

INTERNATIONAL INFORMATION BULLETIN

AUGUST, 1951

CONTENTS

DRAFT RESOLUTION ON THE INTERNATIONAL SITUATION
AND THE TASKS OF THE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL

Note: This article is reprinted from the June
1951 Bulletin of the International
Secretariat of the Fourth International
for the information of our readers.

Published by the
SOCIALIST WORKERS PARTY
116 University Place
New York 3, N.Y.

15¢

CORRECTION

The following correction should be noted in the Ten Theses on the question of Stalinism published in the International Information Bulletin, April 1951. The last sentence of the third paragraph on page 10 reads:

"If, primarily because of lack of an effective leadership, the revolutionary upsurge should fail to overturn in time the decayed rule of the bourgeoisie, this rule would not be destroyed by an eventual Soviet occupation but only obliged, after an intermediary period, to modify its form as the resistance movement of the working masses for proletarian democracy develops against the occupation regime that the Soviet bureaucracy would impose upon them."

This should read as follows according to the French text:

"If, primarily because of lack of an efficient leadership, the revolutionary upsurge should fail to overturn in time the decayed rule of the bourgeoisie, this upsurge would not be suppressed by an eventual Soviet occupation, but only obliged, after an intermediary period, to modify its form and to become the resistance movement of the working masses for proletarian democracy, against the occupation regime that the Soviet bureaucracy would impose upon them."

DRAFT RESOLUTION ON THE INTERNATIONAL SITUATION
AND THE TASKS OF THE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL

The Struggle Against the Imperialist War and
for the Victory of the World Socialist Revolution

(Reprinted from the June 1951 Bulletin of the International Secretariat of the Fourth International.)

The international situation is characterized by the accelerated preparations of imperialism for war; the almost consummated rupture between the imperialist bloc on the one side, and the USSR grouping around it the "peoples' democracies" and allied to China, on the other side (despite the possibility of a limited compromise before the outbreak of the general conflict); the sharpened polarization of the social forces in all countries; the spread of the anti-imperialist and revolutionary movement in the countries of the Far East and the Near East, in the African colonies and the semi-colonial countries of Latin America; and the new upsurge of the workers' movement in the metropolises as a consequence of the anti-imperialist victories of the colonial masses and of the implementation of the armaments program of the bourgeoisie.

The unfolding period is a period of the alignment of opposing social forces engaged in partial struggles which will tend to spread into a decisive general encounter.

The quickening of the march of imperialism to war is the result of the defeats of all its attempts to institute a new equilibrium, to halt the process of its own decomposition, to checkmate the powerful movement of emancipation of the colonial and metropolitan masses, and of its efforts to conjure away the threat of economic crisis.

Underlying this evolution is the exacerbation of the fundamental contradiction of the capitalist system: increased production and productivity in a market which is constantly narrowing due to the loss of a series of essential colonial reserves and of the Soviet European buffer zone, as well as by the constriction of the buying power of the masses because of the continual rise of the cost of living, which has assumed a universal character during and after the Second World War. Above all, it is the swollen apparatus of production of American imperialism which is stifling within the already too narrow boundaries of the capitalist world and which can find no other solution for its contradictions than the conquest of the entire world.

The armaments economy and the war itself are envisaged by imperialism as the last resort of eliminating the threat of the economic crisis, of recuperating lost territories and of crushing the revolutionary movement of the masses, which is the precondition for a real stabilization.

II. The Evolution of World Economy

Between 1948 and June 1950, the date of the outbreak of the war in Korea, world capitalist economy evolved under the threat of a depression to the degree that production attained and surpassed its pre-war levels without a compensating enlargement of markets.

Above all it was the capitalist economy of the United States which most clearly and most particularly demonstrated in 1949-50 the heralding symptoms of the approach of a depression in the faltering and even frequent declines of production.

