

PROLETARIAN POLITICS

Workers Of The World
Unite

Organ Of The Communist
League
Indian Section Of The
Fourth International



March-April : 1979

No. : **2**

- ★ Editorial : Janata Govt. & anti-Janata budget.
- ★ Ernest Mandel : Indo-China war : The Theoretical and Political issues behind the military conflicts in the South-East-Asia.

Evelyn Reed an artist-cum-revolutionary anthropologist is no more.

Rs. 2-00

Volume : 2 March-April : 1979 No. : 2

Editorial : Janata Govt. & anti-Janata budget 1-7

Ernest Mandel : INDO-China war - The theoretical and political issues behind the military conflicts in South-East-Asia. 8-50

Tribute : Evelyn Reed an artist-cum-revolutionary anthropologist is no more. 51-54

Condolence message : From the Central Secretariat of the Communist League to the Socialist Workers' Party of USA.

Editor..... : Magan Desai

All correspondence to : Proletarian Politics,
Govindrao Dev's wada, 2nd Floor,
Pratap Road, Baroda - 390 001,
India.

Annual Sub : Rs. 10-00

Edited and Printed by Magan Desai on behalf of the Communist League at the Anupam Printing Press, Near Sarasia Talao, Yakutpura, Baroda, Published by him at Govindrao Dev's wada, Pratap Road, Baroda-390 001.

Editorial

Janata government & Anti - Janata budget

Charansingh, Finance Minister, attempted the heaviest tax measure in a single budget in post-independence India on February 28. He proposed an additional burden of Rs. 665 crores leaving a record uncovered deficit of Rs. 1355 crores.

The leader of rich peasants has dug deep and wide in the field of indirect taxation which mainly falls on toiling people. From tooth-paste, tooth-brush, kerosene, soap to petrol, oil and automobiles, he has left out nothing. Even before becoming effective from 1st April, the budget has hit very hard urban middle class and the workers. Due to tremendous criticism of opposition the finance minister was forced to 50% tax-relief. Though forced by pressure from the masses all over the country to give this relief, the 1979-80 budget, popularly known as 'Kulak budget' makes no structural changes and underlying its false dichotomy between urban and rural interest, it is the consolidation of live-and-let-live arrangement for the agrarian and industrial rich.

At the same time, Charansingh has given a wide ranging relief to the rich farmer. Excise on chemical & fertilisers is cut by half and so is duty on light diesel oil used for pump sets reduced by Rs. 80 a kilo litre. Power tillers imported by state-agro industries, corporations and Central Government are being totally exempted from customs duty. These excise

concessions alone will put up Rs. 239 crores into the rich farmers' pockets against total taxes worth not less than Rs. 946 crores in a full year. There was absolutely no justification for so heavily weighing excise duties against the lower middle classes and workers. For, already, the direct subsidies to agriculture exceed Rs. 1000 crores a year. In India, rich farmers are not taxed at all. The cumulative effects of these measures will be to provide them with massive financial resources to further develop agriculture along capitalist lines.

Charansing, as the leader of rich peasantry, is the first Finance Minister who has used budget as an instrument of agricultural development. But he wants to work through the large and medium farmers and he takes prevailing highly inequitable distribution of land for granted and does not want to alter drastically the man-land or property relationship in agriculture. Thus his budgetary proposals have a distinct rural bias but that too in favour of agrarian kulaks capitalist of rural India. But the development thrust is not at all that much deep as is being made out. There is no significant increase in the proportion of outlay on agriculture and allied activities. Moreover the development through these measures will be confined to rich farmers of Punjab, Haryana, West U. P. and Tamilnadu. Because in India only they use chemical fertilisers, diesel oil and power tillers.

The corporate sector which has shown marked improvement in its profitability during the current year, has not been asked to sacrifice much by way of direct taxes. The increase in surcharge on the

corporation tax from 5% to 7.5% is considered insignificant by industrial circles in Bombay in view of the buoyancy of profits. The small hike in the surcharges on the income-tax and in wealth-tax, the reduction in tax concessions for long term savings and the withdrawal of tax exemption for capital gains are estimated to have only a marginal impact on the fortunes of the affluent classes in India.

The Economic Times March 1, reported that captains of trade and industry accorded a general welcome to the Union Budget. The guillotine that was expected to fall on them because of Charan's verbal tirade against them, did not fall. As noted economist A. M. Khusro reported in The Times of India, March 8, the industrialists felt relieved that the budget is more favourable to them than they expected.

The stock market was all smiles registering its sharpest-ever post-budget spurt.

Trade-unions condemned the attack on working classes and income groups. Their reaction was very sharp as only a week ago the railway budget presented by erstwhile socialist leader, now railway minister, Madhu Dandavate, had doubled the suburban season ticket fares which hit the urban workers literally below the belt. Dandavate later agreed to reduce the proposed hike by half.

Redistribution of national income was not the strong point of Charan's budget.

Capitalist state in India uses budgetary devices to mop up surplus from the people for the development of capitalism in India. It even squeezes the bare

incomes of wage earners through some such schemes as Compulsory Deposit Scheme. Indirect taxes is the main device. Direct taxes like income-tax capital - gains, wealth - tax and Estate duty tax after death fall on rich people and companies. The base of direct taxes is very narrow and fettered by rampant tax evasion non-payment of taxes, concealment of income (generation of 'black' or 'on' money etc.)

In 1977-'78, the Central and State Governments collected a huge Rs. 13,324 crores by taxes which was 16.2 % of national income. (Rs. 73,000 crores). The direct taxes, here, came to only Rs. 2,599 crores while the indirect levies were more than four fold at Rs. 10,725 crores. In 1977 - '78 its tax collections exceeded the country's entire national income in 1960 - 61. (Rs. 13,263 crores).

What does the regime do with such massive mobilisation of resources? It grows and fattens. The current governmental expenditure is Rs. 18,000 crores. But in government's financial strategy and its operation, non-development expenditure far exceeds the outlay on plans. The main beneficiaries of massive government expenditure are the rich people. And through this channel transfer of resources to them takes place. Capital formation lags behind mobilisation of resources. And this budget follows the same pattern as the earlier ones. Such a massive effort at resources mobilisation (Rs. 665 crores through additional tax-burden, Rs. 160 crores under the Compulsory Deposit Scheme for tax payers and Rs. 1355 crores by way of deficit financing) has not been related in any way to the development effort.

But then, how is the regime to find resources for development? Data for answering this question at once throws much light on the class character of state power and its functions in India. It is a capitalist state actively engaged in promoting capitalism in India at the expense of the exploited people.

For example, considerable scope for economy in recurring non-developmental government expenditure exists. But this cannot be done by a government which is the biggest stimulant of home market for capitalism in India. The state in India is the biggest employer, biggest buyer of goods, and biggest industrialist also.

The regime could exercise a stricter check on tax evasion by rich by streamlining the pro-rich tax administration, by clearing up arrears, by plugging loopholes in the system of taxation. Charansingh has not even given a thought to the proposals for tightening up the tax administration. Arrears of direct taxes come to Rs. 1000 crores. Charansingh does not want to recover them, as the Economic Survey of the regime, put it, such a step might be unduly 'harsh on the tax payers'.

Indian tax system has built-in devices of granting concessions, subsidies, tax-holidays, tax-exemptions for a prescribed period, etc. to industries where the main beneficiaries are the relatively better off persons. An estimated Rs. 1500 crores every year could be garnered by axing such concessions and subsidies to private sectors.

There is considerable scope for stepping up rates of wealth-tax. Capital gains tax net can be enlarged to cover the sale of real estate, flats, diamonds, gold and

jewellery. Here the unit of assessment should be the family and not the individual.

Budgetary incentives for exports should be scrapped.

These are the alternative sources of raising resources through taxes without imposing additional burden on the toilers. As such, they do not challenge the basis of capitalist rule in India. Any left party as an opposition part can as well take up these demands and put forward an alternative programme of taxation even within the system.

In addition, in a country like India, huge resources in the form of potential surplus remain hidden from the axe of taxmen. Because of the compulsion of a capitalist system, taxman will not even speak of them, leave aside the question of mobilising them. This is massive stock of gold, silver, jewellery and money lying with India's huge temples, private and public trusts, and wealthy individuals. Nationalisation of all land without compensation would at once put into jeopardy a major source of generation of black money and investment in unproductive and speculative activities in India. But only a worker's state can undertake such revolutionary steps to mobilise resources not for developing capitalism but creating essential pre-requisites for socialism. The system of taxation in such a state would altogether acquire a different color, thrust and aim.

Overall, Charansingh's budget is a crude fiscal operation which does not come to grips with the problem of making taxation system an effective instrument of redistribution of national income in favour of

weaker sections and of generating more resources in terms of manpower and finances.

It has a built in inflationary potential. Already the prices of several essential consumer goods have begun to rise. In big cities such goods have disappeared. As usual, tax incidence is being shifted to the pocket of consumer. More ever such items are not generally included in the compilation of the consumer price index numbers. Hence there will be no corresponding increase in the Dearness Allowance payment. The manufacturing costs are also going up. Hence the legally major factor of determining the wage - the paying capacity of the manufacturer - will also be upset. Sur-tax is a prior item of deduction from profits under the payment of Bonus Act of 1965. Its budgetary enhancement will cause reduction in legally available profit for determining bonus. Thus bonus earnings of the workers will be adversely affected. Continuance of Compulsory Deposit Scheme will considerably reduce the take home pay of the workers.

