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THE NEW RISE OF THE WORLD REVOLUTION

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THE NEW RISE OF THE WORLD REVOLUTION

At the Reunification World Congress, held in 1963, the international Trotskyist movement adopted a resolution, "Dynamics of World Revolution Today," which took up the current interrelation of the three sectors of the world revolution as it stands today -- the colonial revolution, the political revolution in the bureaucratically degenerated workers states, and the proletarian revolution in the imperialist countries. In the five years since then the world revolution has suffered serious setbacks but it has also scored new successes, the most imposing of which was the May 1968 revolutionary upsurge in France. As a result, the global balance of forces is continuing to turn against imperialism, a still clearer interaction has emerged among the three main sectors of the world revolution, and an important change has occurred in the dynamics of their interrelation -- revolutionary struggles in the imperialist countries themselves occupying a more important place in this worldwide process today than in the past twenty years.

We must assess the implications of these changes and from them determine the major perspectives of the world revolution in the period before us. At the same time, the recent developments make it impossible to answer in a detailed way a whole series of ideological questions being debated in the international revolutionary movement.

I.

The Failure of the Imperialist Counteroffensive and the New Relationship among the Three Sectors of the World Revolution

After the victory of the Cuban revolution, the colonial revolution unquestionably marked time. For ten years, no new workers state has been established.

In fact, starting early in the sixties the colonial revolution suffered a series of spectacular reverses. The rise to power of military dictatorships and the momentary decline of the mass movements in Brazil and Argentina (the two principal countries of Latin America); the overthrow of the Lumumba regime in the Congo, the Nkrumah regime in Ghana and the Ben Bella regime in Algeria; the victory of the Indonesian counterrevolution in October 1965; and the military defeat of the United Arab Republic and Syria in the six-day war of June 1967 constitute the main milestones in each of the epicenters of the colonial revolution -- Latin America, Black Africa, the Arab world, and southeast Asia.

Whatever the specific reasons for each of these setbacks, two general causes explain why the colonial revolution levelled

off at the beginning of the sixties. On the one hand, the capacity to lead the anti-imperialist struggle of the masses -- though strictly limited for well-known historical reasons -- which the colonial bourgeoisie and the petty bourgeois nationalist governments had for a certain period came to an end.

The colonial revolution had reached the point where it could go no further unless it made the transition into a socialist revolution -- and for that the subjective factor was lacking. On the other hand, American imperialism, drawing its own conclusions from the victory of the Cuban revolution, shifted more and more openly to repressing by military force all revolutionary movements which in its view threatened even incipiently to touch off the process of permanent revolution. Ever more systematically it brought to bear its strategy of permanent counterrevolution against such revolutionary movements.

Caught between the masses seeking a clear revolutionary socialist solution and imperialism, which strove to crush such tendencies in embryo, the Sukarnos, the Nkrumahs, the Nassers, and the Nehrus, who had dominated the scene in the semicolonial countries for fifteen years, reached the end of their era.

Since the formation of new revolutionary vanguards, even of the Fidelista type, lagged behind this process, the initiative passed for a whole phase to American imperialism with its CIA-financed plots, its counterrevolutionary interventions, and its ever widening wars of aggression.

An acceleration of economic growth in the United States coincided with this phase of more direct and overt counter-revolutionary moves and created the means by which the imperialists could finance these projects for five or six years -- which from "military missions" and "counter-insurgency" in Latin America to the war in Vietnam, including the upkeep and expansion of dozens of air-naval bases throughout the world, cost tens of billions of dollars -- without opening up an assault on the living standard of the workers in the United States; that is, without immediately unsettling the political and social stability in the American fortress.

The might, expansion, and arrogance of Yankee imperialism seemed to reach new heights after its failure in the fifties in relation to both the colonial revolution and the power struggle with the Soviet Union.

The Vietnam war also was the culmination and, as it were, the crest of this imperialist counteroffensive. The Vietnam war became the turning point in the situation. As a result of the indomitable resistance of the Vietnamese masses, the colonial revolution was able to regroup its forces and stage a comeback in several important sectors. Simultaneously, the contradictions in the American imperialist society sharpened considerably.

Even the revival of direct mass action against the bureaucracy in the bureaucratically degenerated workers states has been stimulated in part by the profound influence the Vietnamese revolution has had on the most politically conscious working masses throughout the world.

In escalating its aggression against the Vietnamese revolution, American imperialism aimed not only at blocking the revolution's advance in a region of obvious economic and strategic importance (Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia); it sought not only to create a "deterrent" against a victorious revolution in Asia, which would represent a catastrophe of global scope for the international imperialist system. It wanted also to intimidate the exploited masses in all colonial and semicolonial countries, if not the entire world. It wanted to put them on notice by a terrifying example that if they took the revolutionary road they would have to face the most powerful military machine in the world and pay a terrible price in blood and destruction for an attempt to liberate themselves from the yoke of capital. Thus, the outcome of the confrontation in Vietnam assumed crucial importance.

Today, the militant revolutionary enthusiasm of the Vietnamese masses, unparalleled in recent history, has blocked the imperialists and kept them from achieving the principal objectives of their aggression. And the Vietnamese masses have achieved this victory despite the totally inadequate military aid they have gotten from the workers states, for which the Soviet Union as the most powerful of them bears the major responsibility; despite the unceasing pressures the Kremlin and its agents have brought to bear seeking to force the Vietnamese revolution to adopt a more "responsible" stance toward the aggressor and allow him to "save face"; and despite the no less inadequate scope of the international movement of solidarity with the Vietnamese revolution, which has not succeeded in drawing decisive strata of the workers in the imperialist countries into actions capable of blocking the imperialist war machine in any effective way.

The 1968 Tet attack showed that the Vietnamese revolution held enormous reserves for taking the offensive and that the military situation had deteriorated for the counterrevolutionary interventionist forces. At the same time, the escalation of their aggression began to reveal to the American imperialists the full extent of the dilemma facing them.

Because, while it is certainly true that any strategic retreat before the Vietnamese revolutionary forces could only encourage the revolutionary forces in the neighboring countries and throughout the world, the prolongation of the war also had that effect both in Thailand and Burma, where the guerrilla movement has expanded significantly, and in Indonesia. Paradoxically, in Indonesia, the Vietnam war has begun to undermine

the results of imperialism's greatest success in recent years -- the defeat of the Indonesian revolution in October 1965.

At the same time, the American bourgeoisie has recognized with dismay that even its colossal resources are not sufficient to simultaneously finance the nuclear arms race with the USSR, the "conventional" war in Vietnam, the worldwide consolidation of capitalism, and the minimal reforms necessary to put a damper on social tensions in the mother country itself. The economic price which imperialism has paid for continuing the war in Vietnam has been accelerated inflation, with a deepening crisis in the international monetary system and an accompanying exacerbation of interimperialist contradictions; reduced "aid" to the colonial bourgeoisie; and a cutback in the "war on poverty" in the United States, which was intended to defuse the explosive nature of the Afro-American problem in that country. Together with the encouragement the victorious resistance of the Vietnamese masses has given to the formation of a black and student vanguard in the United States on the subjective level, the objective effects of the war in Vietnam made possible both an unprecedented growth of the antiwar movement and broadening radicalization of the black masses, which in conjunction are creating the most explosive domestic crisis the United States has experienced since 1929-36.

Thus, American imperialism's failure to hold back the waves of world revolution has become evident.

The essential historical reason for this failure is three-fold. As "Dynamics of the World Revolution Today" stressed, imperialism's incapacity to stabilize the political and economic situation in the semicolonial countries creates objective possibilities there for a rapid revival of the mass movement. The Indonesian example -- where the grave defeat of October 1965 was followed by a still more galloping inflation, a decline in the productive forces, a famine, and general poverty -- offers a typical illustration of imperialism's inability to stamp out colonial revolution for long.

Old and new contradictions in the social and economic system of the imperialist countries themselves continue to periodically provoke tensions and crises that can be stimulated by the advance of the colonial revolution. Finally, in a world where the capitalist system is being challenged by a majority of the human race, even the economic resources of the most powerful state in history are not sufficient to enable it to effectively play the role of world policeman. And this is all the more true because all attempts at lasting coordination of the military, diplomatic, economic, and financial policies of the imperialist states run up against the persistence of inter-imperialist contradictions, that is in the last analysis, into obstacles arising from the survival of private ownership of the

means of production and of the bourgeois national state.

The Vietnam experience has shown the fallaciousness of the Soviet bureaucracy's argument that the strategy of peaceful coexistence would bring a peaceful advance of the revolution throughout the world as a simple result of the change in the global balance of forces, while revolutionary wars or armed insurrections threatened to become a nuclear world war.

In reality, no revolution can advance or win without colliding with imperialist military intervention. Extending the revolution internationally remains the only way to compel imperialism to disperse its forces and to weaken it throughout the world. The threat of nuclear war unquestionably remains -- not because of this or that revolutionary war but because of the existence of nuclear weapons in the imperialism countries, above all the United States. This threat will be eliminated once and for all only with the overthrow of capitalism in the United States.

In the last analysis, the failure of the imperialist counteroffensive is an expression of the fact that the global balance of forces is already too unfavorable to imperialism for it to be able to reverse the trend on its periphery. There is no question that the international situation could have developed in a way much more favorable to the revolution if there had been an international revolutionary leadership able to marshal all the anti-imperialist and anticapitalist forces in a united front pursuing a global strategy counterposed to the global counterrevolutionary strategy of imperialism. But even in the absence of an effective world revolutionary leadership, imperialism was unable to reverse the balance of forces. Once the oppressed and exploited classes, or at least their most alert sectors, began to become conscious on an international scale of the crucial fact that in today's world the heroic fighters of a little country like Vietnam can stall the war machine of the greatest imperialist power in history, a new and grave deterioration in the imperialist position began to develop.

First of all, the contradictions and difficulties faced by imperialism have mounted on numerous fronts. The revival of the colonial revolution in southeast Asia has been spurred. Interimperialist contradictions have been accentuated. Secondly, the defeat which imperialism has suffered on its periphery has greatly contributed to reviving the revolutionary crisis in the very heart of the imperialist system, including in the United States itself through the struggles of the black masses.

The May 1968 revolutionary upsurge in France was the first stirring example of this resurgence.

The links between the victorious resistance of the Vietnamese revolution and the revival of revolutionary struggle in the central imperialist countries are obvious, both on the subjective and objective levels.

On the subjective level, this resistance impelled the formation of a new youth vanguard in the imperialist countries, strongly contributed to making it independent of the traditional reformist and Stalinist apparatuses, and helped it to gain experience and assume increasing boldness in its ceaselessly escalating clashes with the traditional parties, with the bourgeoisie, and with the repressive apparatus of the bourgeois state.

On the objective level, the economic and financial consequences of the Vietnam war have aggravated the dollar crisis, increased the tensions in the international monetary system, and sharpened the interimperialist contradictions, thus draining the reserves with which the international bourgeoisie could have cushioned the effects of the 1966-67 recession. Instead of a policy of concessions, the bourgeoisie, under the pressure of all these economic factors, has been forced in almost all the imperialist countries to attack the standard of living and certain improvements considered by the workers to be established rights (particularly full employment and fringe benefits). This in turn impelled a revival of the class struggle in those sectors freest from control of the trade-union bureaucracy and shook the relative social stability that existed in most of the imperialist countries in the preceding period.

It is in the last analysis this exacerbation of the social contradictions within imperialist society -- stimulated by the objective and subjective effects of the failure of the imperialist counteroffensive against the colonial revolution -- that accounts for the objective possibility of the new revolutionary rise in West Europe. This new revolutionary upsurge, coinciding with the close of the period of reformist illusions and political apathy among the masses in the bureaucratically degenerated or deformed workers states of east and central Europe, profoundly alters the interrelation among the three main sectors of the world revolution. The action of the Yugoslav students in June 1968, its scope, and its high political level are a first sign of this.

