" bourgeoisie. Such monolithism could be maintained only if the crisis were relatively short and the working class remained disoriented and quiescent. But the very duration of the crisis goads the workers into reacting against the additional burdens that the employers and their government—even if administered by the reformists—try to impose on them. The more intense these reactions, the more likely it is that they will be reflected in an organized way inside the unions and mass parties of the working class. Thus the twin crises of capitalism and Stalinism become translated into a crisis of the mass reformist organizations and their class-collaborationist leaderships.

There is of course a deeper reason for the revolt of the workers. In a period of very slow economic growth, if not outright depression, the employers are unable to grant concessions sufficient enough to appease the workers. The bourgeoisie must even try to take back past concessions won by the working class. The workers sense the bankruptcy of class-collaborationism and defend themselves from the capitalist offensive through spontaneous actions or pressuring the labor bureaucrats to act.

But it takes more than this to present a consistent alternative to the program and strategy of reformism. As long as no politically credible and organizationally powerful alternative pole of attraction appears, the present leaders of the mass organizations will by and large retain by default the political allegiance of the majority of organized workers, be it on a purely electoral basis with stronger and stronger reservations. Periodic differentiations in the ranks will continue to occur, increasing the possibility of growing numbers of workers outflanking the labor bureaucrats in action. Rooted among these workers, the revolutionary Marxists will be able to build up their own forces and in many countries help speed the formation of an organized class-struggle left wing that presses key class demands flowing from the needs of the present economic, social, and political situation. This growing alternative leadership will prove attractive to the class as a whole and its allies. Revolutionary Marxists, utilizing the method outlined in the Transitional Program, will seek to raise the political level of such class-struggle left wings as they arise and keep them headed in the direction of a socialist revolution.

20. In a series of major capitalist countries, the Social Democracy has descended to new levels of treachery as a labor agency of the bosses. For instance, in Britain, West Germany, Denmark, and Portugal, the Social Democratic governments have enforced anti-working-class "austerity" measures. They have come out openly not only in favor of capitalist profits but of increasing them at the expense of wages and public services. This policy is defended with the argument that in a depression, priority must be given to the struggle against unemployment and not to increasing wages. Then the ancient "lesser evil" is dragged out—if "we" don't apply "mild" austerity measures, then reaction will come to power and apply "harsher" austerity, coupled with massive unemployment and a savage attack on democratic rights.

It is not necessary to point out the hypocrisy in these

arguments. In spite of their attacks on real wages, the Social Democratic governments have not reduced unemployment. Structural unemployment is here to stay. Far from protecting "democracy" against the "onslaughts of reaction," it is precisely these governments that have leveled sharp attacks against democratic rights, launched waves of repression, and strengthened the repressive state apparatus in several countries. If the resulting disorientation and partial demoralization of the working class caused by the Social Democratic leaders paves the way for the return to power of reactionary direct representatives of the bourgeoisie, they will be able to exploit to the fullest the preliminary "clearing of the field" accomplished by the reformists.

It might seem paradoxical that despite the exposure of the Social Democracy as a cynical agency of bourgeois politics inside the labor movement, it has undergone considerable expansion during the last period in countries like Portugal, Spain, and (to a lesser extent) France. The explanation for this is threefold:

In the first place, when workers become so radicalized as to be able to topple a fascist or brutal military regime, they seek to organize themselves as an effective political force on a national level. Because of their experience with openly declared capitalist parties, the masses are not pulled in that direction. They move instead toward what they consider to be working-class parties, a conclusion drawn from memory, from accounts of underground activities, or actual contact in preliminary phases of fighting the dictatorship. But the masses are largely ignorant of the factional struggles over policies and lines of action that occurred under the dictatorship. Consequently a period opens of testing these parties in which the masses pass judgment on them primarily in accordance with the criterion of effectiveness. A moderate party that displays great energy in propagandizing itself, that does not hesitate to use radical-sounding demagoguery, including talk of workers control and similar concepts, and for opportunist reasons puts itself at the head of demonstrations, protest rallies, and even union struggles, can swell its ranks on a large scale before its pretenses are exposed.

In the second place, the fact that increasing numbers of the world proletariat have become thoroughly convinced of the abhorrent nature of Stalinism, while agreeing on the need to struggle for socialist goals, has given the Social Democracy "another chance." In the absence of mass revolutionary parties, important sectors of the working class find the Social Democracy if not more attractive, then at least less unattractive, than Stalinism. Wherever the Stalinists (as in Portugal in 1974) combine the traditionally repulsive aspects of their policies with flagrant class collaborationism, strikebreaking, open support to bourgeois governments, and divisiveness in the labor movement, this impels many class-conscious workers to opt for the Social Democracy.