The workers are likely to launch struggles against these provisions. Many spokesmen of textile, engineering, pharmaceutical and teachers' union are reported to have said that now their fight will not merely be against the Industrial Relations Bill but against the total approach of the government □

For the very best coverage of world politics
Read

Intercontinental Press / Inprecor

It is published to help people to learn
from each other's successes and setbacks.

ANTAR - RASHIRIYA PRAKASHAN

Pratap Road, Baroda-390 001.

The Theoretical & Political Issues, Behind The Military Conflicts in South East Asia

By Ernest Mandel.

(Originally appeared in "Inter Continental Press/
Inprecor" Issue-April 9, 1979, - Abridged and Edited).

Different positions have arisen inside the Fourth International over the appreciation and political attitude towards the military conflicts that have occurred in South East Asia since December 1978. While these disagreements seem to center around what attitude one should adopt towards the invasion of Kampuchea (Cambodia) by the Vietnamese regular armed forces (there has been a unanimous condemnation of the Chinese invasion of Vietnam), their political implications with regard to further developments in relation to armed conflicts between ruling bureaucracies in workers states are not clear. This is potentially dangerous especially because of the possibility of armed struggle between the Soviet Union and People's Republic of China. Moreover underlying theoretic questions are of such importance (and, in one case, of such novelty) that a thorough discussion of them has become unavoidable.

1. Was Pol Pot's Cambodia a worker's State (Albeit Extremely Bureaucratized and Despotic)?

When one gives critical support to the invasion of Kampuchea by regular Vietnamese army on the basis of argument that, that country was not a workers' state and that instead, the Pol Pot's regime was a capitalist counterrevolutionary government that threaten Vietna-

mese revolution, the historical analogies then immediately come to mind: Georgia, Finland.

More generally, a military conflict between a workers state and a bourgeois state, revolutionary Marxists support the first against the latter, because of the need to preserve the superior socio-economic system against the restoration of capitalism. This remains uppermost, regardless of the degree of bureaucratization which characterize the given workers state. This has been the common programmatic attitude of Fourth International since the experiences gained in 1939-40. Nothing, in our eyes, justifies any modification of this position.

The hypothesis that Pol Pot's Kampuchean regime was not a workers state is quite contrary both to facts and to Marxist theory.

A civil war started in Kampuchea in April-May 1967 when the leaders of the Kampuchean Communist Party left Phnompenh to organize a guerrilla war against the bourgeois regime of Prince Norodom Sihanouk, that regime launched severe repression against communists and other left wingers, and after the outbreak of spontaneous peasant revolts of Samlaut in the Battambang, where landlords had tried to impose the payment of rent upon peasants who had the free use of land for centuries.

This civil war broadened considerably when the massive United States air attacks and invasion of Cambodia unfolded in 1970 and after the coup by Lon Nol (Sihanouk's former military commander). It was closely intertwined with the civil wars in Vietnam and Laos, and with war of national liberation by the Vietnamese masses against U. S. imperialism, culminat-

ing finally in the overthrow of the Lon Nol regime by the KHMER ROUGE in April 1975. While the Vietnamese C. P. -led forces played an important role in assisting the Khmer Rouge in this civil war, especially by thwarting several offensives against them by the U. S. imperialist forces and the south vietnamese and Cambodian counterrvolutionaries, the Cambodian C. P. jealously defended its autonomy and operated in a manner which was more and more independent of Hanoi. This was demonstrated, inter alia, by the way in which it tried to destroy all the elements of the bourgeois state and of the capitalist class in one stroke after 1st April, 1975 victory.

Against the advice of both Hanoi and Peking, the advice of Moscow was no longer listened to, especially after the Kremlin maintained relations with the Lon Nol regime while the latter was butchering Camodian communists, workers, students, intellectuals and peasants by the thousand - the leader of the Cambodian C. P. tried to introduce a "radical social revolution in all fields" in the shortest possible time (to use the formula with which the peasant rulers of Kampuchea describe the Pol Pot regime.)

A big part of the participation in the bourgeois state apparatus were physically eliminated (apart from those who escaped abroad). The great majority of the bourgeoisie down to the lower middle classes suffered the same fate. The urban population was dispersed, Private property and/or use of the land was severely restricted if not radically suppressed. Peasants who had been the prototype of individual farming in South East Asia for centuries were forced into rigid collective farming (co-operatives).

"Replacing a system in which farming had been essentially a family undertaking, the production solidarity groups became the basic unit of agricultural work. They were in turn organized into 30,000 agricultural co-operatives. Although the peasants cultivate small gardens for their fruit and vegetables, to day private property in land basically does not exist,"³.

Francois Ponchud indicates that beginning in October 1975 all means of production were collectivised in the co-operatives. In addition, beginning in December 1975, state farms were being created.⁴

The radicalism (or ultra-leftist adventurism) of Pol Pot regime went so far as virtually suppressing all forms of trade and money. Only the barest remnants of barter continued.

Kampuchea's economy and society had already been wrecked by the barbaric imperialist bombing and other acts of war. It was estimated that in the densely populated area around Pnompenh alone, the monthly equivalent of seven Hiroshima type atomic bombs had been rained down by U. S. bombers in the six months ending in August 1973. The consequent disruption of agriculture and food production was catastrophic.

An unpublished International Monetary Fund study estimated that of the end of 1974, the total cultivated paddy land had been reduced by 75 percent and that paddy production in the Khmer Republic (i. e. those areas not liberated by the Khmer Rouge at that time) had fallen from an annual level of 3.8 million tons to only 493,000 tons. But even the latter figure is considered to be exaggerated by pro-Khmer Rouge sources. Massive starvation, malnutrition and epidemics were rampant. Many of the deaths attributed, first by

imperialist propaganda and later by Hanoi and Moscow, to Pol Pot atrocities were in fact due to the barbaric acts of imperialism and its local stooges.

But it is also obvious that the adventuristic policies followed by the Pol Pot faction greatly contributed to the price paid in terms of human suffering for the change of regime in Kampuchea. Moreover this policy made it impossible to quickly repair the damage caused by the imperialist destruction. The national economy and the very fabric of elementary social division of labour was disrupted further by the inhuman means by which private property was suppressed. Transport, medical supplies, hospitals and a large part of the educational system were not only disrupted- they entirely collapsed for a whole period. The repression was extended against whole social groups including women and children. The victims of state terrorism certainly have to be measured in terms of hundreds of thousands.

The obvious parallel which comes to mind is the severity, scope, and extreme terrorism of Stalin's forced collectivization in the Soviet Union, summed up in his formula of "suppressing the kulaks as a class". The human toll exacted by his crime-not to speak of the long term result in misery and shortage of certain foodstuffs in the Soviet Union - was immeasurable. Khrushchev estimated that during that period and the ensuing purges in the 1930s. Stalin and his henchmen killed 12 million people, while uncouth additional millions were deported. If anything, these figures underestimate gruesome reality.

But it is one thing to say that an inhuman despot used barbaric methods which we ofcourse, condemn fully

and without reservation, and which are unable to further the building of a classless socialist society-in order to suppress private property. It is something else again to present this despot as a "counterrevolutionary capitalist". Unless we go over to the camp of the state capitalists or bureaucratic collectivists, we must recognize that the crimes of the soviet bureaucracy against the workers and peasants of the soviet union had neither the purpose nor the objective effect of restoring capitalism or establishing a new class rule. It operated within the frame work of a post capitalist society-a society in transition between capitalism and socialism i. e a workers state. What is true for Stalin's terror is true for Pol Pot's terror too.

This is not in the first place a speculation but one of judging facts, If it is true that the bourgeois state apparatus was utterly smashed in Kampuchea (probably more totally so than in any previous social revolution)⁶, if it is true that not only bourgeoisie but that even the peasantry was expropriated, if it is true that no remnant whatsoever of capitalist property and production relations can be found in Kampuchea of 1976-77 or 1978 - then it is just impossible to refer to the Pol Pot regime or government as capitalist. A capitalist government or a bourgeois state which utterly destroys capitalism is an absurdity within the framework of Marxist theory of classes and that of the state. It is a concept which is in contradiction with all the basic elements of historical materialism.

One could argue that, because Kampuchea was an extremely backward country and because both the basic classes of capitalist society - the proletariat as well as the bourgeoisie-were present only in a near-embryonic

form, the classical criteria for establishing the class nature of the state can only be applied with great difficulty, reservations and constant reference to the historic background and specificity of Kampuchean society. We fully agree the tragedy of Kampuchean revolution is an extreme and grotesque distortion of the tragedy of Stalinism reflected through extreme backwardness. But it is a distorted repetition of Stalinism not of bourgeois counterrevolution. Any false judgment on this matter will have serious consequences for one's analysis of soviet union and other bureaucratically degenerated or severely deformed workers states too.