European capitalist economy, which continued to benefit from massive American aid, seemed to follow an ascending course. However, the rhythm of the increase of production was everywhere diminishing. Production reached a plateau in certain countries (Belgium, France), while in some important sectors (steel and coal) it had already attained the saturation point. On the other hand there was a world overproduction of agricultural products and of certain raw materials.

The reconversion into armaments economies begun with the war in Korea has upset this tendency in all spheres.

In raw materials, which are sought in all markets and stockpiled with frenzy, it has imprinted a firm upward curve which has simultaneously revived and inflated the previously depressed economies of the producing countries, particularly those of South East Asia, Latin America, Australia and Africa.

It has permitted American economy a considerable expansion of its production whilst it has arrested the first declines of production in Europe.

But at the same time, new contradictions have arisen counterbalancing these favorable effects, which also aggravate the disequilibrium as well as the social crisis of the system.

Inflation, somewhat slowed down between 1949-50, has revived everywhere and assumed a universal character. This is developing due to the combined effects of the rise of the price of raw materials, the unproductive character of the armaments economy, the constriction of civilian production, and the lowering of the buying power of the masses as a result of new taxes and a more or less strict freezing of wages.

It has already led to a notable reduction of the living standard of the masses, including to a certain degree that in the United States itself, even though the implementation of the armaments program is still only at its beginning.

To the degree that this program is realized, civilian production, including that of the United States, will necessarily be constricted, while on the contrary the expenses of the State will rise to the detriment of the buying power of the productive population, an ever larger part of this buying power going to finance the armaments sector.

Within this general evolution, the different constituent elements of capitalist economy describe varied trajectories and often in the inverse sense. The United States which, during and after the Second World War, had acquired a crushing preponderance in world capitalist economy, now exercises a more rigorous control than ever over the whole of world capitalist economy.

If the development of production in other capitalist countries, as well as the first phase of the new economic conjuncture accompanied by the drainage to the United States of all raw materials originating in these countries and their colonies, has reduced their deficit in dollars between 1949-50, the monopolization and the stockpiling by the United States of these indispensable raw materials has resulted in a greater dependence than ever of the rest of the capitalist world upon it.

Naturally this concerns above all the industrialized countries of Western Europe. On the contrary, the colonial and semi-colonial countries producing raw materials are experiencing a revival of economic activity but must once more sacrifice all hope of industrialization to the intensified production of raw materials.

The United States is becoming the storehouse of raw-materials, the factory and the bank of the entire capitalist world to the detriment of the other industrialized zones and of the industrialization efforts of the colonial and semi-colonial countries.

Thus the bloated development of American imperialism, far from easing the internal contradictions of the capitalist system and leading to a kind of inter-imperialist planning, which has been the dream of the apostles of "super-imperialism," is leading on the contrary to the accelerated crackup of the capitalist equilibrium.

The very logic of this new orientation of capitalist economy towards an armaments economy carries within itself an ineluctable drift towards a pure and simple war economy. On the other hand, to the degree that this orientation has already been entered into and has advanced it creates an irreversible process; its cessation would inevitably cause a fall of prices, unemployment, economic crisis rebounding from the United States to the entire capitalist world.

Contrary to these parasitic tendencies, predominantly those of unproductive investments of the capitalist economy, the satiated and planned economy of the USSR and of the "peoples' democracies" of Europe have experienced an important and more balanced development, despite the burdens imposed by armaments, the upkeep and the waste of the bureaucracy and the absence of conscious and willing participation of the masses in the functioning of the economy. This is the proof of the intrinsic superiority of this economy despite its bureaucratic management.

In the USSR, the industrial goals of the five-year plan have been attained and surpassed, bringing industrial production well over the level attained in 1940. For the first time, on the other hand, since the years 1936-38, the living standards of the masses, especially of the urban masses, is beginning to show a certain improvement by the stabilization and even the lowering of prices, the increase of buying power and the improvement in supply of consumers goods like foodstuffs and clothing. On the contrary, the agricultural goals of the plan do not seem to have been realized, and the problem of the increase of agricultural production, to provide for the heightened needs of industrial and civil consumption, continues to remain an acute one.

