

The Advance of Socialism to World Leadership

By William Z. Foster

FOR THE PAST FOUR DECADES, since the Russian Revolution of November 1917, the most important political fact in the contemporary world has been the growth of Socialism as an organized social system and the spread of its influence throughout the world. So rapid has been this growth that Socialism has become a decisive leading force in the world, actively challenging capitalism, in this respect, at every point. So far has this development gone that capitalism can no longer work its will on the world, economically or politically. It is now a matter of consideration for peoples of all political persuasions as to which world system is actually the stronger, capitalism or Socialism, and in just what respects. This is a complex question, with many facets. It is not a matter of mere intellectual speculation, but one of real political importance.

There are now 17 countries which are either actually building Socialism or are definitely orientating in that direction. These are the U.S.S.R., People's China, Poland, Czechoslovakia, East Germany, Yugoslavia, Bulgaria, Hungary, Rumania, Albania, Outer Mongolia, North

Korea, North Viet Nam, and Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania (which voted themselves into the Soviet Union) and Tibet which joined People's China. Together these countries embrace 900,000,000 people, or about 40 percent of the world's population. They constitute the beginning of the new Socialist world.

What we have in the world now are not merely two social systems both growing, in simple competition with each other. The situation is very different from that. On one hand, there is capitalism, a prey to its own contradictions and caught in an incurable general crisis, going rapidly into general decline, even though the volume of its production may temporarily continue to increase in some countries; and on the other hand, there is Socialism, robust, healthy, and continually on the upgrade. On the capitalist side there is a group of "neutralist" countries which are no longer in the imperialist camp, "imperialism" being a much narrower concept than "capitalism." The neutralist group is one of the big factors which must be taken into account in estimating the present-day relationship of strength, in

general and in particular, between declining world capitalism and rising world Socialism.

THE RECORD OF A CENTURY

Modern scientific Marxist Socialism, as an active force, dates back to the publication of the *Communist Manifesto* in 1848 by Karl Marx and Frederick Engels. From that time to the Russian Revolution of 1917, the movement was developing its forces by clarifying its ideology and its mastery of working-class strategy and tactics, by educating the international working class, by laying the foundations of the workers' trade unions, cooperatives, and political parties, and by steeling itself in thousands of strikes and other battles with the bourgeoisie—in short, by organizing and preparing itself for the decisive revolutionary struggles that lay ahead.

In the great November 1917 Revolution in Russia—precipitated by causes needless to review here—the workers and peasants of that country, led by the Communist Party with the great Lenin at its head, made the first real breach in world capitalism and established the pioneer Socialist Republic, covering one-sixth of the earth's surface. So great was the impact upon world capitalism of this revolutionary blow by the toiling masses following the monstrous imperialist World War I, that it undoubtedly would have led

to the revolutionization of all or most of Central and Western Europe, had not the reactionary wing of the Social Democrats succeeded in sabotaging and defeating the German Revolution of 1918.

Socialism has always made its greatest progress when the workers were in a militant revolutionary mood. It also grows not only during periods of acute class struggle and imperialist war, such as that of World War I, but also during times when there is no war, as witness the decisive industrialization of the U.S.S.R. during the 1920's and 1930's, and the building of many Communist Parties and the carrying through of the great people's front anti-fascist movements during this period. After 1917 Socialism's next great leap forward came in the course of, and shortly after, the world-wide armed struggle of the peoples during the 1940's against fascist enslavement. Thus, during and immediately following World War II many countries, including great China, declared for Socialism. At this time, too, the main obstacle preventing the popular masses from dealing a final mortal blow to world capitalism was the Right-wing Social Democracy, which, together with the imperialist governments and clerical reaction, was able to maintain capitalism in such key countries as Great Britain, West Germany, France, Italy, and Japan.

Throughout the post-World War

II period the growth of world Socialism and the decline of world capitalism, which are the decisive political phenomena of this era, have gone on apace. On the score of Socialism, the European Socialist countries have all made a spectacular economic recovery since the war, without benefit of American loans or gifts, and they are now roaring ahead with their Socialist industrialization, at a pace far superior to anything ever accomplished by any capitalist country. The rapid industrialization of China and other Socialist countries, for example, is also a tremendous matter of decisive world significance. Of vast importance, too, is the fact that the united Socialist and peace forces scored an immense victory in Geneva in obstructing the war drive led by Wall-Street imperialism. Socialist prestige rapidly mounted throughout the world, and in all countries the peoples hailed the conference as a great success for policies of negotiation, as against those of war.

On the other hand and in contrast, the defects and difficulties of world capitalism constantly mount. The capitalist general crisis continues to deepen, although this is by zizzag course. One of the many major symptoms of weakening capitalism at present is the continuing break-up of the colonial system. This is an historic disaster to world capitalism as a whole. In this respect the British, French, Japanese, Dutch, Ameri-

can and other capitalist empires are being very seriously undermined. American imperialism, coming out of World War II rich and undamaged, sought to make itself master of the world through a great atomic war, and in the doing of this, to abolish finally the nightmare of a rising world Socialism and declining world capitalism. But American monopoly capital could not reverse the course of history. The world's peoples, with the Socialist countries in the lead, succeeded in at least temporarily blocking the Wall Street fantastic plan of trying to win world domination through a great war. The central thing accomplished by the first Geneva conference of 1955 was to register the bankruptcy of the monstrous war policy of American big capital, and to give an enormous impulse to the world peoples' program of the peaceful co-existence of the Socialist and capitalist nations. These were developments of supreme importance to the whole world.