The question of the class nature of the Pol Pot regime and of the Kampuchean state under that regime may get obscured if the problem of the class nature of the Khmer Rouge bureaucracy is not considered and its relation to the working class and to the bourgeoisie not studied in that light.

The idea that bureaucracy could in any way be compared to the bureaucracy of the Asian mode of production type of society should be rejected. We are living in the last quarter of twentieth century not in the early Middle Ages. But in the same context, the idea that working class was totally suppressed and that to defend the concept that Kampuchea is a workers state means having a workers state without a working class, has to be rejected as equally absurd.

No contemporary state, not to speak a contemporary economy, could exist or survive without airports, tele communications, rail roads, highways, port facilities (if it has an outlet to the sea, as Kampuchea has); repair shops, power stations, arms maintenance depots, a minimum of cement and other building-material pro-

duction, and some industrial production of agricultural implements. All this implies not only the existence but even the expansion of an industrial labour force. To present matter as though Pol Pot and his henchmen deliberately wanted to destroy the industrial proletariat or had actually destroyed them in Kampuchea is just nonsense.

In fact the Kampuchean C. P. was intent upon the industrilization, be it of a special type; i. e. in a special relationship with agriculture (an idea borrowed not from bourgeois ideologues, incidentally, but from Mao Zedong), Its number two leader, Ieng Sary, stated that in so many words before the general assembly of the United Nations.

According to Hildebrand and Porter, who are apologists for the Pol Pot regime and whose information therefore should be treated with caution, 100,000 people had been allowed to return to Pnompenh by the end of 1975, part of whom were working in factories. By the beginning of 1976, nearly 100 factories around the country are said to have resumed production.⁶ Other sources site much lower figures. According to the October 13, 1978; Far Eastern Economic Review, Pol Pot told a Japanese delegation that the population of Pnompenh has already increased to 200,000 and was intended to grow to 400,000.

Ponchaud provides similar information, insisting especially on the role of the communication and transportation workers the Yugoslav C. P. journalist Slavko Stovic, who visited Kampuchea in 1978, reports that 220,000 people were living in the Pnompenh suburbs.

So the question boils down to this: what kind of industry was the Pol Pot bureaucracy starting to build?

A capitalist one or a non-capitalist one? This is not only a question of nationalization or non-nationalization of the initial industry. It is a question of the entire socio-economic context.

Does this nationalization and industrialization, maintain or lead to a revival of private property, private capital accumulation, the birth of a new capitalist class? Are the bureaucrats administering this industry accumulating private fortunes (be it through corruption, theft or black market operations)? Certainly CP bureaucrats of Stalinist persuasion and origin could do that. The question is, did that do that in Kampuchea? The fact that "forced labour is exploited" is no more proof of the existence or survival of capitalism in Kampuchea than it was in the Soviet Union. The question is: does it lead to capitalist property and production relation, to generalized commodity production? No proof can be brought forward to substantiate such an assertion.

Therefore it follows unavoidably that we are faced not with a capitalist, bourgeois or precapitalist state bureaucracy, but a bureaucracy tied to the working class not only through its ideology, but also and especially through its specific form of remuneration and its basic relation to the means of production and ownership of property. Let us recall that the Kampuchean CP never did abandon its programmatic statements in favour of the proletariat, building communism, the leading role of the working class, and the need for international solidarity with the workers of all countries.

In "A Short Guide for the Application of Party Statutes" published in 1975, the "long-range goal of the the party" is stated as follows: "To lead the

people in creating a socialist revolution and communist society in Kampuchea..."

In the constitution of Democratic Kampuchea adopted on January 5, 1976, the first two articles state:

Article I: "...the state of Kampuchea is the state of workers, peasants and all other toiling layers of Kampuchea"

Article 2: "All important means of production are the collective property of the people's state and the collective property of the common people".

Furthermore, Article 12 says: "Every worker is master of his factory." 9

A pamphlet published in August 1973 by the Khmer Rouge stated that "the working class forms the vanguard" of all the 'patriotic forces' engaged in the war; that it "has become a class fully capable of leading the revolutionary national and popular war of liberation to victory".¹⁰ The same pamphlet states that "the revolutionary struggle of the people of Kampuchea is an integral part of the workers and toilers of all the countries of the world, including those of the United States against capitalist, neocolonialist and imperialist oppression and exploitation. The workers, toilers and people of Kampuchea have always shown a firm and active internationalist spirit. They have always firmly supported the struggles of the workers, toilers and people of the world, including those of the U.S.A. and manifested their militant solidarity with them".¹¹ On September 10, 1976, on the occasion of the death of Mao, Pol Pot exalted the dictatorship of the proletariat as the heritage of "Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin and Mao Tse-tung".¹²

Above statements were implemented to an important extent in Kampuchea, which shows the class nature of the Kampuchean bureaucracy.

The grave contradiction that faces those who deny that Pol Pot bureaucracy-an extreme example of the degeneration of a communist party of Stalinist origin are graphically expressed in the official statements of the most violent opponents of the Pol Pot bureaucracy, the very people who toppled them from power. Here is what they have to say about Pol Pot clique;

"A complex situation emerged; on the one hand, co-operation between Vietnamese and Kampuchean revolutionist (sic) continued, but on the other hand, the Vietnamese felt that the attitude of the revolutionary leadership of Kampuchea had changed."¹³

As late as September 1976, the official Hanoi propaganda organ le courrier du Vietnam published an interview with Pol Pot, in which the revolutionary achievements of his regime and its deep ties with the revolutionary masses were celebrated. In fact, some form of collaboration between the Kampuchean and Vietnamese C. P. leaderships lasted for two and a half years after the April 1975 victory. The above quoted 1979 pamphlet goes on to add that in September 1977 a chauvinist tendency definitely triumphed within the Kampuchean Communist Party.

But Yet the founding declaration of the FU\SK, published in the same pamphlet, calls the Pol Pot faction "Militarist, reactionary tyrants" and even "slave owners" (esclavagistes). We know, of course, that in the Stalinist tradition communists of different factions can rapidly become "counter-revolutionaries" and even

"fascists" as soon as the slightest deviation from the "general line" appears

Thus the founders of the Khmer Rouge were obviously communists of Stalinist persuasion in their origins, members of the Indochinese and French C. P. They never turned themselves into new bourgeoisie governing in the state apparatus, as it is argued by some people.

2. What are the Criteria for Defining a Workers' State ?

A workers state exists when and if the previously existing bourgeois state machine has been smashed, the existing bourgeois class has lost its political and economic power, and when the economy based upon new production and property relations of a non-capitalist nature, evolves according to laws of motion that are not those discovered by Marx in Capital as being characteristic of the capitalist mode of production.

This implies:

a. We do not accept the possibility for any state to exist in the epoch of imperialism (i.e. the world in which we are living in this last quarter of the twentieth century) which would be neither a bourgeois nor a workers' state or some hybrid combination of both.

b. That we do not accept the possibility that in backward countries, semifeudal or large-scale property in land, exploitation of peasants through trade, banking, usury etc. could be suppressed - i.e. that a radical agrarian revolution could take within the framework of a bourgeois state and with a capitalist ruling class.

c. That we do not accept that any bourgeois state could exist without the presence of a ruling bourgeois class, even if it is a weak one, whose existence and character has to be empirically proved in terms of the definition given by Marx.

d. That we do not accept that capitalism can exist without private property, without generalised commodity production, and without the economy being governed by the laws of motion of that mode of production as laid bare by Marx.

Thus where a radical agrarian revolution has occurred, where the existing bourgeoisie has lost state power and is no more a ruling class, where private property has been essentially suppressed, where the economy obviously does not operate any more on the basis of Capitalist production and property relations and does not function any more according to the laws of motion of capitalism, a workers' state has come into being, independently of the conditions under which this has occurred.

While it is true that there is, historically a unity between the destruction of state power of the capitalist class, the disappearance of the bourgeoisie as a ruling class, and the suppression of private property and capitalist relations of production, there is no necessary synchronization between these processes. The Marxist tradition is clear on this subject. It starts with the Communist Manifesto itself :

“The proletariat will use its political supremacy to wrest, by degrees, all capital from the bourgeoisie, to centralise all instruments of production in the hands of the state, i.e. of the proletariat organized as the

ruling class; and to increase the total of productive forces as rapidly as possible.”

The idea that a workers' state comes into existence only after the final abolition of the last remnants of private property in the means of production is completely alien to that tradition. This is strikingly confirmed by Trotsky's report to the Fourth Congress of the Comintern.

“It is perfectly obvious that from the economic stand point the expropriation of the bourgeoisie is justified to the extent that the workers state is able to organize the exploitation of enterprises upon new beginnings. The wholesale, overall nationalization which we carried through in 1917-18 was completely out of harmony with the condition I have just now outlined. The organizational potentialities of the workers state lagged far behind total nationalization... Indeed had we been able to enter the arena of socialist development after the victory of the revolution in Europe... we could have tranquilly taken hold only of the large-scale enterprises, leaving the middle sized and small ones to exist for a while on the private capitalist basis...”

If the state is an instrument to uphold the rule of a given social class, how can it be used for the overthrow of that very class rule? For it is under the given state power, and with use of the given state power, apparatus, that the later total abolition of private property takes place.