The reforms undertaken in the sphere of the collective farms with the aim of centralization and a more advanced mechanization of agriculture, have as their economic purpose, on the one side, an increase of agricultural production and, on the other side, the furnishing of needed labor supply to industry. Moreover, they will cut the peasant's ties with his old land and will represent a new stage in the stabilization of collective farm property.

The European "peoples' democracies" have realized notable progress in repairing the destruction of the war, in their industrialization which has already begun to considerably alter the economic structure and the social composition of these countries. The short-term plans, which had as their goal to return the economies of these countries to pre-war levels, have in general attained this limited objective. The new long-term plans, now in operation, are progressing and in some cases extending their initial objectives, especially in the domain of industrial production.

However the international conjuncture, which makes obligatory an enhanced armaments effort, the exploitation of a part of the resources of these countries by the Soviet bureaucracy, as well as the management by their own bureaucracy, imposes heavy sacrifices on the masses and has led to a lowering of the standard of living varying according to the country and to the different categories of the working masses. The removal of these countries from the world market, in the absence of effective aid from the USSR, acts as a break on their industrial development while accelerating the integration of their economies into that of the Soviet economy.

Progress is the slowest and difficulties the greatest in the agricultural sector. That is because effective and harmonious collectivization depends above all on an important previous rise in industry and on education by example of the peasantry and not on administrative measures and bureaucratic and police pressures.

In Yugoslavia, the Kremlin blockade, the conditions on which imperialism in seeking advantages has granted limited aid, the high objectives initially fixed by the PCY and the government, have resulted in repeated changes and limitations of the plan. Although re-adjusted, it is being realized amidst constant difficulties and delays, and its very existence is being placed at stake. The living conditions of the masses have suffered much, while the concessions the government was forced to make to imperialism and in the countryside have strengthened the tendencies of primitive accumulation of the peasantry and of the speculators, disorganizing the plan as a whole in the economy, which is translated into a growing pressure by alien class forces on the political and social plane.

Concerning the economic situation in China, the stabilization of prices, the stopping of inflation and a better provisioning of the market with agricultural and industrial products should be written down to the credit of the Mao-Tse-tung government. These results are the more remarkable if one takes into consideration the condition China was in after the defeat of Chiang Kai-shek, the war effort undertaken more than one year ago to support the Korean people in their struggle against imperialism, the blockade which has been erected against China, and the minimum material aid granted up to now by the USSR to the Peking regime.

The international conjuncture since the Korean war has naturally upset the plans for the economic revival of China and has also drained a large part of the resources of the country into the war effort. The realization of agrarian reform south of the Yangtse which has led to the rupture with the bourgeoisie allied to the landed proprietors opposed to this measure, implies a slower general economic revival for southern China than the one experienced by northern China and especially by Manchuria, which has known a full industrial revival. The role of the state, because of the economic trump cards it holds (statification of important sectors of industry) and especially by its political trump cards, shows itself to be to a great degree that of controller, regulator and stimulator of all the economic life of the country, and moving by stages toward a statified and planned economy.

Naturally in China, this problem proves to be more difficult than in the European "peoples' democracies" because of the very low level of the productive forces and the existence of a still very vast domain of agricultural and urban economy which functions on the basis of private property and which the state tries to control.

III. The Evolution of International Relations

The new element in international relations which has become more and more manifest since the war in Korea is the aggravated rupture between imperialism and the Soviet bloc allied to China, which removes and renders improbable the perspective of any really durable general compromise between the two camps.