For two decades the center of gravity of the world revolution had shifted to the colonial and semicolonial countries, the victory of the Chinese revolution coinciding with the defeat of the postwar revolutionary wave in Western Europe and the rise of McCarthyism in the United States. Today, the May 1968 revolutionary upsurge in France heralds a historic turning point. The profound crisis of the society, the economy, and parliamentary democracy in Great Britain; the prerevolutionary situation in Spain; the stirring of the West German workers after their long passivity; and the rise of a new youth vanguard in Italy

are all signs that this is not an isolated or passing phenomenon.

The appearance even in the United States of a wave of radicalization unparalleled in thirty years indicates that this is a deep-going and universal phenomenon.

The new revolutionary upsurge in Western Europe does not mean that the colonial revolution has lost its importance. To the contrary, one of the most dramatic results of this revolutionary rise could well be that imperialism will be forced to redistribute its financial and military strength throughout the world, which would reduce the pressure on the colonial revolution on several fronts, stimulate its resumption and the winning of new victories.

This new revolutionary rise means that essentially proletarian forces and vanguard political currents carrying on the traditions of revolutionary Marxism and workers democracy will be in the thick of the fight, that their methods of intervening, of action, and organization will draw much closer to the classical norm of proletarian revolutions. Thereby, the weight of the proletariat and of its most valuable and special traditions will be considerably enhanced in the overall process of the world revolution. This will have a profound influence on the course and the forms both of the colonial revolution and the political revolution in the bureaucratically deformed or degenerated workers states. It will greatly favor the construction of the Fourth International, of the new mass revolutionary parties which it seeks to promote, and its own sections and sympathizing organizations.

II.

The New Revolutionary Upsurge in France and Its International Consequences

The revolutionary upsurge that occurred in France in May 1968, touched off by the student strike and the night of the barricades on May 10-11, was the broadest revolutionary mobilization in Western Europe in thirty years. It encompassed even the most marginal strata of the population and drew in an important part of the new middle classes. The bourgeois state was paralyzed for almost two weeks. The militancy of the demonstrators led to numerous direct confrontations with the repressive forces. Many instances occurred in which the masses spontaneously moved toward establishing their control and even their power in opposition to the governmental, managerial, and other institutions integrated with the bourgeois state.

For a few days (May 24-30), the May 1968 mobilization put the overthrow of the bourgeois order and the conquest of power objectively on the order of the day. The absence of an alternative leadership, or the components of such a leadership, with

sufficient authority among the workers enabled the traditional leaderships, most importantly the CGT [Confédération Générale du Travail] and the PCF [Parti Communiste Français] which had the great majority of the workers behind them, to betray this movement and divert it into big economic strikes. In these, the workers displayed a combativity which on several occasions escaped the control of the official union leaders. Besides its breadth, the mobilization of May 1968 had the following characteristics setting it off from the previous mobilizations of the French workers in 1936 and 1945-47:

(1) The detonator this time was not an electoral victory (the Popular Front) or the military victory of an alliance of a workers state with the imperialist democracies but a struggle of the university students, the high school students, and broad layers of young workers. This struggle was revolutionary in its forms (confrontations with the state forces) and in its political level (struggle for socialism and internationalism).

(2) A revolutionary vanguard, politically independent of the traditional leaderships, including the Stalinists, assumed mass dimensions in several demonstrations in Paris.

(3) The international context. In 1936, the struggle of the masses in Spain and France took place in the face of the extension of Nazism in Europe and the development of the most monstrous aspects of Stalinism in the Soviet Union. The May 1968 upsurge came after the victory of the Vietnamese Tet offensive and simultaneously with parallel student struggles in several imperialist countries and a new antibureaucratic thrust in the workers states (the fall of Novotny).

(4) The special role played by the university, high school, and worker youth as the "detonator" and spearhead of the movement. In the context of political reformism, stagnation and apathy in the traditional workers movement, and more or less advanced integration of the political and trade union apparatuses into the bourgeois state, the needs and aspirations of the youth became virtually overlooked and were disregarded by established society. As a result, the youth rejected the traditional leaderships, including the Stalinists. The prestige of the latter, moreover, had been greatly undermined in previous years by "de-Stalinization", the Sino-Soviet conflict, and finally by their inadequate defense of the Vietnamese revolution against American imperialist aggression. The incapacity of neocapitalism to satisfy the material and cultural needs of this youth, and the reappearance of unemployment among the youth, created the objective basis for this radicalization. One of the new features of these struggles was the participation en

masse of the very young, starting at about the age of fourteen.

At the onset of the movement, despite its breadth, the politically independent vanguard had no other organizations at its disposal than small political formations (Trotskyists, Maoists, and anarchists). Its base in the factories was insignificant -- there was no lack of militants but the union apparatus had strangled all minorities for decades, barring all those suspected of opposing the PCF line from even the lowest trade union posts. Furthermore, the student and high school youth on the one hand and the young workers on the other had no contact with each other before the movement began. It was only in the course of the actions conducted by the students that the young workers, who found nothing to rally around in the factories, joined the student actions in numbers that mounted daily.

The betrayal committed by the PCF-CGT leaders can be summarized as follows:

-- They opposed the revolutionary struggle of the students and did everything in their power to prevent them from linking up with the workers politically and organizationally.

-- They divided the various categories of workers (private industry, the nationalized sector, civil service workers) instead of uniting them on a common program.

-- They refused to declare an all-out general strike on the pretext that it existed de facto. Their real reason was to avoid advancing the only slogan consistent with such a strike -- the political slogan of struggling for power.

-- They negotiated without regard for what the workers wanted and they accepted abject agreements which the workers rejected out of hand.

-- They never took the least initiative toward mobilizing the strikers, limiting themselves to shutting them up in the factories or sending them home to do nothing.

-- They attacked and slandered the "leftists" without letup, covertly encouraging physical violence against them as in the past. But they never organized the workers to defend themselves against the reactionary squads and the repressive forces of the state.

-- They never raised the slogan of dissolving the repressive forces sent against the students (gardes mobiles, CRS).

-- They betrayed the defense of "foreign" militants against the government's repressive edicts (the Cohn-Bendit affair), putting their factional interests above proletarian internationalism.

-- They never publicly denounced the maneuvers of Mitterand and Mendès-France and they kept chasing after the FDGS [Fédération de la Gauche Démocrate et Socialiste] trying to get a "common program" that had nothing to do with the political situation.

-- They took an equivocal position in regard to the referendum which de Gaulle decided on at one point.

-- They never tried to overthrow de Gaulle and were the first to accept his decision to hold legislative elections.

-- They did not want to take advantage of a movement heading toward socialism, seeking instead a "new democracy" of bourgeois type.

This betrayal by the PCF leadership was the trump card of French capitalism, paralyzed for fifteen days, whose armed forces could not handle even a part of the movement, which along with the large and small cities had swept up major sectors of the peasantry.

Despite this betrayal of unheard-of magnitude, the French workers have not been defeated. In the economic strikes into which the movement had been split up, they generally made gains, varying according to the industry but rather substantial as a whole. In their majority they do not feel frustrated. A growing minority, moreover, recognizes the traditional leadership's betrayal. In the course of the movement, the workers relearned the class methods of struggle which the apparatuses had not used for fifteen to twenty years (militant street demonstrations, calling strikes and demonstrations without the due notice required by law, etc., showing the superiority of these methods to petitions and other legal steps, parliamentary moves, etc.). The workers overruled their leaders on several occasions, notably in rejecting the Rue de Grenelle agreements; the authority of the leaders suffered. The continuation of the strikes was marked by the militancy of many important sectors; and the provocations organized by the government and the bosses often elicited militant responses (in the Renault factories in Flins) despite the leaders.

The great gain scored by the May 1968 mobilization was the multiplication of more or less extensive and more or less temporary forms of "dual power." They led to the creation of militant groups, lacking an organizational structure or a previously established program, the "action committees," which

were the driving force in the determined demonstrations against the repressive forces.

Defense of these gains against inevitable attacks by the government and the creation of new centers of dual power, small or large, will be a vital task in preparation for the coming struggles and the next revolutionary crisis. Harassment of the government and capitalist society must be continued in manifold forms in preparation for a new broad confrontation.

In a still inadequate way, the May 1968 mobilization saw a first approximation of a transitional program in operation. This occurred in the factories (where the question of workers control and workers management arose in several cases), to say nothing of the major public services which were run partially or completely by their personnel. Similar developments occurred in many professional circles (the liberal professions, specialists, sports ...) in opposition to the official institutions. The question of transitional forms was posed most profoundly in education at all levels.

Drawing up a balance sheet in this area would provide many elements for a concrete transitional program for France. The question of workers control as a preliminary to workers management must be the central concern of the vanguard militants in the factories. Directly linked to this question is that of democratically elected committees. One of the movement's greatest weaknesses lay in the fact that in almost all cases behind the name "strike committee" was to be found the local union executive committee. These were linked to each other through the apparatus of the union bureaucracy. These "strike committees" transmitted the CGT leadership's policy to the workers. But real strike committees, democratically elected by all the strikers, unionized or not, could have been a genuine expression of the rank and file. They could have linked up in a nonbureaucratic network, in which a real revolutionary leadership could have asserted itself.

By reviving the socialist revolution on the European continent, the revolutionary upsurge in France has created a new relationship among the three sectors of the world revolution (the proletarian revolution in the imperialist mother countries, the colonial revolution, and the antibureaucratic revolution in the workers states). It began eliminating the distortions which developed in the world revolution over the last twenty years. It dramatically renewed the revolutionary Marxism which the Fourth International alone has unceasingly defended. It also enriched the lessons of many experiences in the most varied fields.

The revolutionary upsurge in France has already had effects in the semicolonial countries, notably in the big cities of Latin America (Rio de Janeiro, Buenos Aires, Santiago de Chile) and countries where French imperialism still wields an important

influence (Dakar). This upsurge gave Vietnam and socialist Cuba the greatest help they have received.

The revolutionary upsurge in France has already had important repercussions in Yugoslavia. Demonstrations of solidarity with the French students have also occurred in Czechoslovakia. For its own purposes, the Chinese government organized big demonstrations in solidarity with the actions of the French proletariat. In the other workers states, that is, the Soviet Union and the workers states of Eastern Europe, the governments distorted the revolutionary movement in France still more shamelessly than L'Humanité. They gave exclusive stress to the workers economic demands, denigrated and slandered the "leftists," and supported de Gaulle in the most critical moments, beginning to criticize him for his anti-Communist statements only after the movement had been betrayed by the Stalinist leadership.

But it will not be long before the truth is known about the events in France and the Stalinist lies will only reinforce resistance to the bureaucracy. The repression of recent years in the Soviet Union against the intellectuals and the university youth testifies that in the USSR also the students will play a very important role when a great revolutionary mass upsurge against bureaucratic rule develops. May 1968 considerably accelerated the process of the political revolution in the Soviet Union.

The main effect of the French revolutionary upsurge has been to open up the political situation in Europe.

The European socialist revolution froze when the postwar revolutionary wave was halted by Stalin's agreements with the imperialist democracies at Yalta, Teheran, and Potsdam. The European socialist revolution was weighed down both by the Stalinist degeneration of the Russian revolution and the defeat of the German working class in 1933 along with that of the Spanish revolution just prior to World War II. Now, for the first time, a gigantic revolutionary thrust has opened new perspectives for the European workers. The crisis hit France first due to its economic situation, which remains precarious despite the transformations carried out by French capitalism in the postwar period and due to the political situation created by the Gaullist regime which, under the guise of a "strong state," eliminated in daily practice the buffers offered by a representative parliamentary regime. In all the most essential areas there was nothing but the arbitrary will of one man or an extremely small group.

At bottom, neocapitalism exhibits the same brittleness in all the European countries; the upsurge in France was only a harbinger of the crises soon to emerge in Europe.

Objective necessity compelled the European capitalists to concentrate their productive forces in the narrow, reactionary

framework of the Common Market. The same objective necessity will revive the highest expression of revolutionary Marxism in the European workers movement, a mass revolutionary International. The expressions of proletarian internationalism which marked the street demonstrations of the revolutionary vanguard in the month of May testify that the creation of the mass revolutionary International will soon become one of the major tasks for the revolutionary vanguard in Europe and with that revolutionary vanguard throughout the world.

