PART IV

WAS THE DEMOCRATIC REVOLUTION IN THE U.S. COMPLETED?

As we have seen, most Marxist-Leninists still hold that, while socialist revolutions in developing capitalist and feudal and semi-feudal countries involve two stages, the transformations to socialism in advanced capitalist countries are one-stage revolutions. However, rather than supplying a ready-made formula specifying the number of stages involved in a particular type of country's socialist revolution, Marxism-Leninism's basic principles provide the means of determining the number of stages the socialist revolution in a particular country involves. That means, of course, is concrete analysis of concrete conditions, "the living soul of Marxism". Therefore, for example, the reason the revolutions in Russia and China involved two stages was that concrete analysis of the concrete conditions in those countries revealed certain barriers (Tsarism in Russia and imperialism in China) blocking the path to socialism. So far so good. But in supposedly applying Marxism-Leninism to the U.S., many of our advocates of one-stage revolution fail to conduct a thoroughgoing analysis of the concrete conditions in the U.S. and completely ignore the fact that an incomplete democratic revolution is one of the barriers blocking the path to socialism.

According to Marx and Engels, in other words, the democratic revolution must be carried to completion--i.e., must result in a revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of all classes and strata comprising the people--in order to remove all barriers standing in the path of socialism. Originally put forward with the world's industrially-advanced countries in mind, the above principle--the "red thread" running through all of Marx's works --was completely buried by opportunists and revisionists and only partially unearthed by Marxism's subsequent defenders and developers. As a consequence, advanced capitalist countries are mistakenly thought to be the only countries in the world where the "red thread" doesn't apply. Many in the U.S. movement therefore fail to take the "red thread" into account in their random, partial analysis of the U.S.'s concrete conditions. Others verbally recognize the "red thread's" existence, but in the very next breath claim it doesn't apply in the U.S., since the U.S.'s democratic revolution was allegedly carried to completion as a result of the War of Independence or the Civil War or the accumulative effect of both. Can such a claim survive the test of concrete analysis of concrete conditions? Such is the question we must now investigate.

CHAPTER 1

THE WAR OF INDEPENDENCE AND THE FIRST DEMOCRATIC REVOLUTION

The American War of Independence was the product of divergent economic and political interests between certain segments of the population in the thirteen American colonies on the one hand and the ruling class in mother England on the other. Further on in this section, we will briefly explore those divergent economic and political interests. However, let us first of all briefly examine the class structure of Colonial America and the class struggles occurring there prior to independence.

Geography, climate and the quality of the soil to a large degree determined the nature of the productive systems in the various regions of English America. Though New England and New York City were noted for shipbuilding, fishing, slave-trading and distilling, the New England and Middle Atlantic Colonies were predominantly agricultural. Approximately 90% of the inhabitants of the two regions were engaged in farming. Since the fertile soil in both regions existed in the form of scattered patches, small-scale agriculture on the part of independent farmers predominated. In the Southern Colonies, however, where extensive stretches of extremely rich soil abounded, agricultural enterprise was conducted on a far greater scale. Plantations--large scale agricultural units on which slave labor produced huge quantities of tobacco, rice, indigo and eventually cotton (among other commodities) that were exported to the mother country and the Northern Colonies at tremendous profit--were the hallmark of Southern agriculture, while a miniscule, aristocratic planter class dominated Southern society.

By 1760, the population of England's American Colonies (not counting the Native Americans) had reached 1,600,000. The overwhelming majority inhabited scattered, sparsely-populated rural settlements. Fewer than 100,000 were urban dwellers.

At least 360,000 (22 1/2%) of the 1,600,000 were chattel slaves from Africa. Though a small number were owned by independent farmers in the Middle Atlantic and Southern Colonies, the overwhelming majority of slaves were the property of Southern planters.

Indentured servants numbered about 208,000 (13%). Aside from the fact that, with very few exceptions, chattel slaves were Black Africans and indentured servants were white Europeans,

the principal characteristic distinguishing indentured servitude from chattel slavery was the period of bondage--slavery usually being for life, indentured servitude for a period of from two to seven years (usually closer to the latter).

Virtually identical in number with the indentured servants were free individuals (white and Black) who earned a living by selling their labor power. Included among these wage laborers were seamen, carpenters, mechanics, masons, brickmakers, potters, blacksmiths, shoemakers, tanners, tailors, millers, soapmakers and a variety of artisans. A small number--especially from among the ranks of blacksmiths, shoemakers and tailors--eventually accumulated the capital to go into business for themselves, in the process becoming employers of wage laborers and, in some cases, masters of indentured apprentices.

Fully one-half of colonial society was comprised of independent farmers and frontiersmen, with the former outnumbering the latter by almost seven to one. Though both were free and made their living through individual enterprise, the profits derived therefrom were invariably not of a nature allowing the exercise of widespread social, economic or political influence. Nevertheless, approximately one-third of all independent farmers either owned small numbers of slaves or were masters of indentured servants.

The two classes dominating colonial society were divided according to the means by which each class acquired its wealth. Thus, each of the two classes was especially dominant in the region where the mode of production responsible for that particular class's wealth predominated. In the South, several hundred planter families reigned supreme and perpetuated their dominance through the practices of primogeniture (automatic inheritance of an entire estate by the eldest son) and entail (forbidding the transfer of a family's land to non-relatives). Those comprising the other dominant class, merchant-capitalists, were mostly residents of the four principal Northern cities (Philadelphia, New York, Boston and Newport), though they were prominent in Charleston, South Carolina as well. Consisting of approximately four hundred families, this class maintained its dominance through direct bribery of governors and other colonial administrators and monopolization of the seats in the various colonial councils, assemblies and legislatures.

In summary, then, the following was the class structure of colonial society in 1760, that is, immediately prior to the birth of the independence movement in the American colonies.

The Classes In Colonial American Society (1760)

Class	Population	Percent
Merchant-Capitalists	14,500	0.9
Planters	9,500	0.6
Independent Farmers & Frontiersmen	800,000	50.0
Free Laborers	208,000	13.0
Indentured Servants	208,000	13.0
Chattel Slaves	360,000	22.5
Total	1,600,000	100.0

Because of the dual character of Colonial America's economic life (i.e., the dominance of merchant-capitalism in the North and slavery in the South), two ruling classes existed, with each involved in struggles with the classes under its domination. Throughout the entire Colonial era, however, the two ruling classes did not engage in mortal conflict with eachother. In other words, each ruling class was more concerned with escaping the domination of mother England and maintaining dominance over the lower classes in Colonial America than with the possible consequences of the expansion of the other ruling class's mode of production. Thus, class struggle in Colonial America manifested itself in the following ways: Chattel Slaves struggled against the Southern Planters and the slave-holding strata of independent farmers; indentured servants struggled against their merchant-capitalist, planter, independent farmer and independent businessman masters; free laborers (the majority of whom lived in the New England and Middle Atlantic Colonies) struggled against their merchant-capitalist and independent businessman employers; and small landowners struggled against large landowners--be they planters or land-speculating merchant-capitalists.

Struggle on the part of slaves took the form of passing oneself off as habitually sick or lazy, sabotaging production (through such acts as individual and mass work slowdowns, damaging tools, disabling work animals and destroying crops), burning buildings, poisoning overseers and masters, committing suicide, running away and engaging in widespread mass insurrection. Despite the efforts of proficient, brutal overseers, the individual forms of struggle (feigning sickness, sabotaging production, running away, etc.)were day-to-day headaches for virtually all Southern planters. Mass insurrections, though happening years and sometimes decades apart, were of frequent enough occurrence to keep the white population throughout the South in a more or less constant state of fear.

Struggle on the part of indentured servants was quite common as well. Work stoppages, intended to extract promises of more humane treatment, and escape attempts were as much a part of indentured servitude as similar forms of individual struggle were a part of chattel slavery. Widespread uprisings by indentured servants occurred on an average of once every ten years during the second half of the 17th century. During the 18th century, however, as indentured servitude gradually began fading out of existence (having been superceded by chattel slavery as the primary means of supplying free labor), widespread revolts by indentured servants became once-in-a-generation occurrences. Yet individual or mass flights to freedom by indentured servants continued throughout the remainder of the Colonial era.

Concurrent with the 18th century decline of widespread mass struggle by indentured servants was the rise of increasingly intense mass struggle by wage laborers. For example, during a period of severe depression and widespread hunger, unemployed workers in Boston staged the "bread riots" of 1709 and 1713; in 1741, bakers in New York City and shipbuilders in Boston both went out on strike; in 1746, carpenters struck for higher pay in Savannah, Georgia; and in 1763, a strike for higher wages by predominantly Black shimney sweepers rocked Charleston, South Carolina.

Far more widespread and intense than such instances of urban labor strife was the struggle in the countryside between independent farmers and large landed interests. Scattered in the backcountry from New Hampshire to Georgia "...the small farmers constituted a remarkably homogeneous group....It had peculiar social and political views arising from the crude nature of its environment, but its active political doctrines were derived from an antagonism to the seaboard groups. One source of conflict was connected with possession of the land itself. Much of the western country had been taken up by speculators and the settlers were either squatters or purchasers from large holders." 1/

There was also a large tenant-farmer population, which, in essence, constituted the middle sector of the independent farmer class. As a matter of fact, since a great deal of the available land was owned by planter families living along the coast and by land-speculating merchant-capitalist families inhabiting the major cities, the <u>majority</u> of independent farmers were tenants of merciless, profit-hungry landlords.

The relatively small number of <u>landowning</u> backwoods farmers, though strong-willed and possessing the right to vote, remained in a state of perpetual subjugation to the planters and merchant-capitalists as a result of excessive taxation and gross

underrepresentation in the colonial legislatures. The resulting frustration in planter and merchant-capitalist controlled legislatures and courts often led independent farmers to resort to armed struggle.