This trend is the reflection of the absence of a basis for such a compromise, the relationship of forces having evolved to the disadvantage of imperialism and its decomposition having assumed such scope that it is impossible for it to stabilize itself even if the Soviet bureaucracy was disposed to respect the line of division of influence in the world established after the last war and to prevent the collapse of capitalism in other parts of the world. The status quo is not only impossible but it is not viable for imperialism. On the other hand, the bureaucracy can no longer reopen the European "peoples' democracies" to imperialist exploitation without gravely compromising its own security, and even less conclude a compromise at the expense of the regimes installed in these countries and especially of the regime of Mao-Tse-tung in China and of the colonial revolution which is developing according to its own logic. It could not make such a settlement without encountering resistance, a resistance which would lead to a break with the Kremlin and to its isolation within its own camp.

The Korean war itself reveals how mightily the colonial revolution comes into conflict today directly with the armed forces of imperialism. The Soviet bureaucracy has been unable to openly betray a movement of such scope without placing its own existence at stake, and it has taken care to intervene as little as possible in the conflict while favoring the exhaustion of both the imperialist and the revolutionary forces.

There remains the possibility of an extended compromise on Germany, once again the pivotal point of all Western Europe. This

compromise was possible before the Korean war and the implementation of the gigantic armaments plan with all its consequences. This possibility now appears less and less likely, with each of the two camps proceeding in practice to speed up the integration of the German zone under its control.

Behind the camouflage of attempts to revive diplomatic talks between the two camps and proposals of "peace" and "pacifist" chatter each side derives various advantages in gaining time and in propaganda, while in reality both sides push to the utmost their military preparations and proceed on all fundamental questions from the point of view of an inevitable war in the near future.

It is because there is no longer a basis for an extended compromise that the war in Korea has degenerated into a war of attrition and the Big Four Conference has failed.

However, this does not exclude the possibility of a limited compromise but one which will not in any way alter the fundamental and inexorable march of events.

Over and above the growing tension caused in international relations by the conflict in Korea and the situation in the Middle East, the rearmament of Western Germany aggravates this tension still further and will force it to the breaking point. If this rearmament is undertaken on a broad scale, which is now the intention of the whole "Atlantic community" -- the American point of view on this question having definitively overcome the resistance of the French bourgeoisie -- this will constitute the sign of a speeding up of the pace toward war and of the consummation of the rupture between the two camps. In this case, one cannot completely exclude the eventuality that the Kremlin, driven to the wall, despite its sincere and tenacious efforts to do everything possible to prevent such an outcome, will risk a preventive action.

The imperialist camp, within the framework of this trend, is becoming more and more homogeneous around and under the leadership of the United States. This is not to say that all inter-imperialist antagonisms have disappeared, but rather that the still existent antagonisms are being more and more subordinated to the common struggle in prospect, to the significance and the gravity of this struggle for the very existence of the capitalist system as a whole.

On the other hand, the disproportion between American imperialism and the other capitalist powers has now reached that point where all resistance to Washington ends in capitulation.

British imperialism, which has not ceased to nourish the hope of playing the role of a brilliant second, tries on every occasion to preserve the appearance of independence. But even London has now so limited a base and is assailed with such difficulties in the colonial domain it still possesses, that it is impossible for it to offer the slightest resistance to the invading protection of its American ally.

The capitulation of London to Washington on Chinese and Korean policy in order to be able to meet the dangers which have arisen in Iran with American aid is symptomatic of the manner in which the

antagonisms and passing frictions between the two allies are finally settled and of the real relationship of forces between them.

This tendency towards homogeneity is also proceeding within the ranks of each bourgeoisie, bringing together the points of view of the different factions of the class and establishing a stricter discipline over it as a whole. This tendency breaks down as a result of struggles and frictions but it is reasserted again by the rallying to a common, fundamental line as the chances of war become greater.

Thus, for example, in the United States, the "Great Debate" which took place within America's ruling circles has clarified the scope of the differences among them as to the time element of the outbreak of the war and as to the principal front (Asia or Europe), but at the same time it has permitted the working out of a more considered and better formulated strategy for the whole of the American and world bourgeoisie, to which the principal nucleus of this class has now rallied.

