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THE EVOLUTION OF CAPITALISM IN WESTERN EUROPE

AND THE TASKS OF REVOLUTIONARY MARXISTS

Against the world background of a continual rise in the colonial revolution, an ever deepening crisis in the Soviet bureaucracy, and the temporary stabilisation of capitalism in the imperialist countries due to the betrayal of the revolutionary upsurge of 1943-48 by the reformist and Stalinist leaderships and the possibility opened to capitalism of a new phase of economic growth in these countries, the evolution of capitalism in western Europe during recent years has been dominated by:

(a) An economic boom in which the motor forces have nevertheless begun to lose power and which has ended in a new economic situation, the contradictory dynamics of which is shown in at least some of the west European countries by periodic recessions.

(b) A prolonged crisis in classical bourgeois democracy, leading to attempts to install a "strong state" each time a sudden turn in the political, economic or social situation gives it urgency from the bourgeois point of view and it is made feasible by the weakening of the resistance of the labour movement.

(c) The necessity for the working class to energetically oppose the more and more frequent attempts to reach a new level in integrating the labour movement into the bourgeois state.

(d) The possibility of transforming economic struggles for immediate gains, or for the defense of previously won gains, into struggles for transitional demands that could create a prerevolutionary situation and objectively pose the question of power.

(e) The more than ever decisive role of the subjective factor in arriving at this result.

Revolutionary Marxists have the duty to adjust their transition program to the precise needs and possibilities of this phase, in which the periodic possibility to overturn capitalist rule is provided both by the unresolved contradictions of bourgeois society and by the fighting capacity of the proletariat which remains intact in most of these countries.

I. The New Economic Situation and the Politics of European Capitalism

(1) In 1963 the economic situation of European capitalism began to change slowly but definitely. A phase of unprecedented expansion of the productive forces, of industrial growth and of the national income in all the European capitalist countries gradually gave way to a phase of uneven development, in which various capitalist countries have undergone contradictory evolution.

(a) Throughout 1964 expansion continued and even accelerated in West Germany. Greater stability of prices than in the other countries of the Common Market (reflecting in the last analysis a higher level of productivity) supported an extraordinary rise in exports, firstly to the European countries hit by inflation (Italy, France); secondly to countries overseas where purchasing power has been stimulated by the American economic boom.

(b) A series of European capitalist countries underwent a slowing down of expansion (Great Britain, and Belgium beginning the second half of 1964) and an aggravation of their balance of payments deficit.

(c) Other countries, especially Italy and France, have been affected since 1963 by new inflationary pressures, forcing the bourgeoisie to take deflationary measures which precipitated the beginning of a recession, first in Italy, then in France; altogether more than two and a half million workers suffering wage cuts or lay offs.

Moreover, in spite of "technical" recoveries (due to seasonal needs or the necessity to replenish stocks) various branches of European industry today have considerable surplus capacity: coal mining, steel, ship building, synthetic textiles, automobile manufacture. If certain of these branches of industry are obviously suffering structural stagnation or decline (e.g., coal mining), others such as synthetic fibres and automobile manufacture were among the principal driving forces of the expansion in the preceding phase.

Nevertheless, a high level of employment, production and income still constitutes the prevailing feature of the capitalist economy of western Europe as a whole. Full employment still exists in many countries. A large number of workers from more backward regions or countries (southern Italy, Spain, Greece, Portugal, Turkey) continue to be absorbed by the demand for labour in countries or regions where expansion is continuing. Western Germany and Switzerland particularly are in process of becoming genuine melting pots for hundreds of thousands of foreign workers, limited, as in most west European countries, to the least qualified and most repellent jobs, and living under conditions that have little in common with the so-called "affluent society."

(2) This contradictory evolution of the various capitalist countries in western Europe can have two different outcomes:

(a) Either the recession will spread from Italy and France to the other countries of the Common Market (i.e., through the chain reaction of reduced imports), first hitting the countries already affected by a slowing down of the expansion, then slowing down the expansion of the West German economy itself and precipitating a recession in western Europe;

(b) Or, the deflationary measures taken by the Italian and French bourgeoisie will permit them to rapidly overcome the inflation, opening a phase of new "expansion without inflation," thanks particularly to the reappearance of unemployment. In this case, in 1964-65 only a general slowing down of expansion of the Common Market will have taken place (as in 1958) but not a recession—the resumption of expansion in France and Italy picking up where the West German boom leaves off and maintaining a more or less general expansion of the economy of western Europe as a whole.