III.

The End of the Long Imperialist Boom

Since the beginning of the second world war in the United States and since the postwar reconversion period in Western Europe and Japan, the imperialist countries have undergone a long-term economic expansion comparable to, if not exceeding, capitalism's best periods in the past.

Of course, the world context in which this expansion occurred was different from that of former times. This time, it did not go hand in hand with an extension but rather with a shrinkage of the area in which capital could freely exploit labor power. It was not an uninterrupted boom. During this period, except in West Germany, the imperialist economy experienced multiple recessions, all reminders of capitalism's inability to resolve its underlying economic contradictions. Moreover, parallel to this expanding imperialist economy was a still more rapidly growing economy in the workers states and a stagnating one in the colonial and semicolonial countries, both highlighting the crisis of the world capitalist system.

Finally, it must be remembered that the expansion in the imperialist economy, above all in Western Europe, was not automatically generated by spontaneous economic forces. To the contrary, it was a result on the one hand of the reformist and Stalinist leaderships betraying the European working class's revolutionary opportunities after the war; and, on the other hand, of massive aid from American imperialism, which in the immediate postwar period concentrated all its energies on consolidating and reviving capitalism in Western Europe.

However, these reservations in no way detract from the scope and importance of this long-term period of expansion for the imperialist economy. The fact that the imperialist economies could enjoy such a boom even though fourteen countries had freed themselves from capitalist exploitation, that the disintegration of the colonial empires and declining colonial superprofits for the economies of the imperialist countries could go hand in hand with an exceptional expansion in these economies must be recognized and explained.

To deny such obvious facts would not mean "maintaining unshakable faith in the revolutionary potentialities of the working class"; it would mean transforming the grounds for such confidence -- a rigorously scientific grasp of reality -- into dogmatic, religious humbug unworthy of Marxism. However, to limit analysis to the current facts, without indicating the deep-going, long-term trends, without clarifying the basic contradictions and thus disclosing their historically limited and passing character would obviously mean falling victim to vulgar empiricism. It would mean becoming a prisoner of bourgeois and petty bourgeois ideology which has been proclaiming in all keys that capitalism has found out how to "stabilize" continued expansion and guarantee full employment.

In general, revolutionary Marxists have succeeded in avoiding these twin evils. They have provided an overall analysis of the causes of the long period of imperialist economic expansion consistent with general Marxist theory.

This expansion was generated by accelerated technological renovation spurred by an exceptionally high level of arms spending maintained continuously over two decades (three decades in the United States) -- an unprecedented phenomenon in the history of capitalism. This resulted in a more thoroughgoing industrialization of most of the imperialist countries themselves, involving a veritable revolution in the social structure of countries like France, Italy, Canada, and Spain, with a rapid decline in the importance of the peasantry in the population and the economy. This expansion was protected against a recurrence of grave periodic crises of overproduction through the systematic and deliberate institution of a permanent credit and monetary inflation. The boom was sustained by an enormous, unprecedented volume of debt. Overproduction was not eliminated. It was concealed, on the one hand, by buying power generated through inflation; and it was "frozen," on the other hand, by the emergence of greater and greater excess capacity in a number of industries (coal, shipbuilding, steel, textiles, petrochemicals, and tomorrow, no doubt, automobiles).

This Marxist analysis reached three conclusions: first, that the essential motor forces of this long-term expansion would progressively exhaust themselves, in this way setting off a more and more marked intensification of interimperialist competition; secondly, that the deliberate application of Keynesian antirecessionary techniques would heighten the worldwide inflation and constant erosion in the buying power of currencies, finally producing a very grave crisis in the international monetary system; thirdly, that these two factors in conjunction would give rise to increasing limited recessions, inclining the course of economic development toward a general recession of the imperialist economy. This general recession would certainly differ from the great depression of 1929-32 both in extent and duration. Nonetheless, it would strike

all the imperialist countries and considerably exceed the recessions of the last twenty years. Two of these predictions have come true. The third promises to do so in the seventies.

West Germany's first real recession, in 1966-67, strikingly confirmed the inevitability of cyclical fluctuations in the capitalist economy. This recession, coinciding with Great Britain's fifth postwar recession, affected almost every country in capitalist Europe. Only Italy managed to escape because it had already had a serious cyclical downturn in 1964. This recession, the most serious in Europe since the second world war, brought the unemployed figure up to three million. However, since it paralleled a boom in Japan and a period in the American economy characterized by an initial boom followed by a mild short-term downturn ("an inventory-liquidation downturn"), a general recession throughout the imperialist world was narrowly averted.

Nonetheless, though still limited to the major countries of capitalist Europe, this recession has already seriously sharpened interimperialist rivalry. The devaluation of the pound sterling; the measures taken by the Johnson administration to "defend the dollar"; the Japanese automobile manufacturers' massive invasion of the European and North American markets; the competition between the American and European trusts within the Common Market; capitalist Europe's own crisis of economic integration (ostensibly provoked by the Gaullist rejection of British membership in the Common Market, but in reality spurred primarily by the fears and hesitations of the principal bourgeoisies facing a general slowdown in the expansion of the international imperialist economy -- these are the chief manifestations of this interimperialist competition. It is leading inevitably toward a new and more advanced phase of capital concentration -- in many instances international concentration of capital! -- and thus generally tending to exacerbate excess productive capacity, mounting debt, and declining profit rates for the monopolistic trusts. The products of a first slowdown in the growth rate, this competition and stepped-up capital concentration must in turn produce a further decline in this rate.

All these factors, therefore, combine to erode the foundation on which for thirty years it was possible to erect a colossal pyramid of debt and inflation. Confidence in the international capitalist economy's two so-called "reserve" currencies -- the dollar and the pound sterling -- has been profoundly shaken. This has tended to inhibit the expansion of international capitalist trade and impede the expansion of the means of international payment. Return to the gold standard is impossible in a declining imperialist world at grips with powerful anti-capitalist forces. It would risk provoking an economic crisis too great for the system to tolerate.

But at the same time, continuing international inflation collides more and more sharply with the interests of a growing section of the international bourgeoisie. Growing lack of confidence in the dollar tends increasingly to cutback the expansion of international liquidity at a time when such expansion is urgently needed to revive the boom. This contradiction is pointed up by the failure of the New Dehli Conference and the imperialist countries' inability to increase their "aid" to the semicolonial countries (which is primarily aid to their own export industries), coming in conjunction as it does with the first signs that the expansion of trade among the imperialist countries is running out of steam.

Doubtless, American imperialism still commands sufficient reserves and resources to continue using Keynesian techniques in the United States for some time without mounting a direct assault on the living standards of the American working class. But the pressures on it to put an end to its chronic balance-of-payments deficit are becoming so great that an important restraint has been put on the inflationary expansion of the world monetary system. This more and more general deflationary pressure is imposing a common monetary and financial discipline on a growing number of imperialist countries, which is to a large extent independent of the economic policies their changing governments select. Thus, they are being drawn one after the other into a general current which will carry them toward a general recession in a few years.

One of the imperialist economy's most striking features since the second world war has been the absence of an international synchronization of recessions. The American recessions of 1949, 1953, 1957, and 1960, which had more or less immediate repercussions for the British economy and the economies of a whole series of lesser imperialist countries, coincided with a sustained boom in West Germany. The Japanese recession did not come until 1965, when the French and Italian economies were already on the upturn. And the German and British recessions of 1966-67 were accompanied by a boom in Italy and Japan and at least partial maintenance of the high economic conjuncture in the United States.

This diffusion of recessions in time and space has clearly tended to moderate the extent and duration of business downturns, an increase in exports compensating in every instance for a drop in sales on the domestic market. The causes of this situation lay in the fact that while in the last analysis recessions follow from a decline in productive investment, that is the emergence of excess capacity or "frozen" overproduction, their immediate causes lie in governmental measures -- credit restrictions and deflationary policies aimed either at balancing international payments or "dampening an overheated conjuncture," or both at once. It was the general expansionary tendency

and international inflation together which made possible this widespread monetary and financial manipulation in the imperialist world.

These two stimuli have already begun to weaken, considerably reducing every imperialist government's margin for maneuver. The Wilson government learned this to its cost when international finance virtually rammed down its throat a devaluation insufficient to enable the British bourgeoisie to win back their lost international markets. Because of the close international collaboration among central banks, the decline in these two stimuli is tending to result in the imposition of increasingly rigid monetary disciplines. This is producing a tightening coordination of the monetary policies of the principal imperialist countries, which will sooner or later make inevitable a synchronization of economic recessions.

The synchronization of economic recessions is rooted in the productive process itself. It reflects, in the last analysis, the growing internationalization of capital, the levels of productivity and competitiveness among the different imperialist economies becoming evened out. In these conditions margins for monetary and financial maneuvers shrink considerably. Every maneuver, whether deflation, monetary devaluation, or protectionism, immediately brings on negative consequences for the economies of the other imperialist countries and prompts them to take a similar course. In fact, the close collaboration among the central banks expresses on a conscious level the objective inability of the imperialist countries, even the strongest of them to escape simultaneously the imperatives of imperialist competition and the monetary retaliation inevitably provoked by any attempt to improve their own competitive strength with the aid of financial expedients.

Historically there are more profound causes for the approaching end of the long-range expansion in the international imperialist economy from 1940 to 1965 than monetary problems, credit systems, or the interventionist policies of bourgeois states. It signifies that the contradiction between the expansion of the productive forces and the braking role of private appropriation, which capitalism was able to repress for a whole period with the help of temporary expedients, is emerging to the surface again in a powerful way. The efficacy of these expedients is waning. The stimulus of permanent inflation is being neutralized by the negative effects of this inflation on world trade. The stimulating effects of arms production are declining at a time when it has reached colossal proportions. Reviving the boom would require a new hike in military spending which even the American economy can no longer sustain. The more and more pronounced relative impoverishment of the semicolonial countries constantly reduces the fraction of the total industrial production of the imperialist countries which they can absorb. However, trade between the imperialist countries, which grew enormously during the long period of expansion, is increasingly

restricted by interimperialist competition and by progressive equalization of the technical level among all the imperialist countries.

To sum up, the enormous productive capacity built up in these countries is coming into conflict more and more with the needs of capital realization. Only the expanding economy of the workers states might offer a temporary safety valve. But, although rising constantly, their trade with the imperialist countries is still too small to put the brakes on a general recession. The limitations on this trade, due to both the workers' states very meagre export potential and the general international context which makes long-term credits very risky, will not be overcome to any great extent in the near future.

IV.

The New Stage in the Crisis of the Bureaucratic Regimes and the Meaning of the "Economic Reforms"

After the Hungarian revolution was crushed in 1956, the crisis of the bureaucratic regimes in the workers states of East Europe and the USSR seemed to have leveled off. The liquidation, beginning in 1957, of most of the reforms won by the "Polish October"; the halt in de-Stalinization in the USSR after the Twenty-second Congress of the CPSU; the passivity of the working masses; the political apathy, which was broken briefly by the victory of the Cuban revolution and its clashes with American imperialism but which was not shaken later even by the Sino-Soviet conflict -- all these were expressions of the momentary suspension of the crisis. The removal of Khrushchev, whose economic policy had clearly become unpopular among the working masses, occurred amid general indifference. Even American imperialism's war of aggression against the Vietnamese revolution, which drew such broad and violent protests from the vanguard youth in the imperialist countries, met with a much more indifferent climate in most of the European workers states -- although the courageous independent actions of students in East Germany, Czechoslovakia, Poland, and above all Yugoslavia in support of the Vietnamese revolution must be mentioned.