BASIC CRITERIA OF SOCIALIST AND CAPITALIST STRENGTH

The course of events over the past one-third of a century, with advancing Socialism and a decaying capitalism, amounts to a growing shift in power relationships between the capitalist and Socialist worlds, a shift which is definitely and dramatically in favor of the latter. This shift has now proceeded so far as inevitably

to put upon the world's agenda the question as to which of the two systems is presently the stronger, capitalism or Socialism, and in what respects.

Many years ago Lenin set as a basic task of Socialism, speaking particularly of the Soviet Union, "to overtake and surpass" capitalism. This, of course, holds good also for world Socialism. The task of the present article is to determine to what extent the forces of world Socialism have succeeded in putting into practice Lenin's great strategic principle. Let us, therefore, make an approach to this important question by analyzing some of the major features which, in the modern world, go to indicate the strength or weakness of a given country and its social system.

At the outset of this analysis we must sound a word of caution. In making an evaluation of the relative strength of capitalism and Socialism at this time, we must not underestimate the strength of capitalism in certain countries. That system, although clearly in decay on a world scale, still retains great power economically and otherwise, and to underestimate it would lead the workers into most dangerous errors of passivity and complacency. We must not mistake future perspectives for present actualities. By the same token, we must also not underestimate the strength of advancing Socialism. As Zhdanov once wisely

remarked, the biggest mistake we can make in this period would be to undervalue the strength of the world working class and its allies.

a) *Dynamic Trend of World Development*: One of the greatest advantages possessed by world Socialism over world capitalism is that the dynamics of social change all radically favor it. This is true, not only in a general but also in a specific sense. That is, in all the criteria of measurement that may be used in such an analysis as this, the powerful element of change is always to be found working in favor of increased Socialist strength. This decisive fact is central in a world situation in which Socialism is the ascending and capitalism the descending system.

b) *Territory, Resources, and Population*: In evaluating these three important spheres, capitalism, from a purely statistical viewpoint, plainly has much the best of the matter. That is, the ratio is very roughly, about two to one in its favor. But this is true only if the whole colonial and semi-colonial world is counted in the capitalist world, which is stretching the point very much. In reality, many of these countries—India, Indonesia, Burma, etc.—have become anti-imperialist and are now showing many trends in the direction of cooperation with the Socialist sector of the world. In this respect, the

Socialist influence of both the U.S.S.R. and People's China is of enormous importance. At this time the spokesmen of the imperialist big powers, notably the United States, are almost in a panic at the movement of the colonial and semi-colonial countries of Asia and Africa (see the Bandung Conference, the new agreement between the U.S.S.R. and India, etc.) toward forming a bloc by themselves and also to enter into friendly collaboration in trade and other important respects with the Socialist countries of the world.

In considering the question of the world weight of population in our equation, it is necessary also to bear in mind that there are important oppositional forces in all capitalist countries. These are the huge masses of workers, peasants, and small middle class elements in the great trade unions, political parties, and other essentially anti-capitalist organizations in the many capitalist and colonial countries—including Britain, Italy, France, West Germany, Japan, India, Burma, Indoesia, and others. There is, of course, also a huge potential anti-capitalist force in the United States.

c) *Industrial Production*: Reliable figures are hard to get in the sphere of international industrial production. With world capitalism possessing somewhere in the neighborhood of two-thirds of all industrial production, it appears on the sur-

face as though that system therefore has a very commanding lead over Socialism in this most vital respect. But this lead, besides now diminishing swiftly, is quite deceptive. One would make a big mistake to conclude mechanically, that just because the capitalist world sector has something like double the value of industrial production of the Socialist sector, therefore, *ipso facto*, the former is twice as strong as the latter in the industrial field. This would be a conclusion far wide of the mark.

First, it must be understood that Socialist industry has been built according to the principles of planned economy and, therefore, that it is a "lean" and "muscular" economy, capable of meeting, at the maximum degree of effectiveness, all the specific tasks that a modern state has to face—of which more anon. Whereas, in contrast, the industry of the capitalist states, which has grown up planlessly, is flabby and weak in its fibre, being cluttered up with vast amount of fat—that is, with enervating luxury production carried on for the benefit of the bourgeoisie. Therefore, it is correspondingly less able to meet the various tests of basic strength that confront states in the present-day world.

W. S. and E. S. Woytinsky, (*World Population and Production*, p. 1005) estimate (however inaccurately) the total U.S. industrial production in 1950 at 93.2 billion dollars and put that of the U.S.S.R.

at 38 billion. Almost panicky, the bourgeois economists are beginning to get an inkling, however, that such statistics do not mean what they seem to on the surface. For example, Walter K. Gutman (*New York Times*, Sept. 10, 1955), argues in substance that whereas the United States in 1954 could put 20 percent (or 17 million tons) of its steel into military production, the Soviet Union, with a little over half the steel production of the United States, was, under the sharp pressure of the cold war, able to apply no less than 27 million tons for military production, or 60 percent more than the United States. Gutman's example is doubtless an exaggeration of the real relationship in steel, but it at least illustrates the important point that the Soviet Union is able to make far more decisive use of its production than is the United States or any other capitalist country. This elementary consideration cuts deeply into the statistical advantage the United States has with regard to industrial production.

Second, it must be remembered also, that the ratio of world industrial production is swinging very rapidly in favor of the Socialist countries. Take, as the major example, the U.S.S.R.: M. Dobb (*Economic Theory and Socialism*, p. 125) estimates that the rate of the Soviet increase of production in heavy industry, over that of capitalist countries developing under favorable conditions during 1928 to 1954, (omit-

ting the war years) is: for metal, the U.S.S.R. nearly three times as fast as the strongest capitalist countries; for fuel, more than three times; and for power, not quite twice. What this disparity in growth-speed has meant over the past quarter century is made clear by G. Malenkov, (*On the Threshold of Communism*, p. 7) in the following (telescoped) table, indicating the expansion of industrial output in the U.S.S.R. and the major capitalist countries of the world for the period 1929-1951, in percentages of increase over their output in 1921: U.S.S.R. 1,266 percent, U.S.A. 200 percent, Britain 160 percent, France 104 percent, and Italy 134 percent. A. Alekseyev (*The Basic Economic Law of Modern Capitalism*, p. 62) states that, "The annual increase of industrial output in the U.S.S.R. for 20 years (1929-1949) averaged 20 percent, while that in the greatest capitalist country—the U.S.A.—hardly reached two percent." Frightened, Ex-Senator Benton says that the U.S.S.R. industrially is going ahead at 6 percent increase per year, as against 3 percent by the United States (*New York World-Telegram*, December 15, 1955).