New Jersey farmers, protesting high rents and lack of political representation, were in a state of more or less open revolt from 1740 to 1754. Their movement was eventually suppressed by British troops, local militia having refused to do so. Widespread revolts by New York farmers began in 1711 and were virtually annual occurrences for the next half century. Ultimately, in 1766, again with British troops providing the balance of power, resistance on the part of New York's independent farmers was brutally crushed. And in 1768, backcountry farmers and frontiersmen in North Carolina founded the "Regulators", an association which specialized in returning to the rightful owners land confiscated by sheriffs for non-payment of taxes. "Regulator" elements eventually occupied several county courthouses in 1770, thus preventing the institutions responsible for dispossessing backwoods farmers from transacting any further business. The Governor thereupon assembled a military force composed primarily of planters, their sons and well-paid mercenaries, and, with much difficulty, dispersed the "Regulators" at the battle of Alamance Creek.

Despite countless such struggles with the various classes subordinate to them, the merchant-capitalists and the planters had accumulated immense fortunes by the third quarter of the 18th century as a result of booming commercial intercourse with England. Huge exportations of Southern staple products (tobacco, rice, indigo, etc.) comprised three-quarters of the trade. Combining to comprise the remainder of the colonial commodities exported to England were furs, beaver skins, iron ore, copper ore, ships, lumber, paper, shoes, hemp, flax, cloth, linen, and a variety of household goods from the Northern colonies. Trade with other markets within the British Empire was highly lucrative as well, as evidenced by the approximately 60,000 bushels of wheat annually exported from Pennsylvania to Ireland and several other British possessions from 1730 onward.

Commercial interests from all regions of Colonial America, but especially those from New England, also derived immense wealth from nominally <u>illegal</u> intercourse with <u>non</u>-British markets. The most profitable of these unlawful ventures was the "triangular trade", a coordinated traffic involving the New England Colonies, several West African Kingdoms, the West Indies and the plantation Colonies of the American Southeast. As is well-known, the "triangular trade" served as the commercial

mechanism for transporting African slaves to the Western world.

Thus, in virtually every sphere of economy, American business enterprise was arousing the antagonism of rival interests in England. To keep Colonial business enterprise in its proper place, British merchant-capitalists continuously pressured their government for legislation and administrative acts favorable to British commerce and industry. But prior to 1763, the British government had been too involved in world-wide colonial warfare with the French and the Spanish to actively defend the interests of British merchant-capitalists against legal and extralegal American competition. However, after the Treaty of Paris (establishing England's supremacy in North America) had been signed in 1763, the British government, no longer diverted by military conflicts but in financial difficulty because of them, turned its undivided attention to the increasingly wealthy American Colonies, which, according to those ruling England, had for too long flaunted British law and avoided their financial obligations to the British Empire.

Though the Navigation Acts (16th and 17th century laws regulating trade within the British Empire and between that Empire and the rest of the world) had not been stringently enforced prior to 1763, colonial commerce had nonetheless been visibly affected. For example, Americans were not permitted to export many of their products--including the most lucrative, tobacco and rice--to markets outside of England. Also, though allowed to purchase non-British products, Americans were required by law to do so through British merchants. As a result, the colonists had to pay an average of 16% more than they would have paid for foreign imports purchased directly from the producing countries.

Being practical men of affairs, it did not escape the attention of the colonial merchants and traders that political independence would permit them to freely export their goods to non-British markets and to deal directly with the producers of valued commodities. Nevertheless, as late as 1763, realizing that they were not nearly as affected as they would have been had the Navigation Acts been strictly enforced and/or adhered to, those engaged in colonial commerce were not yet actively entertaining the idea of independence. In that year, however, the British Prime Minister promulgated a series of regulations demanding adherence to the Navigation Acts. In addition, he ordered the deployment of British warships on the high seas as a means of intercepting colonial smugglers. Soon thereafter, the British Parliament passed the Sugar Act of 1764, which, though reducing the duty on molasses by one-half, raised the

duties on sugar, coffee, pimento, indigo and other West Indian commodities. Most importantly, the Act prohibited the importation of West Indian rum.

Besides being the most popular drink in the Northern colonies, West Indian rum was one of the most valuable items of exchange on the African slave-trade circuit. To be denied access to rum from the West Indies would mean a Northern slave-trader's virtual economic ruin. And so at the dawn of 1765, owing to the threatened loss of their immense profits from the African slave-trade, the Northern merchants and traders actively began taking up the cause of independence.

The Stamp Act of 1765, which imposed a tax on the stamps affixed to the wealth of literary, legal, political and scientific publications circulating among the various colonies and between the colonies and the mother country, motivated the professional and intellectual strata of the colonies to make common cause with the merchants and traders before 1765 had run its course. For the better part of the next decade, however, the merchants-capitalists, the professionals and the intellectuals were unable to expand the base of their independence movement to include the Southern planters, the Middle Atlantic and Southern independent farmers or the Western frontiersmen. But in 1774, following the Boston Tea Party, the British Parliament passed the Quebec Act of 1774 as a means of further punishing the rebellious colonists. Incorporating the Old Northwest Territory into the Canadian Colony of Quebec, this Act had the effect of closing off the land west of the Appalachians to American speculation and settlement. This infuriated the planters, many of whom were engaged in land speculation, as well as the independent farmers and frontiersmen, all of whom strongly opposed barriers to westward expansion. For the first time in colonial history, in other words, merchant-capitalists, planters, independent farmers and frontiersmen were under simultaneous attack. Their common oppression soon gave rise to common resistance on their part, and they formed what amounted to being a united front against mother England.

Eventually, this united front also came to include the masses of propertyless wage laborers--all of whom were seeking an improved standard of living and less stringent suffrage requirements. As a matter of fact, along with independent farmers and frontiersmen, propertyless wage laborers came to comprise the backbone of America's independence army.

What role, if any, did indentured servants and chattel slaves play in the united front? As mentioned above, indentured servitude was declining in importance during the period currently under investigation. Therefore, while it would be

incorrect to say that indentured servants <u>as a group</u> were a component part of the united front, significant numbers of indentured servants joined the independence army in hopes that the successful conclusion of the struggle would result in their freedom. (Their hopes were in fact realized in many instances.) Such occurrences were rare with regard to chattel slaves, however. This was so because the planters and the slave-traders discouraged the widespread participation of chattel slaves in the War of Independence, since one of the purposes of that struggle was to gain the right to engage in <u>unrestricted</u> slave-trading--<u>not</u> to abolish chattel slavery. For the most part, therefore, the masses of chattel slaves remained neutral, although scattered individuals fought on both sides. The scores and perhaps hundreds fighting on the American side made notable contributions to the cause of independence--some, but by no means all, of these individuals being rewarded with their freedom.

And so the lines were drawn and the stage was set. Merchant-capitalists, professionals, intellectuals, planters, independent farmers, frontiersmen and propertyless wage laborers in Colonial America united in common struggle against the intolerable interference in American affairs by the British merchant-capitalists and their political and military servants. In terms of American history, what followed was "...the successful revolt of the thirteen American colonies against the government of Great Britain, resulting in their independence; the War of Independence (1775-1781): called in the United States the Revolution." 2/ In terms of world history, the era of bourgeois-democratic revolution had begun.

Independence from England gave rise to a brief period of stimulated economic activity in America, as agricultural enterprise was extended to newly-available land in the West and manufacturing began developing in the North. However, though no longer encumbered by British colonial regulations, American commerce nonetheless sharply declined, since Great Britain, the chief importer of American goods, had drastically reduced its level of commercial intercourse with its former colonies. As in the colonial era, American commercial interests--especially slave-traders--counteracted British economic aggression by engaging in widespread smuggling to off-limits markets. Yet, during the immediate post-War period, at least, the British embargo was highly effective. Thus, by 1785, after two years of relative prosperity following Britain's 1783 departure from the U.S., widespread depression reigned. In its wake pre-independence class struggle resumed.

Those hardest hit by the depression, independent farmers and small traders, were severely in debt and were attempting to extricate themselves through payments in paper money. Their creditors, however, bankers, merchants and land speculators, were demanding payment in the form of the debtor's land or business. In 1785 and 1786, the debtors carried their struggle into the political arena, as they organized paper money parties in many of the states. Most of the parties were weak and ineffectual. However, in Rhode Island, the paper money party succeeded in winning control of the machinery of state government in the spring of 1786. Yet creditors and merchants in Rhode Island continued to refuse to accept paper money. Some Rhode Island tradesmen even closed their shops rather than submit to the paper money laws enacted by the State Legislature. Rhode Island's farmers, in turn, retaliated by refusing to sell their produce to the recalcitrant merchants.

And yet, despite the reigning anarchy and widespread economic depression, Rhode Island wasn't the scene of the most intense debtor/creditor struggle. In Massachusetts, where the plight of those in debt was compounded by the imposition of extremely high taxes, Daniel Shays, a farmer and former officer in the independence army, led an armed debtors rebellion in December 1786. Though poorly organized and carried out in the dead of winter, "Shays' Rebellion" sporadically endured for the next several months. 4,000 Confederation troops were required to finally disperse Shays' forces in the Spring of 1787.

Debtor revolts similar to, though less widespread than, Shays' Rebellion and the turmiol in Rhode Island occurred in many of the other states as well. Clearly, debtors in the various states were highly conscious of their status and were actively struggling for relief of one kind or another. However, the debtors' efforts to secure relief were in contradiction to the interests of creditors and money lenders. Determined to guarantee the binding nature of past contracts and loans, yet inhibited from doing so by the Confederation in its then-prevailing form, the creditors and money lenders thus became involved in a movement to "revise" the Article of Confederation.

The Articles of Confederation, the initial attempt on the part of the founders of the United States to define the power relationship between the federal government and the states of the Union, provided for a unicameral legislative body, the Congress of the Confederation. While each state was represented by not less than two but no more than seven delegates, each state delegation was limited to only one vote. In those areas where the Congress had jurisdiction (appointing a commander-in-chief, raising an army, concluding treaties, creating a postal

service, etc.), the vote of nine out of the thirteen states was required for the enactment of legislation. However, the Congress could only broaden its powers (to include such measures as imposing duties on imports and exports and levying taxes) through the ratification of an amendment, an action requiring the unanimous consent of all the states. Not suprisingly, therefore, all attempts to amend the Articles of Confederation ended in failure.