The interaction of several factors explains this prolonged political apathy, this apparent renewed stability of the bureaucratic regimes in the workers states lasting for nearly a decade after the period of violent tremors from 1952 to 1957. In general, the late fifties and early sixties were marked by a constant rise in the standard of living of the masses. This was more pronounced in some countries, like the USSR, East Germany, and Yugoslavia, than in others such as Poland and Czechoslovakia. But it was nonetheless real enough to account for the appearance of a climate fostering reformist illusions. The crushing of the Hungarian revolution also helped to nourish this climate. The mirage of a progressive "democratization" from above, stimu-

lated by abrupt phases of cultural "liberalization" and growing interest in Yugoslav self-management, made up the general framework for the consolidation of this climate.

Underlying this apathy, however, was a more basic factor. In the Stalinist era, the working class in all these states, with the partial exception of Yugoslavia, was politically expropriated and atomized. The flagrant contradiction between the official doctrine -- an apologist deformation of Marxism -- and the political oppression and social inequality created profound distrust and mounting skepticism in the working class toward Marxist-Leninist doctrine. In periods of strong economic expansion, this distrust was combined with optimism about the possibilities of "individual success"; in periods of semi-stagnation, with a general pessimism in this regard. But this loss of confidence in the Communist ideal prostituted by the bureaucracy was the fundamental cause of the workers' political apathy. Neither the periods of "liberalization" nor the intellectuals' fight for increased socialist democracy have overcome this factor, inasmuch as the workers, not without reason, consider these intellectuals to be part of the privileged bureaucracy and the "liberal" program as offering scarcely any attractions or immediate advantages to the workers.

However, for several years a series of factors has begun to undermine the relative stability the bureaucratic regimes regained after 1957. The crisis of these regimes is again bringing diverse layers of the population into action in Yugoslavia, Poland and Czechoslovakia. The Soviet bureaucracy itself displays panic over the possibility of such a revival in the USSR, too. Of the factors at work, four must be stressed: a slowing down of economic growth coupled with the detrimental effects which the "economic reforms" of recent years have had for the masses; the crisis in the "world socialist camp," that is, the crisis in the relationship between the workers states and the CPs; the bureaucracy's inability to develop a consistent ideological line to take the place of the Stalinist doctrine; the impact on the workers states of American imperialism's aggressive escalation, of the victorious resistance of the Vietnamese working masses, and of the revival of revolutionary agitation and struggle in Western Europe.

The steady decline in the sixties of the rate of economic growth in the bureaucratically degenerated or deformed workers states is an expression of a deep-going crisis in bureaucratic economic management. It is universally recognized that hyper-centralized bureaucratic planning fails when the time comes to go beyond the stage of industrialization where costs are not taken into account, when the prime necessity is to develop a more modern sector (electronics, petrochemicals, automated mechanical systems) and a consumer durables industry. But since the bureaucracy cannot replace this system with one of democratically centralized workers self-management, it is seeking

"automatic" mechanisms to take the place of contradictory, confused, and less and less effective directives from above. This is the reason why it has generally opted for "economic reforms" reviving the idea of a "socialist market economy." Underlying the bureaucracy's increased recourse to market mechanisms is a rivalry within the bureaucracy itself between an essentially technocratic wing and the conservative tendency, Stalinist in origin, of the political apparatus.

The intrabureaucratic character of this conflict appears most clearly in the program of relations with the working class which the "liberal" technocrats have developed. Nowhere do they take a stand for workers' self-management, even in principle. Everywhere they advocate increased powers for plant managers and more plant autonomy. Greater powers for the managers are meant not only with respect to the central planning authorities but with the workers as well. The technocrats favor a kind of austerity and economic rationality all the more suspect in the workers' eyes because it entails a reappearance of large-scale unemployment and the dismantling of free or low-cost social services such as housing at the same time as an increase in social inequality and in the salaries and bonuses of the bureaucrats.

It is one thing to note that in spite of everything the "liberal reforms" create an atmosphere more favorable to a revival of initiative and political activity among the workers. But it would be an incomplete assessment and a profoundly wrong conclusion to give "critical support" to the liberal technocrats as against the "conservative" political bureaucrats on this basis. Unquestionably, this intrabureaucratic conflict and the liberal concessions accorded to writers, journalists, and students as in Czechoslovakia improve the chances for a resurgence of activity by the workers. And the workers' activity might also turn against the economic consequences of the "reforms" which are detrimental to the working class. Trying to limit the embryonic new vanguard in these countries to a "choice" between a "lesser evil" (the liberal, technocratic bureaucracy) and a "return to Stalinism" would trap the rising vanguard in an insoluble dilemma. Only a bold program calling for the full rebirth of socialist democracy based on power exercised by workers councils, that is, on the program of political revolution, can bring the workers back on the political scene en masse. The working class is too antagonistic to the bureaucracy in its entirety to let itself be used as a mere auxiliary force in the conflict between two strata in the ruling caste.

The fact that the intellectuals and youth are the first stratum in the bureaucratically degenerated or deformed workers states to begin to move is due not only to the workers' still very widespread political apathy. It reflects also the much more immediate discontent which the bureaucratic dictatorship has aroused in these circles. The workers at least have had the satisfaction of an improvement in their standard of living

and a marginal increase in their trade union rights in the plants. For the intellectuals and the youth, the demand for freedom of creation in the arts and literature, for freedom of scholarly and, by implication, political debate, is a vital need without which they threaten to stifle. By liquidating the most extreme aspects of Stalinism without re-establishing a climate of genuine socialist democracy, the bureaucracy only removed the most extreme means for suppressing the demands of the intellectuals and students without satisfying them. This could not help but provoke a crisis of mounting virulence, inevitably leading to explosions.

This evolution was all the more inevitable because the bureaucracy's failure in the ideological field is much more pronounced than its failure in the economic one, which is only partial. The bureaucracy has been incapable of substituting a doctrine of even the slightest coherence for Stalinism. It has been incapable even of recasting its own history. Its bankruptcy in this regard has appeared in stark clarity in the laborious re-writing year after year of its "manuals" of philosophy, political economy, and the history of the CPSU, which are then revised again, and finally withdrawn from circulation. This bankruptcy is still more obvious when compared with the Soviet Union's conspicuous successes in the natural sciences and technology.

The bureaucracy's ideological bankruptcy is manifested also in the growing crisis in the "socialist camp" and the international Communist movement. To be sure, this crisis does not have purely ideological roots. It reflects the conflicting interests of the nationalist bureaucracies and the differing relationships of these bureaucracies to imperialism. But the inability of the bureaucracy, and above all, of the Soviet bureaucracy to formulate a semblance of doctrine acceptable to all the workers states with regard to either their relations with imperialism or the ways of building a socialist economy and society unquestionably promotes centrifugal tendencies within the camp.

From this standpoint, the Kosygin-Brezhnev era has been still more disastrous for the Soviet bureaucracy than that of Khrushchev. Of the fourteen workers states, eight have now escaped the Kremlin's control (in chronological order, Yugoslavia, the People's Republic of China, the Democratic Republic of Korea, the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, Albania, Cuba, Rumania, Czechoslovakia). With Czechoslovakia's growing autonomy, the lure of autonomy is growing also in Poland and Hungary. If this has not received expression in the German Democratic Republic, too, it is because bureaucratic rule in this country is directly dependent on military support from the USSR.

In the international Communist movement, the Kremlin's policy of "peaceful coexistence" and "economic competition" has cost it control over most of the Communist forces in south and southeast Asia and has condemned the forces remaining loyal to

it in Latin America to become a dwindling minority. While this policy is fully endorsed by most of the CPs in the imperialist countries, it places them in an impasse with regard to the mushrooming youth movements in those countries, giving them only extremely limited access to this new vanguard.

Thus, the bureaucracy's ideological bankruptcy goes hand in hand with an intense political crisis. The dynamic of this crisis has not operated in a linear or direct way. The influence of the Maoist or even the Fidelista current is still insignificant or weak in the CPs and circles of young rebels in the bureaucratically deformed workers states. The failure of the tendencies to advance a concrete program or proposals dealing with the problems of these countries which could inspire enthusiasm is largely responsible for their weakness. The Maoists' continuation of the Stalin cult shuts them off from all opportunity of influencing the intellectual and student strata in Eastern Europe.

But the international political crisis of the bureaucracy has indirectly influenced and continues to influence the development of renewed activity in the East European workers states. The multiplicity of "official" resolutions encourages a revival of critical thought and increases the general skeptical attitude toward any "orthodoxy." The outcome is to increase the number of currents and subcurrents within the political leaderships in the bureaucracy. Every international confrontation becomes an occasion for debates reviving the polemic broken off momentarily by the halt in de-Stalinization in the USSR. Even modest successes in the struggle for socialist democracy have international repercussions, setting off a chain reaction. The Czech students come to the defense of the Polish students who are victims of repression and both sympathize with the nonconformist intellectuals persecuted in the USSR.

Furthermore, Peking's propaganda campaign against Moscow has unquestionably helped to undermine the authority of the bureaucratic Communist party leaders both in the capitalist countries and in the Soviet Union. Out of polemical necessity, the Maoists have told devastating truths about the "revisionists" and offered important examples involving the pro-Moscow CPs as proof of their statements. While this propaganda has gotten little response in the Soviet Union, in Eastern Europe, etc., chiefly because of the development of the Mao cult and the praise of Stalin associated with it, it has played a contributing role in the formation and activities of the youth vanguard in the capitalist countries, which in turn has contributed to the rise of opposition currents in the youth and among the intellectuals in the degenerated or deformed workers states. From this standpoint, the propaganda, as hypocritical as it was, concerning the "cultural revolution" had a special importance because it was ostensibly directed against the bureaucracy and proclaimed the need for the youth to "take power." The ultimate result of this was to contribute to undermining the stability

of the Stalinist bureaucracy on a world scale.

The Vietnamese masses' resistance and their victories over the imperialist aggression have come to exercise a positive influence in reviving a political vanguard in the workers states. It has cooled the sympathies of a section of the rebel intellectuals and students for bourgeois "democracy" and discredited American imperialism in their eyes. It has galvanized a current of active solidarity, reinforced by the presence in the workers states of many students from the colonial countries. It serves today in the workers states, as in the West, as a touchstone to distinguish reactionaries and right wingers -- who complain about the sacrifices imposed on the peoples of Eastern Europe "for the benefit of the Vietnamese and Cubans," who claim that the Vietnam war is only a "quarrel among the great powers," and who take a neutral or indifferent attitude toward the heroic resistance of the Vietnamese people --- from the progressive currents whose spontaneous demonstrations and demands for more direct and massive aid go beyond the purely verbal affirmations of official "solidarity." The same observation applies even more closely with regard to the attitude adopted by the different currents in the workers states toward the revolutionary upsurge in France. The rightists regretted the weakening of a Gaullism favorably inclined to an "international detente" and criticized the PCF from the right. The genuine left currents expressed solidarity with the youth insurrection and criticized the PCF from the left.

The key problem facing the vanguard in the workers states is how to achieve a link-up between the students and intellectuals who have opened a direct struggle for socialist democracy and the workers who can and must be won to this struggle. This link-up cannot be achieved without taking account of the present outlook, the material interests, and the historical objectives of the working class. The way to prepare this link-up is to work for the rebirth in these countries of revolutionary Marxist organizations supporting the full program of the political revolution.

The economic and social consequences of the "economic reforms" introduced in various workers states in Eastern Europe have for some time promoted tendencies in the international revolutionary movement which maintain that these countries are on the eve of capitalist restoration. The Maoist propaganda, which has been disseminated on a grand scale, has had an unquestionable impact. The evolution in the foreign policy of some of the governments of these countries, such as Rumania and particularly Yugoslavia, have given objective reinforcement to these fears which the Soviet bureaucracy has used to justify the strict forms of control it exercises over these countries. This proved true again in the case of Czechoslovakia, where all of the support given by the Kremlin to the conservative neo-Stalinist Novotny tendency was justified on the basis of a purported danger of a return to bourgeois democracy.