As this article is about to go to press, an announcement from Moscow states that, under the 6th 5-year plan 1956 to 1960—there will be a 65% increase in the output of Soviet industry, a broad expansion of atomic energy production, and a doubling

of the output of agriculture. This tremendous industrial leap forward widely outdoes anything ever accomplished by a capitalist country, and it will go far towards eliminating the present industrial gap between the United States and the Soviet Union. Similar recent announcements from People's China also indicate very rapid industrial progress in that country.

d) *Economic and Political Stability*: Obviously also, a most important gauge of the strength of the capitalist and Socialist worlds, is the degree of stability of their economic systems and governments. In these spheres the Socialist countries are far superior.

The hodge-podge capitalist economic system, producing planlessly and based upon the exploitation of the workers, is essentially chaotic. It suffers fundamentally from overproduction; that is, as against the inability of the limited capacity of capitalist markets to keep pace with expanding production facilities. Consequently, capitalist history is dotted with a long series of devastating economic cyclical crises. It is nonsense, the boasts of the capitalist economists that, with their Keynesian policies of governmental subsidies and "managed economy," they have overcome this inherent capitalist tendency towards economic crisis and breakdown. The present international "boom" in capitalist production is

largely based upon repairing the damages and fulfilling the shortages created by the last war, and upon gigantic preparations for another war—its perspective is for an eventual economic crisis. Socialist economy, on the other hand, is founded upon planned production for use, for social welfare and advancement. There is established a scientific balance between production and consumption. Socialism is therefore immune to economic crises and mass unemployment. This fact it proved beyond all question during the great economic crisis of 1929-33, when it went ahead full steam in its rapid Socialist industrial development and full employment, while the countries of the capitalist world, without exception, lay prostrate economically and scores of millions of workers went jobless.

By the same token, capitalist political instability and decay, nationally and internationally, is a matter of daily manifestation. The capitalist countries are torn internally with the struggles of rival groups and classes; the big powers are weakened internationally by incurable conflicts of interest with each other; the imperialist states are in perpetual collision with the colonies, and NATO, SEATO, METO, and other capitalist war alliances are crippled by internal weaknesses and conflicts. An especially disruptive feature in world capitalism is the aggressive expansionism of Wall Street imperialism.

In the early years of the post-World War II the United States, by squandering 51 billion dollars abroad in loans, gifts, and subsidies, and by putting practically all the capitalist countries on its dole, temporarily helped to shore up tottering capitalist Western Europe, and also succeeded in building up an unparalleled degree of world capitalist hegemony for itself; but now its boss position in the capitalist world, undermined by advancing Socialism and intensifying capitalist general crisis, is increasingly shaky. One of the great Stalin's very last writings was to point out the impossibility of world capitalism overcoming its internal and external rivalries, hostilities, and contradictions.

In contrast, the Socialist nations—containing among their number both the biggest country in the world—the U.S.S.R.—and the most populous one—People's China—are bound together internally and externally by a solid harmony of the economic and political interests of their peoples. Strategically situated in one great unbroken land mass, as against the scattered locations of the capitalist countries, they are also no less united in their general policies. This shows that, unlike capitalism, they are not based upon a predatory imperialism, but upon the cultivation of their mutual and harmonious interests. This basic economic and political unity enormously increases Socialist strength, actually and relatively, in

every respect as a world force. In the recent rift between Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union the capitalists of the world gloated that they had finally broken the solidarity of the Socialist world; but as it has turned out, their joy was short-lived and misplaced.

e) *Leadership of the Labor Movement*: One of the most striking examples of the forces of world Socialism "overtaking and surpassing" those of capitalism is to be found in the international labor movement; in its rapid drift to the Left. Imperialism has always striven to control and paralyze the labor movement through the instrumentality of its political agents, the Right-wing Social Democrats. Up to the Revolution of October 1917 the Right-opportunists controlled overwhelmingly the labor movement of the entire world. But since that time, as Socialism has won one country after another, the Right-wing Socialist control of labor has progressively diminished on an international scale. The general crisis of capitalism is also the general crisis of Right-wing Social Democracy.

The present status of the advance of the world labor organizations to the Left is to be seen in the current relations of the strength between the progressive World Federation of Trade Unions and the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions, which is led by pro-capitalist Social

Democrats. Of the total of some 140,000,000 trade unionists in the world, about 85,000,000 are affiliated to the WFTU and some 54,000,000 to the ICFTU. The main strength of the WFTU is in the countries of Socialism and people's democracy, but it also has powerful support in the capitalist countries — Italy, France, Japan, Great Britain, West Germany, Brazil, Australia, Canada, and many others.

f) *Ideology as a World Force*: In the present situation of the growing world competition between declining capitalism and rising Socialism, the question of the dominant and guiding ideology in the two respective major camps becomes an important matter of political and economic strength. In this respect the Socialist countries have an enormous advantage over the capitalist countries.