Only the strongest reactions of the masses, and especially a strong reaction of the American masses, can once again endanger the cohesion of the bourgeoisie.

An analogous centripetal process to the evolution of inter-imperialist relations has occurred in the Soviet camp allied to China. The Kremlin's control over the European "peoples' democracies" has been accentuated in the direction of a progressive isolation of these countries from the rest of the capitalist world, which also includes the economic sphere as a result of the "cold war." The governments of these countries have been led to tighten their economic ties with each other and with the USSR and to elaborate a common program of military preparation strictly controlled by the Kremlin. Hence, the Kremlin's grip on these countries, which for a long time was thwarted by an undercurrent of opposition among the masses and even among a section of the indigenous apparatus of the Communist parties, has once again been reinforced by the international evolution toward war.

The pro-imperialist turn of the leadership of the Yugoslav Communist Party and of the Belgrade government has also weighed considerably on the same side of the scales.

This does not at all signify that the opposition of the masses to the Soviet bureaucracy and to the native bureaucracy has been weakened nor that the crisis even within the apparatus of the Communist parties has been overcome. It signifies merely that the factors favoring the broadening and the deepening of this crisis in the masses and in the party have been modified, and that the perspective for the development of a substantial "Titoist" opposition in this period or in the early future are no longer justified.

Insofar as China is concerned, there also the aggravation of the international situation acts rather in the sense of the maintenance of the ties with the Kremlin. To the degree that China is isolated from the world market by the imperialist blockade and is drained by its war effort in Korea of a large part of its resources to the detriment of a rapid economic revival, China is obliged to temporize with the Kremlin even if its attitude toward China, determined by the

self-interest of the Soviet bureaucracy, becomes ever clearer and ever more intolerable in the eyes of the militants of the Chinese CP and even of a section of its leaders.

IV. The Evolution of Social Struggles and the Situation in the International Workers' Movement

The anti-imperialist and revolutionary movement of the colonial and semi-colonial countries is at the center of the present upsurge of the international movement of emancipation of the exploited masses and is favored by the accentuated crisis of the capitalist system. Far from experiencing a lull, this movement is spreading and winning new territories.

While the conquests of the revolution are being consolidated in China and while the war in Korea, accompanied by the imperialist blockade, is imposing a more leftward course on the Mao-Tse-tung regime both on the economic and on the political planes, the armed struggle of the masses against imperialism and its native agents is being continued in Korea, in Vietnam, in Malaya, in Burma, in the Philippines and no stabilization favoring imperialism is in prospect.

In India, Ceylon and Indonesia, countries where imperialism was obliged to cede power directly to the native bourgeoisie, there prevails a pre-revolutionary situation where a highly explosive potential is being stored up. This is the expression of the organic incapacity of the bourgeoisie, closely tied to imperialism, to accomplish the democratic, economic and political reforms which would attenuate the extreme misery under which the peasant and worker masses live in these countries and would satisfy their profound aspirations for freedom and self-government.

The Near East, up to now the private preserve of imperialism supported by the native feudal-capitalists, has entered the ferment. The anti-imperialist movement of the masses is growing in scope and is obliging the most farsighted elements of the propertied classes to project an anti-imperialist orientation. These circles thereby hope on the one hand to moderate the financial crisis, which rages in these countries, through expropriating imperialism of a part of the resources which it derives from the exploitation of their wealth, and on the other hand to prevent the development of a revolutionary leadership of the national movement of the masses.

In the French North African and equatorial colonies, the strengthening of administrative oppression has not succeeded in crushing the profound liberation movement of the native masses.

For identical reasons to those existing in the Near East, this movement draws behind it a more and more important section of the feudal capitalists and the petty-bourgeoisie, functionaries, small businessmen, native intellectuals.