Revolutionary Marxists must refute the arguments developed in these circles and defend a correct application of the Marxist analytical method. This is important not only because defending the theoretical gains of Marxism is an integral part of the struggle for world revolution; it is also the essential prerequisite for intervening in the crisis in progress in the workers states; since to advance the political revolution, such intervention must correctly weigh the social forces present, their respective weight, and their dynamics. Since the case of Yugoslavia has been chosen as a model, because of the way the private sector has expanded in that country, we must examine the capitalist restoration thesis in the light of the reality in this country.

From the standpoint of method, the partisans of the thesis that capitalism has been restored in Yugoslavia apply, at bottom, reformist conceptions in reverse. Since there has clearly never been a social counterrevolution in this country, since the party in power is the same one that totally expropriated the former possessing classes in 1945 and destroyed their state, the hypothesis of a restoration of capitalism implies that it is possible to go gradually and imperceptibly from a workers state to a bourgeois state, from a noncapitalist economy to a capitalist economy, in the same way that the reformists think you can go gradually and imperceptibly from a bourgeois state to a workers state, from a capitalist economy to a noncapitalist economy.

For Marxists there can be no capitalism without a bourgeois class in power in the economic sense of the term. There can be no bourgeois class without private appropriation of the means of production and the social surplus product. From this standpoint, it is impossible to show that the Yugoslav bureaucracy has taken any important step toward private appropriation of the major means of production. To the contrary, the system of self-management represents an additional political and psychological obstacle in the way of private appropriation. The workers are much less willing to surrender the plants, where they directly participate in the management, to private owners. The process of primitive private accumulation has assumed important proportions in agriculture, commerce, craft production, and the service sector. But this process is occurring in classes or social layers such as the rich peasantry, the private traders, etc., not in the bureaucracy. As for the private appropriation of a part of the social surplus product by the bureaucracy, it cannot be shown that this phenomenon is quantitatively more important than in the USSR in Stalin's time.

It is true that the symbiosis of a corrupt bureaucracy with a peasantry and a class of artisans and traders in the course of rapid enrichment creates major social and economic tensions in a socialized economy and introduces grave contradictions. These contradictions, however, are simply a repetition of analogous contradictions in the USSR in the NEP period. They do threaten the planned character of the economy and its social-

ized foundation and they are aggravated by the Yugoslav CP's decisions to increase the economic decentralization and the progressive dismantling of the monopoly of foreign trade -- this cannot be disputed. But the only conclusion that can be drawn is that a process of sharp social and political struggles is in the offing in Yugoslavia, as indicated by the political crisis since 1966, the strike wave of 1966 and 1967, and, above all, the student demonstrations of June 1968. For capitalism to have been restored, the Yugoslav working class, the only one which has made a socialist revolution in Europe since 1917, would have to have been beaten; the social forces representing the private reappropriation of the major means of production would have to have triumphed. To say that capitalism has already been restored, without massive resistance from the workers, would be to proclaim defeat before the battle; it would demonstrate a defeatism that the recent events have shown to be totally unjustified.

Revolutionary Marxists reject any notion that the social nature of an economy or a society can be fundamentally changed by ideological factors or political conceptions. They reject still more emphatically the Maoist thesis that capitalist restoration is "automatic" if the vestiges of capitalist ideology are not eliminated. This is a genuinely idealist and voluntarist deviation from historical materialism. Restoration of capitalism in a country where it has been overthrown is possible only if a new bourgeois class, whose existence is clearly shown in economic and social reality, appropriates the major means of production and overthrows the bureaucratized workers state to replace it with a bourgeois state. Nothing of this sort has occurred in Yugoslavia.

Yugoslavia no more than the USSR or China presents us with a definitive model or "ideal" of a society and economy in transition from capitalism to socialism. In all these cases, grave deformations developed that were new and unanticipated in the theoretical schema. But this is no reason to abandon the basic Marxist criteria for determining the social character of a state, to consider only the distortions and overlook what is essential. Excessive economic decentralization, the reappearance of unemployment, and accelerated primitive private accumulation in the service sector in the case of Yugoslavia are grave deformations. But they are of the same order as the destruction of all workers control and power at the plant level in the USSR in Stalin's time, the bloody repression of the Hungarian workers councils by Khrushchev, the economic stagnation in Czechoslovakia under the Novotny regime, and the widespread development of a black market and a parallel market in the USSR in the fifties. In none of these cases was the fundamental underpinning of a workers state -- the elimination of the big bourgeoisie, nationalized ownership of the major means of production, controlled planning of major investment projects, the banks, and big industry abolished. As long as these bases remain, and the workers have not been defeated by a new bourgeoisie, there can be no capitalist restoration.

V.

Problems of the Resurgent Colonial Revolution

In each of the colonial revolution's chief centers -- the revolution in Southeast Asia, Latin American, the Arab countries, and Africa -- there are increasing signs of a resurgence. At the same time, the prerevolutionary situation in West Bengal heralds the development of a new vitally important center of the colonial revolution -- the Indian revolution. Therefore, the principal problems the resurgent colonial revolution faces in each of these centers must be specified along with the conditions under which the new revolutionary leaderships can successfully undertake to solve them.

The Vietnamese revolution's triumphant resistance has created conditions favorable to an extension of the revolution in Southeast Asia to the principal neighboring countries: Laos, Thailand, Burma, and Indonesia. Even in Malaysia, the most stable country relatively in this zone, there has been the start of a revival in the mass struggle. Simultaneously, in the Philippines there has been more vigorous oppositional activity in the cities along with the beginning of a resumption of the guerrilla struggle.

Up until now, the international extension of the Vietnam revolution in Southeast Asia has not been a spontaneous mass phenomenon. It has been the result primarily of the activity of the North and South Vietnamese revolutionary forces (above all in Laos) and the Chinese CP's preponderant influence on the Southeast Asian Communist parties. After the disaster of the Aidit policy in Indonesia, and in connection with the "cultural revolution," the Maoist leadership took a left turn tactically in its attitude toward the Asian "national bourgeoisie." Almost everywhere it advocates unleashing armed struggles under Communist leadership in accordance with the model of guerrilla warfare becoming transformed into a people's war. A notable exception is Pakistan, where the Communist forces under Maoist influence have been led to maintain a moderate wait-and-see attitude toward the regime in power, which for diplomatic reasons Peking wants to treat tactfully.

Most of these countries are essentially agrarian societies with little or no industry, whose level of socio-economic development is well below that of China in 1949 or even Vietnam in 1954. The peoples of these countries either have little experience in struggle (Thailand) or have undergone long periods of conflicts centered around the national issue in which the urban masses played little role. This means that the climate in these countries is especially propitious for the development of the tactic of guerrilla war which can end in a victory if a minimum of favorable conditions is assured, particularly a leadership independent of both Peking and Moscow.

In its desperate search for a minimum of political and social stability, the Burmese officer caste has gone a long way in opposing imperialism in this region. Practically all imperialist property and the greater part of the urban property of the Burmese "national" bourgeoisie has been nationalized. It has nonetheless proved true, as in all countries of this type, that the key to Burma's social future lies in the countryside. Without a genuine agrarian revolution there can be no real mobilization of the popular masses. Above all, without an agrarian revolution it is impossible to create the basis for overcoming, if only gradually, the real causes of underdevelopment. In this area, the Burmese military regime has failed. The failure has facilitated the resumption of guerrilla warfare, which has forced Rangoon to beg for military and economic aid from imperialism.

The turn which most of the CPs in this region have taken toward guerrilla warfare and toward unleashing an agrarian revolution unquestionably favors the selection of a new revolutionary vanguard, hostile to "peaceful coexistence" and gradualist illusions, and ready to unleash a process of "uninterrupted revolution." Thus far their ties to Peking have encouraged their development toward a more revolutionary orientation. However, this evolution is not irreversible. As in the case of Indonesia yesterday and Pakistan today, the bureaucracy in power in Peking may try again to use the revolutionary movement in this or that Southeast Asian country as small change in its diplomatic maneuvers. Therefore, to establish the most favorable conditions for taking advantage of all the opportunities to advance the revolution, it is necessary for the CPs in these countries to free themselves from all subordination to any of the bureaucracies now in power in the workers states.

American imperialism recognizes the threat to its interests involved in an extension of the Vietnamese revolution internationally. That is why it has built an immense military base in Thailand, a veritable counterrevolutionary staging ground in Asia, which is supposed to enable it to strike hard as the need arises at any point in the zone extending from Manila to Karachi.

Indonesia is clearly the key country in this whole zone. It is there that imperialism's counterrevolutionary intervention in Southeast Asia has had its most detrimental effect, giving a team of Indonesian generals the necessary confidence to crush the Communist movement. But it is there also that the "national" bourgeoisies' inability to achieve even the slightest political and social stability has been most strikingly exhibited. Despite the October 1965 bloodbath and the breadth of imperialism's political victory, in the face of the corruption and chronic incompetence of the native ruling class, imperialist military and economic "aid" (backed discreetly by the Soviet bureaucracy) has not been enough to halt economic disintegration or a catastrophic new drop in the living standard of the masses, which was already so low at the close of the Sukarno era. This objective

evolution has given the impetus permitting a renewal of the struggle in the form of armed struggle.

The PKI was decapitated. It lost most of its leading cadres. But its intermediate cadres were already too numerous to be exterminated. Among these cadres a process of selection and intensified regroupment is in progress. While there is a defeatist and conservative wing that draws conclusions from the failure of the Aidit policy tending toward neo-Khrushchevism, the majority of the surviving cadres are turning toward the left, toward the necessity for armed struggle. The revolutionary Marxist cadres must participate to the fullest in this turn and support it with all their strength. They must promote a critical examination of all the errors in the Aidit line -- those inspired by Moscow as well as those inspired by Mao. And by forming their own nucleus, they must help to form a new leadership for the Indonesian revolution.

With the OLAS conference, a new stage opened also in the creation of a revolutionary leadership in Latin America. A separate document deals with all the lessons of the decade of struggle in Latin America since the victory of the Cuban revolution. It is sufficient here to point to the lamentable bankruptcy of the national bourgeois and petty bourgeois leaderships of the traditional mass movement (AD in Venezuela, APRA in Peru, the MNR in Bolivia, the Peronists in Argentina, the "Liberals" in Columbia). The collapse of the Goulart government in Brazil and the integration of the Vandor team into the Argentine military dictatorship doubtless are the most typical examples. Caught between the fire of the Cuban revolution and the pressure of imperialism, these forces have everywhere allied themselves with pro-imperialist tendencies, although not without suffering continual splits and shrinkage of their popular base in the process.

The CPs continue to live in the atmosphere of the period before the victory of the Cuban revolution. They are still chasing the mirage of an "alliance with the national bourgeoisie" and a "constitutional road" to liberation from the imperialist grip. Even when the pressure of the ranks has forced them to turn toward armed struggle as in Venezuela, Columbia and Guatemala, this turn has been episodic, partial, and pragmatic; and they have tended to fall back into an overall strategy dominated by "peaceful coexistence." The increasingly numerous conflicts between these CPs and the Cuban leadership and the local supporters of its revolutionary line attest to the depth of this contradiction.

The Fidelista leadership sought for a time, at the Tricontinental Congress and before, to work through the traditional Communist parties in order to draw the most extensive forces behind its line of armed struggle unleashed simultaneously in a series of countries and a socialist revolution on a continental scale. Now, it has drawn a balance sheet on the congenital

incapacity of the Latin American CPs to reintegrate themselves in the ongoing revolutionary process. This was the reason they set up the OIAS conference independently of the traditional CPs. This is why they are trying to regroup on a national and continental scale all the revolutionary forces without excluding anyone, who are ready to engage in the revolutionary struggle and to accept both the socialist character of the Latin American revolution, its continental nature, and the predominant role armed struggle is to play in it.

The original conceptions of the Fidelista leadership on the tactics and strategy of armed struggle have not remained static. In the light of hard-won and painful experience, a series of modifications have been introduced. The most important are recognition that the first expectations of an early victory in a number of countries proved to be overoptimistic, that the struggle must be conceived as one of long duration, and that imperialism has learned lessons which increase the difficulties of guerrilla warfare. Of particular interest is the thought being given by the Fidelista leadership to the distinction between generally revolutionary conditions and a revolutionary situation favoring an uprising.