In addition, under "normal" circumstances, the vast majority of the working class is not politically active. In periods of upsurge on the other hand, masses of workers, running into the millions in heavily populated countries, come into political activity for the first time. Newly politicized workers tend to join the traditional proletarian organizations. Other layers of workers seek to move ahead to more revolutionary levels. Spain and Portugal provide striking examples of this process.

In the third place, the very growth of the Western proletariat and the increasing proletarianization of the "middle classes" broadens the differentiations within the working class, and incorporates into the organized labor movement new layers of relatively privileged professionals with little or no knowledge of the past betrayals of reformism, little or no socialist education, and loaded with petty-bourgeois illusions.

All this creates an objective basis for the temporary growth of the Social Democracy.

World imperialism—especially the more flexible European sectors—has deliberately used the Schmidts, Wilsons, and Callaghans as their first line of defense against the threat of revolution in Southwest Europe. Together, they have calculatingly used and built up Mário Soares, for example, as the main Judas goat in restoring "law and order" in Portugal and a stable repressive apparatus to enforce it, a task which no reactionary bourgeois figure could have carried out in 1975-76 in view of the relationship of class forces.

But precisely because they are rooted in the working class and maintain numerous ties with the trade unions and other organizations of the proletariat, Social Democratic mass parties cannot insulate themselves from revolts and oppositional moods engendered by the crisis of capitalism. Thus political differentiation and growth of oppositional currents within Social Democratic mass parties is on the agenda. This process is interlinked with the development of similar differentiations in the unions and in the mass Communist parties, and with the growing opportunities to organize class-struggle left wings in the labor movement as a whole.

21. "Eurocommunism" is misnamed. It has nothing to do with genuine communism. Moreover, it is a phenomenon not limited to the mass Communist parties in Western Europe. It also involves the Japanese CP, the Australian CP, and formations such as the Venezuelan MAS, which originated in a split from the CP in 1971. The appearance of Eurocommunism marks a new stage in the crisis of Stalinism. It consists of a more systematic codification of the class-collaborationist, electoralist, and reformist practices engaged in by the CPs since the Seventh Congress of the Communist International and the initiation of "popular front" policies in 1935. It is featured by abandonment of even lip service to Lenin's concept of the dictatorship of the proletariat and of references to Leninism in the official party programs, coupled with more critical public statements concerning the worst features of the Stalinist dictatorships in the USSR and Eastern Europe. The manifold inner contradictions of Eurocommunism are just beginning to unfold.

There is nothing new in Eurocommunism so far as class collaboration, government collaboration with the bourgeoisie, and betrayal of the revolutionary movement is concerned. The Stalinists engaged in these practices on a broad scale in Spain and France before World War II and again in France, Italy, Greece, and elsewhere at the end of that slaughter. On these occasions the CP leaderships literally saved the bourgeois state and bourgeois property relations from being overthrown by the masses. What is new in so-called Eurocommunism is the emphasis these bureaucrats place on their "independence" from the Kremlin. Formerly they rode high on the popularity of the Soviet Union, particularly after its victory over German

imperialism. Today they seek to rid themselves of the political cost of publicly associating so intimately with the Kremlin. In the past, sharp turns in the international situation, to which Moscow responded with total reversals in foreign policy, would cause these mass Communist parties to make abrupt shifts in line. Under current conditions, such overnight reversals run the risk of causing disastrous losses of trade-union influence and voters.

But the Eurocommunists are not moving toward class political independence and revolutionary Marxism. Their direction of movement is toward deeper integration into bourgeois society and more open support of the government in competition with the Social Democrats whom they regard as both bitter factional rivals and allies in preventing socialist revolution. Out of bureaucratic self-interest, they are compelled to maintain their differentiation from the Social Democrats and to periodically sharpen it. This leads them to step up divisionist policies toward other forces in the labor movement as was vividly demonstrated in France in the breakup of the Union of the Left on the eve of the 1978 elections.