By 1785, the above and other weaknesses of the Confederation government had become glaringly apparent. The above-mentioned movement to "revise" the Articles of Confederation thus arose. Who participated in this movement, and for what reasons? Who opposed it? Though, for the most part, the struggle unfolded within the ranks of the era's two ruling classes, the merchant-capitalists and the planters, the struggle wasn't simply a straight-up conflict between those two classes. Rather, the struggle cut across class lines and resulted in some elements from both ruling classes uniting against other elements who likewise came from both ruling classes' ranks.

Specifically, the matter of revising the Articles of Confederation was a struggle between two groups of property interests--real property on the one hand and personal property on the other. In the mid-1780's, the real property interests primarily consisted of the owners of immense estates and manors in and around the region of the Hudson Valley and the owners of large plantations and large numbers of slaves in the South. The general groups into which the personal property interests were divided were: money, public securities, manufacturing, shipping and Western land speculation. Since taxes on real property were sure to come about as a result of a new form of government, the large landholders (both North and South) were not in sympathy with the revision of the Articles of Confederation movement. Hence, the collective initiators and vanguard of the movement were creditors, financiers, bankers and money lenders determined to guarantee the binding nature of past contracts and loans; merchants and manufacturers in need of protection against foreign competition; and land speculators seeking access to Western land free of government interference, yet, at the same time, demanding government protection against the "Indian menace".

Eventually, a call for a Federal Convention was forwarded to the Congress of the Confederation. The Congress, in turn, passed the call on to the various state legislatures, stipulating only that the delegates should be "appointed by the states". With the exception of Rhode Island, each of the states complied with the call and selected delegates to a Federal Convention.

In each instance, the actual selection of the state's delegation was made by the state legislature. "A majority of the states placed direct property qualifications on the voters, and the other states eliminated all who were not taxpayers. Special safeguards for property were secured in the qualifications imposed on members of the legislatures in New Hampshire, Massachusetts, New York, New Jersey, Maryland, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia." 3/ Thus, since the state legislatures were completely dominated by professional men and men of property, commerce and finance, "...it was therefore only natural that men of that character should have been chosen to the Philadelphia gathering." 4/

A total of fifty-five delegates attended the Convention. None were slaves, indentured servants, free laborers, frontiersmen, independent farmers or women. On the other hand, every delegate was either a member-in-good standing of, or a political representative of, one or the other of early America's two ruling classes. Four delegates owned extensive Hudson Valley domains. No less than twenty-two delegates were slaveholding planters from the South. At least twenty-five delegates had loaned money at interest to the Union, either during the War of Independence or the Confederation period that followed, and were thus intent upon guaranteeing their loans' repayments (not to mention guaranteeing the binding nature of all past contracts and loans). No less than forty delegates were in possession of varying amounts of state and/or continental securities (which each of the forty subsequently exchanged for U.S. Treasury Department tender, as a result of the Constitution guaranteeing the value of those securities). Eighteen delegates were merchant-capitalists seeking protection against foreign commerce--not only for American commerce in general, but also for their personal mercantile, manufacturing and shipping interests. And, finally, fourteen delegates had capital invested in Western lands.

"It cannot be said, therefore, that the members of the Convention were 'disinterested.' On the contrary, we are forced to accept the profoundly significant conclusion that they knew through their personal experience in economic affairs the precise results which the government that they were setting up was designed to attain." 5/

The Federal Convention of 1787 met in Philadelphia from May 21 to September 17. The product of the Convention's labors was the Constitution of the United States, a document which both defined the limits of the power of the Federal Government and provided means for the Federal Government to broaden its power. A brief survey of the Constitution's major provisions clearly

demonstrates in whose interests the document was written, whose interests it serves and protects.

The Constitution provided for the creation of a three-branch government: 1) a legislative branch; 2) an executive branch; and 3) a judicial branch.

A great deal of struggle went into determining the structure and composition of the legislative branch. The large states demanded a national system consisting of a bicameral legislature apportioned according to population--the lower house being elected by the qualified voters in each of the states, the upper house by the lower house from lists of nominees submitted by the state legislatures. The small states, on the other hand, called for a federal system consisting of a unicameral legislative body in which each state would have equal power, regardless of population. Although giving rise to prolonged and heated debate which threatened to wreck the convention, this struggle did not have a class basis. Rather, it was the product of lingering distrust between heretofore separate political jurisdictions now desirous of living under the same political roof. While eager to be constituent parts of the United States, in other words, small states simply refused to be dominated by large states, and visa versa. In the end, the matter was resolved by a meeting of the minds known as the "Great Compromise". The "Great Compromise" provided for a bicameral legislative body, the lower house (the House of Representatives) apportioned according to population and elected by the qualified voters in each of the states (thus satisfying the demands of the large states), and the upper house (the Senate) chosen by the state legislatures and consisting of equal numbers of representatives from each of the states (thus satisfying the demands of the small states).

Broad powers and responsibilities were delegated to the Executive (the President), among which were the power to conclude treaties and appoint jurists to the newly-created federal judicial system (both acts requiring the advice and consent of the Senate).

Contrary to the struggle concerning the structure and composition of the legislative branch, which did not have a class basis, the controversy surrounding the matter of the election of the President was very much a class struggle. In this regard, it should be pointed out that two types of class struggle occurred at the Constitutional Convention: 1) the struggle pitting the merchant-capitalists and the planters against each other; and 2) the struggle in which the two ruling classes together opposed early America's other classes and strata. The matter of the election of the President fell into the latter category.

After much wrangling, the Constitutional Convention managed to reduce its options for choosing the Executive to the following four alternatives: 1) by direct popular election; 2) election by Congress; 3) election by State Legislatures; and 4) by electors of some kind or another.

In reality, only the first option (direct popular election) fully reflected the struggle between the merchant-capitalists and the planters on the one hand and the masses of the people on the other. Accordingly, despite severe suffrage restrictions, direct popular election was ruled out because such a method would have given relatively significant elements of some of the classes and strata subservient to the two ruling classes a direct role in the selection of the principal representative and protector of the two ruling classes' interests.

Once the struggle around the first option was resolved in favor of the merchant-capitalists and the planters, which was a foregone conclusion, since, without exception, the Convention delegates were either members or representatives of the two ruling classes, it was only a matter of the two ruling classes collectively determining which of the three remaining options would best facilitate maximum possible domination over the people. Though given much consideration, election of the President by Congress was ultimately rejected, as it was felt that such a manner of election would destroy the independence of the Executive branch. Election by State Legislatures was similarly decided against in order to prevent the states from taking advantage of an indebted President and usurping the power of the Federal Government. Left with but one alternative--that of electors--but unable to agree on a plan, the Convention referred the matter to a "Committee of 11", which eventually hammered out the compromise the entire Convention adopted. The President was to be chosen by an Electoral College composed of delegations of electors from each of the states. Each delegation was to be equal in number to its state's Congressional delegation (i.e., the number of lower house representatives, plus the two Senators) and chosen in a manner prescribed by the various state legislatures. If no Presidential candidate were to receive a majority of the electoral votes, the responsibility of choosing a President would then fall to the House of Representatives.

The Convention's next controversial issue concerned whether slaves should be included in the population count that would determine the number of lower house representatives apportioned to each of the states. Without question, this was a class struggle pitting the two ruling classes against each other. In the opinion of the Northern merchant-capitalists, the slaves were "property" and therefore shouldn't be counted at all. The Southern planters, on the other hand, while agreeing that the

slaves were indeed "property", argued that they should nonetheless be fully enumerated in order to give the less-populous Southern states more equal representation in the lower house of Congress. Another compromise settled that issue: the popularly-elected House of Representatives would be apportioned according to the number of free inhabitants and three-fifths of the slaves in each of the states.

To be sure, the above compromise was based upon virtually every delegates' belief that chattel slavery was an inherent part of Southern life and would remain the South's "peculiar institution" for an indefinite period. But no such resignation existed among many of the delegates with reference to the slave-trade.

The majority of the fifty-five delegates were in favor of putting an end to the slave-trade through the imposition of a prohibitive tax on slaves. However, the delegates from South Carolina and Georgia vehemently protested against any measure that would restrict the importation of slaves into their states, threatening secession if the Convention did not accede to their wishes. With another compromise clearly on the order of the day, the delegates sought the middle ground between the two extremes of giving total and permanent sanction to the slave-trade and abolishing it altogether. The culmination of a debate of nearly three days duration was Article I Section 9 of the Constitution of the United States: "The Migration or Importation of such Persons as any of the States now existing shall think proper to admit shall not be prohibited by the Congress prior to the year one thousand eight hundred and eight, but a Tax or duty may be imposed on such importations, not exceeding ten dollars for each Person." Thus, while not specifically mentioning the slave-trade, the Constitution prevented any legislation abolishing that practice for twenty-one years!

As mentioned above, the slave-trade debate and the debate concerning the enumeration of slaves for representation purposes were both class struggles between the two ruling classes. More specifically, the debates were products of the contradiction between the merchant-capitalists and the planters--a contradiction that would eventually lead to civil war. However, since the two ruling classes were more or less equally represented at the Federal Convention of 1787, neither was able to establish dominance over the other and thus found it necessary to compromise on certain, irreconcilable matters. But the two ruling classes felt no such need to compromise with early America's other classes, since, along with Native Americans and women, none of the other classes were present or otherwise represented at the Convention. Thus, for example, the new Consti-

tution prohibited the issuance of bills of credit for anything other than gold and silver to be tender in the payment of debts. The states were also prohibited from passing laws staying compliance with legal contracts. In other words, public creditors were assured full repayment of all past loans. In addition, among the major powers placed under the jurisdiction of the new government were those of taxation, war, commercial control and disposition of Western lands. Hence, the finances and legal machinery necessary for raising armies in the event of foreign wars or domestic insurrections were now available, America's commerce and manufacturing were now fully protected, and the Western lands were once again completely open to expansion and speculation.