In Russia, to take the first example, on change in the structure of the state or in the nature of state power took place after the October 1917 revolution.

If one argues that this state remained a bourgeois state until capitalist property was abolished in the autumn of 1918 - why not until the abolition of the NEP in 1928? - then it was a bourgeois state that abolished the economic power of the bourgeoisie, an absurd proposition if there ever was one.

The same remark applies to case of China. Some comrades claim that the Chinese state remained bourgeois after the proclamation of the Chinese People's Republic in October 1949. But leaving aside the fact one will not find a single Chinese Capitalist who believes that he remained in power in 1950 or 1951 in his country, the extension of land reform and the generalized nationalizations of the subsequent years were obviously realized by the state power (the army, the government, the administration, the state apparatus) established in October 1949.

Thus, the destruction of the bourgeois state leads to the establishment of a workers state, even if private property is not completely and immediately abolished.

It is true that history has presented us with short phases of transition in which the question of which class really rules society is not clearly answerable. Periods of dual power are an example of this. But in each case, the class nature of the surviving state apparatus does not allow any doubt: it remains bourgeois. Therefore, it has to be rapidly abolished, lest the working class loses again the elements of class rule it is beginning to assemble.

One could assume that a similar short phase of transition occurred in Eastern Europe under Soviet occupation (we are not referring to Yugoslavia) in

the years 1946-47. But the real relationship of forces was rapidly revealed. Without great difficulty, the occupying forces eliminated the surviving elements of bourgeois power essentially, by military-bureaucratic means.

The concept that the nationalization of property is not enough to establish a workers state but the intervention of the worker is needed, can have a double meaning. One, consistent with the method of historical materialism, it is a working hypothesis. It means, we assume that without the intervention of the workers, nationalization of property is not enough to destroy bourgeois class rule, because this will then grow again and again, like the heads of Hydra, whatever the blows you use to try to chop it off. This hypothesis has then to be tested by factual analysis. It has been tested in Eastern Europe, not to speak of Kampuchea. No bourgeois class, no private property revived, although "workers mobilization" in most cases were non-existent or extremely marginal. Although the abolition of capitalism occurred essentially through military-bureaucratic means, capitalism was indeed abolished.

Second, without the rigorous application of the method of historical materialism, this same formula becomes a dogmatic scheme. When the nationalization does not occur through mobilization of the working class, when the capitalists do not become expropriated by the workers, then, by definition, capitalism continues to rule, even if there are no capitalists, no capitalist laws of motion, no capital and no money. Capitalism without capitalists, without capital and without money. The whole of Marx goes out of the window.

Once one accepts the utterly revisionist idea that one can have a capitalist state without capitalists, without a ruling capitalist class, without the economy obeying the laws of motion of capitalism, then 99 percent of the traditional Marxist case against various theories of state capitalism - commencing with these of the Mensheviks and the Social Democrats, throughout those of the Bordighists, CLR James, and Tony Cliff, upto those of the Maoists and Bettelheim - collapses. The miserable remnants of that case then hand on the single thin thread of the 'origins' of nationalizations and on them alone. The razor-sharp factional minds of the state capitalists will find no difficulty in cutting through that thread.

Now in Kampuchea there were actually more mobilizations against the capitalists and landlords than in most of the Eastern European countries. Powerful mass mobilization took place in Kampuchea against bourgeois rule in 1974-75 (including a general strike in Pnompenh in 1974). Again, the mass mobilizations, especially of the poor peasants, were rather important after the victory of the Khmer Rouge in 1975. Indeed, the setting up of many of the agricultural co-operatives was done through mass mobilization.

Already before final victory, in the liberated zones, the KCP leadership had "apparently skipped directly into more advanced stages of collectivization."¹⁶ The dynamic went in that direction, coinciding with the emergence of pre-state structure of a clearly non-capitalist nature. But after that came forced collectivization and mass deportations obviously without the participation and against the wishes of the overwhelming mass of the toilers (as it was in Russia and other workers states).

Thus it is obvious that first two waves of collectivizations were more than sufficient to destroy the bourgeois state, the capitalist property relations and the existence of bourgeois class rule, so Kampuchea thereby became a workers' state. The forced collectivization and deportations were criminal policies applied by the ruling bureaucracy within the framework of the already existing workers' state, as they had been Russia under Stalin,

What change then the Vietnamese invasion bring about? Are Vietnames going to introduce a workers' state under Heng Samrin? According to the "Far Eastern Economic Review" of March 2, 1979, Samrin granted an interview to the Finnish-based Professor Kaarle Nordenstreng of the International Organization of Journalists on February 3, 1979. According to the Hongkong weekly:

"The discussion touched also on the shattered economy; he said heavy industry would be state owned but so far as handicrafts and other small industries were concerned, private entrepreneurs would be allowed to operate, though under state guidance."

Now, to turn from a policy of forced collectivization or extreme terroristic "war communism" to a policy of the NEP-type probably makes some under the conditions prevailing in Kampuchea to day. We tend to approve such a turn but this, of course, can only be understood within the framework of an already existing workers state but to indentify the transition from 100 percent collective ownership to 75 or 60 percent collective ownership i. e. a rather large-scale restoration of private property, as the transition from

bourgeois state to workers' state is beyond the Marxist reason.

Now let us take up the cases of Egypt, Burma, Syria, Mozambique and Angola. Here also the question of nationalization is involved. In none of these countries was private property ever abolished or constitutionally forbidden. What was nationalised in most cases were the industrial, banking, wholesale trading and large transport companies, some times even while leaving imperialist property intact. But these were from the start only a relatively small part of the national economy, given the backwardness of these countries. Private use of rural and urban land was limited but never abolished. It had been the main base of capitalist fortunes before the "revolution". It remained the main base for those after the political overturns.

A capitalist class never disappeared - only its internal articulations (the relationship of forces between its different components) altered. The large nationalized sectors therefore acted as huge breeding grounds for private capital accumulation. Huge private fortune appeared and grew not in the least because many capitalists received large scale compensation for the nationalization of their properties. The stock-exchange continued to function in Egypt throughout the Nasser period. It was therefore just a question of time before the "private sector" (not a petty peasant sector, but a large capitalist one) would reassert itself in a powerful manner - among other things because of "encouragement" received through symbiosis with imperialist countries and imperialist firms. This is what occurred in Egypt under Sadat. This is what will occur tomorrow

In Mozambique and Angola, if no social revolution destroys the bourgeoisie as a class. This is occurring in Burma and Syria right now.

But precisely in Kampuchea as in all other workers' states, this has not occurred and cannot occur without a social counter-revolution. This is precisely one of the key indicators of the class nature of the state and the ruling bureaucracy. It can steal, plunder, undermine, betray, whatever you will. But its privileges remain in the realm of standard of living, of consumer goods, and not in the accumulation of private fortunes and the private appropriation of the means of production. What is "accumulated" by the state are use values in the form of means of production - not exchange value embodied in commodities and money.

One could argue that the time that elapsed between the establishment of the Pol Pot regime and its overthrow was too short to allow final judgement on this question. Even if this is granted there can be no doubt the direction in which the things were going; not in the direction of restoration but in that of a suppression of private property.

Sections of the bureaucracy can become a nucleus of a new capitalist class (as they could in the Soviet Union as well) intent upon private capital accumulation, upon defending independent firms, enterprises, and capitals in competition with others. This has occurred in Egypt, Burma and Syria and will occur in Angola, Mozambique. It has not occurred in Vietnam, North Korea, Romania, Hungary or Poland. This way one can concretely note the difference between a bourgeois and workers' bureaucracy, between a

bourgeois state with a large nationalized sector and a workers' state even with a not unimportant private sector. In the first case, the socio-economic dynamic is towards the revival and strengthening of private property and the bourgeois class. In the second case, the socio-economic dynamic is towards their elimination and disappearance (or marginalization).

3. Are Wars Between Bureaucratized Workers' States Possible And What Should Our Attitude Be Towards Them ?

One could withdraw to the lame defence of saying that there has been no war between Chinese and Vietnamese workers' states - only "border incidents." But such a line of defence only constitutes an unacceptable concession to the callous disregard for the lives of tens of thousands of workers and peasants by the ruling bureaucracies, lives lost not for the sake of liberation from exploitation and oppression, not for the sake of a struggle against capitalism and imperialism, but for the sake of fractions of bureaucracies seeking to avoid "encirclement" (by other fractions of the bureaucracy); "teaching them lessons", "punishing criminal aggressors" and other nauseous "war aims" - taken straight out of the armoury of absolutist, semi-feudal, colonialist, and imperialist diplomacy. We have to say it loud and clear; these wars are criminal, irresponsible, and counter revolutionary enterprises. They only help imperialism. The life of not a single soldier, worker or peasant should be sacrificed for the particularistic, narrow and nationalist goals of self-aggrandizement of any faction of the bureaucracy, whichever it is.

There are basic concepts of Fourth International,

which remain unchanged throughout and after the tragic events in South East Asia.