Nevertheless the Eurocommunist CPs have not cut their links with the Soviet Union, the "socialist camp," and the "world Communist movement." In fact they do their utmost not to let their more critical stance toward the Kremlin injure these links. They follow this course because the huge apparatus built up by most of these parties inside bourgeois society, which feeds essentially upon accumulated reserves of imperialist wealth and superprofits, is able to maintain and amplify its privileges only if it consolidates and extends its electoral and trade-union strength. For this it requires a specific political and ideological image involving its special relationship with the Russian revolution, the USSR, and the "socialist camp." If it loses its specific differentiation from the Social Democrats, it becomes vulnerable to displacement by them. In reality, the Eurocommunist bureaucrats are concerned about their ties with the bureaucracies in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, who likewise cling to identification with the Russian revolution if only ritualistically. For example, the objective of maintaining friendly ties with the Romanian Stalinists led the Italian, Spanish, and French CPs to turn a blind eye to the August 1977 miners' strike there. The Eurocommunists have the same sort of relationship with the Yugoslav bureaucrats.

The Eurocommunists are all the more sensitive to this problem because of the sharpened class struggle resulting from the general crisis of the capitalist system, and the concomitant search by the workers for class-struggle leadership and proletarian democracy. From this point of view also, the rise in militancy of the workers is a central factor in the motivations of the leaders of Eurocommunism.

Another factor is the growing challenge from left currents in the working class and in the mass organizations controlled by the Communist parties. It helps explain the continued identification of the Eurocommunist parties with the "socialist camp" and the "heritage of the October revolution." They are unwilling to make it easier for revolutionary Marxists to be recognized by large sectors of the working class as the genuine representatives of communism.

No qualitative change has occurred in the nature of these Communist parties. Nevertheless, Eurocommunism

represents a phase in their increasing integration into bourgeois economic institutions and the state machinery (in Trotsky's words, the Communist parties "feed from the same sources as the Social Democracy, that is, the super-profits of imperialism"). This trend, noted by Trotsky in 1938, could eventually lead to the transformation of these parties into analogs of Social Democratic parties.

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

It should be pointed out that the sallies by the more outspoken Eurocommunist leaders against the political regimes in the USSR and Eastern Europe have drawn sharp rebuffs from the Kremlin, which is aware that criticisms from such sources encourage articulate socialist opposition within these countries. Likewise, if the Eurocommunists still generally express solidarity with the "anti-imperialist struggle of the socialist camp," some exceptions have already been recorded. The Japanese CP supports its own imperialist government against the Soviet Union on the question of the return of the Kurile Islands to Japan. The Italian CP leadership is ready to approve Italy's membership in NATO and has come out openly against the Kremlin's line on Eritrea.

The fact that the appearance of Eurocommunism coincides with a general rise in working-class struggles, leftward differentiations inside the unions and more critical attitudes of large layers of workers toward bureaucratism—union bureaucrats and party bureaucrats alike—adds to the strains brought about by a change in line which, for important layers of Communist militants, means in any case a radical break with traditional political norms, habits, and convictions. Both the factional struggle precipitated by Eurocommunism and the class struggle thus give impetus to political differentiations in the Communist parties of a scope not seen in most of these parties since the 1920s. If the rise of oppositional tendencies should coincide with mass revolts of workers against "austerity policies" applied or even approved by the CPs, the potential for splits arises. We of course reject any illusions that the CPs can be regenerated or can transform themselves into centrist parties as a result of Eurocommunism.

The Eurocommunists, like the Social Democrats, seek to gain government posts and build up party strongholds inside the bourgeois government and state apparatus while strengthening their position in the organized working-class movement. For the time being, however, the key sectors of the European bourgeoisie oppose this build-up. Their reluctance differs qualitatively from their attitude toward the similar designs of the Social Democratic parties. It will require a powerful prerevolutionary or even revolutionary upsurge of the mass movement, and immediate threats to the survival of capitalism, for the bourgeoisie to abandon their resistance and treat popular fronts with a strong Communist component as a last defense line before turning toward an extreme right-wing and fascist mobilization against the revolution.

22. Even more than the leaders of the Social Democratic and mass Communist parties, the trade-union bureaucra-

cies have been subjected to direct pressure from the membership in response to the antilabor offensive mounted by the employers. These bureaucrats have shared responsibility for imposing various governments' "austerity policies," "wage restraints," and repressive laws upon the working class wherever these have been applied by governments headed by reformist workers parties or with their participation. Indeed, without their complicity, mass resistance against these policies would have become irresistible from the outset. But even in those countries where such policies were applied by governments composed of bourgeois parties, union bureaucrats have been responsible—as in the United States, France, and Japan—for putting a brake upon mass resistance and for fragmenting and isolating militant responses on the picket line. They have even openly opposed strike actions and mobilizations of the working class and its allies in favor of "political" solutions, such as manipulations through "historical compromise" or electoral politicking.