The Cubans have also developed a more complex strategical concept than the original idea of a "guerrilla focal center" triggering off a successful overthrow of a reactionary government and the bourgeois state. This has been modified to the concept of "marching guerrilla columns," and, more importantly, the necessity has been recognized of organizing mass support among the peasantry and widening the armed struggle to include the broad layers of the urban population. These are important advances. Still lacking is a revolutionary Marxist appreciation of the need for a transitional program for the city masses in order to set these explosive forces in motion through their own inherent needs. Likewise lacking as yet is a revolutionary Marxist appreciation of the role which a party of the calibre of the Bolsheviks could play in bringing the struggle to a successful conclusion at the earliest possible moment.

The Arab revolution suffered a severe setback when the retreat of the Algerian revolution set in preceding the fall of Ben Bella. The possibility for new progressive development appeared in Syria in 1966-67, and, in the last analysis, it was to stamp out this possibility that the June 1967 Israeli aggression was launched. The defeat suffered by Egypt and Syria in this war of aggression momentarily increased the weight of the reactionary Arab governments. But at the same time it heightened the anti-imperialist consciousness of the masses, which in Egypt led them to act in an independent way for the first time in ten years.

The most promising revolutionary revival taking shape at present in the Arab world is in South Yemen and Palestine.

By their revolutionary struggle, the urban and rural masses of Aden and South Yemen were able to drive out the imperialists, the semifeudal sheiks, and most of the neocolonialist tools. The guerrilla war started up by the Palestinian masses in the territories occupied by Israel relighted revolutionary hope and enthusiasm throughout the Arab world and made possible the formation of much more seasoned and conscious revolutionary cadres than in the decade 1956-66.

In fact, the sun is setting for the Arab revolutionary generation dominated by essentially "national" bourgeois Nasserism and petty-bourgeois Baathism. The conditions are ripening for the formation of a genuine party of the Arab Revolution based on revolutionary Marxism and combining a resolutely anti-imperialist orientation with a genuine proletarian internationalism which would facilitate solution of the Israeli and Kurdish problems. The elements of this party will assemble not only among the Palestinian and Yemenite fighters but also in the Moroccan, Algerian, Tunisian, Egyptian, Syrian, and Iraqi student and workers vanguards, which are now drawing up a balance sheet of the experiences and failures of the traditional CPs, Nasserism, and the Baath.

In Black Africa also, after Sharpesville and the overthrow of Lumumba, the initiative passed for an entire period to imperialism and its neocolonialist agents. In general, the military coups d'état which have occurred have maintained, if not reinforced, the neocolonialist structures. The overthrow of Nkrumah in Ghana, the elimination of Odinga Oginga in Kenya and Oscar Kambona in Tanzania marked grave rightward turns in the governments of these countries. The unilateral declaration of independence by the white colonists in Zimbabwe (South Rhodesia), the reinforcement of the regime of apartheid and semifascist repression in South Africa are some indications of the lag experienced by the African revolution in recent years. The OAU's growing paralysis, or rather its progressive transformation into an instrument of neocolonialism, capped this temporary setback.

At the same time, however, forces have been coming together whose role is decisive today for a revival of the African revolution. The consolidation of the guerrillas in so-called Portuguese Guinea and Eritrea; the revival of guerrilla warfare in Angola and Mozambique and its first appearance in Zimbabwe, and a current increasingly inclined to guerrilla struggle in the anti-Apartheid movement in South Africa are the clearest expression of this.

The peculiarities of African society involve the survival of tribalism and the rudimentary character of the bourgeoisie, which make neo-colonialism endemically weak but which at the same time place additional obstacles in the way of a genuinely anticapitalist revolution. Under the protection of neocolonialism, the private accumulation of capital has continued at an

accelerated pace in almost all the countries of Black Africa. This process has promoted the emergence of modern social classes from the old tribal structures, as is shown with special clarity by the secession of Biafra organized by bourgeois forces manipulating tribal structures and fears.

This can only increase the importance of the South African revolution, the only one which can base itself on a mass of workers and peasants who have been proletarianized and largely detribalized in the crucible of capitalist exploitation and apartheid oppression. The historic role of all the armed struggles now in progress on the African continent, which are slowly moving southward, is to prepare, facilitate, and spur the outbreak of the South African revolution, beginning with guerrilla warfare.

The Indian revolution is called upon to play a crucial role in the advance of the colonial revolution in the seventies. The Congress party's electoral defeat in 1967 revealed the bankruptcy of the traditional leadership of the Indian masses established since the start of the struggle for independence against British imperialism. The Indian bourgeoisie sought in vain to halt this disintegration of their power by two military adventures, against China and Pakistan respectively, in an attempt to generate a chauvinist climate of "national union" in the country. It strove in vain also to prepare alternative bourgeois leaderships -- on the "right" with the Swatantra party and the Janh Singh, on the "left" with the Bangla Congress (which sought to govern in a coalition with the opportunist workers parties). The social crisis is proving more powerful than political maneuvers. The Indian cauldron in which such mighty forces are on the boil is inexorably nearing the point of explosion.

The industrialization of India cannot be considered a total failure, despite the industrial recession which has been going on for more than two years. The productive forces in industry have developed. The proletariat has increased in numbers and skill. The cities have continued their monstrous growth. But what was a fraud and a farce was the propaganda about the "social" or "noncapitalist" character of this industrialization. In reality, what we saw was a classical process of large-scale primitive accumulation to the profit of the Indian bourgeoisie. And in today's world context, this primitive accumulation of capital has reproduced on a still broader scale the phenomena which accompanied this process in Europe in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries -- destruction of small-peasant ownership; tens of millions of rural families dispossessed of their means of agricultural or craft production; an accelerated rural exodus; heavier and heavier indebtedness of the mass of the people; low wages, greater unemployment and generalized misery for the urban proletariat and subproletariat, existing in foul slums -- if they are not left without a roof over their heads at all -- and subjected periodically to outright famine.

The most explosive issue in India today is the agrarian problem -- the problem of agricultural laborers who work only one day in three, of peasants dispossessed of their lands, of small tenant farmers and independent farmers crushed by rent, taxes and usury. The technical problem of irrigation -- which the production of basic necessities depends on -- cannot be solved so long as the social question is not solved. No revolution can triumph in India unless these tens of millions of workers and poor peasants in the villages of the country rise up.

But a peasant uprising would not be enough by itself. It would have to go over into overthrowing the political power of the bourgeoisie and creating a Soviet type government. Only such a government could carry out and consolidate on the scale of this immense subcontinent the confiscation of the land from the landlords and capitalists, cancellation of debts, division of the land for the benefit of the poor peasants and the creation of the first producers cooperatives among the agricultural wage workers. Historical experience has shown that any alliance with the "liberal" or "left" wing of the bourgeoisie, any acceptance of the electoral or parliamentary road, any confusion as to the character of the state and government resulting from the revolution blocks the accomplishment of these urgent tasks.

The CP led by Dange has long been mired in class collaboration with the Indian bourgeoisie. In this it has followed the instructions of the Kremlin, which wants to maintain a political alliance with New Delhi, prating about the "noncapitalist road of development" chosen by the "leading circles" of the Congress party.

The so-called "left" CP, to which the hopes of the masses were transferred and which leads them in the two key states of Bengal and Kerala, has followed Dange down the road of coalition with the bourgeoisie. It has not hesitated to participate in coalition governments within the framework of the bourgeois state. These governments went bankrupt less than a year after they were constituted. Cadres coming from the left wing of the left CP can make an important contribution to the new revolutionary vanguard which has been developing out of the political, social, and economic crises of recent years. The Socialist Workers Party, the Indian section of the Fourth International, will make an important contribution to this through programmatic clarification, selection of cadres, and the example of struggles of a new type.

While this vanguard can develop through programmatic clarification, it will arise primarily from the immediate struggle of the masses, which had already reached a semi-insurrectionary stage in the great anti-famine struggles of 1966. In 1967, the first sparks of a peasant rebellion were struck in the struggle in Naxalbari. This must be broadened, radicalized, and organized by revolutionaries until it leads to the creation of organs of

dual power -- armed workers and peasants committees.

Doubtless in a territory as vast as that of India this dual power will also take on a character of geographical division. The uneven development of the different parts of the country makes a break-up of the union almost inevitable in an early phase. Moreover, reactionary forces are striving to make regionalism the last redoubt against the revolution, above all in regions less affected by the famine like Bombay. But in today's world, the Indian revolution will find more powerful allies than the Chinese revolution could in the twenties and thirties. And the resistance of the possessing classes will be proportionally weaker inasmuch as the balance of forces has altered profoundly in favor of the revolution and continues to do so.

VI.

The Crisis of the Traditional Workers Movement and the Appearance of a New Youth Vanguard in the Imperialist Countries

Already, before the end of the long period of expansion in the capitalist economy, the social contradictions had been slowly sharpening in the Western European countries. The high economic conjuncture itself had made possible relatively high wage demands thanks to the prolonged period of full employment. These wage increases, in combination with the factors already mentioned, undercut the average rate of profit. The capitalists reacted in two ways: (a) an increasing limitation on the trade unions' freedom of action through imposition of an "incomes policy," a voluntary or legal limitation on wage increases by "mutual agreement"; and by (b) accelerated automation and credit restrictions imposed at precise times in order to rebuild an industrial reserve army, weaken the workers' response, and sow disarray and apprehension in the ranks of labor by creating fear of massive layoffs.

A vigorous and aggressive workers movement equipped with a program of transitional demands prepared precisely for such situations, a movement which had educated the workers in the spirit of resolute anticapitalism and kept intact their capacity to fight back and mobilize in a militant way, could have profited from the end of the period of full employment in Western Europe to deal the capitalist system very hard blows. With a growing contempt for a system compelled itself to dispel the myths and illusions which it had fostered, the workers could have refused to accept unemployment and a wage freeze, could have launched powerful strikes and demonstrations, occupied factories, forced the governments to retreat, and created an objectively prerevolutionary or even revolutionary situation.

Anticipating this turn in the objective situation, revolutionary Marxists in several Western European countries have con-

centrated their efforts for years on preparations for such responses to the general offensive of big capital. They understood that what was required to mount such counterattacks was not only a correct political program, cadres, and a revolutionary organization struggling to produce a new revolutionary leadership, but also sufficient roots in the mass movement and adequate organizational transmission belts to draw the broad masses into a determined, coordinated general counterattack against the capitalist offensive.

The increasingly pronounced integration of the reformist bureaucracy into the capitalist system; the sociological transformation of a part of the reformist apparatus which, abandoning its mass support in the workers movement, based itself more and more exclusively on the apparatus of the bourgeois state itself; the rightward evolution and progressive Social-Democratization of the Khrushchevite Communist parties; and the political incapacity and centrist hesitations on the part of the left wing of the trade union bureaucracy once again succeeded in largely wrecking the chances of a revival in the Western European workers movement in the 1963-67 period. The result of this was clear. Almost everywhere the capitalist offensive in these countries succeeded in imposing a massive reappearance of unemployment without arousing any violent reactions from the workers. Along with the effects of this capitalist victory, the objective consequences of unemployment have stricken and demoralized layers of the proletariat. This disarray weakened the trade union and electoral positions of the workers movement in most countries, produced a rightward political drift, and reinforced extreme right-wing, racist or chauvinist tendencies feeding in part on the demoralization of marginal layers of the working class.

The inability of the CGIL and CGT to wage any consistent struggle whatsoever against the effects of the Franco-Italian recession of 1964 was already significant. Two years later, the British and West German workers movements found themselves facing the same test but on a much broader scale. Wilson's policy of blocking wage increases and reconstituting an industrial reserve army provoked only disjointed and scattered reactions. The grave Ruhr crisis which broke out in West Germany did not stir the least response from the workers movement. Still worse, in entering the "great coalition," the German Social Democracy went to the aid of capitalism at the very time when after twenty years of economic successes which had made a deep impression on the working masses, it began again to exhibit its historical bankruptcy.