First: the basic danger of a World War does not spring from any of the economic or social "laws of motion" of the bureaucratized workers' states, but from the irrepressible trend towards world expansion by capital, especially capital in the imperialist epoch. As long as imperialist capital survives in any major industrial country, it will not give up its drive towards dominating the world, towards reincorporating into its sphere of direct exploitation those countries who are currently engaged in trying to achieve social revolutions. This is and will be the only source of potential world war in the epoch opened by the end of world war II.

Second: The danger of the a third world war is not imminent. In order to qualitatively increase its power to commit aggression - upto a full scale attack against USSR, Eastern Europe and the people's Republic of China - imperialism must first radically alter the political relationship of forces inside the metropolitan imperialist powers i.e. it must first inflict a crushing defeat on the world proletariat. As long as this has not occurred, it is unable to impose upon them the madness of the risk of the nuclear annihilation of mankind.

Third: There is no basic economic reason for wars between bureaucratized workers' state. True, the ruling bureaucracy always eager to increase its power and material privileges, can profit from plundering foreign countries if it succeeds in including them in its sphere of influence without endangering "peaceful

bourgeois state with a large nationalized sector and a workers' state even with a not unimportant private sector. In the first case, the socio-economic dynamic is towards the revival and strengthening of private property and the bourgeois class. In the second case, the socio-economic dynamic is towards their elimination and disappearance (or marginalization).

3. Are Wars Between Bureaucratized Workers' States Possible And What Should Our Attitude Be Towards Them ?

One could withdraw to the lame defence of saying that there has been no war between Chinese and Vietnamese workers' states - only "border incidents." But such a line of defence only constitutes an unacceptable concession to the callous disregard for the lives of tens of thousands of workers and peasants by the ruling bureaucracies, lives lost not for the sake of liberation from exploitation and oppression, not for the sake of a struggle against capitalism and imperialism, but for the sake of fractions of bureaucracies seeking to avoid "encirclement" (by other fractions of the bureaucracy), "teaching them lessons", "punishing criminal aggressors" and other nauseous "war aims" - taken straight out of the armoury of absolutist, semi-feudal, colonialist, and imperialist diplomacy. We have to say it loud and clear; these wars are criminal, irresponsible, and counter revolutionary enterprises. They only help imperialism. The life of not a single soldier, worker or peasant should be sacrificed for the particularistic, narrow and nationalist goals of self-aggrandizement of any faction of the bureaucracy, whichever it is.

There are basic concepts of Fourth International,

which remain unchanged throughout and after the tragic events in South East Asia.

First : the basic danger of a World War does not spring from any of the economic or social "laws of motion" of the bureaucratized workers' states, but from the irrepressible trend towards world expansion by capital, especially capital in the imperialist epoch. As long as imperialist capital survives in any major industrial country, it will not give up its drive towards dominating the world, towards reincorporating into its sphere of direct exploitation those countries who are currently engaged in trying to achieve social revolutions. This is and will be the only source of potential world war in the epoch opened by the end of world war II.

Second: The danger of the a third world war is not imminent. In order to qualitatively increase its power to commit aggression - upto a full scale attack against USSR, Eastern Europe and the people's Republic of China - imperialism must first radically alter the political relationship of forces inside the metropolitan imperialist powers i.e. it must first inflict a crushing defeat on the world proletariat. As long as this has not occurred, it is "unable to impose upon them the madness of the risk of the nuclear annihilation of mankind.

Third: There is no basic economic reason for wars between bureaucratized workers' state. True, the ruling bureaucracy always eager to increase its power and material privileges, can profit from plundering foreign countries if it succeeds in including them in its sphere of influence without endangering "peaceful

co-existence" with imperialism on a global scale, i.e. through a modus vivendi with world imperialism. But this is in no way structurally linked to the nature of the workers' states economics. The plundering of East Germany stopped by and large after the workers uprising of July 1953. Cuba is not plundered but subsidized by the Soviet bureaucracy as is, increasingly, Czechoslovakia, since the 1968-69 "normalization". We have great doubts whether Peking "plundered" Kampuchea or is intent upon "plundering" Vietnam. And while the Vietnamese, desperately short of rice this year, might enviously eye the good rice harvest in Kampuchea, if their troops get bogged down by Kampuchean Khmer Rouge guerillas, they will find that they most probably have to subsidize their new Pnomenh allies rather than "plunder" them.

It is preposterous to believe that China needs "colonies to exploit", when it is desperately lacking the resources to exploit 80 percent of the natural resources known on its own native soil. It is likewise unproven that the soviet bureaucracy wants to "colonize" China, when it does not even have the means to exploit the resources of its own, far Eastern Siberian territories and is inviting Japanese, Germans, French and North Americans capital to assist in this vast endeavor.

Fourth: The inability of imperialism to launch at present a full scale war of reconquest against the workers' states does not imply its inability to try to destabilize them, to try to erode their strength, so that it can achieve a comeback in all those countries where the new social system is still relatively young and weak.

It is certainly trying to do so in Indochina. It specially does not imply an inability to try to stop the spread of social revolution internationally.

Then, how can one explain the danger of wars between bureaucratized workers' states or more correctly the danger of wars between the ruling bureaucracies of these countries? How is this danger correlated to the struggle between imperialism and anti-imperialist and anti-capitalist forces on a world scale?

We believe that this war danger can no longer be denied in light of unmistakably military conflicts between Vietnam and Kampuchea and between China and Vietnam, and a real threat of a military confrontation between the Soviet bureaucracy and the Chinese bureaucracy. We have to try to explain these wars within the framework of the traditional revolutionary Marxist analysis of the specific social nature of the bureaucracies ruling in these countries. We believe that we are perfectly able to do so, without threatening to upset the inner cohesion and consistency of Marxist theory in general and that of the workers' states bureaucracies in particular.

The roots of these potential conflicts are political and not socio-economic. Rather their economic roots lie in the special way in which the hardened bureaucratic layers ruling these countries can guarantee and maintain the material privileges they enjoy. The guarantee and reproduction of these material privileges depend upon the exercise of a monopoly of political and social power by the bureaucracy. Any serious challenge to that monopoly, any form of public political pluralism, even of an inter-bureaucratic nature, inevitably hastens the political awakening of the masses, which, as the examples of

Hungary and Czechoslovakia most clearly, show, could shatter the very basis of the bureaucracy's privileges in a short period of time.

Stalin embodied their principle of the monopoly of power of monolithism in the clearest, most consistent, and radical way. That is why he suppressed all political differentiation not only within the CPSU but within the Comintern as well. When the power of the Soviet bureaucracy spilled over the pre-war frontiers of the Soviet Union into so called "people's democracies," he had to extend this very same principle of monolithism throughout these newly established workers' states, including the one that had not been created through military - bureaucratic actions and manipulations by the Kremlin but through a genuine popular revolution, be it a bureaucratically controlled one - Yugoslavia. It was this drive (and not the fear of the effects upon the Soviet Union a non-existent mass movement in Yugoslavia in early 1948) that was the basis for Stalin - Tito rift of 1948. A similar need for monolithism explains the outbreak of the Sino - Soviet conflict in 1959.

Any form of autonomous political and ideological development in any workers' state, independent of the immediate level of mass mobilization there, is seen as a threat by the Kremlin to its rule, including to its rule in the Soviet Union. Any form of autonomous political and ideological development in any Asian workers' state is likewise seen by Peking as a threat to its rule, ultimately inside China too. And any development of political and ideological autonomy in any Indochinese or neighbouring country is likewise seen

by Hanoi as a threat to its rule, including over Vietnam. In this and in nothing else, lie the objective political roots of potential wars between bureaucratized workers' state.

As long as Soviet Union was the only existing workers' state, Stalin could impose a servile obedient leadership upon any communist party, most often by direct dictate from Moscow, through a combination of corruption, repressive selection of leading cadres, and blackmail threatening public denunciation and its disastrous political and organizational consequences for a whole period, later threats and open use of physical terror and murder were added to this in a number of cases.

When a certain number of Communist parties of Stalinist origin were installed in positions of state power after World War II, these methods were insufficient, given the qualitatively increased material resources at the disposal of each "national" bureaucracy. The Kremlin now had to resort to more direct methods of political control: military occupation; control over the "national" repressive apparatus, especially the army the secret police, and a special network of informers; control over a key number of economic pressure points; and the imposition of policies upon the "national" bureaucracies that would leave them without any serious

popular basis in their own country, thus making them very much dependent upon the military "protection" of the "fraternal country."

These methods were, to different degrees, successful in most of those countries where the ruling bureaucracies had been installed in power through the Kremlin's military strength itself (the two most outstanding exceptions being North Korea and Romania). They were generally unsuccessful in those countries where, from the beginning, the "national" bureaucracy disposed of an autonomous material, political, and social power, having conquered power on the crest of a genuine popular mass social revolution, be it a bureaucratically controlled and manipulated one—Yugoslavia, China, Vietnam. Again, this is the root of the Tito-Stalin and the Mao-Khrushchev rifts, of the Vietnam-China conflict, and, why not, of the future Vietnam-USSR conflict.