The time was, in the early stages of capitalism, when the capitalists had a firm and confident ideology, in that they at least believed unshakably in their system and feared no social rival. But for them such happy days are now forever past. The growth of predatory monopoly and imperialism, and especially the advance of world Socialism, have, from different directions, worked havoc with the capitalists' earlier complacent thinking, introducing deep ideological confusion and pessimism into their ranks. These tendencies, disintegrating to capitalism,

are bound to increase in the coming years. Capitalist political economy has degenerated into mere propaganda and wishful thinking, and the capitalist system has no sure idea whatever as to where it is heading, what ails it at present, or what is its future. German imperialist fascism, 15 years ago, tried by violence to impress upon world capitalism the arrogant Hitler "*Weltanschauung*"; but this attempt failed in a welter of blood. During the past several years American imperialism has also been trying to prepare the world, ideologically and otherwise, for Yankee domination through economic, political, and military aggression; but this program, too, has now gone bankrupt. Consequently, the capitalist system is drifting confusedly, without a pilot and without a charted course.

On the other hand, the Socialist world, in Marxism-Leninism, has a definite, dynamic, and powerful ideology, based upon scientific principles. It has brilliant guides in the living works of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin, and now, it may be added, those of Mao Tse-tung. Scientific Socialism clearly understands the capitalist system, the social laws that are bringing it to its end, and the principles upon which the next stage of society, Socialism, is being built. These principles the many Socialist peoples are now putting into practice in their countries.

Marxism, from the outset, has al-

ways united theory and practice. This unity of thought and action, historically has given it tremendous power. It has been especially manifest during the past few years, since the enormous increase in the extent of power of world Socialism. Marxism, or more properly, Marxist-Leninist theory, has become transformed into a great and powerful social force; one which moves and inspires millions and hundreds of millions of people to conscious united effort. Marxism-Leninism, in its practice, has become transmuted into a mighty means against capitalism and for the regeneration of mankind socially. Translated into terms of reality, the many-sided superiority of Marxist theory over capitalist theory, means in the field of production many additional millions of tons of coal, oil, and steel. Marxism-Leninism, expressed in the militant and progressive Communist policies of today, of itself goes far to cancel out the statistical advantages still held by moribund capitalism in various fields, as we have noted. Therefore, in any measurement of the relative strength of the world capitalist and Socialist systems, at their present stage of development, the matter of Marxist-Leninist theory and policy must be accorded major weight.

CAPITALIST AND SOCIALIST STRENGTH IN THE TEST OF PRACTICE

In the previous pages we have re-

viewed briefly some of what may be called the organic strengths of the capitalist and Socialist systems, regarding the dynamics of social evolution, territory, natural resources, population, industrial production, economic and political stability, labor leadership and guiding theories. Now it remains for us to gauge the two systems as functioning currently in the supreme test of life itself; to measure the way these systems face up to the severe tasks and problems which they daily have to confront. Let us, therefore, take a look at some of these tests.

In doing this, however, we must not forget that there is a fundamental difference in the way the Socialist and capitalist worlds approach the broad question of international relationships. As Lenin and Stalin have stated upon innumerable occasions, and as 38 years of Soviet foreign policy have fully borne out, Socialist international policies are based upon the principles of the peaceful co-existence of all states, regardless of the nature of their internal regimes. This means that the inevitable competition between capitalism and Socialism, which will probably extend over a protracted period, should be carried on within the general framework of world peace and of the friendship of the many peoples. World capitalism, or more precisely, world imperialism, on the other hand, views Socialism as a mortal enemy which must be crushed, and

it has been trying to do this ever since the USSR was born in November 1917. Wall-Street imperialism, which has nothing in common with the interests of the American people, constitutes the worst expression of this militant capitalist hatred of Socialism. Its foreign policies, particularly during the cold war period, have generally been conceived and applied in the hope and expectancy of a broad capitalist war against the USSR and the other countries of Socialism.

a) *The Question of War and Peace*: In this basic world issue of these times, with the decay of capitalism and the advance of Socialism, the Socialist world is increasingly demonstrating its greater strength than that of decadent capitalism. Take World War II, for example. In line with its general peace policy, the USSR and the world peace forces fought to prevent this awful war, but the USSR was nevertheless forced into the war on June 22, 1941, by the treacherous attack of Hitler. The Soviet Union put up a fight that amazed the world, and it showed conclusively the superiority of Socialism also in this lethal field. Decades ago the general superiority of Socialism over capitalism was made manifest in the Soviet Union; it was especially confirmed in the basic experiences of World War II. Hitler had behind him virtually the entire economic system of Europe, as well as most of

its man-power, but he nevertheless went down to crushing defeat, mainly at the hands of the Red Army. In its great patriotic war the USSR, with its tremendous strength, utterly confounded the bourgeois military experts of the world.

In their recent great struggle around the basic issue of the war danger since the end of World War II the capitalist and Socialist systems also faced a crucial test of their respective strength and vitality. In a nutshell, the post-war situation was that world imperialism, led by a Wall Street seeking international domination, strove to embroil the world in a great atomic war in order to try to establish its world mastery; whereas, the peace forces of the world, headed by the USSR and other Socialist countries, and people's democracies, and embracing the bulk of the peoples in all capitalist countries, including the United States, fought against the war plan of predatory American monopoly capital. The Socialist and peace forces won this vast and decisive struggle, at least for the time being, by blocking the warmongers at Geneva and by easing the danger of a world war. Of course, this peoples' victory did not end the war danger permanently, as such a danger will continue as long as imperialism lasts, but it did greatly lessen international tensions.