Thus completed, the Constitution was submitted to the Congress of the Confederation. Accompanying the document was a strong recommendation that ratification be the work of state conventions rather than that of state legislatures, since the latter stood to lose a great deal of power under the new Constitution and would therefore obviously oppose it. The Congress assented to the recommendation and, without otherwise passing judgement on its contents, submitted the proposed Constitution to each of the states.

In nearly every state an intense struggle over ratification ensued. Such objections as the omission of a bill of rights and the delegation of broad powers to the President notwithstanding, "...the division of the voters over the document ran along economic (class) lines. The merchants, manufacturers, private creditors, and holders of public securities loomed large among the advocates of the new system, while the opposition came chiefly from the small farmers behind the seaboard, especially from the men who, in earlier years, had demanded paper money and other apparatus for easing the strain of their debts." 6/

New York was the only state where all free, white males were allowed to elect delegates to the state's ratifying convention. "In the rest of the country probably one third of the adult (white) males were disenfranchised." 7/ Despite the intense nature of the struggle, therefore, the outcome was a foregone conclusion.

The concurrence of nine of the states being required for the Constitution to go into effect, adoption of the Constitution became assured upon New Hampshire's acceptance on June 21, 1788. However, the leading circles in the first nine states to ratify the Constitution agreed to delay putting it into effect until the two key states of Virginia and New York opted for ratification. The waiting period proved very short indeed, as Virginia ratified on June 25, 1788, while New York followed suit exactly

one month and one day later. Thus, with the U.S. Constitution now the law of the land, the joint rule of the merchant-capitalists and the planters over early America's other classes was given concrete legal expression. America's First Democratic Revolution was over.

The First Democratic Revolution was not without its progressive aspects. For instance, "...by 1791 all states had abolished primogeniture, and by 1786 all save two had abolished the law of entail." [8] Moreover, since the various new state governments had expropriated the Crown and Tory estates and the new Federal Government subsequently removed all legal barriers to Western expansion, a great deal more land became available following independence.

Who was the chief beneficiary of this newly-available land? "The most intensive study has been centered on the southern counties of New York, where the DeLancey's, the Bayards, the Philipses held sway in colonial times over vast baronies. When the revolutionary New York government seized the estates and sold them off, some of the land, to be sure, went to former tenants and other landless individuals. But the bulk of it was bought up by wealthy patriots and merely augmented the domains of rival families like the Livingstons, Schuylers, and Roosevelts." [9] Other studies indicate the same to be the case in each of the other states, both North and South. So, aside from the few rural and urban wage laborers fortunate enough to acquire a small tract of land and take up farming, none below the middle class benefited from the post-independence redistribution of land--i.e., the redistribution of land that occurred during the First Democratic Revolution. And though some independent farmers undoubtedly increased their holdings, the <u>major</u> beneficiaries were the country's large <u>real</u> property interests.

Another oft-cited indicator of post-independence progress is the modest expansion of the electorate that occurred. Suffrage was limited to free, white male property holders prior to independence, but following independence was broadened to include free, white male tenant farmers and wage laborers. However, a majority of the people--Native Americans, chattel slaves, indentured servants, Freedmen (Free Blacks) and women--remained disenfranchised.

To sum up. The First Democratic Revolution economically enriched and politically strengthened the merchant-capitalists and the planters, slightly improved the position of independent farmers and frontiersmen, and extended the franchise to free, white male tenant farmers and wage laborers. On the other hand, the First Democratic Revolution did <u>not</u> alter the general status of subjugation in which Native Americans, chattel slaves, inden-

tured servants, Freedmen and women were held. In other words, since it did not result in the working and middle classes jointly sharing power and, through that power, regulating the activities of the former large owners of this country's various sources of wealth, America's First Democratic Revolution was _not_ a completed democratic revolution.

CHAPTER 2

THE CIVIL WAR AND THE SECOND DEMOCRATIC REVOLUTION

INTERREGNUM

The inauguration of George Washington as the first President of the United States on April 30, 1789 marked the beginning of a new era. On the surface, however, the concrete conditions remained very much what they had been prior to the War of Independence and the First Democratic Revolution. Specifically, the economic base continued to develop along the same lines that had prevailed prior to independence, as Southern planters continued the process of concentrating nearly all cultivatable soil in their hands, and Northern commercial interests rapidly extended their areas of enterprise to include the Caribbean, South America, North America's west coast, the mid-Pacific, China and, eventually, Japan. However, underlying *objective* factors were at work that had the effect of gradually changing the subjective conditions.

First of all, the United States gradually came to solidify its existence as an independent country and, in fact, *secured* its continuing existence upon Thomas Jefferson's purchase of the Louisiana Territory in 1803. Thus, with the danger of foreign intervention no longer a major factor, the strong bond of unity that had temporarily existed between the Northern merchant-capitalists and the Southern planters slowly disintegrated and the conflicting interests of early America's two ruling classes once again became glaringly apparent. And, secondly, along with exporting and importing commercial products, the *manufacturing* of commercial products became a way of life in the North.

The original exponent of the development of manufacturing in the United States was Alexander Hamilton, the country's first Secretary of the Treasury. In his famous "Report on Manufacturers", presented to Congress at the end of 1791, Hamilton stated that the national ruling class had to expand beyond its then-existing composition of merchants, bankers and planters to include manufacturers. (Hamilton mistakenly viewed merchant-capitalists and planters as part of the same ruling class, rather than two separate classes exercising joint rule.) In the South, of course, where large-scale agriculture was the dominant mode of production, Hamilton's call for the development of manufacturing was greeted by a storm of protest that never subsided until snuffed out forever by the Civil War. But in the North, where large-scale agriculture was impossible, and where

the transition from merchant or banker to manufacturer was both an easy and desirable step, Hamilton's call was embraced with enthusiasm.

During the War of 1812, the factory system for spinning and weaving cotton arose in New England and 1200 cotton factories, two-thirds of them in New England, were operating by 1840. The manufacturing of woolen products developed more slowly than that of cotton, but, nevertheless, in excess of 1500 small, individually-owned textile mills were scattered across the Northern states by 1850. These textile mills and factories, along with a multitude of other small factories that were producing, among other things, machine tools, firearms and furniture, were mostly run by water power. Hence the coal and iron industries were somewhat slow in developing. Yet the production of pig iron increased from a mere 54,000 tons in 1810 to more than one-half million tons in 1850.

Meanwhile, with it legally sanctioned by the Constitution of the United States, the African slave-trade remained a flourishing enterprise. While the importation rate during the first two decades of the Constitution's life was approximately 3,000 slaves per year, in excess of <u>10,000</u> African chattels were annually imported into the United States between 1803 and 1807. The marked increase in the importation of African slaves during the final years of the above two decade period occurred for the following reason: It had become obvious that the Congress intended to legally abolish American participation in the slave-trade at the earliest constitutionally-allowable moment (1808); therefore, the Northern slave traders and the Southern states dependent upon slave labor for economic survival were endeavoring to reap the maximum profits possible during the closing years of Constitutional sanction.

In 1807, Congress promulgated legislation legally abolishing American participation in the slave-trade as of 1808. Owing to a combination of factors (the fear on the part of some slave traders of paying fines and especially of forfeiting their ships, and the seemingly adequate supply of slaves already in the United States), the slave-trade to the United States, though not ceasing altogether, significantly declined during the first decade following its legal abolition. Concretely, less than 1,000 slaves per year were imported into the United States between 1811 and 1820. By 1820, however, the cotton gin was in widespread use and the cotton kingdom was in the process of spreading to the vast Louisiana Territory. The Southern planters thus frantically demanded the importation of more slaves, while the New England slave traders, by then fully aware that the U.S. Government was making only token efforts to prevent the partici-

pation of U.S. citizens and ships in the slave trade, willingly supplied the Southern planters' demand. Thus, the level of slave importation into the United States increased to 3,000 per year by the decade of 1850-1860.

By that time, the hub of Northern slave trade activity had shifted from Newport to New York City, where the fitting out of slave ships became an increasingly flourishing business. Concurrent with the increased volume of imported slaves was the increased profit from the sale of slaves, as the average price for slaves rose from about $325 in 1840 to $500 in 1860. Meanwhile, Southern planters were also accruing immense profits as a result of the Southern cotton crop increasing from three million bales in 1852 to five million bales in 1860. In a word, the decade of 1850-1860 was a period of soaring profits for both the Northern slave traders and the rulers of the Southern Cotton Kingdom.

In the midst of this period of unparalleled profit, and with the vast territory of Texas having been annexed from Mexico in the previous decade, the Southern planters and their political representatives foresaw the need for a fresh supply of slave labor and thus concluded that the survival of the plantation system in the South was dependent upon the resumption of the _legal_ participation of Americans in the African slave trade. A political movement designed to abolish all laws restricting American participation in the African slave trade spontaneously developed in South Carolina in 1854 and within five years had become an influential force all across the South. As the _National Era_ magazine editorialized in March of 1859, "There can be no doubt that the idea of reviving the African slave trade is gaining ground in the South. Some two months ago we could quote strong articles from ultra-Southern journals against the traffic; but of late we have been sorry to observe in the same journals an ominous silence upon the subject, while the advocates of 'free trade in negroes' are earnest and active." [1]

In reality, the Southern planters and their political representatives were demanding legal sanction for something already accomplished--namely, the reopening of the African slave trade to the U.S. on a broad scale. As the rulers of the South were all too aware, however, there remained the possibility that a sufficiently determined administration in Washington could completely suppress American involvement in the slave trade at a moment's notice as long as American involvement remained technically illegal. Hence, the intent of the planters' movement was to ensure the _permanent legal status_ of the African slave trade, the lifeblood of the institution of chattel slavery.