We know that the ideological root of this process of disintegration of the Stalinist monolith—of the world crisis of Stalinism—is the theory of socialism is one country, and the closely related phenomenon of national-communist messianism ("our" country and "our" country alone or in the first place—is the true bastion of world revolution). In that sense, our movement was theoretically and politically prepared through decades of struggle against these petty-bourgeois nationalist deviations from Marxism to understand the deeper reasons for political conflicts between different fractions of the bureaucracy spilling over into conflicts at state level between ruling bureaucracies. The overall correct positions that we adopted at the outbreak of

the Stalin-Tito rift and of the Sino-Soviet conflict should help us to understand the dynamic of these state conflicts, leading up to wars between bureaucratized workers' states. But we have to understand that these nationalist deviations from Marxism have material, social roots as well.

The methods used by Stalin in order to try to bring Tito's Yugoslavia to its knees were the typical methods of great-power bullying: economic blockade; concentration of big military forces in Yugoslavia's frontiers; a huge propaganda barrage inciting parts of the bureaucracy (especially in the army and police) to subvert the Tito apparatus. The purpose was the overthrow of the Tito leadership and the installation at the head of the Yugoslav CP of a faction subservient to the Kremlin.

The Tito leadership, being itself a bureaucracy and not a genuine representative of the Yugoslav proletariat, reacted in a typical—be it audacious—manner by trying to enlarge its popular basis, abolishing forced collectivization of the peasantry, establishing workers' self-management in the factories, enlarging the scope of the workers' standard of living and civil liberties (with many limitations, of course, for it wanted to retain its own monopoly of political power at all costs!), and at the same time maneuvering with imperialist and other bourgeois forces at the international level, and making not a few treacherous concessions to these hostile class forces (e. g., the support of the imperialist was in Korea).

A similar analysis can be made of the spilling over of the Mao-Khrushchev politico-ideological

dispute into a full-scale conflict at state level. The Kremlin organized an economic blockade of China at the very moment when the Chinese economy was in a desperate state after the failure of the second round of Mao's "great leap forward," and at a time when the imperialist blockade of China was still in full swing. It refused all military support (especially a nuclear "umbrella" to China when the Pentagon was still busy considering how to "nuke the Chinks.") It compounded its counterrevolutionary sins by concentrating more than half a million troops on the Sino-Soviet border in Central Asia—indeed, more soldiers than it keeps in Eastern Europe!—including those armed with nuclear warheads directed at the nuclear bases of the People's Republic of China, at its Manchurian industrial centers, at the capital city of Peking, and at the metropolitan area of Shanghai.

The Chinese bureaucrats, caught between both threats upon their power base, reacted in a typical bureaucratic pragmatic manner. First, they withdrew to the line of "supporting oneself by one's own forces," i. e., rationalizing the desperate isolation they found themselves in. Simultaneously, they kept an equal distance from both "super-powers," engaging in "super-revolutionary" rhetoric. At the same time they were looking for serious openings. The openings did not come from the Kremlin and its satellites. They came first from the European and Japanese imperialists, on the commercial and economic front. Then they came from Washington, through prudent moves of military disentanglement.

Peking responded enthusiastically, ready to sacrifice

the Vietnamese revolution in exchange for these openings. The similarities to Stalin's attitudes, and Khrushchev's, under analogous circumstances, are too striking not to conclude that what was involved here was not some special deviation of the Chinese rulers, but general characteristics of the bureaucratic caste as such.

With hindsight we should have understood, at least from the middle 1960s, that a *potential* war danger was inherent in this transposition of the inter-bureaucratic conflicts to state levels and the use of all the classical paraphernalia of great-power diplomacy in these conflicts. But what is true is the fact that the actual transformation of this *potential* threat into *actual wars* marks a new stage in the degeneration of the bureaucracy.

With hindsight too, the military invasion of Hungary in 1956 and of Czechoslovakia in 1968 can be seen as testing grounds of that tendency although neither of them evolved into full-scale wars of the Vietnam-Kampuchea or China-Vietnam type. And obviously, while we understand this war danger today much better, we have to stress that, at least at the present level of the world relationship of forces, these will be *limited wars* (which does not necessarily mean that they can't take the form of long term guerrilla wars) compared to the wars occasioned by long-term structural economic conflict of interests, e. g., inter-imperialist conflicts, colonial wars of conquest, national wars of liberation, or wars between different social systems (imperialism versus workers' states).

There is no basic social reason why the Chinese

leadership should be "allied to U. S. imperialism against the Soviet Union." Its needs of modernization could be at least partially satisfied by the Soviet Union as much as by imperialism. In playing one against the other—as they already have with different imperialist powers—the Chinese bureaucrats would minimize costs of credits and maximize gains. Furthermore, modernization through cooperation with imperialism alone will impose increasing financial burdens upon the Chinese workers' state, which, like the example of Eastern Europe and especially that of Yugoslavia show, have to be stopped at a certain ceiling lest they disrupt the planned economy as such. When that ceiling is reached, there arises a genuine material pressure in favor of "dividing the burden" between Moscow, Frankfurt, Tokyo, and Wall Street. This is what happened in Yugoslavia. This is what happened in Poland and Hungary. It will happen in Peking too...if the Kremlin wants it to happen.

From this line of analysis there flows a decisive political conclusion. The Fourth International is opposed to wars between bureaucratized workers states. It considers them utterly reactionary and irresponsible. They only help imperialism and hinder the cause of world revolution. They are against the interests of the international working class and against the cause of the liberation of oppressed semicolonial and colonial peoples. We are against the invasion of Kampuchea by the regular Vietnamese army. We are against the invasion of Vietnam by the Chinese army. We are against any attack upon Chinese territory by the Soviet army and its satellites. We say: fight in common against imperialism and capitalism, not against workers

and peasants of other workers states! And we add: if and when the workers and poor peasants of these countries will have the real political power to decide over war and peace, *such wars will never happen again!*

Certainly, the defense of the Vietnamese revolution is today one of the key tasks of the Fourth International. The question is: how, and by what means? We are convinced that the invasion of Kampuchea did not help but rather undermined that defense. There is no "liberal humanitarianism" nor an atom of "pettybourgeois pacifism" behind this principled stand. (Although, to repeat it again, we find it morally repulsive and contrary to the elementary needs of raising working-class consciousness to identify legitimate concern for the lives of Kampuchean, Vietnamese, Chinese or Soviet workers and peasants, a refusal to see these lives sacrificed for the sake of sordid interbureaucratic squabbles, with "liberal humanitarianism.")

We are neither opposed to armed mass insurrection, nor to wars of national liberation, nor to fraternal aid—including military aid—by a victorious revolution to the rising workers and peasants of other countries. Our opposition to wars between bureaucratized workers states is based upon a correct understanding of the very nature of the hardened bureaucratic castes engaged in these wars, of their relations with world revolution and the world proletariat.

We reject out of hand the idea that any faction of the bureaucracy in any way whatsoever has the "historical" mission or "objective function" to "centralize" the interests of the so-called "socialist camp." i. e., the bureaucratized workers states in their

totality, in confrontation with the imperialist and capitalist forces either regionally or globally. The whole historical record, on which our analysis of the bureaucracy is based, proves precisely the opposite. Each of these factions of the bureaucracy—the Kremlin one as much as the Peking one, and, alas, also the Hanoi one systematically *sacrifice the general* interests of the world proletariat and the oppressed peoples, the general interests of world revolution, *to the particularist* narrow conservative self-interests of defending *its own* power and privileges, regardless of what happens elsewhere.

In fact, the Soviet bureaucracy as well as the Chinese bureaucracy, the Vietnamese leadership as well as the Pol Pot one, are conducting the conflict ideologically in the narrowest terms; whipping up chauvinistic—if not racist—hatred against “the Mongols,” “the Viets,” “the Han,” and so on. With this despicable nationalism is combined a callous celebration of the “tens of thousands of Chinks,” of the “Viet aggressors,” “exterminated” in the war, without a single consideration for the fact that workers are shooting workers, peasants are shooting peasants, and none are shooting imperialists, capitalists, or landlords. To see only clever statecraft, or diabolical maneuvers by imperialism, behind this scandalous spectacle is just covering up for Stalinism. Behind this are the ultimate fruits of the petty-bourgeois nationalist poison of “socialism in one country.”

We likewise reject out of hand any conjunctural approach to the question, which consists in pointing out that “in a given situation” a given bureaucracy is “objectively” more (or less) counter-revolutionary than another one. Such

impressionistic considerations not only are condemned to be by passed by events from one day to another. (Remember the theoreticians who drew all kinds of conclusions from the temporary alliance between Stalin and Hitler!) They sin profoundly by subordinating the structural similarities between *all* workers states to considerations based on conjunctural practices. Any serious blow against the People's Republic of China today would be a blow against a workers i. e., a blow for the restoration of capitalism in China, and not a blow against “an ally of U. S. imperialism.” The same is true of any serious blow against any workers' state without exception.

It is not very smart to mentally rearrange one's analysis of the world situation around the bizarre proposition that Washington's main purpose today is to “roll back” the Indochinese revolution out of Kampuchea. It seems rather obvious that the strategic goals of keeping control over Middle East oil, preventing a socialist revolution in Western Europe, and maintaining Latin America under its domination, loom much larger in its eyes. But in order to further these key goals, it needs close collaboration with the Kremlin much more than with Peking—which can't deliver any goods in these areas. Why should Washington deliberately jeopardize its own vital interests by ganging up with Peking against Moscow, merely for the purpose of reconquering the Kampuchean market?