Several factors will determine finally which direction the economic evolution of Europe takes. The decisive factor will undoubtedly be the influence of the international capitalist economy (particularly the American economic cycle) on the economy of western Europe. The boom in the American economy for four consecutive years now has favorably influenced the economic cycle in western Europe in two ways:

firstly in stimulating European exports to the USA; secondly in stimulating the prices of raw materials exported by the colonial and semicolonial countries, increasing the purchasing power of these countries for producers goods exported by the west European capitalist countries.

If this boom continues throughout 1965 and the first half of 1966, it is probable that no general recession will occur in western Europe. If on the contrary a recession breaks out in the USA in 1965 or the beginning of 1966, it is probable that this would coincide with a general recession in western Europe, and that, for the first time since the second world war, synchronizing of the economic cycles of all the important capitalist countries would occur.

Even in the latter case, however, it would be only a recession, and not a serious economic crisis like that of 1929 or 1938. The reason for this, amply considered in previous documents of the International, is the possibility which imperialism has to "amortize" crises by increasing state expenses, at the cost of continually lowering the purchasing power of money.

(3) The combination of slowed-down growth everywhere (except in West Germany), of sharpened competition both on the European markets and the world market, and of still generally full employment, has at various times since 1963 brought strong pressure to bear on the average rate of profit enjoyed by the bourgeoisie in the different countries of western Europe. The slowing down of growth and the rise in international competition make it difficult to increase wholesale prices of industrial products, while full employment and even a labour shortage favor a rise in wages, even partially reducing the rate of exploitation of labour power (due to greater shifting of labour from plant to plant, lowered "work discipline," a rise in wild-cat strikes and all kinds of work stoppages, etc.).

In general the workers have utilized these favorable conditions to gain considerable wage increases. In both 1963 and 1964 these increases came to around 10% or more in countries like Italy, Holland, Belgium, etc. In 1963, a slower rise in wages aided the British capitalists in regaining some previously lost markets, especially in Europe; but in 1964 the drive was not followed up. This was due particularly to a lower general level of productivity than that of West Germany.

In face of this trend towards erosion of their rate of profit, the European bourgeoisie react in two fundamental ways (as did the American bourgeoisie during the preceding decade):

(a) By attempting to destroy, or at least to reduce, the strength of the trade unions and their ability to utilize the general shortage of labour to gain a significant increase in wages. The main weapon in this is the "incomes policy" and pressure for collective contracts of some years' duration. In the last analysis, it involves attempting to suppress trade-union autonomy in negotiations, and reaching a new level in integrating the trade unions into the bourgeois state.

(b) By attempting to again build up an industrial reserve army by carrying automation and rationalisation of enterprises through to the end, and by following a policy of importing foreign workers on a big scale.

In conjunction with this, brutal deflationary measures, such as those taken in France (stabilisation plan) and in Italy (anti-inflationary programme), lead to the same result of "easing off the labour market."

The bourgeoisie is clearly not unanimous in advocating these two ways of defending their rate of profit. The general interests of capitalism often conflict with the interests of particular sectors. In Italy especially, the trusts producing durable consumer goods were more or less opposed to the anti-inflationary programme, which was primarily in the interests of finance capital and the industries most tightly under its control. In France a considerable sector of the bourgeoisie (particularly small and medium concerns, and light industry) revolted against the "stabilisation plan" and against all the "planning" under the tight control of the big monopolies. In Great Britain the bourgeoisie were likewise quite divided over the advisability of the Tory economic policy known as "stop-go." Nevertheless, given the persistence of the fundamental contradictions in the capitalist system, there is no way in which capital can defend its threatened rate of profit except by one of the two methods indicated above, or by a combination of the two.

(4) Under the prevailing conditions of economic expansion -- even though it is slowed down -- the trend towards the progressive economic integration of the capitalist countries of western Europe, above all the countries of the Common Market, has continued, insofar as it corresponds in particular to the inevitable imperatives of productive technique (size of enterprise required to cross the threshold of profitability), so that markets greatly transcending the frontiers of the national state become a necessity.