Meanwhile, the Northern industrial capitalists had become

unalterably opposed to the continued existence of chattel slavery, as chattel slavery's continued existence stood in the way of their objective need to expand capitalism to every region of the country. "History was not ambiguous in the task allotted to the bourgeoisie. The further expansion of capitalism required the annihilation of the slave power which at every turn placed obstacles in the path of northern industry and free agriculture, and acted like a drag on the young and progressive bourgeoisie. Capitalist industry had to be assured, above all, of its own home market. This was the prime economic force which propelled the North in its struggle against the South. The bourgeoisis needed to dominate the whole country, to achieve national unity under its own wing, to explore, broaden, round out and conquer the market at home. This is the driving force of capitalism in progress, in the period of its expansion and growth." 27

Thus, in the end, the Slavery Compromises hammered out at the Federal Convention of 1787 and incorporated into the U.S. Constitution merely had the effect of delaying a showdown between capitalism and slavery, not postponing it indefinitely. In other words, in the aftermath of the War of Independence and the First Democratic Revolution, a society based upon free labor and free farming continued its development in the North, while a society based upon chattel slavery continued its development in the South. Each economic system gave rise to distinctive, mutually-exclusive social structures, though both systems continued the attempt to co-exist within a single governmental framework. But since the fullest possible development of either system was dependent on the other system's complete destruction, a fight to the finish between capitalism and slavery was inevitable.

THE LAND QUESTION

The Civil War resulted in the total victory of the Northern capitalists over the Southern planters, thereby paving the way for the fullest possible development of capitalism in the U.S. However, the pace at which American capitalism was to fully develop depended on how quickly and thoroughly the Northern capitalists consolidated their victory.

Without question, confiscation of the plantations would have assured the quickest and most thorough consolidation of the capitalist victory. For confiscation would have deprived the planters of their economic power and thus destroyed the basis for a political comeback on their part. Most importantly, confiscation and the subsequent distribution of the land to the

Freedmen and landless whites would have provided a solid basis for capitalism to replace the plantation economy in the South, since the result of such actions would have been the creation of a large class of independent farmers unencumbered by the fetters of slavery or feudalism.

What was the Northern capitalists' approach to the matters of confiscation and redistribution? Let us now examine that question.

During the Civil War, Congress passed the Confiscation Act of 1862, which authorized the President to seize all real and personal property owned by Confederate civil and military officers, as well as to confiscate the property of all others engaged in armed rebellion against the United States. Although Abraham Lincoln never implemented the Act's key provisions, abandoned plantations in areas occupied by the Union Army were confiscated if their owners had been active in the Confederate cause. However, <u>in not one instance was land in the occupied areas given to the Freedmen</u>. Instead, former slaves were put to work on the abandoned lands under varying conditions of servitude, ranging from wage labor to forced labor to share-tenancy. These were temporary, war-time arrangements in lieu of final disposition of the abandoned and confiscated lands. But it soon became clear that very little of the abandoned and confiscated land would end up in the possession of Freedmen. While some of the land was eventually sold for taxes, thus allowing small numbers of Freedmen to buy small tracts of land, most large plantations were leased out to private contractors, for whom the Freedmen were forced to labor under the above-mentioned conditions of servitude. In addition, sizeable tracts of land were purchased by Union generals, U.S. Treasury department agents and Northern capitalists.

A more comprehensive land policy was contained in the Act of March 1865, which created the Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen and Abandoned Lands (the Freedmen's Bureau). "The Bill made it clear that redistribution of the land in the form of free grants to freedmen was not contemplated. Instead, the commissioners of the Bureau were authorized to assign to each freedman and 'loyal white refugee' not more than forty acres of land from the abandoned and confiscated plantations. The land was to be leased for a term of three years at an annual rent of six percent of its value in 1860, when land prices were at their peak." 3/

The Act extending the life of the Freedmen's Bureau for an additional year (enacted over President Andrew Johnson's veto on July 16, 1866) went slightly further. It ordered 38,000 acres of disputed lands on South Carolina's coast and sea-islands sold at $1.50 an acre to the Freedmen holding those lands.

In addition, the Act provided that Freedmen dispossessed by the legal return of absentee owners were to be leased twenty acres of government-owned land in South Carolina for six years, at which time the lessees could purchase the land at $1.50 an acre. For the most part, however, eventual ownership of disputed land by the Freedmen was the exception, not the rule--absentee owners being allowed to repossess their land in most cases. Moreover, disputed land was never outrightly awarded to the Freedmen, merely made available for purchase at relatively nominal cost. Despite the efforts of such Radical Republicans as Thaddeus Stevens in the House and Charles Sumner in the Senate, that was as far as the Northern capitalists went on the question of land confiscation and redistribution. In other words, the ultimate economic task of the Second Democratic Revolution--the confiscation of the plantations, their subsequent break-up, and the redistribution of this newly-available land to the Freedmen and landless whites--was never accomplished.

PRESIDENTIAL RECONSTRUCTION, 1865-1867

Several weeks after succeeding Lincoln as President, Andrew Johnson issued a proclamation of amnesty and pardon. Excluded from his order were all Confederates who possessed taxable property worth $20,000 or more. However, that provision was rendered virtually meaningless by another provision which allowed those excluded from the general amnesty and pardon to apply for special pardons directly to President Johnson. Through liberal use of the special pardons, Johnson thus proceeded to reconstruct the rebel states on the basis of their pre-Civil War electorates and in concert with the ante-bellum leaders.

Under provisional governors appointed by Johnson, constitutional conventions were organized in the rebel states on the basis of the old electorates. These conventions met toward the end of 1865 and abolished slavery by amendment to the old state constitutions. At the same time, however, the conventions adopted the infamous "Black Codes", which were designed to severely restrict the freedom of Black people and reinstitute forced labor conditions on the plantations. Also, state governments were elected and representatives and senators to Congress were designated. Then, in his first annual message to Congress in December 1865, Johnson completed his "Reconstruction" by proclaiming the war at an end and civil government in operation in the states of the former Confederacy.

Due to mass resistance, the process of planter restoration in the Presidentially-reconstructed states did not proceed as

smoothly as Johnson and the planters would have liked. For example, though every pardon carried with it an order to restore the pardoned individual's confiscated property, armed Freedmen occupying confiscated land, along with Black Union Army regiments, frequently prevented the implementation of restoration orders. However, despite numerous such instances of mass resistance, the planters were effectively restored to a position of dominance in the South by the end of 1865.

CONGRESSIONAL RECONSTRUCTION, 1867-1877

Prior to Johnson proclaiming the task of Reconstruction accomplished, Thaddeus Stevens introduced a resolution in the House which provided for the creation of a joint committee of the House and Senate to investigate conditions in the Southern states and determine whether those states were fit for re-admission to the Union. In addition, the resolution provided that no Congressman from any Confederate state was to be seated until such time that the joint committee completed its work. Most importantly, all matters relating to Reconstruction were to be referred to the joint committee without debate, thereby placing the initiative for subsequent Reconstruction measures in the hands of Congress. Stevens' Bill was enacted into law in February 1866, with Stevens, though not appointed Chairman, being included in a 15 member joint committee.

Now in control of the Reconstruction process, Stevens, Sumner and other "Radical Republicans" enacted a number of significant measures. Included among these laws were the Civil Rights Act of 1866, which empowered the President to employ the necessary armed forces to guarantee the legal equality of Freedmen in property and personal security matters; the Freedmen's Bureau Act of 1866, which not only extended the bureau's life for an additional two years, but increased its authority; and the Fourteenth Amendment, which conferred American citizenship on the Freedmen, penalized states for denying any group of citizens the right to vote, disenfranchised active participants in and supporters of the Confederate cause, and repudiated all debts incurred by the Confederate states. But the above and other measures were only preliminary actions designed to lay the groundwork for the Radical Republicans' more comprehensive plans for Reconstruction. When the 1866 Congressional elections resulted in even larger Radical Republican majorities in both houses of Congress, the stage was set for Congressional Reconstruction.

The principal elements of Congressional Reconstruction were contained in The First Reconstruction Act, enacted on March 2, 1867.* By then, the Radical Republican Congress had re-admitted Tennessee to the Union on the basis of that state having ratified the Fourteenth Amendment. Thus, the First Reconstruction Act applied to the remaining ten states of the Confederacy.

Sweeping aside the civil governments established by Presidential Reconstruction, the First Reconstruction Act declared that neither legal government nor adequate protection of life and property existed in the ten "rebel states". Those states were divided into five military districts, with each district to be administered by a brigadier-general with sufficient troops under his command to enforce martial law. A new electorate was to be created, compromised of Freedmen and loyal white refugees, and excluding those previously loyal to the Confederacy. The new voters were to elect delegates to state constitutional conventions, at which constitutions codifying universal manhood suffrage were to be framed. When a new state constitution was approved first by a majority of the state's voters and then by Congress, and after the new state legislature ratified the Fourteenth Amendment, the Congressionally-Reconsrtucted state would then be re-admitted to the Union.

Mass participation was essential for the success of Congressional Reconstruction. Thus, the Radical Republicans tried mightily to involve the masses of Freedmen and loyal white refugees in mass organizations directed by the Republican Party. The most significant mass organizations developed by the Radical Republicans were the Union Leagues. Originally created in the North for the purpose of supporting the war effort, the Union Leagues quickly spread to the South. With the war's end, the Leagues in the North tended to evolve into selective social clubs, but "...in the South they developed as the organizational centers of the popular movement, in some respects similar to the Jacobin Clubs of the French Revolution." 4/

Branches of the League could be found in virtually every Black community in the South. Local League Councils in each election district usually met weekly. Significantly, local

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* Three supplementary Reconstruction Acts, while including additional provisions, were basically designed to reaffirm and clarify the principal measures contained in the initial Act. Hence the details of the supplementary Acts are not dealt with in this work.

Councils were often transformed into people's militia companies and rifle clubs. These armed bodies usually worked in conjunction with the 20,000 Federal troops--approximately 2,000 per rebel state--deployed throughout the South to prevent planter interference with the process of Congressional Reconstruction. Though the Leagues included white Radical Republicans from the North ("Carpetbaggers") and white loyalists from the South ("Scalawags"), along with a few military officers, the overwhelming majority of League members were recently-freed slaves.