The so-called concessions and reforms of the administration have shown themselves to be illusory and once again push into opposition the native propertied circles who had wanted to collaborate. This results from the fact that the base of French imperialism is very narrow and from the fact that its general impoverishment obliges it

to engage in an intensified exploitation of its African colonies and to a more severe policy of repression than ever.

In the semi-colonial countries of Latin America, the attempts of American imperialism and of the collaborationist ruling circles, which are once again profiting from the international conjuncture of war preparations, to dragoon the masses into a common "defense" of the western hemisphere and the anti-Soviet war is encountering a very strong resistance as illustrated by the struggles which have recently taken place in all of these countries as well as by the significant results in this connection of the elections in Bolivia and especially in Brazil.

In Australia and New Zealand, countries where there has grown up a more and more numerous and vigorous proletariat without a past of defeats, widespread struggles have demonstrated its resistance to the war policy of the bourgeoisie and its consequences.

In Western Europe great struggles have pointed to a new upsurge of the proletariat in the wake of the victories won in Asia and to the implementation of the armaments program of the bourgeoisie with all its consequences on the already very low standard of living of the masses.

In England, the proletariat shows an unremitting resistance to this war policy which finds its expression not only in a series of struggles conducted under an independent leadership against the bourgeoisie and its reformist agents but also in the ferment which is taking place in the LP and in the development of a left wing in its ranks.

Bevan's resignation and his new "socialist" program, by means of which he hopes to refloat the LP in the next elections and to appease the discontent of a large part of its rank and file, is a culminating point in the differentiation towards which events are moving within the LP.

This is only the beginning of a process which will be speeded up to the degree that the execution of the war policy of the English bourgeoisie and its increased difficulties in the colonial domain demonstrate the incompatibility of such a policy with the maintenance of a social, let alone a "socialist," program.

In France, the recent great strike struggles have demonstrated what the reaction of the masses will be to the strong inflationary pressure in that country. Under the combined effect of economic developments, difficulties in the colonial domain and the strengthening of reaction in the new parliament which has emerged from the June elections, the class struggle in France is moving toward a climax.

In Italy, the elections have demonstrated a new strengthening of the workers' parties and a notable decline of the principal bourgeois party, that of de Gasperi. This contrasts with the strengthening of the right wing in the French parliament with its massive presence of Gaullist deputies, and due to the disposition of forces in Italy creates a more favorable climate than in France for the coming workers' struggles.

In Western Germany, the workers' upsurge, induced by the pressure of inflation, unemployment and the reactionary policy of the imperialist occupation and the collaborationist bourgeoisie is still circumscribed in nature. The speeded-up integration of Germany into the "Atlantic community" and its war policy will not fail to bring to a high level the resistance and the reactions of the German masses who moreover are opposed to a new carnage.

In Belgium, Austria, Holland, in the Scandinavian countries, in Greece, the war policy of the bourgeoisie is giving rise to similar reactions in various degrees among the masses who do not feel themselves in any way beaten or demoralized.

But it is especially in Spain that the new upsurge of the European proletariat has shown itself in all its actual scope. Twelve years of ferocious repression has not been able to prevent the rebirth of the resistance of the Spanish masses who, from one end of the country to the other, in imposing formations, have mightily demonstrated their will to struggle and their indomitable opposition to the Franco regime. A new revolution is now maturing in Spain and its outbreak should cause no surprise. It can occur as the result of certain fortuitous internal conditions, or as a result of new extensive struggles in Western Europe, or through new anti-imperialist victories. In any case, its outbreak from the very beginning will impel the present upsurge of the workers' movement of Western Europe to a very high pitch and will profoundly alter the situation, particularly in France, Italy, England and Germany.

In the United States and in Canada, the workers' reactions, being stirred up again by the inflation which is developing in these countries, still remains at a relatively low level, both of these countries benefiting from exceptional conditions. The buying power of the masses in a period of full employment has not yet been seriously curbed by the process of inflation. On the other hand, the violent reactionary offensive of the bourgeoisie, the anti-communist witch-hunt, the drastic measures of regimentation and the accelerated militarization of the life of these countries, particularly of the United States, weighs on the masses who still do not fully realize the meaning and the end-result of the new conjuncture.