As for the Kremlin, its propaganda machine is running along the following lines: You dirty Chinese hegemonists, you are undermining detente, you are trying to collaborate with Washington in order to prevent us from better collaborating with Washington.

And you Western governments, your sending arms to the Chinese is stupid because in the long run they will be used against you.³⁵ All of this is a far cry from a world situation allegedly dominated by U. S. imperialism's frantic attempts to go on to the offensive with Chinese help against the Vietnamese revolution.

In fact, most bourgeois analysts insist that Washington is giving preference to the SALT II treaty with Moscow, over and above any benefit it could obtain from the interbureaucratic conflict in Southeast Asia and from closer links with Peking.³⁶ And the bourgeois governments of the ASEAN countries, while satisfied because the dynamic of the Indochinese revolution is weakened by these conflicts, are worried as much by the Chinese military buildup as by the Vietnamese one.³⁷ They have good reasons for this—and a sound class instinct. For, independently from conjunctural alignments and realignments, the class nature of the various states (and armies) will decide in the long run in determining their role in world politics.

More generally, imperialism can and will try to use the interbureaucratic conflicts to gain advantages and to change the relationship of forces and stop the spread of revolution. But its basic historical goal remains not to weaken Moscow against Peking or vice versa, but to restore capitalism. For that purpose, the class nature of *all* the workers' states remains a formidable obstacle, regardless of their conjunctural opportunist and treacherous maneuvers.

Much has been made of the fact that Washington knew about Peking's attack against Vietnam beforehand,

and either gave the green light enthusiastically, or failed to give the red light, or was so divided in its reactions that Deng could feel encouraged to act.³⁸ But these speculations or what really went on in Washington during Deng's visit or in Peking during Blumenthal's trip are largely beside the point. Everybody in the Fourth International agrees on two positions: After its grave defeat in 1975, U.S. imperialism is, *for the time being*, unable to intervene directly in Indochina. It can only seek to reenter the scene by exploiting the conflicts between the Soviet, Chinese, Vietnamese, and Kampuchean leaderships.

The differences revolve around the following two points: Did the Vietnamese intervention in Kampuchea and the Chinese intervention in Vietnam facilitate these imperialist maneuvers? We answer yes in each case and have strong evidence in support of this analysis. Comrades Feldman/Clark/Waters answer "no" in the first, and "yes" in the second one. But the evidence for the "no" is very shaky, to say the least.

And the bigger difference is whether in the China-Vietnam conflict Peking acts, basically for imperialism—whether Stalin acted for imperialism by attacking Tito, whether Tito acted for imperialism by resisting Stalin whether the same judgement can be made about the Khrushchev-Mao conflicts, which imperialism could and did exploit, but which they neither generated nor controlled.

We especially reject any "lesser evil" policy as applied to various shades and fractions of the bureaucracies. In as much as we are dealing with countries in which the bureaucratic rule has become hardened

and institutionalized—i. e., can only be removed by a political revolution—no bureaucratic caste of another workers' state can seriously be seen as being able to further, not to say initiate, such a political revolution. This is politically and socially inconceivable. It would be identical to expecting it to commit suicide. The task of overthrowing each of these privileged bureaucracies is a task to be solved by the workers and poor peasants of each of these countries, not through an invasion by a foreign regular army.

Finally, the question of our principled opposition to any invasion of any bureaucratized workers' state by the army of another bureaucratized workers' state is closely linked to a correct understanding of the uneven historic, economic, social, political, and cultural development between different workers' states, i. e., of the dangerous dynamics of the national question *after* the victory of socialist revolutions, a dynamic which revolutionary Marxists have not yet fully understood and mastered.

How can one forget that China for more than a century a semicolon, plundered, dismembered, and humiliated by imperialist powers, among which Lenin explicitly included tsarist Russia? How can one forget that the Chinese empire for nearly 2,000 years tried to subjugate the smaller country of Vietnam? How can one forget that Vietnamese emperors in turn threatened the independence of even smaller Kampuchea through repeated aggression and wars of conquest for many centuries? To believe that it is sufficient to realize a socialist revolution—while maintaining huge differences in standard of living and levels of economic development between different workers' states—for all

the suspicious the ideological and political consequences of these centuries-old situations to disappear as through magic from the consciousness of millions of people little-versed in Marxism, is to believe in miracles. It is much preferable to be a bit more realistic, to take these suspicious into consideration and to carefully abstain from any act that could stimulate new and long-lasting waves of nationalism. Be it only for this reason we have to condemn both invasions out of hand!

Lenin, we must note, understood that aspect of the question perfectly. Already in his report on the new Party Program in 1918 he stated categorically that the workers' state had to grant self-determination (i. e. independence) even to countries remaining under bourgeois rule, if by acting otherwise the class differentiation between the bourgeoisie and the workers would become obscured and slowed down as a result of nationalism in these countries. And in the final codicil to his Testament he stated:

A distinction must necessarily be made between the nationalism of an oppressor nation and that of an oppressed nation, the nationalism of a big nation and that of a small nation.

In respect of the second kind of nationalism we, nationals of a big nation, have nearly always been guilty, in historic practice, of an infinite number of cases of violence; furthermore, we commit violence and insult an infinite number of times without noticing it.

That is why internationalism on the part of oppressors or "great" nations, as they are called...

must consist not only in the observance of the formal equality of nations but even in an inequality of the oppressor nation, the great nation, that must make up for the inequality with obtains in actual practice. Anybody who does not understand this has not grasped the real proletarian attitude to the national question.

The harm that can result to our state from a lack of unification between the national apparatuses and the Russian apparatus is infinitely less than that which will be done not only to us, but to the whole International, and to the hundreds of millions of the peoples of Asia, which is destined to follow us on to the stage of history in the near future. It would be unpardonable opportunism if, on the eve of the debut of the East, just as it is awakening, we undermined our prestige with its peoples, if only by the slightest crudity or injustice towards our own non-Russian nationalities.³⁹

In the interest of world revolution and of defending the international solidarity of toilers, we had better take these warnings of Lenin deeply to heart!

The *only* exception to the above-stated general rule that we could visualize today would be a situation of full-scale general war of imperialism against the workers' states. If in such a situation—in which the survival of the workers' states as such would be immediately threatened—one or two of the ruling bureaucracies allied themselves *militarily* to imperialism, operations by the armies of the other workers' states on the territories of these countries would then be justified. But even in that case, all the above-mentioned considerations should be taken into consideration—especially the fact that we would call upon the workers of these

few countries to themselves overthrow the treacherous bureaucrats ruling them. The victory of such a political revolution would be a thousand times preferable to a foreign invasion and occupation—even in the framework of world war which would have numerous negative consequences for the survival of the workers state as such.

We must add that we still believe such an eventuality to be extremely unlikely—and that we completely refuse to identify a situation of “*preventive* moves in view of a *potential* war danger” (which might exist for half a century or more!) with a situation of an actual world war.

Imperialism makes a lot of political and ideological capital out of the recent crimes of the bureaucracies in Southeast Asia. It will make even more capital out of them tomorrow. It will try to utterly confuse and disorient the international working class and the freedom fighters in the semicolonies by shouting at the top of its many voices—some well-paid, some rather eloquent some reaching deep into the organized labour movement—that events have shown that Marx was wrong when he thought that wars would disappear with capitalism; that Lenin was wrong when he had written into the first constitution of the Soviet Union that war was structurally tied to capitalism and likewise peace to socialism; that Marxism and proletarian internationalism are bankrupt when armies marching under the Red Flag with the hammer and sickle are fighting each other.

We have to answer that imperialist offensive head-on. We have to denounce its hypocrisy and

diversionist character. Compared to the victims of the past and present imperialist wars, the tragic victims of what is happening in Southeast Asia are and will remain a tiny minority. Compared with the threats that the existence of imperialism poses for the very survival of humanity, the interbureaucratic military conflicts remain a secondary aspect of world development.

But we cannot answer the imperialist propaganda machine adequately by denying or minimizing the extent of the bureaucracy's crimes. The analogy with the bourgeois "human rights offensive" is eloquent here. Any line of defense against that offensive of the type "imperialism is really responsible for all that" or "you are exaggerating the extent of the slave-labour camps in the USSR under Stalin" was condemned to collapse sooner or later. It actually helped the imperialist propaganda machine. We have to look reality squarely in the face. We have to speak out what is. Only the truth is revolutionary.

The truth is that the wars started by the different bureaucracies in Asia are unspeakable crimes of the bureaucracy against the working class and socialism that have to be condemned as such. They have to be explained as having nothing to do with socialism, like the Moscow Trials had nothing to do with socialism. Not Marx, or Lenin, or socialist revolutions are responsible for these wars, but the privileged bureaucracies that, in the last analysis, are the results of the survival of capitalism on an international scale and have to be overthrown by political revolutions.