Not all mass activity was under the direction of the Radical Republicans, however, as the Black masses paralleled their joint (Republican Party) work with independent political activity. The most striking manifestation of independent political activity on the part of the Black masses was a series of Black Conventions held in many Southern states during the summer and fall of 1865. "These conventions represented the first concerted political action by the Negro (sic) people in the South. As a whole they defined clearly and sharply the democratic issues of the revolution." 5/

However, the Union Leagues provided the basis for the Southern state party organizations that the Radical Republicans eventually developed in 1867-68. In that regard, the initial task of the Republican Party was the registration of the new electorate, which occurred in September 1867. This was the first major political struggle of Congressional Reconstruction. The approximately 200,000 former Confederates who had been stripped of their voting rights employed all manner of subterfuge and intimidation to prevent widespread voter registration, but the courage and determination of the Radical Republican organizers, the Freedmen and the white loyalists would not be denied. As a result, the new electorate in the ten rebel states came to consist of 703,000 Blacks and 627,000 whites. 6/

Black men were a distinct majority of the electorate in South Carolina, Mississippi, Louisiana and Alabama; a small majority in Florida; slightly less than 50% in Georgia; and definite minorities in Virginia, North Carolina, Arkansas and Texas. 7/

Regarding the white electorate, the principal question was what sectors, if any, would ally themselves with the Freedmen and Radical Republicans against the planter oligarchy? The small planters, though opposed to the big planters for economic reasons, were even more opposed to the Freedmen for racist and political reasons and therefore could not be counted on as the Freedmen's allies. For almost entirely racist reasons--though economic and political considerations were contributing factors --poor whites ("crackers") opposed Black political liberty with

a vehemence even surpassing that of the big planters. Appalachian mountaineers, though definitely opposed to the big planters and qualitatively less racist than the "crackers"--meaning that mountain people would have been fairly reliable allies of the Freedmen--did not play a significant role in the Reconstruction struggle due to their physical isolation from that struggle's center.

Objectively, then, the allies of the Freedmen had to come from the ranks of the rural class opposed to both the big and small planters and from the urban classes opposed to planter domination of urban economic and political life. Thus, the Freedmen's potential allies were to be found among the independent farmers and the urban working and middle classes--the farmers at that time being far more numerous and decisive.

What was the subjective attitude of the Freedmen's objective allies? In attempting to answer that question, we shall again employ the gauge of electoral politics, basing our conclusions on the results of the Constitutional plebiscites held in each of the rebel states. In the seven states where vote by color was recorded (Mississippi, Arkansas and Louisiana failed to do so) 197,999 whites supported the various new state constitutions, 116,896 opposed them and 278,064 abstained. 8/ Since no breakdown of the vote by class is available, we can only hypothesize as to the disposition of each of the classes. However, we can safely assume the following: most small planters abstained rather than choosing between the big planters on the one hand and the independent farmers, the urban working and middle classes, and the Freedmen on the other. Conversely, most poor whites voted "No" rather than cast their lot with the Freedmen, whom generations of conditioning had taught the poor whites to look upon as inferior. Thus, while most white "Yes" votes came from the ranks of independent farmers and working and professional people in the cities, at least two-thirds of the Freedmen's objective allies either abstained or outrightly opposed the new state constitutions. Why? One word sums up the answer: racism--certainly a more restrained variety than the strident racism of the planters and the "crackers", but racism nonetheless. Therefore, the conclusion to be drawn from the above is this: Because they were unable to immediately overcome the effects of generations of racist conditioning, independent farmers and urban working and professional people were at best extremely unstable allies of the Freedmen.

Soon after registration of the new electorate was completed, delegates were elected to each state's Constitutional Convention. With the exception of the South Carolina conclave, however, the level of Black participation did not approach the

proportion of Blacks in each state's electorate. In other words, with the exception of South Carolina's, each state Constitutional Convention was controlled by white delegates.

The color composition of the delegates was not the sole basis on which the character of each Constitutional Convention could be judged, however. This was so because a certain number of white delegates--up to one-third in some cases--were "Carpetbaggers" who strongly supported the Freedmen's cause. Therefore, not only in South Carolina, where Freedmen outnumbered white delegates by nearly 2-1, but in Louisiana and Florida as well, the Freedmen/"Carpetbagger" delegates combined to give the Constitutional Conventions distinctly anti-planter characters. In the remaining seven rebel states, however, varying degrees of intimidation of the Black electorate (i.e., to either abstain or vote for white candidates) combined to give control of the Conventions to white, middle class forces who eventually went over to the side of reaction.

Despite their relatively undemocratic compositions, each of the Conventions nevertheless proceeded to write progressive state constitutions. "The new constitutions provided for Negro (sic) suffrage and for complete equality of civil rights. They disfranchised and barred from office the leaders of the Confederacy, as already stipulated in the Fourteenth Amendment.... The opposition of the up-lands (i.e., of the backcountry small planters and independent farmers-ed.) to the old planter aristocracy is indicated by the fact that disfranchisement was most stringent in those states where white delegates sat as a majority in the conventions." [9]

The gathering most representative of the masses of Southern males was the South Carolina Convention. "The white delegates of the state paid altogether $761 in annual taxes, of which one conservative paid $508. The taxes paid by the Negro (sic) delegates totaled $117, of which a Charleston Negro paid $85. Fifty-nine of the Negro and 23 of the white delegates paid no taxes whatever. These certainly were not men of property gathered in South Carolina to create a new democratic state. Almost half of them had toiled on the plantations as slaves, others had scratched out a bare living in the uplands." [10] Not surprisingly, therefore, South Carolina's Constitution was more progressive than the Constitutions of the other rebel states. Even in South Carolina, however, the land question was inadequately dealt with; the confiscation of large landed estates and their distribution among Freedmen and loyal white refugees--the revolution's fundamental economic demand--was not incorporated into the State Constitution.

The next period of Congressional Reconstruction involved

the ratification of the new constitutions in each of the rebel states and the election of state governments and representatives to Congress. These were very intense, often violent struggles, since in many rebel states the planters and their "cracker" footsoldiers had organized opposition political parties and extra-legal terroristic bands. However, by midsummer of 1868, with the Black electorate overwhelmingly in favor of the new state constitutions and thus providing the balance of power, the Freedmen/independent farmer/urban middle and working class alliance had ratified the Constitutions in seven of the ten states. When, in July of that year, the newly-elected legislatures in the seven states ratified the Fourteenth Amendment as required by the First Reconstruction Act, those states were re-admitted to the Union. One of the seven, Georgia, subsequently was denied representation in Congress as a result of expelling the Black members of the state legislature and declaring Black people ineligible for all other state offices. Meanwhile, the initial ratification referendums had been defeated in Mississippi and Texas, while the Commanding General of the Virginia military district, who sympathized with the planters, blocked the election there until such time that disfranchisement of former Confederates was rendered less sweeping. By March 1870, however, after numerous twists and turns, each of the ten rebel states was once again part of the Union.

Though the extent of democracy varied from state to state, the post-Civil War Democratic Revolution in the South resulted in distinctly more progressive and democratic state governments than had ever existed in the South(or, for that matter, in any state outside the South). As a matter of fact, in terms of mass sharing of power and mass participation in the administration of government, the Congressional Reconstruction regimes in South Carolina and Louisiana were the most democratic state governments ever to have existed in the U.S.

However, though progressive and democratic, the state governments erected in the course of Congressional Reconstruction remained largely in white hands throughout the entire Reconstruction era. To put it another way, while "the high point of the revolution in the South was the extension of civil and political rights to Negroes (sic) and their participation in government", Blacks "did not hold the dominant position in any of the state governments, even in those states where they formed the majority of the electorate." 11/

Let us illustrate the above point by briefly examining the extent of Black participation in the Reconstruction government of South Carolina, where the Second Democratic Revolution reached its highest level. Blacks were a large majority of

South Carolina's Lower House between 1868 and 1873 and were nearly equal in number to whites in both Houses of the Legislature between 1874 and 1878. In addition, seven Blacks were elected to Congress from South Carolina during the Reconstruction decade, while at various times during the same period Blacks served as Lieutenant-Governor, Speaker of the House, Secretary of State, State Treasurer and Adjutant and Inspector General. Throughout the entire Reconstruction period, however, whites constituted a majority in the State Senate and maintained uninterrupted control of the Governor's office.

As indicated above, Black participation in the other Reconstruction governments generally did not approach the level achieved in South Carolina, although a Black man served as the interim Governor of Louisiana for 43 days and Blacks regularly filled the office of Superintendent of Education in a number of other states. * Thus, "...it is clear that democracy even during this revolutionary epoch had worked itself out only partially." [12] In other words, though they each contained the necessary elements to evolve into genuine democratic dictatorships of all classes and strata comprising the people, the Reconstruction governments all stopped short of actually doing so. That failure, along with the failure to adequately deal with the land question, was to ultimately lay the basis for successful planter counter-revolutions.

"The (planter) strategy of counter-revolution in the South was to split the Radical Republican coalition. There were two phases in the development of this strategy. On the one hand, an attempt was made to separate the Negroes (sic) and native white Republicans from 'carpetbag' leadership and ally them with the old Confederate leaders in the Democratic Party. When this proved unsuccessful, the principal emphasis was shifted to the 'race issue'; 'white superiority' as a political program emerged hand in hand with increased terroristic activity against Negro and white Republicans." [13] Playing an integral part in the planters' counter-revolution, therefore, was the counter-revolutionary violence of the Ku Klux Klan (KKK) and other extra-legal armed groups. The purpose of the Klan's violence was to drive the "Carpetbaggers" out of the South, intimidate the "Scalawags" from participating in politics and prevent the Freedmen from exercising their political rights.

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* The Reconstruction Governments established free public school education in the South, the most significant of many social reforms that date from Reconstruction and remain in existence today.