The unions, which had steadily grown in both absolute and relative strength during the previous period in nearly all the imperialist countries, include in their structure a much larger part of the working class than the reformist parties do. Consequently they are more subject than the reformist mass parties to working-class discontent, unrest, or revolt ascribable to the capitalist depression and "austerity policies." Resistance inside the unions to the "austerity" policy approved by the Italian Communist Party and trade-union leaderships was so strong that the union bureaucracy at first sought to break up the opposition by imposing its line piecemeal before daring to challenge it openly. In Britain, a sector of the union bureaucracy also offered lip service to the workers' resistance against "wage restraints" while at the same time doing everything possible to avoid an explosion of mass struggles in defense of jobs and the level of real wages. Even in West Germany, the conservative union bureaucracy, while constantly giving aid and backing to the anti-working-class policies of the Schmidt cabinet, had to go along with the growing discontent of the workers and organize a series of official strikes in the spring of 1978, in order to avoid losing control over the mass discontent. Likewise, the class-collaborationist leadership of the American coal miners' union had to acknowledge the strong reaction of the rank and file against the employers' union-busting offensive, while doing its utmost to weaken the strike and to undermine the rank-and-file revolt.

More generally, one could say that in the absence of mass revolutionary parties, the capitulation of the reformist parties impels the ranks to turn to their unions to fill the political vacuum. Insofar as they express discontent with the procapitalist policies of the SP and CP apparatuses, and make some gestures of resistance, they voice the interests of the class not only on "pure" trade-union questions but on social and political questions as well, starting from economic issues.

From this general proposition Trotsky drew the conclusion: "The trade unions of our time can either serve as secondary instruments of imperialist capitalism for the subordination and disciplining of workers and for obstructing the revolution, or, on the contrary, the trade unions can become the instruments of the revolutionary movement of the proletariat." ("Trade Unions in the Epoch of Imperialist Decay.")

While powerful class-struggle left wings in the large unions, like the nationwide "minority movement" in Britain in the 1920s, or even like broadly based, consciously led regional formations such as the American Midwest Teamster movement in the 1930s, have not yet appeared, the existence of an expanding vanguard of young militants makes itself felt today in the plants and the unions to a much higher degree than in the reformist mass parties. This is shown among other things by the resilience of the "councils of delegates" in the north Italian factories, by a left-wing opposition against the Moncloa Pact in the Workers Commissions and the Unión General de Trabajadores in several key regions of Spain (especially the Basque country and Catalonia), the emergence of energetic opposition tendencies inside the French Confédération Française et Démocratique du Travail and the Swiss metalworkers union, the powerful upsurge of union opposition in Denmark, the opposition in Canada led by the Canadian Postal Workers Union, the rank-and-file opposition in the American coal miners' union, and the Sadlowski campaigners in the United Steelworkers of America.

In various countries, growing numbers of women, immigrant workers, or workers of oppressed nationalities have played militant roles in advancing such developments.

The fall of the dictatorships in Portugal, Spain, and

Greece, accompanied by mass workers upsurges, has tended to drive forward the organization of effective trade unions in these countries.

Revolutionary Marxists favor organizing the broadest united-front instruments of class struggle (elected strike committees, incipient workers councils, more advanced forms tomorrow), but they do not counterpose this task to defending and advancing the existing mass unions. Unions are necessary instruments in the daily class struggle under capitalism—the first form of the proletarian united front, as Trotsky put it. They will even remain necessary instruments in defending the class interests of the workers after the victory of the socialist revolution.

Revolutionary Marxists are therefore genuine defenders and builders of strong unions, not only out of passing tactical considerations but for strategic reasons. We accuse the union bureaucracy of weakening the unions through class collaborationism and bureaucratic practices. The fight for a consistent class-struggle line goes hand in hand with the fight for democracy in the unions. Both struggles run counter to the capitalist policy of subordinating the unions to the state and to the employers' interest (hypocritically termed "the general interest"). We help to build the unions, make them more representative of the working class as a whole, and powerful champions of the just struggles of all the oppressed and exploited.

V.