It was a long and bitter struggle, in which the forces of peace and Socialism won a mounting series of

victories, among them, the breaking of the A- and H-bomb monopoly—a success which hamstringing the war program of American imperialism; the bringing about of the settlement of the Korean and Indo-China wars, in the face of determined Wall Street efforts to continue and expand these wars; the accomplishment of the defeat of the repeated attempts of the Wall Street militarists to introduce the A-bomb into the wars in Asia; as well as various other victories along the same general line. The struggle over war and peace came to a crisis at the Geneva conference of July, 1955, at which meeting of the Big Four the United States reactionaries were compelled to shelve their war program. At first, the Pentagon warmongers tried to claim Geneva as a victory; but now, almost in panic, they are learning how completely mistaken they were. They are now trying feverishly to re-invigorate the cold war. Only the next years will demonstrate just how decisive was the major defeat of world imperialism in Geneva at the hands of the world forces of peace, democracy and Socialism.

During the sharpest phases of the cold war, in February, 1955, Foreign Minister Molotov of the USSR warned those elements who were plotting war against the Soviet Union. After reviewing the whole international situation and the forces in play, he declared, "If we compare the Soviet Union—with all its man-

power, with its immense material resources, with all its foreign allies—and take into account, moreover, the moral and political support the policy of peace commands among the masses in other countries—if we compare the Soviet Union, as it is today with the United States of America, taking into account in respect to that country the factors enumerated above, it should be perfectly clear that the Soviet Union is not weaker than the United States." (*Pravda*, February 9, 1955). This is the answer to those reactionary elements who still cherish the traditional bourgeois illusion that Socialism can be prevented or wiped out by war.

b) *Social Progress and Change*: This is the most basic of all the living tests of strength between the two current world systems of capitalism and Socialism. Broadly stated, the issue is whether ultimately the forces of the working class and its allies, working in the individual countries, can abolish capitalism and establish Socialism in their lands, or whether capitalism will be able to prevent this, and perhaps even to reverse the process by wiping out the existing Socialist states. The history of the past generation, with its growth of Socialism, now covering one-third of the world, has given the decisive answer to this fundamental test of the relative strength of the two social systems.

At present, the capitalist soothsayers are wishfully hoping that, with the help of the Right-wing Social Democrats, they have halted the vast post-World War II mass advance toward Socialism, at least in Europe. But all this is only a futile bourgeois dream. Socialism is both invincible and inevitable in all countries. In Asia, the forces leading to Socialism are currently more active, and in Europe, at most there is only a lull in the Socialist advance; that is, in the sense of Socialism winning in additional countries. We can be certain that, with the further deepening of the general capitalist crisis, the Socialist movement in Western Europe will soon take on a new burst of growth. Socialism in the world has progressed mainly in great revolutionary leaps, alternating with periods of relative calm. In this supreme test of strength between the two systems — whether or not Socialism can be born into the world and live — the forces of Socialism, during the past four decades, have proved by actual fact in the hard struggle that they have established such wide areas of Socialism despite the forces of world capitalism.

c) *Industrialization of the Underdeveloped Countries*: This question is also currently providing a basic test of strength between the capitalist and Socialist systems. Historically, the development of capitalist imperialism — of Great Britain, the

United States, Germany, France, Japan, Italy, Belgium, Holland, Portugal, and Spain—fastened the economic and political fetters of colonialism and semi-colonialism upon most of the countries of Asia, Africa, and Latin America, whose population embraces a big majority of the human race, thus effectively preventing their industrialization. The first decisive blow against this monstrous system of human exploitation and oppression was struck by the Russian Revolution of 1917; for Russia, too, was largely dominated by foreign imperialists. The great Revolution profoundly stirred the colonial peoples all over the world, especially in view of the fact that the first Socialist Republic renounced the imperialist privileges of Czarist Russia in colonial Asia, and also because of the tremendous progress that was made by the national liberation and subsequent Socialist industrialization of the many erstwhile oppressed colonial peoples within old Russia itself. The Russian revolution, by establishing the national and racial equality of these peoples, also struck a mortal blow at Jim Crowism throughout the world.

The central purpose of the great national revolution now sweeping over Asia, and led by People's China, is precisely to break the fetters that the imperialist capitalist powers had fastened upon them in order to prevent their industrialization and general national development. The

basic question at issue now, so far to full fruition and success, or whether the imperialists of the capitalist world will be able to stunt or abort it. There can only be one answer to this problem; the national liberation movement is invincible.

The world imperialists, viewing their vital colonial system collapsing, have suddenly become loud-mouthed "friends" of the colonial peoples, declaring that they want nothing better than to industrialize and modernize their countries. Thus, Great Britain has its Colombo Plan and the United States its Point Four Program. The essence of both these projects, however, is the cultivation of imperialist investments, not real industrialization, in the colonial world, with many strings of economic and political control attached. The imperialists' efforts in this direction are not to be minimized, however, as they have vast amounts of available capital, particularly those of the United States, and their shaky economic systems badly need the shots-in-the-arm that heavy foreign investments could give them.

In contrast to this active program of imperialist investment and domination the Socialist forces, in this case basically the Soviet Union, are, with economic cooperation and political solidarity, genuinely helping the peoples of the undeveloped countries to industrialize and to modernize their homelands. Thus, the USSR is lending both capital and

technicians on an increasing scale to many of these countries. Not to mention the Soviet Union's active cooperation with People's China, it is also in the process of developing various industrialization projects in India, Indonesia, Burma, Egypt, Afghanistan, and other Asian lands, to the amazement and dismay of the big imperialist powers. People's China and India are also in active mutual collaboration, especially in the economic field. All this is very alarming to the Wall Street imperialists. John Foster Dulles, with the announced support of President Eisenhower, cried out in alarm (N. Y. *Herald-Tribune*, January 12, 1956) that "we" are in a contest with the USSR for the industrialization of the "underdeveloped countries." "Defeat in this contest," said he, "would be as disastrous as defeat in the armaments race." And he dreaded this defeat, "unless the country *as a whole* (his emphasis) wakes up to all its implications."