The rupture of the Radical Republican coalition (or, more precisely, of the coalition of the classes and strata comprising the embryonic people's revolutionary democratic dictatorships) occurred unevenly, that is, at different times in each of the Congressionally-reconstructed states. By the end of 1870, the conservatives and reactionaries had already regained control of the machinery of government in Virginia, North Carolina and Georgia. In the other Southern states, meanwhile, the Federal troops were at best rendering half-hearted aid to the Freedmen and their increasingly less reliable allies in the struggle against the KKK's campaign of armed terror. Soon thereafter, the Federal Government began dropping all pretense of opposing the planters' counter-revolution, as various legislative acts designed to suppress the KKK (including the Enforcement Act of 1870 and the Ku Klux Act of 1871) were repealed in some cases and declared unconstitutional in others almost immediately upon becoming law.

Federal Government complicity in the planters' counter-revolution (which, in reality, meant Northern capitalist complicity, since, by then, the Federal Government had become the Northern capitalists' organ of class rule) became even more pronounced upon the passage of the Amnesty Act of 1872, which reduced the number of former Confederates excluded from office from 150,000 to less than 500. Yet the Northern capitalist representatives now controlling the Republican Party were still unwilling to withdraw the Federal troops from the South until that region had been secured as a reliable internal market. This gave rise to some right Radical Republicans splitting-off from the Republican Party. Known as the "Liberal" Republicans, these right Radicals were confused, middle class forces demanding the withdrawal of Federal troops from the South on the one hand and Black suffrage and equal rights on the other (as if the latter were possible in the absence of the former). The "Liberal" Republicans eventually aligned with the Democrats, but nevertheless went down to a resounding defeat at the hands of Grant and the mainstream Radical Republicans in the 1872 Presidential election. However, the crisis of 1873 (the first of the periodic crises of U.S. capitalism), Radical Republican corruption involving high administration officials in Washington, mass discontent among farmers and workers, and continuing gains by the Southern reactionaries (who by now were firmly entrenched in the Democratic Party) all combined to undermine the 1872 electoral results.

As has already been made clear, the independent farmers of the uplands and the small urban middle class were among the most unreliable elements of the Republican Party's alliance in

the South. Not surprisingly, then, those elements initiated the alliance's breakup by defecting in droves to the Democratic Party between the years 1873 and 1876.

Meanwhile, during the same period, the small Southern working class had also abandoned the Republican Party. Unlike the upland farmers and urban professionals, however, the Southern workers for the most part did not shift to the Democratic Party, but instead became involved in a variety of independent political activities--including, the Eight Hour Day Movement and the movement to form an independent workingmen's party in the U.S. In other words, rather than uniting with the planters for the purpose of suppressing the Freedmen, as did the upland farmers and urban professionals, the Southern workers joined with the workers of the country's other regions in a common struggle against arising American capitalism, which by then was forcing American workers to labor increasingly long hours at starvation wages in extremely dangerous workplaces best described as death traps. Therefore, though not consciously abandoning the Freedmen, the Southern workers (as well as all other workers) became so caught up in their own struggles that they failed to maintain firm political ties with the Freedmen and to continue resolutely defending the Freedmen against planter reaction.

The differing intentions and directions notwithstanding, "the Republican Party in the South became more and more a Negro Party which included a handful of white office-holders." 14/ The Black masses were now effectively isolated from their former allies; hence "it became only a matter of time before the Negro people would be defeated by far superior forces." 15/

And so, one by one, the governments of the remaining Congressionally-reconstructed states were replaced by counter-revolutionary regimes. In 1872, KKK activity in Texas prevented nearly the entire Black electorate from voting, resulting in Democrats seizing the state legislature and electing the entire Congressional delegation. Much the same thing occurred in 1874, but the Radical Republican Governor refused to recognize a Democratic victory won by terror. Both sides armed themselves to the teeth and occupied various government buildings. Dual government thus existed for a time in Texas, but the Federal Government put an end to the situation by supporting the reactionaries. When dual government likewise arose in Arkansas the same year, the Federal Government again came down on the side of reaction.

Counter-revolution followed essentially the same pattern in the remaining Congressionally-reconstructed states: the rupture of the Radical Republican alliance, a reign of white terror, the initial establishment of dual government and the

eventual establishment of counter-revolutionary power, usually with the direct aid of the Federal Government. Thus, as the date of the 1876 Presidential election approached, counter-revolutionary power was firmly established in seven rebel states, while in the remaining three--Louisiana, South Carolina and Florida--dual governments were bitterly struggling for power.

The results of the 1876 Presidential election were extremely close. Samuel Tilden, the Democratic candidate, received 4,300,000 popular votes, while the Republican candidate, Rutherford B. Hayes, received 4,036,000. However, Tilden's Electoral Vote total (184) was one short of the number required to be declared President. The 19 Electoral Votes from Louisiana, South Carolina and Florida--the three rebel states with dual governments--were claimed by both candidates. If just <u>one</u> of those votes was awarded to Tilden, he would become President. Hayes, on the other hand, needed <u>all</u> the disputed votes in order to prevail.

Republican and Southern Democratic connivance prevented the Democratic controlled House of Representatives from resolving the dispute. (In a strictly party-line vote, the House would have favored Tilden by a considerable margin.) Instead, the Congress established a fifteen-member Electoral Commission made up of five members of the House (3 Democrats, 2 Republicans), five Senators (3 Republicans, 2 Democrats) and five Supreme Court Justices (2 Republicans, 2 Democrats and one independent). The key member, of course, was the one avowedly independent Supreme Court Justice, Justice Davis, since he alone would supposedly be able to render a decision free from all partisan considerations. However, for reasons which to this day remain a mystery, Justice Davis was unexpectedly elected to the U.S. Senate by the legislature of his home state, Illinois. Unfortunately for the Democrats, the remaining Supreme Court Justices from whom to choose Davis's replacement on the Electoral Commission were all Republicans. Though the least objectionable of the remaining Justices was given the nod, the Electoral Commission nonetheless came to consist of 8 Republicans and 7 Democrats. Thus, Hayes was all but assured the Presidency.

However, before relating the election's actual outcome, it is necessary to briefly detail the economic and political issues underlying the Hayes-Tilden contest.

The crisis of 1873 had given rise to widespread depression, which in turn had led to an upsurge of radical activity on a mass scale among Northern workers and, especially, Western farmers. The question foremost on the mind of Northern capital

was: whither the planter-dominated South?

> "Would she join hands with restless labor in the East as she had in Jackson's time? Or would she...rush into the arms of her ante-bellum ally, the agrarian West, break-up the East-West alliance that won the war, and throw the East back into the position of an isolated minority section? Or, finally, could the South be induced to combine with the Northern conservatives and become a prop instead of a menace to the new capitalist order?" 16/

Clearly, in the eyes of Northern capital, the latter possibility was an absolute necessity, while the former had to be avoided at all costs. Achieving re-unification with the South was therefore a matter of great importance for the two major parties and their Presidential candidates. For Tilden and the Northern Democrats, however, reunion was overshadowed by the need to reform the corrupt federal bureaucracy in Washington. On the other hand, Hayes and the Republicans subordinated all other matters to the goal of "breaking down the sectional barrier between men of property and reviving the ante-bellum political alliance between conservatives of North and South." 17/

But on the eve of the 1876 Presidential election, the Republican Party found itself in the worst possible strategic position to achieve that goal:

> "Stoutly conservative in its national character, the Republican party nevertheless clung nominally to the old Radical Southern policy, which was quite out of line with its true nature. The party of wealth and property and privilege in the North, it appealed to a propertyless, oppressed Negro laboring class....(But) one by one the Southern states had been torn from Republican control by the Redeemers (the name adopted by the Southern reactionaries during the period of planter restoration--Ed). These Redeemers seemed to be for the most part conservative not merely on race policy but on economic questions as well, for they appeared to think like good Republicans in these matters. Now in the midst of a depression, under attack from radical agrarians in the West and radical labor in the East, the Republicans found themselves estranged from their natural allies in the South." 18/

To rectify the situation, the Republican press was soon turning out a deluge of propaganda justifying a shift of allegiances. Even the National Republican, the voice of Radical Republicanism, enthusiastically took up the cause, in the process throwing to the wolves the very "Carpetbagger" governments the radicals had helped establish:

> "The landed proprietors in agricultural districts, and the capitalists in cities, have it in their power to control the laboring classes to a very large extent, and this has been done in the South to such a degree that the alien element (Carpetbaggers), which made common cause with the colored people, finds itself abandoned by its allies and unable to maintain its position without the aid of the general government." 19/

In other words, concluded the National Republican, the policy of maintaining the "Carpetbagger" governments in power with federal troops had proved to be a colossal failure and thus had to be immediately discontinued.

Remarking on the above and numerous other examples of the Republican turnabout, a Southern publicist correctly observed:

> "If these manifestations mean anything, they mean that any further attempt to kill the goose that laid the golden egg has been abandoned....They (the Northern capitalists) require other fields for their surplus labor and capital, and more and better customers for their surplus manufacturers....(Thus) Home-rule in the South is considered essential to their prosperity." 20/

Home-rule, of course, meant planter hegemony in the South. To put it another way, with the planters acutely aware that a return to chattel slavery was no longer possible and that the development of capitalism in the South was now on the order of the day, the planters' desire to once again rule the South coincided with the Northern capitalists' interests in that region. But, in order to assure the complete restoration of their power in the South, the planters demanded recognition of the counter-revolutionary (Democratic) regimes in Louisiana, South Carolina and Florida and the withdrawal of all remaining Federal troops from those states. In addition, the planters demanded that a Southern Democrat be selected as Postmaster

General as a means of somewhat influencing the direction of the next administration in Washington and controlling a good deal of patronage. Finally, since they were resigned to building up the South's economy along capitalist lines, the planters demanded Federal Government subsidy of the Texas and Pacific Railroad and other internal improvements in the South.

Such was the Southern Democrats' price for allowing the responsibility for resolving the electoral dispute to be shifted from the Democratic-controlled House of Representatives to an Electoral Commission on which the Republicans eventually came to hold the balance of power. In addition, the Southern Democrats promised to allow the Republicans to choose the next Speaker of the House (though the Republicans were a slight minority in the House) and organize the House along Republican lines.