Immediate Tasks of the Fourth International

23. Despite its division into nation-states, one of the main features of capitalism is its international structure. This led first to creation of the world market, then the progressive unfolding of an international division of labor and a development of the productive forces that clearly cut across national boundaries. From this flows the international character of the working class and the international nature of the class struggle.

For the bourgeoisie, the internationalization of the productive forces stands in fundamental contradiction with the national and continental fragmentation of capital, which is rooted in private property and competition. For the working class, no such internal contradiction exists. The historic interests of wage earners of all countries are identical—the abolition of capitalist property, exploitation, and oppression in the building of a classless society can only be achieved on an international scale.

On the other hand, no matter how intensive the rivalries may be between national sectors of the capitalist class, all of them agree on fighting tooth and nail against the socialist challenge of the working class. The working class in turn is compelled to extend and tighten its international ties out of need for common defensive efforts and to press forward its historic interests. Hence the compelling necessity to build a world party of socialist revolution. Marx, Engels, Lenin, and Trotsky devoted themselves to advancing this task.

In constructing the Fourth International, it is necessary to proceed simultaneously on both a national and international level. This is not a peculiarity of "Trotskyism" in opposition to Marxism or "orthodox Leninism." On the contrary, building an international *organization* is part

and parcel of the revolutionary Marxist program. It follows from Lenin's theory of imperialism and from the theory of permanent revolution.

During the struggle for power and even after its conquest, the proletariat is directly confronted with counterrevolutionary actions by the international bourgeoisie. An effective answer to these attacks requires solidarity actions by the workers and their allies on an international scale.

Any abandonment of the task of simultaneously building national and international organizations nourishes deviations from revolutionary Marxism. It nourishes the appearance of petty-bourgeois nationalist tendencies inside the revolutionary movement itself. It hampers the ability of the revolutionary Marxist movement to give systematic political attention to the new problems that are encountered.

The program of the Fourth International summarizes the experience of the struggles of the proletariat and its allies on a worldwide scale for the past 150 years. Among the key documents on which the Fourth International stands are the resolutions of the first four congresses of the Communist International (1919, 1920, 1921, 1922) and *The Death Agony of Capitalism and the Tasks of the Fourth International* ("Transitional Program" adopted in 1938).

To advance party building, the Fourth International abides by the norms of democratic centralism both nationally and internationally, with the right to form tendencies or factions guaranteed as in the Bolshevik Party in Lenin's time.

On this point the statutes of the Fourth International include two general provisions on the mode of operation of

democratic centralism. (1) Decisions taken by a majority of delegates at a democratically organized world congress, the highest body of the Fourth International, are binding on all sections. Decisions taken by the International Executive Committee, which is elected by the delegates to serve as the highest body until the next congress, can be appealed but remain in effect until the appeal is heard and decided on. (2) The members of national sections have the right to elect their own leaderships. Democratically organized congresses and plenary meetings of elected national committees constitute the highest bodies of national sections. They have the right to determine program nationally, and to interpret and determine for all members of the section the national application of decisions made by the Fourth International.

During the last decade the Fourth International has made organizational gains—sections and sympathizing groups now exist in about sixty countries, and its total membership is ten times what it was before the May-June 1968 events in France. However, no party adhering to the Fourth International has as yet won a majority of the working class or of its militant vanguard. Its current central goal remains to recruit and train proletarian cadres through deepening involvement in the class struggle.

24. The specific tasks facing the Fourth International in the immediate period ahead include the following:

a. *Continuing the proletarian orientation.* Since its foundation, the Fourth International has followed a proletarian orientation without overlooking opportunities to recruit in allied layers of the population. The essence of this orientation consists of advancing the Marxist program and utilizing the method of the Transitional Program to intervene as much as possible in the politics of the country and developments in the working class and its organizations. It includes recognition of the fact that only a party that is proletarian in composition as well as program, and has earned growing respect by the workers for its leadership role in the class struggle, can win a majority of the toiling masses to its banner and lead them in the struggle for power.

In many countries the majority of comrades are union members, but strong industrial union fractions remain to be built. New opportunities have now opened up for gains in the industrial proletariat. Success in utilizing these opportunities requires special efforts, including mobilization of cadres recruited in the previous period. In many countries these cadres have not yet become rooted in the industrial working class. They should be led to make a turn in this direction without further delay. Their participation in trade-union fraction work from the base of jobs in industry can perceptibly increase the rate of successes of the party's political campaigns—as Trotsky put it in discussing the Transitional Program—by showing the workers how to think socially and act politically. It will facilitate paying the necessary attention to building class-struggle left wings. It will improve the progress of similar work in the mass movement and among the allies of the proletariat. It will help develop links with the struggles of the superexploited—women, youth, and the oppressed nationalities or immigrant workers. It will also enhance sensitivity to the moods of the workers and give greater stability to the sections and their work.