In the current industrialization of the erstwhile colonial countries, the outcome will be of measureless importance to the world, both economically and politically. At present the forces of Socialism are well in the lead in this constructive work. The very existence of the broad revolutionary colonial movement, with its basic stress upon industrialization, proves this. The financial power of the capitalists in this vital field is great; but their huge supplies of

capital will, in the end, not prove decisive. So far, one of the main things that the United States has won by its squandering of over 50 billion dollars abroad during the post-war period is the suspicion and hostility of most of the peoples of the world. Nor will the imperialist leopard be able to change its spots. The ultimate victory will rest with the forces of Socialism and democracy, which are animated by the desire for peace, by basic principles of genuine cooperation and of international friendliness and fair dealing with the peoples of all lands.

d) *Raising of Living Standards:* Always a fundamental test of a social system is what it does to raise the living standards of its people. In this respect, capitalism, which is based upon the ruthless exploitation of the toiling masses, has made a ghastly record. After some 200 years of existence, it had reduced the great majority of the world's toilers, especially in the colonial lands, to virtual starvation levels. In the capitalist countries themselves the bulk of the lesser skilled workers also remain in abject poverty, while the exploiting employers revel in boundless luxury. In the United States most of the workers are better off—due chiefly to the fact that this country escaped the ravages of the two world wars and now, in a dominant imperialist position, it has created for itself a false prosperity, built largely upon exploitation of the other peoples of

the world. But the American higher living standards rest upon precarious foundations, with the prospect of a deepening of the general crisis of capitalism and the eventual effects of this crisis upon our country's capitalist economy. Actually the high producing American workers are sweated out of more profits than are those of any other country, and, as a result, here the capitalists are wealthy beyond the wildest dreams of parasitic exploiters in other countries.

In contrast, world Socialism, although born only a third of a century ago, has already demonstrated its superior capacity to improve the condition of the masses of workers of field and factory. The Soviet Union has set up the 8-hour day in place of the 12-14 hour day of Czarist Russia, and, starting from an extremely low wage base, it has greatly improved real Soviet wages and working conditions. In this respect, however, the USSR has had to contend with a number of temporary adverse conditions that have definitely hindered the improvement of mass living and cultural standards, which is, in the end, the supreme objective of all Socialist regimes. Over the years it has had to build its present big industrial machine from the ground up under heavy pressure for time, necessarily creating also entirely new cadres of engineers and armies of skilled workers as it has gone along. It has also had to repair the enormous ravages and costs of World War

II, which destroyed most of the industry in the western USSR and devastated the country generally. And, not the least, it has been compelled, in order to counter the looming war threat of Wall Street imperialism, to construct, at terrific speed, an adequate national defense. These huge tasks have made heavy strains upon the Soviet national economy, and they have therewith definitely militated against the faster advance of mass living standards. People's China and other Socialist countries have all had to face similar monumental difficulties, forced upon them by the aggressive warlike cliques and moves of the decaying capitalist system.

But now, with the war danger reduced though not defeated, these big military non-productive drains upon the Socialist economies will diminish. This will, therefore, open the door to a more rapid improvement in the conditions of the producing masses. The Soviet Union especially is now on the eve of spectacular progress in this general respect, and the rest of the countries building Socialism will not be far behind. Capitalism has never been able to bring to the broad masses of the entire world, even in elementary forms, the blessings of steam, electricity, and electronics, and all the less will it be able to confer upon them the gigantic potential of atomic energy. The fulfillment of these basic tasks awaits the advance of world Socialism. In the fundamental matter of improv-

ing, in actual practice, the living standards of the peoples, Socialism has already decisively proved its superiority over capitalism.

e) *The Question of Culture:* The ability of a political system to produce a free life and a high culture for the masses of the people is another basic test of its social strength. In this respect, too, world Socialism has already, in the crucible of actual experience, demonstrated its superiority over decadent capitalism.

In the vital matter of democracy, for example, as capitalism sinks further into its general crisis it increasingly tends and strives to solve its insoluble problems by a resort to force—to fascist terrorism as well as to war. The great bulwarks of world democracy today are the Socialist forces and the big mass movements that are orientating in the general direction of peace, democracy, and Socialism. Capitalism, which in its early days was relatively democratic, has now, in its period of decay, become generally a malignant menace to democracy. It is only a decade since the democratic peoples of the world, with the USSR at the head, saved humanity from the fascist enslavement planned for it by world imperialism.

In the basic field of education also Socialism is now giving a practical demonstration of its superior strength over capitalism. At this time, notoriously, in the capitalist countries the educational systems are in deep crisis,

and nowhere is this crisis more striking than in the United States. In their wild rush for maximum profits and in their eagerness to create a mighty world conquering military machine, the capitalists have shoved away the vast task of properly educating the people.

On the other side of the picture, the Socialist countries are well known for their active cultivation of their educational systems, notwithstanding the heavy drains their economies have been subjected to, as noted earlier. Not only have they largely dissolved the vast oceans of mass illiteracy inherited from the rotten capitalism which they displaced, but they are also outstripping the best educational efforts of the bourgeois technicians and leaders. Reactionary American educational leaders bemoan this reality.

A recent article by N. T. Dodge (N. Y. *Herald-Tribune*, November 29), tells the story in a nutshell. On the basis of a personal investigation of Soviet high schools, Mr. Dodge says: "All students (in preparatory studies for university training) must take ten years of mathematics, including trigonometry, six years of biology, five years of physics, and four years of chemistry. During the last three years, over 40 percent of the students' time is spent on these four subjects. In contrast, only eight percent of our high school students take chemistry, five percent physics, and two percent trigonometry. Even

a watered down course such as general science is taken by only a little over one-fifth of our students." Small wonder, then, that American scientists, are themselves stating that both in number and in quality they are in danger of falling behind those in the USSR. Soviet science is now in the very forefront of world science. Outstanding Soviet progress in developing industrial techniques and technicians is fully acknowledged throughout the bourgeois world.