And so, by identical 8-7 margins, the Electoral Commission ultimately awarded each of the 19 disputed electoral votes to Hayes, thus making him President. To repeat, Hayes secured his victory by assuring Southern Democrats that in return for the Presidency and control of the House of Representatives he would withdraw all remaining Federal troops from the South, recognize the counter-revolutionary regimes in Louisiana and South Carolina (in January 1877, prior to the terms of the Hayes/Southern Democratic deal being finalized, the State Supreme Court had ousted the Republicans from power in Florida), appoint a Southern Democrat as Postmaster General, and support Federal government subsidy of the Texas and Pacific Railroad and other internal improvements in the South. This was the Compromise of 1877, the act which brought about the final defeat of the Second Democratic Revolution.

While Hayes delivered on the first three points of his part of the bargain, the Southern Democrats reneged by siding with the Northern Democrats to elect a Democratic Speaker. Thus began the deterioation of the political alliance between Republicans and Southern Democrats. The Republican/Southern Democrat divorce became final when Hayes withdrew his support for a Bill subsidizing construction of the Texas and Pacific Railroad.

However, despite the Republican/Southern divorce, the Compromise of 1877 achieved the primary goal collectively sought by the Northern capitalists and the Southern planters. That is, when Rutherford B. Hayes withdrew the Federal troops from South Carolina on April 10, 1877, and from Louisiana ten days later, the counter-revolutionary regimes in both states immediately seized undisputed power. Reaction had thus accomplished a successful political comeback throughout the South.

The Second Democratic Revolution was over.

The content of the Second Democratic Revolution and the place of the Second Democratic Revolution in American history can be summed up thusly:

Elements of all classes and strata comprising the people to one degree or another were involved in the democratic dictatorships that ruled several of the Congressionally reconstructed rebel states. In that sense, People's Democratic governments in embryo form can be said to have briefly existed in the more progressive of the Congressional Reconstruction states, especially South Carolina. It must be kept in mind, however, that the People's Democratic form of government, to the extent that such ever really existed in the U.S., was confined to one or at most several states and endured for less than a decade. Hence, even in those few states, the Second Democratic Revolution was <u>not</u> a completed democratic revolution. In the face of such evidence, therefore, only those lacking all ability to think or who have never given any thought to the matter can continue to perpetuate the illusion that the Democratic Revolution in the U.S. has been carried to completion.

CHAPTER 3

AMERICA'S SECOND HUNDRED YEARS

A brief survey of America's second hundred years likewise illustrates that the Democratic Revolution in the U.S. has yet to be carried to completion.

Emerging from the Civil War as the productive and economic system upon which the entire country would be based, industrial capitalism developed and expanded at a phenomenal rate. Between 1860 and 1900, anthracite coal production increased from 11,000,000 tons to 57,000,000 tons, while crude petroleum output rose from 500,000 barrels to 63,000,000 barrels. Between 1867 and 1897, the production of steel ingots, which is a basic heavy industrialization index, increased in tonnage from 17,000 to 7,000,000. Also, the chemical industry, turning out such products as drugs and textile dyes, came into being, as did the communications industry and its most significant by-products, the telegraph and telephone.

These and other manifestations of post-Civil War industrial development were now national in scope, no longer limited tc the country's Northeast sector. Even the South, which was slow to adopt industrialization and, as a consequence, lagged behind the rest of the country, experienced post-Civil War industrialization in the following ways: a small number of New England textile mills transplanted to Southern locations; Birmingham, Alabama became a steel and coal production center; and the heretofore small scale production of such raw materials as lumber, turpentine, flax and ores significantly increased.

Concurrent with the rise of heavy industry was the decline of small scale agriculture. Though the rapidly growing American cities springing up around the centers of heavy industry provided a ready market for dairy products, poultry and eggs, and meats and vegetables, the rise of monopoly capitalism in the U.S. and increasingly stiff competition on the world cotton and wheat markets served to make farming a losing proposition for all but the largest landholders. Hence, more and more during the post-Civil War era, rural youths abandoned life on the farms for the opportunities supposedly awaiting them in the rapidly developing industrial centers.

Linking these industrial centers, and the industrial centers in turn with the sources of agricultural commodities, were the country's railroads. A summation of the coal, iron and steel industries, railroads are the most representative index of industrial capitalism's development. Thus, as industrial capitalism in the U.S. expanded, the country's railroad system

expanded as well. From 60,000 miles of track in 1871, it increased to 93,000 miles in 1880 and 165,000 miles in 1890.

As stated in Part I of this work, a basic feature of developing capitalism is the rapid concentration of industry and banking and the subsequent merger of the industrial and banking monopolies into a financial oligarchy. And so it was in the U.S. Thus, with an overwhelming amount of the industry and the available medium of exchange (money) becoming concentrated in the hands of the monopoly capitalists, declining wages and unemployment reigned among the working masses. At the same time, however, an enormous volume of products was being turned out by the rapidly developing industries--products the economically deprived working masses were unable to consume in the amounts being produced. This condition of overproduction on the one hand and underconsumption on the other resulted in the crisis of 1873.

Many small, unstable industrial and agricultural enterprises fell by the wayside as a result of the crisis of 1873 and were gobbled up by the monopolies (as happens during all periods of economic depression). But even though the economy eventually recovered from the crisis of 1873 and the monopolies in the realms of industry, finance and agriculture continued to expand, the monopolists were still confronted with the problem of a domestic market no longer able to consume all that was being produced. Thus, another industrial crisis occurred in the early 1890s.

Under capitalism, of course, the inevitable solution to the problem of overproduction and underconsumption is the acquisition of foreign markets. Between 1876 and 1898, however, those areas of the world still available for colonization were rapidly being snatched up by America's principal imperialist competitors. Thus, as the 19th century was drawing to a close, the financial, industrial and political rulers of the U.S. found themselves having to grab off those few areas in the world still available for colonization or withdraw from the struggle with the other imperialist powers over the division of the entire world.

The leap from one era of American history--the era of the rise of monopoly capitalism--into a distinctly new era--the era of the rise of U.S. imperialism to worldwide supremacy--occurred in the form of the Spanish-American War. As is well-known, U.S. imperialism's rise to worldwide supremacy unfolded between 1898 and 1945. The unchallenged reign of U.S. imperialism was very short-lived, however, enduring only from the end of World War II in 1945 to the liberation of China in October 1949.

From October 1949 to the present, therefore, a new era of American history has been unfolding--the era of U.S. imperialism's gradual decline.

Not incidently, the outward form (though not the internal content) of that era has undergone significant change. In other words, from 1949 to the early 1960s, while the Soviet Union was still a socialist country and a socialist camp was still very much in existence, U.S. imperialism gradually declined in the face of the resistance of the socialist camp. But the full-blown emergence of Soviet social-imperialism in the early 1960s gave rise to the subsequent break-up of the socialist camp. Meanwhile, concurrent with the break-up of the socialist camp was the intensification of independence and liberation struggles in the world's colonial and semi-colonial countries (the Third World). As a result, U.S. imperialism is now gradually declining in the face of Third World resistance on the one hand and contention with Soviet social-imperialism on the other.

Just as the outward form of the era of U.S. imperialism's gradual decline has undergone significant change, the nature of class rule in the U.S. has also changed; yet the essential nature of the struggle against both the old and new types of class rule in the U.S. has remained the same. More specifically, the First Democratic Revolution (1783-1788) resulted in a joint dictatorship of the Northern capitalists and the Southern planters; the Second Democratic Revolution (1865-1877) resulted in the dictatorship of the entire capitalist class; and the era of the rise of monopoly capitalism in the U.S. (1865-1898), during which the capitalist class gradually divided into monopoly and non-monopoly sectors, resulted in the dictatorship of the monopoly capitalist class. However, as previously stated, ever since the conclusion of the U.S. War of Independence, the essential nature of social conflict in the U.S. has remained a struggle between the masses of the people and the class or classes in power to determine the type of democracy by which the U.S. would be governed.

Though the years between 1898 and the present are filled with innumerable examples of heroic mass and revolutionary struggle, the nature of class rule in the U.S. has remained the dictatorship of the monopoly capitalist class. Even the spontaneous mass struggles occurring between 1954 and 1974--many of which were detailed in Part II of this work--did not alter that basic situation. Those struggles, which included a number of spontaneous revolutionary upsurges on the part of the masses, but taken together did not constitute a <u>conscious</u> mass attempt to alter the nature of class rule in the U.S.--i.e., did not constitute a <u>conscious</u> people's revolution--resulted in

the relatively wide extension of various democratic rights, but preserved the one class rule of the monopoly capitalists.

It is beyond the scope of the present work to describe the lines and practice of the principal reformist, radical and revolutionary movements and parties that have existed in the U.S. between 1783 and the present. Such will have to be dealt with in a future work. Suffice it to say, with the exception of the Radical Republican Party, which overthrew chattel slavery in the South and established embryonic revolutionary democratic dictatorships of the people in several Southern states that survived for up to a decade, the various reformist, radical and revolutionary groups did not succeed in altering the nature of class rule in the U.S.

While the particular reasons for the failures of the various movements and parties to alter the nature of class rule in the U.S. differ considerably, the <u>general</u> reasons can be summed up thusly:

The reformist and some radical groups, while endeavoring to change numerous negative features of the capitalist or monopoly capitalist dictatorship (and to some degree succeeded in doing so) were <u>not</u> struggling to change the nature of class rule itself--i.e., were <u>not</u> struggling to replace the capitalist or monopoly capitalist dictatorship with a revolutionary democratic dictatorship of all classes and strata comprising the people. Meanwhile, other radical groups, along with the numerous revolutionary groups, were struggling to bring about (either utopian or scientific) socialism without first carrying the democratic revolution to completion. In other words, the forces struggling for limited democracy and the forces struggling for socialism--besides being unable to recognize the form and content of complete democracy--both failed to understand the relationship of a completed democratic revolution and the subsequent struggle for socialism.