On the internal level, it will facilitate training leaders

and solving organizational problems in all aspects of our work. The struggle for proletarian parties includes consciously cultivating the functioning of leadership as collective teams; it means promoting inclusive leadership bodies that organize themselves in a democratic and objective way, including in their composition comrades of different viewpoints and experiences in the party; it means education on the theoretical and political importance of the organization question; it means conscious attention to the development of workers, women, and comrades from oppressed nationalities, as rounded party leaders; it means education against the dangers of permanent factionalism and cliquism, which can tear apart young and inexperienced organizations. The goal is parties of experienced worker-Bolsheviks who view themselves as political leaders of their class and its allies.

b. *Building a campaign party.* To help advance the national political standing of the sections of the Fourth International in the working class as a whole, serious campaigning is required on selected issues. In many ongoing struggles, well-chosen initiatives can lead to substantial gains for the party. Fruitful work can be accomplished in the electoral field. The point is to organize campaigns that bring to the fore the favorable response of the Trotskyists to new advances by this or that sector of the working class and its allies. One of the results is to demonstrate the ability of the Trotskyists to organize broad united actions in the most effective way, thereby enhancing their reputation among the vanguard of the working class. To do this requires a serious, well-circulated press, offering an accurate account of events along with a popular presentation of their meaning. Such a press plays a key role in opening and sustaining campaigns and bringing them to a successful conclusion.

Systematic campaign initiatives of this kind around key questions of the class struggle and political life of the country can decisively consolidate party-building gains and help project the party's program as a general solution to the problems affecting all sectors of the working class and its allies. Under the present conditions of unemployment, well-planned campaigns for a shorter workweek without reductions in pay, closely linked to growing favorable sentiment inside the unions on this question, are an important example.

c. *Paying increased attention to fraction work inside mass Social Democratic and Stalinist parties, their youth groups, and mass organizations dominated by them.* The upsurge of mass struggles and the growing crisis of Stalinism and Social Democracy is giving rise to centrist currents which, because of their origin in the organized workers movement and initial orientation toward the left, are different from the "Mao-centrist" organizations. Today, there are significant oppositions in some of the Communist parties (for example in Spain). The same holds for some Socialist parties (for instance, in France, the CERES—Centre d'Etudes, de Recherches et d'Education Socialistes; in West Germany, the Jusos—Young Socialists; and in Finland, the SP youth).

Revolutionary Marxists must pay careful attention to such tendencies, combining a consistent criticism of their theoretical and political insufficiencies and presenting our program and criticisms in a systematic way in the debates going on in these parties, while following a policy of unity of action around key issues of the current class struggles.

d. *Encouraging the formation of independent youth groups adhering to the program of Trotskyism.* This can be greatly facilitated by stepping up work among apprentices and young workers in the plants, among students in high schools and technical schools, and among radicalizing college students. Serious consideration should now be given to the creation of an independent international youth organization.

e. *Supporting the women's liberation movement.* Unusual opportunities exist for the participation of Trotskyists in this field. There are growing possibilities for some internationally coordinated activities. This topic has been intensively discussed in the world Trotskyist movement since the women's liberation movement began to erupt on a massive scale. Opinion is now virtually unanimous in the Fourth International on the character of our work to build the women's movement, our program for women's liberation, and the strategically important role that the struggle against women's oppression will play in the socialist revolution. [See draft resolution, "Socialist Revolution and the Struggle for Women's Liberation," in International Internal Discussion Bulletin, Vol. 15, No. 4, May 1978.]

f. *Backing oppressed nations and national minorities in their struggle for liberation.* The field is a wide one, extending from the Maoris in New Zealand, the Basques in Spain, the Corsicans in France, and the Irish and the nonwhite immigrants in the United Kingdom, to the oppressed nations in Southern Africa, and the Blacks, Chicanos, and Puerto Ricans in the United States. Among the areas where the Fourth International has been foremost in calling attention to the importance of the struggle for self-determination are Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union. More and more openings are appearing around the world as these struggles raise the social consciousness of the working class and, in increasing instances, help lay the groundwork for the fight to transform the unions into instruments of revolutionary struggle.

g. *Participating in the struggles of poor peasants and working farmers.* The Fourth International has always stressed the importance of the peasant struggle and its linkage with the struggles of the urban masses. It has made some contributions of its own in this field; for example, the work of the Peruvian section in the mobilizations of the peasants seeking land in the early 1960s.