At the same time, however, the use of the "national state" as an instrument to defend the particular interests of the bourgeoisie in each of the six states is kept up in the very heart of the Common Market. This has been shown in all the many crises that have marked the advances of the Common Market (e.g., the crisis over a common market for grains; the crisis over the adoption of a common attitude towards the GATT negotiations for an international reduction in customs duties; the Italian reaction when faced with a decline in the market for Italian automobiles, etc.).

These two contradictory processes -- the slow creation of a community of interests among the capitalists of western Europe; the self-defence by each European bourgeoisie of its own particular interests -- will coincide and overlap for quite a period. They express two contradictory realities in the very structure of the capitalist system. This system remains essentially a "national" capitalism in each of the main capitalist countries of Europe (that is, most of the stock in the main enterprises in these countries remains in the hands of the capitalists of these countries); but alongside this "national" capitalism, a "European" capitalism is developing, born of the interpenetration of capital originating from some or all of the Common Market countries (and often from Great Britain, Switzerland, if not the USA). The longer the Common Market lasts and the more it becomes institutionalised (including particularly the adoption of a common currency), the more "European" capital will gain in importance in comparison with "national" capital, and the more the Common Market will become irreversible.

However, the point of irreversibility has not yet been reached. It will most likely not be reached until a general recession occurs in Europe. Faced with such a recession, two reactions may appear among the capitalists of the main European countries:

(a) A "protectionist retreat," defending the "national market," if necessary by re-establishing customs duties when the situation deteriorates.

(b) A "flight forward"; that is, the application on the Common Market level of "antirecession" techniques which have proved their efficacy on a national level ("European programming," "managed currency" on a European scale, etc.). This "flight forward" would require creation of a strengthened European executive and a European currency. These would constitute a decisive stage in reaching the point of no return for the Common Market.

Which of these two methods will be preferred by the bourgeoisie of each of the main capitalist countries of Europe will be shown in practice. The choice will be influenced in turn by the relative gravity of the recession and by the international political and economic context.

(5) The same ambivalence displayed by the bourgeoisie of the capitalist countries in relation to the phenomenon of European economic integration is likewise displayed by them in relation to American imperialism and the world market as a whole.

On the one hand, the relationship of forces between American imperialism and the main imperialist powers of the European continent has been shifting for more than a decade to the advantage of the latter and at the expense of Yankee imperialism. This inspired renewed optimism among the European bourgeoisie and even a revival of aggressive attitudes on the world market; a change that is particularly noticeable in West German imperialism. (In 1954 exports from the German Federal Republic rose to 33% of U.S. exports; in 1964 they reached 70%. On a per capita basis, the German Federal Republic exports more than three times the U.S. in manufactured goods.) On the monetary level, the European bourgeoisie is attempting to cast off the tutelage of the dollar and to shift to an "international currency" regulated jointly by the central banks of the imperialist countries (with a European majority).

On the other hand, despite the shift in the relationship of forces, the technological superiority of American imperialism (due in particular to the greater size of its enterprises) remains pronounced, and the European bourgeoisie (especially in France) are finding to their dismay that while they are reconquering world markets, American capital is "colonising" European enterprises. Similarly, the European bourgeoisie (above all in Italy and the minor capitalist countries) are terrified at the prospect of a "collapse" in the dollar, which would threaten to set off a chain reaction in the monetary system of the capitalist world and precipitate a break down of the whole international capitalist economy.

Finally, the European bourgeoisie display two different attitudes with respect to the world market (attitudes which strongly influence their behaviour with respect to the Common Market itself). Some (the majority of the West

German bourgeoisie in particular), holding that their productive forces are already suffocating within the boundaries of the Common Market, do not fear competition with American imperialism and therefore demand a Common Market "open" to Great Britain and the rest of capitalist Europe as a transitional stage towards the "Atlantic zone of free trade" likewise sought by American imperialism. (This is the material basis of the "pro-Americanism" which de Gaulle holds against Erhard.) The others want to consolidate the Common Market first, protect it against the "invasion of American capital," strengthen its competitive capacity, especially through a powerful movement to amalgamate enterprises and trusts, before opening the stage of sharpened and unprotected competition with American imperialism.