In art and literature Socialist progress is also being markedly demonstrated. Aside from the products of the democratic forces in the capitalist countries, in the main, art and literature in these lands, above all in the United States, is submerged by the ocean of filthy comic books, crime stories, and reactionary obscurantism. Unfortunately, this capitalist ideological trash has profound effects upon the minds of the workers. In the Socialist countries, on the contrary, although some of the art forms, under the new conditions of Socialism, are still working their way to maturity, others are blossoming and flourishing in a way quite unknown under capitalism. Already the world is becoming accustomed to the appearance of sensational Soviet cultural delegations in various countries, late striking examples of which were the dramatic successes of the Soviet pianist Gilels and Soviet violinist Oistrakh in American cities. The world is also used to accepting Rus-

sians as world champions at chess, and at the Olympic games it is learning something of the excellence of Soviet athletes. Blazing the trail for all the countries of the world, the Soviet Union is actually building a new type of man and woman.

THE ADVANCE OF SOCIALISM TO WORLD LEADERSHIP

The foregoing analysis provides at least an approach to an elementary answer of the general question as to what is currently the relative strength of the capitalist and Socialist worlds. In these respects it makes clear that in several very basic phases—including those of territory, natural resources, population, industrial production, available capital, and the political control of many important countries—world capitalism still possesses very considerable strength. However, as mentioned before, while the remaining great strength of capitalism must not be underestimated, nevertheless its specific power in these spheres is not to be calculated merely upon a statistical basis, for this would grossly overestimate it. There must also be considered the very important modifications as brought out above in our analysis, which, taken together, seriously diminish the significance and reliability of the current bourgeois statistical generalizations in all these spheres and for the capitalist system as a whole.

On the opposite side, it has also been demonstrated above that in

various vital respects Socialism, on a world scale, is definitely and concretely the stronger of the two systems. It has shown itself in practice to be the superior of the two systems. This is manifestly the case, as we have seen above, in its incomparably stronger theory, Marxism-Leninism; its far more rapid rate of industrial growth; its much greater ability to develop and apply modern techniques and to extend industrialization to the undeveloped countries; its spectacular advances in science and in the production of scientists; its far more fundamental democracy and racial equality; its more effective improvement of the living standards, health and general welfare of the masses; the greater political unity and solidarity of its peoples; its sounder educational system and general culture; its demonstrated ability to grow in a revolutionary way despite all capitalist resistance, and, last but not least, the leading position of Marxism-Leninism in the world labor movement. Of decisive significance, as the foundation of these several developments is the fact that the dynamics of social evolution, on every front, are operating in favor of world Socialism and against world capitalism.

The general picture which emerges from all this is that of a world society in which the forces of Socialism are becoming ever stronger, but in which sectors of the old capitalist system are still powerful. The center

of political gravity in the world, already far advanced in this respect, is still rapidly moving toward the Left. Lenin's famous slogan, calling upon Socialism "to overtake and surpass" the capitalist countries, which is already an accomplished fact in various very important spheres, is fast on the way to being decisively realized generally in the not very distant future. Molotov, in the remarks already quoted, put his finger on the situation, in stating that the USSR and its allies were not weaker than the United States and its allies.

The increasing specific gravity of Socialism in world affairs is bound to further deepen the world crisis of the capitalist system. It will have a corroding effect upon already seriously disintegrated and demoralized world capitalism. This capitalist decay will become particularly marked when the expanding pre-eminence of Socialism becomes a definite fact, obvious to all observers. The growing decay of capitalism and the advance of Socialism will intensify the currents of demoralization among the bourgeoisie, which are already becoming evident. Those "American exceptionalists" who believe that the United States economy, allegedly built of superior clay to that of the rest of the capitalist world, will never take the road that leads to eventual Socialism, are in for a complete disillusionment. The aggressive policies of monopoly capitalism in the midst of world capitalist decay, will even-

tually leave the American people no alternative but to begin to move toward Socialism. Among their many miscalculations, the "exceptionalists" greatly underestimate the present discontent among the American workers, and they will be astounded at the mass radicalization which will take place in the oncoming years, with the deepening of the crisis of world capitalism.

By the same token, the rapid increase of the specific gravity politically of Socialism in the world, and especially when Socialism is visibly becoming the dominant world trend, will give an enormous spur to the growth, enthusiasm, and fighting spirit of the world's masses who are struggling for emancipation. It will provide a powerful impetus to the development of the already existing Socialist countries; it will speed up the growth of Communist and Left Socialist parties, of the trade unions, and of other proletarian organizations throughout the capitalist world. It will hasten the growing orientation towards national liberation, democracy, and Socialism on the part of the colonial and semi-colonial peoples of the world. The stronger Socialism becomes, the faster will be its growth. But there must be no underestimation of the long, hard fights against capitalism that still lie ahead.

The developing hegemony of world Socialism will also have profound effects upon the strategy and

tactics of the many people's movements. Particularly the united front, in all its forms, will become applicable upon a much broader basis than ever before, both nationally and internationally. The vast world-wide pre-Geneva anti-war movement among peoples all over the world, led by the USSR and other Socialist countries, gave an inkling of the future possibilities in this respect. The present growing economic and political collaboration of the colonial and Socialist countries is also a case in point of the broader united fronts that will become possible with the continued expansion of Socialist influence in the world.