While the peasant struggle is most important in those countries where the peasantry still constitutes the majority, or a sizable minority, of the active population (Indian subcontinent, Peru, Mexico, Egypt, etc.), it should not be underestimated in other countries.

In Spain, the peasant movement has undergone a powerful upsurge both in struggles and in organization. Even in the United States, where only 3.8 percent of the population now live on the land, militant sectors of the farmers initiated demonstrations against the farm policy of the Carter administration. The demonstrators displayed strong solidarity with the coal miners, sending truckloads of food to the strikers.

h. *Supporting the antinuclear protest movement.* The recent swift expansion of the antinuclear movement is of great significance. Its international character facilitates coordination of protest actions in a number of countries. The Trotskyists everywhere have met with a friendly reception in the antinuclear movement, demonstrating the

opportunities open to the Fourth International in this arena.

Paralleling and often interlocking with the antinuclear movement, the antipollution movement also offers opportunities for advancing the viewpoint of revolutionary socialism. The same holds true for the ecological movement, which is gaining in public receptivity.

In the Soviet Union, knowledge is spreading of the impossibility of finding safe ways to dispose of nuclear wastes. Reports of protests there indicate the beginning of an antinuclear movement similar to the one in the capitalist countries.

25. Other tasks of first-rate importance likewise involve areas where internationally coordinated campaigns of special appeal to certain sectors can be launched. As examples of this we can point to the importance of coordinating common union struggles in several countries against the same multinational corporation; antinuclear struggles in neighboring countries; the worldwide struggle in favor of abortion rights; and the struggle against discrimination and repression of immigrant workers in capitalist Europe and the United States and Canada.

Other concrete areas include:

a. *Defense of the revolutionary struggles of oppressed peoples that have been singled out by reactionary forces as special military targets.* A current example is defense of the Palestinian people against the U.S.-backed military onslaught of the Israeli government. Another is defense of the peoples of Southern Africa against the predatory attacks mounted by the racist regime of South Africa with the connivance and backing of the White House. Another is defense of the Cuban revolution against the belligerent threats, bullying tactics, and systematic economic and diplomatic pressure mounted by U.S. imperialism and its satellite regimes. Still others include defense of Vietnam against the reprisals organized by American imperialism; and support for the Irish demand to withdraw the British army of occupation from Ulster. New fronts like these will continue to engage the attention of the Fourth International.

Particular attention must be paid by our sections in the industrially advanced capitalist countries to pressing for or reviving anti-imperialist mass actions. Actually, solidarity mobilizations have been dangerously weakened in various countries since 1969, making it difficult to organize rapid replies to interventions mounted by the capitalist powers. This was demonstrated in France after the multiple military incursions in Africa decided on by the government. Our youth organizations especially ought to play a motor role in developing anti-imperialist movements.

b. *Defending union rights and strike struggles.* Strikes involving masses of workers in certain industries or even companies offer unusual opportunities for national and international solidarity campaigns. The most recent cases involve the nationwide strike of the American coal miners, which also drew an especially warm response from the British coal miners. As the Grunwick strike in Britain demonstrated, this question can be of special concern to immigrant and women workers.

The recent attacks upon union rights in Sri Lanka have led to a broad united defense campaign in which the revolutionary Marxists have played a significant role.

c. *Defending political prisoners.* Besides the cases con-

tinually arising in the degenerated or deformed workers states, the field calling for special efforts in defense work continues to expand. The use of torture stands at an all-time high in Iran, Argentina, Brazil, and Chile. Irish political prisoners are handled in similar fashion.

One of the most hypocritical poses in this respect is Carter's championship of "human rights" in face of the brutality of the American prison system and the practice of denying the right to political asylum in the United States to leftists. Organizations specializing in this field such as the Bertrand Russell Peace Foundation and Amnesty International should be given full assistance in their defense work.

d. *Defending sections and members of the Fourth International subjected to repressive measures.* At the present time, under the guise of "battling terrorism," a witch-hunt reminiscent of the McCarthyite period has been launched in West Germany. Restrictive legislation has been enacted and utilized there against leftists of diverse currents. Among the worst hit in various countries have been Trotskyists, hundreds having been arrested and in some cases tortured or murdered by the police as in Argentina, Brazil, Uruguay, and Chile. Trotskyists in Spain and Japan have been arrested by the dozens. Similar repressive blows have been struck against the Trotskyists in Greece. In China, leading Trotskyists continue to be held in prison. The right of leaders of the Fourth International to travel freely is still severely restricted. Thus the problem of defending ourselves against such attacks has grown in acuteness in recent years.