American imperialism retains crushing superiority over the European imperialist powers, especially in nuclear arms (a superiority which is even increased by the decline of British imperialism's "independent deterrent"). The European imperialist powers cannot reasonably conceive defending their system on a world scale in face of the continuous rise of the anticapitalist forces (strengthening of the workers' states, progress of the colonial revolution) outside of their alliance with American imperialism. All this weighs heavily on the whole situation and definitively limits the European bourgeoisie's freedom of manoeuvre.

This is why the European bourgeoisie attach the greatest importance to obtaining access to nuclear arms (and to the rapidly evolving nuclear technology, on which American imperialism holds an almost complete monopoly), whether under the form of a multilateral or Atlantic nuclear force, or "an autonomous striking force" (French or "European").

II. Political Evolution in Western Europe

(6) During the long period of capitalist prosperity that unfolded in western Europe, traditional bourgeois democracy, far from being revived or consolidated, continued to follow its process of slow decline. This decline corresponds in particular to an objective situation in which the key forces -- in principal place the big capitalist monopolies, the banks, finance capital; in an accessory way the trade-union organisations -- decide directly on a series of questions involving political, economic, financial, monetary, commercial and sometimes even cultural policies, which were formerly prerogatives of parliaments. If we add to this the continual strengthening of the executive power of the bourgeois state, and the more and more distinct encroachment of international organisations on important political questions (NATO for military problems; the Common Market, the European Coal and Steel Community, the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade for commercial and economic questions; International Monetary Fund for monetary problems, etc.), it is clear that the actual influence of parliaments on public life is becoming more and more limited.

This process of progressive and uninterrupted erosion of bourgeois parliamentarianism expresses in the last analysis the fact that parliament, which was never an effective instrument for the conquest of power by the proletariat, is more and more ceasing to be an effective instrument for the defence and consolidation of the power of the bourgeoisie itself. Its real function used to be to enable the bourgeoisie to gain a collective understanding of its class interests at a time when it was greatly divided by disparate regional and sectional interests as well as clearly differentiated political currents.

But the more the process of capitalist concentration continues and economic life falls under the control of a handful of large trusts and monopolies, the more the latter use the state machinery to defend their particular profits and industries, the more the "personal union" between the monopolies and the state machinery progresses, and the more the expression of the interests of big capital and the centralisation of the bourgeois forces takes place outside the bounds of parliament, even before its debates begin.

The evolution towards a "strong state," underlying the whole evolution of the European bourgeoisie during the past decade, thus corresponds with a double objective: to adapt the functioning of the state to the needs of the monopolies (providing them with a more stable and "technocratic" executive power in order to ensure a more effective defence of their profits); and to limit the possibility of the labour movement threatening the stability of the bourgeois state through an unreserved struggle for its rights (by limiting the right to strike and demonstrate and by strengthening the organs of repression). It is significant that this tendency has appeared in recent years in all the countries of Western Europe, even in those reputed to be the most democratic, and under all forms of government, including those headed by Social Democrats or in which they participate.

(7) However, up to now the tendency towards installing a "strong state" has succeeded in only one country, France. Everywhere else this tendency persists only latently, certain objectives being carried out little by little, but without reaching the point of qualitative change. On the contrary, an objective balance sheet of the five years since 1959 shows that the executive power of the bourgeois state has been weakened in a series of countries (particularly Greece and Italy), at least in its capacity to prevent expressions of resolute working-class struggle or to reduce their extent. Even in France, where the Gaullist regime seems stable, this stability is bound up in large measure with the survival of its leader; and the bourgeoisie itself doubts the possibility of maintaining it, at least in its present form, after de Gaulle has gone.

The fact is that instituting a "strong state" in its classical French form presupposes a serious defeat of the working class; and such a defeat has not occurred anywhere in western Europe. In fact capitalist prosperity itself has had a contradictory, dialectical effect on the behaviour of the working class in western Europe. If it has clearly weakened understanding of the necessity of a revolutionary overturn of capitalism, it has, thanks to the decline in unemployment, created conditions propitious for an outbreak of economic struggles. This, especially in countries where the integration of the unions in the bourgeois state had been previously institutionalised, can prove to be the point of departure for a new rise in the militancy of the workers. The European proletariat, even in countries where it has been affected by the tendency towards political apathy, is still passionately attached to the defence of its economic rights and its unions, while establishment of a "strong state" requires not only deep political apathy among the workers but also the castration of the trade-union movement.