Nevertheless, the first consequences of the armaments program have produced a sharp reaction from the reformist bureaucracy which is concerned with safeguarding its own privileges and its base in the mass movement. More important reactions will arise in the United States only at a more advanced stage of the execution of the armaments program and the militarization of the country.

Although with a more important and inevitable delay than in the other capitalist countries, the United States is moving nonetheless inexorably towards a profound transformation which will undermine the standard of living as well as the manner of life of the masses, and will make them taste the bitter fruits which rotting capitalism is now dispensing in abundance everywhere else: abysmal pauperization, long years in the barracks, police terror, repression.

The situation within the workers' movement itself is characterized by the disproportion which now exists between the objective

revolutionary possibilities, the more and more widespread struggles of the colonial and metropolitan masses and the constant policy of betrayal, cowardice and opportunism of the traditional reformist and Stalinist leaderships. Reformism shows itself to be incapable of detaching itself in any decisive way from moribund capitalism, which drags it down into its own decadence, even in those countries where the masses accord it a powerful support and demand from it daring measures as in England, Belgium, Austria, Germany, the Scandinavian countries, Canada, Australia and to a lesser degree in India, Japan, Palestine. With non-essential reservations as to form here and there, it has consented to serve the armaments and war policy of the bourgeoisie against the USSR, the "peoples' democracies," China, the colonial revolutions, the international revolutionary movement. In its propaganda it uses the same "ideological" arguments as the bourgeoisie in order to dragoon the masses into the war.

To the degree that the consequences of the war preparations of the bourgeoisie weigh more and more heavily on the masses, this policy of the social democracy will result in the loss of a section of its workers' base in those places where it has been able to maintain it or to reconquer it from Stalinism, and will give rise to even more serious internal ferment than that which has thus far manifested itself as for example in England.

In cases where the discontent in the ranks of the reformists assumes important proportions and where the resistance of the masses runs the risk of being polarized by other parties or tendencies, it is not excluded that the reformist leaders will go into temporary opposition to the policy of the bourgeoisie and carry their parties into this opposition. In certain cases the bourgeoisie itself would like to rid its governments of their presence which is often the source of obstruction and of latent opposition to a firm preparation for war.

For these reasons, the evolution of each reformist party should be specially studied by our movement in order to formulate the tactic to be followed toward it, and which may lead according to the country to our total integration into these parties in order to benefit from the formation of an important left wing in their ranks of which we will try to take the leadership.

As far as Stalinism is concerned, it is necessary to point out and to insist upon the following aspects:

The fundamental policy of the Soviet bureaucracy at the present time is determined by its fear of the revolutionary consequences which would arise from a world war with imperialism, breaking all equilibriums, embracing immense masses and uncontrollable forces. The Soviet bureaucracy, for this reason, and not mainly because of the present military strength of imperialism, is oriented to obtaining postponements through a compromise and it delegates to the Communist Parties as their fundamental task the campaign for "peace" through a conference of the "Big Five." But on the other hand, the Soviet bureaucracy, faced with the obvious and accelerated preparations of imperialism for war and with the revolutionary reactions of the masses, is obliged through the medium of the CPs to carry on a real struggle against these preparations and to a certain extent to take into

account the reactions of the masses. Hence the combined character, a mixture of pacifist, petty-bourgeois opportunism and of "anti-imperialist" and "anti-capitalist" leftism leading to class actions against the preparations for war.

On the other hand, in countries where objective conditions impel the masses to an open revolt against capitalism and imperialism, and to armed struggle, as is now the case in the Far East, the Soviet bureaucracy, despite the dangers that it runs in its relations with imperialism and through the extension of the revolution in the world, is obliged not to sabotage these struggles purely and simply but rather to use them to its best advantage.