However, at the same time that the traditional workers movement was suffering a new setback due to the betrayal of the reformist and Khrushchevite bureaucratic apparatuses, a new generation of militants completely free of the weight of the skepticism and demoralization engendered by the defeats and

failures of the preceding generations was erupting into the West European political scene.

Young students in most of the West European countries, but also young workers, brought a more militant and intransigent tone to the recent strikes in Besançon, Le Mans, and Caen in France and at FIAT in Italy, as well as to the demonstrations against the monopolistic Springer press combine in West Germany following the attempted assassination of Dutschke. This new generation enjoys a much greater freedom of initiative and action because it has largely escaped the control of the traditional organizations. The May 1968 upsurge in France is a dramatic illustration of this.

In other documents the Fourth International has analyzed the social, economic, and political origins of this new youth vanguard, which is a worldwide phenomenon. In Western Europe, it has various sources -- the movements challenging the bourgeois university arising from the worsening crisis faced by this institution in the age of the university explosion and the current technological revolution; anti-imperialist movements chiefly inspired by the victorious resistance of the Vietnamese revolution to American imperialist aggression and by the Cuban revolution; and a bitter revulsion against the self-satisfied, hypocritical, and ultraconformist generation ensconced in the neocapitalism of the "consumer society"; etc. All these driving forces will converge to produce an authentic anticapitalist revolutionary consciousness, provided that the revolutionary Marxists prove themselves capable not only of furnishing high-level political and theoretical analysis in contrast to the sterile and simplistic dogmatism of pseudo-Marxists but of participating in the front ranks in the direct actions which are playing a vital role in the formation of this vanguard.

The fact that its appearance coincides with a new enfeebling of the traditional workers organizations unquestionably magnifies the danger of negative manifestations within the ranks of this ardent youth -- a skepticism regarding the objective revolutionary capacities of the Western proletariat; third-worldism; adventurism of an anarchistic nature; refusal to take into consideration the need of drawing ever broader masses into anti-imperialist and anticapitalist action. The ideologies of Fanon, Marcuse, and Sweezy are only adaptations to this kind of mentality, which is objectively petty bourgeois even if it is inspired by the sincerest revolutionary motives. Even the passing infatuation of a section of the youth vanguard with the "great Chinese cultural revolution" and Maoism merely reflects at bottom this same mentality of skepticism in regard to the revolutionary potential of the Western proletariat.

But life itself, as well as the implacable logic of the class struggle, has rapidly given the young generations the necessary experience, showing them that they would get trapped

in a blind alley if they stayed on the path of their "elitist" conceptions. Everywhere, in West Germany, in Italy, in Belgium, in Great Britain, in the Netherlands, in Denmark, after an initial phase of protest action and revolt centered on purely political objectives or university reform the student vanguard rediscovered the necessity of orienting toward the factories and the workers. It realized the need of establishing a solid alliance first with the vanguard of high school and vocational school students and then with the young workers, who serve as a bridge for reuniting the student revolt with the workers revolt. The task of revolutionary Marxists confronted with the crucial problem of linking up the student and worker vanguards is not to adopt a sterile, paternalistic, polemical stance -- not to lay down ultimatums -- but to defend Marxism firmly and creatively and, above all, to spur concrete initiatives and seek new forms of action aimed at the plants.

The slowdown in economic growth, the reappearance of massive unemployment, above all among the youth, the decline of the Social Democracy, the attrition and ever more pronounced crisis of bourgeois democracy, and the weakening of the CP's grip on the worker youth in France and Italy dovetail to create a much more unstable situation throughout Western Europe. The revolutionary upsurge in France in May 1968 was the first and clearest expression of this. The dynamics of the expansion of this revolutionary upsurge to the rest of Western Europe will depend on both the vicissitudes and the outcome of the French crisis, both its objective repercussions (factors which block economic recovery and accentuate the crisis of the international monetary system) and its subjective repercussions (a powerful encouragement for the activity of the new youth vanguard in the rest of Europe, deepening of the crisis in the traditional parties of the workers movement); and the way in which the spearhead of the vanguard in each country solves the specific problem of engaging in actions of the kind capable of drawing broad layers of the working class into the anticapitalist struggle.

Greece, Portugal, and Spain represent special cases within European capitalism. Although they, too, in different ways, have profited from the long period of capitalist prosperity following the "Korean War boom," and in different degrees have undergone a process of industrialization -- which only in Spain resulted in profound changes in the economic structure -- all three contain explosive contradictions of a different kind than in the other capitalist countries of Europe. In Portugal, these contradictions remained below the surface throughout the last decade. However, the burden of Portugal's colonial wars will bring them slowly to light. In Greece, the mass movement, on the rise for several years, exploded violently into the streets when the king dismissed the Papandreou government in 1965. A prerevolutionary situation was created there which the bourgeois-liberal and Khrushchevite leaderships of the movement managed to smother. The underlying instability resulting from it,

however, led one wing of the bourgeoisie to install a military dictatorship. The establishment of this dictatorship without any violent reaction from the masses also constituted a defeat for the European working class. But it was a partial and temporary defeat and not a decisive one like the triumph of the Nazis in 1933 or the defeat of the Spanish revolution of 1936-39. The slow and tenacious organization of a resistance movement orienting at first toward armed struggle and then toward a not merely antimonarchist but resolutely anticapitalist solution will in any case create a permanent threat to capitalist rule in southeast Europe.

However, Spain is where revolutionary conditions have become most ripe in Southern Europe. The slow decomposition of the Franco regime, which has lasted more than a decade now, has not been able to produce a "constitutional" or "European" solution. This is not primarily due to the resistance put up by the remnants of the Falangist apparatus but to the too explosive nature of the social contradictions in Spain, which in the eyes of the Spanish capitalists, make even municipal elections, freedom of the press and trade union organization seem too great a threat to the survival of the system.

Thus we have not seen the gradual "liberalization" and progressive "legalization" of the "opposition" hoped for not only by the liberal bourgeoisie, the petty bourgeoisie, and the Christian Democrats, and the Social Democrats, but also by the CP. To the contrary, we have seen a steady growth in the strength of the workers and students movement to which the government has responded with ever harsher repression. The attempts of the Christian Democrats, reformists, and the CP to defuse the explosive character of the mass opposition by diverting it toward exclusively trade union and semi-legal paths have been in vain. The masses have counterattacked against the government's harsher repression in the only effective way, by simultaneously broadening their action and radicalizing its forms. Thus, in Spain, too, a new youth vanguard, tempered in the struggle in the universities, has been able to play and will continue to play an important role in the "Comisiones Obreras" [workers committees] in catalyzing a current determined to move out of a strictly trade union framework and toward revolutionary action to overthrow Francoism and capitalism.

The interaction between the appearance of a new youth vanguard and the gradual liberation of the workers movement from the paralyzing grip of the old reformist and Khrushchevite apparatus is evident also in Japan and the United States. It is beginning to develop in the same direction in Canada and Australia.

In Japan, the workers movement, facing a situation of exceptionally rapid capitalist growth whose end will not necessarily coincide with the close of the long period of economic expansion in Western Europe and the United States, has found itself

trapped between maximalist propaganda and action strictly limited to immediate demands. This has engendered a growing crisis which has torn both the SP and the CP and also had its repercussions within SOHYO. The development of the economic structure itself and the growing weight of ultramodern industry with one of the most advanced technologies in the world clearly requires a change in the whole pattern of trade union work.

The student vanguard which emerged chiefly in the anti-imperialist struggle, first in 1960 and later in the struggle against the Vietnam war, has been able to overcome the effects of the split in Zengakuren which weakened it for several years. Its increasingly militant actions for university reform, against American bases, and for the return of Okinawa to Japan have come to draw in layers of young workers and to influence even peasant strata. The task of the Japanese revolutionary Marxists is to take part in these struggles and impel them forward, striving to give them a clearly anticapitalist character; it is to construct a revolutionary party aiming at leading the Japanese proletariat toward the seizure of power by the revolutionary road.

But the progress of the world revolution can be most profoundly affected by the interaction of the black liberation struggle, the appearance of a new youth vanguard, and a reawakening working class in the United States.

For more than two decades after its feverish wartime boom, American capitalism enjoyed a high level of economic stability. This, together with the years of McCarthyism and the trade union bureaucracy's criminal adaptation to the foreign policy of big capital and Democratic party machine politics caused the class struggle to subside in the United States. The American working class as a whole remained relatively passive on the economic front and did not rise to the objective need of breaking with the two-party system.

The first social layer to begin to challenge the political and social stability of the United States was the black community. This challenge was first launched on a legal and parliamentary basis, centering on the system of discriminatory education and social segregation. As the ineffectiveness of these methods became more and more evident, the black community turned toward direct action in numerous forms, including boycotts, picketing, protest demonstrations, marches, etc. This led to debate over the relative merits of "nonviolent" action and more militant methods, to an impassioned debate which was symbolized by the two martyrs of the black community, Martin Luther King and Malcolm X. Uprisings in the ghettos, with the first massive one occurring in Watts, injected a new element into the debate. Thus, a new chapter opened in the black liberation struggle, ushering in concerted struggle by an entire ghetto. Now on the agenda is the problem of giving structure and

coordination on a national scale to the elemental forces which have shown such an explosive power in American society.

The black liberation struggle has had a major effect on the class struggle in the United States. However, in a certain sense, this has only begun because it has not yet emerged on the political arena as an independent force. That may very easily happen in the coming period; the speed with which the slogan "black power" has been picked up is extremely symptomatic.

Two driving forces in this development should be especially noted. The first is the radical changes in American industry -- the expansion of automation and the massive transfer of industries away from the older industrial regions. This has hit the poorest strata of the American working class the hardest, creating very widespread and persistent unemployment in the ghettos. The second is the effect of the African and Cuban revolutions and of the resistance of the Vietnamese people to the American imperialist aggression, which have heightened the black masses' consciousness of the intolerable humiliation to which racial segregation and the absence of a voice in the government of their country have subjected them.

The black liberation struggle attracted the attention of rebel youth on the campuses in the United States and this youth began to participate actively in the fight. Thus, the black liberation struggle played a key role in promoting radicalization on the campuses. The Cuban revolution advanced this process by attracting those youth who were most alert and critical-minded on questions such as the role of American imperialism in today's world, the tendency in the colonial world to turn toward revolution, the historic alternative between capitalist barbarism and the socialist system of planned economy, "peaceful coexistence" as against the expansion of the revolution, "peaceful and parliamentary roads to socialism" as against armed struggle, etc. Finally, the escalation of American intervention in the civil war in Vietnam stirred an extensive revolt on the campuses crystallizing in an antiwar movement, which in turn has continued to expand and deepen and which has been marked by mobilizations on a scale never before witnessed in the United States. These mobilizations have had international repercussions stimulating the class struggle in other countries where they have been particularly felt by the university youth, helping to revive the spirit and practice of international solidarity.

The combination of a dynamic black liberation struggle and a young generation tending to challenge capitalist ideology, institutions, and politics more and more, although in a still confused way, has produced a deepgoing process of radicalization in the United States. On the basis of the economic consequences of the war and inflation, the pressure of technological progress, the cut in social security expenditures, the opposition to the war and fear of what it could lead to, this radicalization process

is shaking the apathy of the white workers. Numerous signs have appeared, such as rank-and-file pressure on the trade union bureaucracy in contract negotiations, readiness to strike, a sector of the trade union bureaucracy beginning to participate in the antiwar movement, and a rift between the two wings of the union bureaucracy headed by George Meany and Walter Reuther. The growing difficulties which the international capitalist system is bound to undergo in the next period as a result of stepped-up competition, of an unstable monetary system, political rivalries, revolutionary developments, etc. cannot but help accelerate this process.