Quick results in defending revolutionists can be achieved where they are known enough in the class struggle so that the masses themselves rally to their defense. Thus in Spain in November 1976, when the government arrested delegates to the congress of the Basque LCR, the solidarity response included job actions and strikes in big plants in the Basque region. These gained rapid release of the comrades.

As justification for hitting Trotskyists with special vindictiveness, a sustained effort has been made by reactionary forces to paint the Fourth International as a "terrorist" organization. Two of the most vicious agencies have been the CIA and the FBI. Their activities include driving "Trotskyists" out of jobs and circulating cooked-up derogatory material to block them from finding new jobs. The American Socialist Workers Party and the Young Socialist Alliance have taken the lead in countering this witch-hunt. Through a \$40 million suit against the government, they were able to uncover a great deal of evidence exposing the illegal activities of the American political police, and set in motion similar suits by others who suffered damages from violation of their rights by government spy agencies.

The campaign of the SWP has greatly aided the efforts of the world Trotskyist movement to counter the propaganda smearing it as a "terrorist" organization. The Canadian section has taken a similar initiative against the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. Increased attention should be paid in the coming period to possibilities of this kind in other countries.

e. *Backing struggles of immigrant workers.* As part of the reserve army of labor, immigrant workers are prime targets of "austerity" moves, being among the last to be hired and the first to be fired. Virtually ignored by the union bureaucracies, their wages are in the lowest brackets

and their housing the very worst. Lacking citizenship, it is difficult for them to organize protest actions. They are vulnerable to summary deportation. These threats increase as unemployment rises.

For these and other reasons, the defense of immigrant workers in the face of stepped-up racist, anti-immigrant demagoguery is of prime importance to many sections of the Fourth International, which have long engaged in solidarity actions on this front. In Britain the defense of immigrant workers has led to sharp confrontations with highly reactionary forces, including protofascist demagogues. Recently the struggle has become of greater importance in the United States, where the Mexican workers have stepped up their resistance to Washington's arbitrary and brutal immigration policies. One of the outcomes of united action in this field is the strengthening of fraternal ties between the sections that are able to engage in such joint campaigns.

f. *Advancing regroupments and fusions.* The construction of a mass Leninist-type party cannot be confined solely to the individual recruitment of members. At a certain point the question of regroupments leading to fusions arises as different layers of the proletariat and its allies gain in political understanding, and the crisis of the reformist and centrist organizations develops.

The process must be repeatedly reviewed from the angle of the different tactical problems that arise in exploring two types of opportunities facing us at the moment: (1) Unifying with groupings that accept the program of Trotskyism in general but maintain differences as to its application on certain key points. (2) Establishing fraternal relations with groupings that do not claim to be Trotskyist but that are evolving along lines that may eventually make fusion possible on a principled basis.

Recently new opportunities to unite with groups claiming to adhere to the program of Trotskyism have arisen and more may soon find a place on the agenda. In clarifying our differences with such groups and probing the possibilities of united action and unification with them, a key factor will be what position they take on the most important issues of the class struggle in light of their declared allegiance to Trotskyism. Success in this will help attract class-struggle-minded workers breaking from the Social Democracy, Stalinism, and centrism but who are repelled by the fragmentation of the Trotskyist movement in some countries. The Fourth International welcomes moves that lead to principled fusions. It stresses the fact that the internal life of the Fourth International is a rich one with guarantees for the presentation of minority viewpoints and the right to form tendencies or factions in accordance with its organizational norms.

As for the leftward-moving tendencies not claiming to be Trotskyist, it has been possible in several countries to engage in common actions that have advanced the struggle of the masses and have proved of mutual benefit. In each case where common actions and joint political initiatives appear possible with other organizations, the leadership of sections should open up fraternal relations. Again, the key will be the position these organizations take on the decisive political issues in the class struggle. In the case of fusions, the decisive criterion is agreement on a principled program (including Leninist organizational norms) defining revolutionary strategy in the class struggle.

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