IMPROVED PROSPECTS FOR PEACEFUL CO-EXISTENCE

The most important practical consequence of the swiftly increasing weight of world Socialism—economically, politically, culturally, diplomatically—is that this growth, by the same token, will vastly improve the prospect for the peaceful co-existence of all nations, whatever the character of their internal regimes. The stronger becomes Socialism and the people's democratic organizations generally, the better will be the chances for the maintenance of world peace. The fight for peaceful co-existence will become more effective, not less so, in the coming period. As we have seen earlier, the imperialists have always followed a policy of hostile

encirclements of the USSR, and now also of People's China, and we may be sure that many of them, made desperate by the irresistible advance of world Socialism, will strive to continue and intensify such destructive policies. Rising world Socialism, however, instead of replying to these policies of repression and violence with a policy of counter-encirclement and of stamping out remaining capitalism, will redouble its efforts to maintain peace in the world and friendly trading and cultural relations among all the peoples. The development of peaceful co-existence of the nations, which is the central task of Socialist foreign policy, will, with the growth of world Socialism, become more realizable in the coming period.

The advance of the forces of democracy and Socialism internationally will greatly facilitate the struggle of the workers in all the capitalist countries for their economic and political demands. It will help everywhere the workers' fight for better wages and working conditions. Even powerful American reaction is already definitely feeling the constructive pressures of world democracy and Socialism. The most decisive example of this was the checking of the world war drive of Wall Street, as registered at the Big Four Geneva conference. International pressure by the world democratic and Socialist forces is also a powerful hindrance to the development of fascist trends

in the respective capitalist imperialist powers, including the United States, and it is a world force for the strengthening of civil liberties everywhere. Undoubtedly, the strong world Socialist and democratic opposition was a decisive element in the recent rebuffs to McCarthyism in this country. These same world forces have also been a basically important factor in compelling the Jim Crow government in the United States recently to make some concessions regarding Negro discrimination, particularly in proposals for the desegregation of the armed forces, of the public school system, and of inter-state travel. Opposition abroad has also done much to diminish the horrible practice of lynching in this country. And the Communist Party of the United States, during its current heroic fight in defense of the Bill of Rights, likewise has received no small support from the expressions of solidarity of democratic and Socialist forces in other lands.

Most important, too, the rise of Socialist strength and influence on a world scale, plus the recent great increase in the power of the democratic forces within the respective capitalist and colonial countries, definitely balances the possibilities for the workers to restrain and curb the violence of the capitalists in the class struggle. No Marxist, however, will ever forget Lenin's great lesson that in their desperate efforts to defeat advancing Socialism, the bourgeoisie

will resort to every possible violence.

Writing a quarter of a century ago, before the recent tremendous advances of world Socialism, Stalin (*Leninism*, Vol. I, p. 117) said:

No doubt, in the distant future, if the proletariat has triumphed in the chief countries that are now capitalist, and if the capitalist encirclement has given place to a socialist encirclement, it will be possible for a "peaceful" transition to be effected in certain capitalist countries when the capitalists, in view of the "unfavorable" international situation, will deem it advisable, "of their own accord," to make certain concessions to the proletariat. But this is to look far ahead, and to contemplate extremely hypothetical possibilities. As concerns the near future, there is no warrant for any such expectations.

Obviously, the world's workers have not reached the position of power laid down by Stalin as the condition for peaceful possibilities for Socialism, but just as obviously, they are rapidly moving in that general direction. Already the workers are ever more effectively resisting the capitalist militarists who, to further their imperialist aims to kill Socialism internationally and to dominate the world, would drench the world in the horror and blood of an atomic holocaust. So, too, the workers will increasingly and successfully undertake to bridle capitalist counter-revolutionaries in the various countries who, in their desperate efforts to block the irresistible advance of

Socialism, would embroil their countries with devastating civil wars. The time is approaching when the capitalist exploiters will be prevented generally from applying their murderous policies, nationally or internationally, to advance their parasitic and predatory interests. For the first time, the world will really begin to follow a rational and civilized course.

CONCLUSION

For the first 70 years of its existence, from 1848 to 1917, the progress of world Socialism was relatively slow, its activities being mostly expressed in the shaping of its revolutionary working class program, the cultivation of solid cadres of Marxist fighters, the building of political parties, trade unions, cooperatives, and other proletarian organizations, and the waging of numberless partial economic and political struggles. In the next stage of Socialist development, marked by the workers' victory in Russia and eventually in a number of other countries, the speed of Socialist advance was greatly stepped up. From now on, on the basis of a more or less prolonged period of peaceful co-existence, as Socialism begins to enter into the period of its developing superiority on a world scale, the tempo of its forward thrust will become faster. And when the movement actually and obviously goes "over the summit" and into "the down-hill pull," then we may

expect still swifter Socialist advances.

The lesson for Communists from the increasingly favorable international situation is not to rest upon their oars in a fatalistic conception that the historic world fight for Socialism is now about won; but, on the contrary, to redouble their activities, specifically and generally, against monopoly capitalism. The workers must strive to create democratic conditions, so that the war-mongers will never again be able (as many of them are still trying) to re-create such a deadly war threat as they had generated prior to the Geneva Conference. The masses should build a broad united front to curb the war-makers and fascists and also see to it that the world develops solidly along the policy of peaceful coexistence. The workers should make a militant struggle in defense of their daily demands and conduct an all-out attack against every feature and phase of the cold war policies of Wall Street. They should build the Communist Party and all other workers' organizations as never before.

All the above-listed world developments towards Socialism are of profound importance to the American working class and its political allies. Our country is rich in natural resources and in the skills of its working people. But our national potentialities for full freedom and a better economic life cannot be realized so long as the industries are owned, the

government controlled, and the country dominated by the Wall-Street monopolists. The workers, the Negro people, the poorer farmers, and other democratic strata are now fighting on every front against mono-

polist domination. This struggle will go on and intensify. Nor can it cease until the people here, as in other countries, finally understand, through their own experiences, the necessity for Socialism.