These shifts, these changes, and the rise of new forces which threaten to shake the political and social stability of American society as never before have precipitated differences within the American ruling class, particularly over tactics in regard to the war it started in Vietnam. But up until the present this has gone no further than an effort to keep the restless sectors corralled in the traditional two-party system. That is the significance of the "peace" propaganda advanced by certain Republican and Democratic candidates in the elections and the policy of giving additional posts in the administration to blacks capable of influencing a certain number of voters.

These demagogic gestures may have a short-term diversionary effect but they cannot solve a single one of the acute problems giving rise to the new mass radicalization in the United States. Considerable concessions would be necessary to appease this mounting discontent for a long period. But such concessions seem excluded because they would require drastic changes in the structure of American capitalism and an immediate drastic retreat in the international arena. Above all, this would mean abandoning the role of world policeman in many areas, sacrificing the decrepit reactionary regimes which the Pentagon and the State Department are now maintaining around the globe, and permitting new revolutionary advances by insurgent peoples.

It can therefore be predicted that the coming period in the United States will be a stormy one and that there will be no lack of opportunities to forge a solid alliance among the black masses, the millions of impatient youth on the campuses, and the most powerful force of all -- the American working class.

VII.

The Construction of a New Revolutionary Leadership

During these last years, an enormous improvement has occurred in the conditions under which revolutionary Marxists have stubbornly pursued their work of building a new revolutionary leadership. This is true to such an extent that we may even speak of a qualitative change. The breakthrough of a new leadership is not yet here, but an important stage of quantitative

reinforcement and rejuvenation of cadres has been concluded which will permit a leap forward in the next stage, so long as political and organizational errors are avoided.

Concretely, this fundamental improvement has resulted from the confluence of the Vietnam war, the Cuban revolutionary leaders' turn toward building new revolutionary forces in Latin America, and the almost universal emergence of a new youth vanguard. In the historical sense, these factors reflect a more fundamental change -- a major reinforcement of those social layers moving in a broad and continuous way toward world socialist revolution. For the first time since the 1945-48 period, if not for the first time since its origin, the international Trotskyist movement has been able to move out of its relative isolation in a large way. In many countries it no longer has to swim against the stream but is being borne along and propelled by popular currents which, while still remaining small minorities in society, are already much more extensive than the revolutionary Marxist organizations themselves.

The success of the worldwide campaign to stave off the threat of death hanging over Hugo Blanco was a foretoken of the change, and this campaign can be said to have saved the life of the Peruvian revolutionary leader. The criminal passivity of the SPs and CPs, as well as the trade union apparatuses, toward the imperialist aggression against the Vietnamese revolution, and the ultra-opportunist character of the feeble Khrushchevite campaigns for "peace in Vietnam" or "negotiations," which repelled the vanguard youth, created an organizational vacuum with regard to the need for radical opposition to this dirty war and active solidarity with the Vietnamese revolution. This vacuum was filled in many countries by ad-hoc or youth movements in which revolutionary Marxists were able to play an important role (the antiwar movements in the USA, Canada, Australia; the Zengakuren in Japan; the CVN and JCR in France; the SDS in West Germany; the VSC in Great Britain; the Vietnam Committees in Belgium and Denmark, etc.).

The revolutionary upsurge of May 1968 confirmed both the qualitative change in the relationship between the new vanguard and the traditional organizations as well as the considerably expanded opportunities for work by the revolutionary Marxists within this vanguard. Since its origin, our movement has never had the opportunity for such impact on revolutionary events in any imperialist country comparable to what the JCR had in May 1968.

The Cuban leadership's left turn between the Tricontinental Congress and the OLAS Conference created the possibility for a united front of all tendencies in the Latin American revolutionary movement which agree with the general line of OLAS. The revolutionary Marxist forces have been able to take advantage of this possibility to broaden their field of action in countries

like Argentina, Bolivia, Peru, Chile, and Guatemala. The convergence between the final message of Ernesto Che Guevara and the theses of the Fourth International did not fail to impress revolutionary militants in many countries. It is not by chance that after the assassination of the Cuban leader, revolutionary Marxist militants and organizations were in the first rank of those who launched an international movement of solidarity with Che and with OLAS. In many countries, they have been practically the only ones to do so.

The onset of "de-Stalinization" in the USSR, the Twentieth Congress of the CPSU, the Khrushchev report, and the Sino-Soviet conflict had already served to break down the old anti-Trotskyist prejudices in the international revolutionary Communist movement. The role played by revolutionary Marxists in defending the Algerian and Cuban revolutions, their participation in the front ranks of the defense of the Vietnamese revolution, and the extension of the Latin American revolution have led to the point where these old prejudices are collapsing and disappearing.

However, the disappearance of these old anti-Trotskyist prejudices represents only the removal of an obstacle to the construction of a new revolutionary leadership. Success depends on positive qualities -- on constantly renewed and updated Marxist analysis of a ceaselessly changing reality; on bringing together and unifying forces emerging from different backgrounds; on involvement in action. These qualities must first be demonstrated in practice and confirmed by successes and breakthroughs in several countries before the balance of forces within the international workers and revolutionary movement begins to shift decisively in favor of the revolutionary Marxists.

While the appearance of the new youth vanguard represents an important opportunity for revolutionary Marxists to widen their field of activity, to link up with new social layers, increase their numerical strength, and train many young cadres, it also confronts them with prejudices and objections of a new type which they have not been accustomed to dealing with. From now on, instead of old slanders and falsifications of history, they will be confronted much more with a certain indifference toward the problems of the period 1923-48, with a blanket condemnation of the classical workers and Communist movement (which in the eyes of many young revolutionists encompasses the Trotskyist current as well), with questioning of some of the fundamental conceptions of Marxism, such as the decisive role that must be played by the workers in the imperialist countries in the world revolutionary process, or the role of a revolutionary party to assure the victory of the revolution. Revolutionary Marxists must learn to answer these challenges without arrogance or impatience through theoretical debate on a high level, constant enrichment of Marxism, and most of all by demonstrating their qualities as revolutionists and as leaders

of groups and layers engaged in determined anti-imperialist and anti-capitalist action.

Two problems merit special attention in this regard; reaffirmation of the revolutionary role of the proletariat; correct application of the united-front tactic in the anti-capitalist and anti-imperialist struggle.

The decisive revolutionary role of the proletariat in achieving the victory of the socialist revolution flows ultimately from the place the proletariat occupies in the productive process, from their ability to paralyze all of economic and social life by the determined action, initiative and organization they can demonstrate on the broadest scale once the fetters of the bureaucratic apparatuses are broken by the resurgence of spontaneous class action. The experience of May 1968 in France dramatically confirmed this and refuted the pessimistic analyses of Sweezy, Marcuse, and others. This experience showed that the relative improvement in the standard of living, the differentiation of the proletariat, its extension into "technical" and "professional" layers, the influence of the mass media -- in brief all those factors on which these theoreticians based their explanation for an alleged growing integration of the workers into neocapitalist society -- were not really objective obstacles, that they could even become factors abruptly reinforcing the revolutionary striking power of the proletariat. It was the systematic demobilization of the proletariat by the traditional political organizations and the absence of any consistent exposure of bourgeois ideology for the masses that allowed these factors temporarily to promote a decline in militancy. But once conditions more favorable to a revival of militancy and even revolutionary explosions appeared, reality surged up behind the appearances. And the reality is that the Western proletariat retains its revolutionary potential which arises from the unsolved fundamental contradictions of bourgeois society.

For three decades the problem of unity in action -- which must not be confused with a united front of mass organizations -- was largely a propagandistic and literary problem for revolutionary Marxists. In the most recent period it has become increasingly a problem of practical activity, especially in the struggle to defend the Vietnamese revolution and within the new youth vanguard. It is essential to point out the two misconceptions which revolutionary Marxists must avoid in applying this tactic.

The line of seeing the united action tactic as merely an instrument for building the revolutionary party by "unmasking" other tendencies and denouncing their errors and crimes before the masses is a sectarian deviation. United action committees can no more be reduced to the level of a means for denouncing opportunist, centrist, or ultraleft currents than strike commit-

tees can be reduced to mere instruments for building a revolutionary party rather than for winning victory in strikes -- that is in specific episodes of the class struggle. In united action committees for the defense of the Vietnamese revolution, for the defense of the student revolts, and to revive working class struggles, revolutionary Marxists must take a responsible attitude and never subordinate the needs of the broader class movement and its victory as a whole to narrow group interests.

On the other hand, renouncing the task of building new revolutionary parties under the pretext of complete devotion to united action is an opportunist deviation. The success of such actions is indispensable to victory in specific episodes in the class struggle. But our historic task is not just to achieve episodic victories; it is to lead the working class to victory by overthrowing the international capitalist system and capitalism in each individual country. If we limited ourselves solely to united actions, we would run the risk of a general defeat in the wake of episodic and ephemeral successes. This would more and more sap the potential for further successes, because what is most necessary to achieve such successes is a correct theoretical and practical grasp of reality which is unattainable without the incomparable instrument of a revolutionary party.

Building a party is necessary to develop a continuous accumulation of forces carrying the revolution to victory. United actions, which by the nature of things are discontinuous and fragmentary, will contribute most to building the party if through them the revolutionary cadres learn to act as the most devoted and capable defenders of the broad interests of their class. In this sense, the tactic of united action correctly applied -- which means that revolutionary Marxists maintain their right to criticize all the other currents with which they are associated (although this criticism, to be effective, must deal with the objectives of the united action) is far from being in contradiction with building the revolutionary party. On the contrary, these two aspects complement and reinforce each other.

The sudden development of the new youth vanguard into a mass movement has caused the resurgence of the worship of spontaneity. This is another new obstacle to a breakthrough by revolutionary Marxists. Such conceptions, like the opportunistic application of the united action tactic, are based implicitly or explicitly on the illusion that the thousands of students or young workers fighting shoulder to shoulder against the Vietnam war, for a "confrontation" with the bourgeois university or even capitalist society as a whole, have already reached the same ideological level as the revolutionary Marxists and that therefore a revolutionary Marxist party and International are no longer necessary.

The reality of course is quite different. At a given moment an apparently complete convergence can develop between the new

mass vanguard and revolutionary Marxists on some specific combat objectives. But nowhere have we seen the emergence of mass youth currents adopting the revolutionary Marxist program as a whole or agreeing with it on the essential strategic and tactical problems that must be solved for the world revolution to triumph. To give up building the party under the pretext that the mass of vanguard youth is already won to revolutionary Marxist ideas means replacing the revolutionary program and theoretical rigor of Marxism with episodic and superficial agreements liable to be broken at the first turn of the movement or the first difficulties encountered. That is why, without any sectarianism, and while advocating as broad as possible unity in action with other currents and unorganized militants on specific goals -- including at times revolutionary goals -- the revolutionary Marxists will defend more than ever the need to train revolutionary Marxist cadres and will pursue this objective unrelentingly.

The worldwide imperialist counteroffensive profited both from the extraordinary concentration of forces deployed by American big capital as well as from the lamentable dispersion, division, and disorientation of the international anti-imperialist and anticapitalist forces. Never has the need for a global anticapitalist strategy been so keenly felt -- and expressed by Guevara and the North Vietnamese -- as at the time of the Vietnam war. Ten years ago, when not a few forces in the international workers movement were flirting with an apparently "ideal polycentrism," even many vanguard currents rejected the idea of an International. Today, in the face of the global strategy of imperialism, the need for a world center to work out policies, strategic orientation, and the coordination of action is making itself cruelly felt.

The new relationship arising among the three sectors of the world revolution guarantees that the question of the International will be divorced from the polarization around the Soviet Union which has been in effect ever since October 1917. Although this polarization was beneficial when the Soviet Union was led by Lenin and Trotsky, it had pernicious effects long after Kremlin policy came into direct opposition to the expansion of the world revolution.

The Fourth International has shown that even with still very weak forces important results can be attained in building an International. By doggedly continuing to build their own parties and their own International, revolutionary Marxists feel that at the same time they are making the most effective contribution to creating the mass revolutionary Marxist International which is indispensable in bringing the enormous revolutionary potential that has now appeared to realization as victories.