The situation imposes this dangerous game on the bureaucracy which like capitalism is in the grip of inextricable contradictions and is swept along by forces it cannot closely control.

Thus the Communist Parties, although subordinated by their leaderships to the Kremlin, and although acting basically as agents of the interests of the Soviet bureaucracy, are placed before new conditions which in turn react upon them. They are obliged, while insisting on a compromise, to struggle against the war preparations of the bourgeoisie, and feeling the effects of the pressure of the masses they become the vehicle for a revolutionary potential which can push them beyond the intentions of the Kremlin and their own leaders and which will not be without its dangers for their bureaucratic conformism.

In general, the present conjuncture of accelerated preparations for war favors a revival of the influence of the Communist Parties, varying in degree in a series of countries. This is clearest in the colonial and semi-colonial countries. The attraction of China and the war in Korea has first of all made itself felt in the Far East and in all of Asia where the indigenous nationalist parties have shown themselves incapable of fighting in any effective manner against imperialism and against the native propertied classes.

In Italy, France and Greece there has been a slight revival of the Communist Parties, which either have maintained their positions or have even made moderate gains as against the decline of their influence prior to the accentuation of their leftist course, and especially before the implementation of the armaments program of the bourgeoisie. In the rest of Western Europe and in the Anglo-Saxon countries, the Stalinist parties continue to decline for the same reasons which caused their weakening since 1947-48.

The limits of this leftist course are now quite clear. To the degree that an extended compromise with imperialism is more or less excluded and to the degree that the war preparations of the bourgeoisie continues its accelerated pace, this course will persist in its basic form. Nevertheless, it will experience oscillations from left to right and vice-versa, but always on the base of this fundamental line and according to the possibilities of limited and ephemeral compromises and in conformity with every "peace" offensive the Soviet bureaucracy will continue to launch up to the outbreak of the conflict. This results not in the disappearance of the crisis of Stalinism but in a transformation of its form. The possibilities of

important splits in the CPs which existed before the Korean war and during the progressive evolution of the Yugoslav affair are replaced by a leftward movement within the Communist Parties among its rank and file.

This evaluation of the present course of the policy of the CPs is not without significance for the development and the tactic of our movement in the countries where there is a strong Stalinist influence insofar as the immediate future is concerned.

Besides reformism and Stalinism, the two still fundamental currents of the international workers' movement, the old centrist formations of the London Bureau variety have either completely disappeared or are stagnating and have shown themselves completely incapable of any revival through the assimilation of the experience of events and thus vitiate their possibilities of playing an important role in their own country.

Between 1949 and the outbreak of the Korean war, the Yugoslav CP gave the appearance of being able to head a regroupment of revolutionary forces independent of capitalism and of the Kremlin and of playing a major role in the formation of a new revolutionary leadership. This possibility, however, was soon wasted under the combined pressure of the turn in the international situation, the internal difficulties in Yugoslavia and the deepgoing opportunist training of the Yugoslav leadership in the school of Stalinism. The progressive repercussions of the Yugoslav affair made themselves felt in several European countries and gave rise to a regroupment of certain elements of the revolutionary vanguard of Stalinist origin. It was particularly in Germany and to a lesser extent in Italy, Spain, France and Sweden that this new centrism manifested itself. But up to now it is practically only in Germany that this tendency has found an important base, due to the crisis of Stalinism, more acute there than anywhere else in Europe. In a period of extreme tension of the class struggle, of an equally extreme polarization of social forces, centrism has less place than ever before and all attempts to recreate it are doomed to rapid and miserable failure.

Only the movement of the Fourth International, rooted more seriously than ever in important circles of the international revolutionary vanguard, and in several countries even in the real workers' movement, has maintained and augmented its forces and is preparing to exploit to the bottom the chances which the present revolutionary period offers for the construction of a new revolutionary leadership which will assure the final victory of world socialism over the ruins of capitalism and Stalinism.

#