What stands vindicated in the light of these

bloody events is not the hypocritical stance of blood-smearing imperialism, but the principled struggle of the Left Opposition, of the Fourth International against the bureaucracy, against "socialism in one country," against petty-bourgeois nationalism, for proletarian internationalism, for world revolution and socialist democracy, for a united front of all workers states against imperialism. This is the only principled line of defense. It is also, in the long run, the only effective one. □

March 15, 1979

Notes :-

1. Malcolm Coldwell and Lek Tan. "Cambodia in the South East Asia War" (New York; monthly Review Press 1973) pp. 157 - 167; and Francois Panchaud, "Cambodia Year Zero" (Harmonds Worth; Panguin Books, 1978) pp 183 - 184 Panchaud indicates that to avoid arrest, two KCP leaders Ieng Sery and Son Sen, had already gone underground in 1963.
2. See "declaration of foundation of FUNSK" in le confluit Vietnam - Kampuchea (Hanoi, 1979)
3. George C. Hilderbrand and Gareth Porter, "Cambodia: Stravation and Revolution" (New York; Monthly Review Press, 1976) pp. 71,72.
4. Panchaud pp. 113 - 114
5. Panchaud pp 214 " On 17 April 1975 a society collapsed, another is now being born from the fierce drive of a revolution which is incontestably the most radical ever to take place in so short a time".

6. Hilderbrand and Porter, pp 90-91
7. Panchaud, pp 101-103
8. Questsons actualles duesocialism October 1978
9. These quotes are taken from the Appendix of the french edition of Panchaud's book cambodge Annee Zero (Paris : Juilliand 1977) pp 239, 231.
10. " La class Ouvriere et les Trovailleurs due Kampuchea dans la Guorra Revolutionario de liberation nationale et Popunalaive, pp 3-4
11. Ibid, p 7
12. Panchud, p. 136
13. " La conflit Vietnam - Kampuchea " (Hanoi 1979) p. 8 Emphasis added.
14. Karl Marx and Fredrick Engels " Communist Manifesto " (New York Path finder, 1970) p, 33 Emphasis added.
15. " Report on the New soviet Economic policy and perspectives of the world revolution in the first five years of the Communist International " Vo; 2 (New York, Path finder 1972) p. 226
16. Communist Party power in Kampuches p. 18
35. On this last point, see Izuestia, December 1978.
36. International Herald Tribune, February 1, 1979, Financial Times, February 28, 1979.
37. Le Figaro, March 12, 1979.
38. Die Zeit, March 2, 1979; Washington Post, February, 19, 1979.
39. V. I. Lenin and Leon Trotsky, Lenin's Fight Against Stalinism (New York: Pathfinder, 1975), pp. 135, 137-38.

Evelyn Reed an artist-cum-revolutionary anthropologist is no more !

Evelyn Reed, a leader of the US Socialist Workers Party and one of the foremost exponents of the Marxist analysis of the origins of women's oppresion, died of cancer on March 22, at the age of 73.

Reed was born on October 31, 1905. In her early years Reed was an artist. She was serious about her art and over several years studied painting under some of the best known artists of the period. She was part of a free-wheeling, radical-minded crowd of artists and intellectuals in the New York City of the late 1920s and early 1930s.

All her life Reed was a rebel. She revolted against small-minded prescriptons as to what constituted proper behavior for a young woman in the 1920s and 1930s. She hated the poverty, suffering, and injustice produced by an economic system based on profit. She had nothing but contempt for the wealthy people she met through her family.

And she later embraced revolutionary Marxism because it enabled her to understand her rage and pointed the way toward ending the exploitation, oppression and hypocrisy she detested.

Reed had already developed a passionate hatred for the way in which capitalist society degrades and enslaves women and seeks to break their spirit.

She also came to understand that merely breaking with conventional conduct and sexual conformity could not free women from the confines placed on them by this society.

Reed was first introduced to revolutionary Marxism in the late 1930s by a professor at New York University who was a sympathiser of the Trotskyist movement.

The prospect of liberation through the struggle for socialism gave essential meaning to her existence. The professor also introduced Reed to Rourke a young member of the Socialist Workers Party. In 1939 Rourke was asked to go to Coyoacan, Mexico, to serve as a guard in the home of Leon Trotsky. Reed had been to Mexico before to paint and decided to go again and set up a studio in Mexico City. Reed began to frequent the Trotsky household and help out in various ways. It was in Mexico, under the influence and at the initiative of Trotsky, that Evelyn Reed decided to join the Socialist Workers Party, the American section of the Fourth International. She discussed with Trotsky, her personal plans and her place in the party.

After the assassination of Trotsky in August 1940, Reed for a time remained in Coyoacan, where she provided invaluable assistance and support to Natalia Sedova: Trotsky's companion and collaborator for years.

After Reed returned to New York City she became the staff of the theoretical magazine, *Fourth International*. One of the editors of the magazine was George Novack, with whom Reed developed a personal and political relationship that lasted until her death. She was elected to the national committee of the SWP in 1959 and served the party in that capacity until 1975.

Evelyn Reed was most widely known for her writings on the origins and role of women's oppres-

sion and made a substantial contribution to Marxism on this question.

Her indignation at the regimentation, stifling and abuse of women long predated her knowledge of socialist ideas. She argued against the distortions and denials of female sexuality.

The method of Marxism gave Reed the opportunity for the first time to make sense out of the oppression she resented so bitterly. She developed her own ideas to this and popularised it for a whole new generation of women's liberation fighters.

In 1951 Reed began the anthropological research that would eventually produce her pioneering work, *Woman's Evolution*. It was almost two decades, however, before the results of her investigations on the origins of female oppression began to be published.

Within a few years the armies whom Reed's writings were especially designed to reach burst upon the scene—new fighters for women's liberation who could be won to revolutionary socialism. No one was more enthusiastic than Reed about the spread of feminist ideas.

Since that time there have been hot debates over how ~~oppression~~ developed, and these have been more than a theoretical or historical question. Reed argued against a whole series of false ideas and self-defeating strategies. The concept that biology has been women's destiny, and that nothing fundamental can be done about female oppression, since women will always be childbearers. The theory that men, not class society, are the enemy. The idea that women

form a social class, or at least a caste, whose role in reproduction is comparable to the working class role in production.

Reed jumped into the battle from the very first days of the movement. She insisted that women were neither a caste nor a class but the oppressed sex. She never gave an inch to the proponents of a deadend "men are the enemy" approach. She insisted that our fire be directed against those who profit from the institutions of class society, which are built on women's oppression and that the fight for women's rights is an integral part of the fight for a socialist revolution.

Evelyn Reed sought to educate and inspire women with the facts about the creative and productive roles females have played in history. She explained how and why women were responsible for the major advances in the productive capacities of humanity and laid the foundation for the development of all civilisation.

Both the power of these ideas and the personal example Reed set served to inspire listeners to join the struggle for a world without exploitation and female oppression, a world in which the full human potential of all will flourish.

BOOKS BY EVELYN REED

	Special reduced price	Rs. Ps.
Woman's Evolution		32 - 15
Problems of Women's Liberation		10 - 58
Sexism and Science		18 - 65
Is Biology Woman's Destiny		4 - 60
Order from Antar-Rashtriya Prakashan Pratap Road Raopura BARODA-390 001		

Statement about the ownership and other particulars of the newspaper : PROLETARIAN POLITICS

From IV

(see rule 8)

- 1 Place of publication : Baroda
- 2 Periodicity of publication : Bi-Monthly
- 3 Publisher's name : Magan Dadabhai Desai
nationality : Indian
address : Govindrao Dev's wada,
Pratap road, Raopura,
Baroda, 390 001.
- 4 Printer's name : Magan Dadabhai Desai
nationality : Indian
address : Govindrao Dev's wada,
Pratap road, Raopura,
Baroda, 390 001.
- 5 Editor's name : Magan Dadabhai Desai
nationality : Indian
address : Govindrao Dev's wada,
Pratap road, Raopura,
Baroda 390 001.
- 6 Names and addresses of individuals who own the newspaper and partners, shareholders holding more than one per-cent of the total capital. : Magan Dadabhai Desai,
Govindrao Dev's wada,
Pratap Road, Raopura,
Baroda 390 001.

I, Magan Dadabhai Desai, hereby declare that the particulars given above are true to the best of my knowledge and belief.

M. D. Desai
Signature of Publisher

Homage to Evelyn Reed

(Condolence message from the Communist League)

Dear comrades of Socialist Workers' Party,

We are extremely unhappy to read the unbelievable news of comrade Evelyn Reed, who is no more forever among us. One more link between us and OLDMAN : TROTSKY since the unfotunate death of comrade Joseph Hansen is snapped away. She was one of the pioneer Bolsheviks forged under the comradly hammer of TROTSKY. Her death has caused irreplaceable gap immediately in the sphere of revolutionary anthropology symbolized through her monumetal work : EVOLUTION OF WOMEN. This was a unique contributive supplement to and enrichment of Engels's "ORIGIN OF FAMILY, PRIVATE PROPERTY AND STATE."

We deeply mourn her death and lower the red flag in her honour. At the same time we send our humble condolence to our berieved Comrade George Novack. Comrade Evelyn Reed is dead, Long live Comrade Evelyn Reed through her everlasting work on women liberation.

Date 31-3-79

Comradly yours

M. D. Desai

For C. S. of Communist
League, Indian Section
of Fourth International