For all these reasons, although tendencies towards setting up a "strong state" come to the surface each time the weakness of the executive of the bourgeois state is sharply illuminated (in Italy at the time of the presidential election in 1964-65; in Austria at the time of the last crisis inside the main

bourgeois party; in Greece in relation to the "defeat" on the Cyprus question, and etc.), these tendencies cannot really triumph until after a phase of intense class struggle culminating in a serious defeat and deep demoralisation of the proletariat. Even in France, the beginning of a revival among the workers, which is shown by the economic strikes launched under the banner of unity of action among the trade unions and by a still hesitant, uncertain and contradictory evolution towards a united front of the PCF-SFIO (Communist party and Social Democrats), threatens to undermine the stability of the "strong state" when de Gaulle and his personal prestige are gone. For this reason the French bourgeoisie envisage changing from a Bonapartist to a presidential regime, but without assurance that the attempt will succeed.

(8) The tendency towards a "strong state" is to monopoly capitalism in a time of prosperity what the fascist tendency was to the same capitalism in a period of economic crisis and mass unemployment. In each case an attempt is involved of adapting the degree of centralisation of political power to the concentration achieved by big capital in the economic field. In the one case, the mass base of the movement consisted of a dispossessed, pauperised petty bourgeoisie mad with despair; in the other, the mass base of the movement is a prosperous enriched petty bourgeoisie without an inferiority complex (composed mainly of technocrats, cadre elements and, in general, the "new middle classes"). Similarly in the one case it was a question of crushing the working class, destroying its organisations and brutally lowering its standard of living; in the other case it is rather a question of emasculating its organisations by integrating them more deeply into the regime and by corrupting the workers with a higher standard of living linked with potent measures to foster political apathy among them.

The climate of economic prosperity prevailing in western Europe the past five years has not favored the rebirth of the fascist danger. On the contrary, the fascist cells which survived or were recreated in countries like West Germany or France, have grown weaker, if they have not disintegrated. They could only reappear in a time of economic, social and political crisis carried to a paroxysm, and even then would lack substance in the absence of mass unemployment.

On the other hand, we have seen the development almost everywhere in western Europe of Poujadist tendencies, expressing the revolt of the "old middle classes," hit by the capitalist concentration, who are seeking to maintain an independent position in the economy. It is primarily small peasants and middle-aged small shopkeepers; inexorably condemned by the progress of agricultural mechanisation and commercial concentration, who are to be found in the forefront of these tendencies. These groups sometimes find expression within the traditional parties (for example, the resistance among the British Conservatives to the abolition of resale price maintenance; the resistance in the West German Christian Democratic Union -- Christian Social Union to a common market in grains; the expression of Poujadist tendencies within the Belgian party of Liberty and Progress, etc.); sometimes they create new parties, mostly of a quack nature and without any future. The fact is that the displaced petty bourgeoisie can easily find new jobs -- often of higher status -- within the framework of capitalist "prosperity." In the absence of a prolonged recession or a big drop in the rate of expansion, their revolt is based more upon nostalgia for the past than any present misery. This situation, however, could change in the event of a general

recession in the Common Market; we would then certainly see the emergence of more powerful Poujadist tendencies.

A relatively recent phenomenon has been the appearance of pronounced racist tendencies on the political scene in western Europe. This phenomenon has two roots: on the one hand, the exacerbated feeling of frustration felt by the petty-bourgeois layers in face of the progress of the colonial revolution and the loss of "empire"; on the other hand, the reaction of petty-bourgeois circles and the less politically conscious layers of the working class in face of the immigration of a large number of foreign workers, sometimes (especially Great Britain and France) of coloured workers.

The material causes of these racist feelings, at least in working-class groups, are tangible enough -- a housing crisis and fear for the stability of employment. These racist feelings are, moreover, less racism proper than xenophobia. Whereas the target of the most virulent demonstrations in Great Britain is black or Pakistani immigrants, in Switzerland it is the Italian immigrants. These sentiments are no less potent in the hands of the bourgeoisie as a weapon to divide the working class. The labour movement, or in its absence, the vanguard, must of necessity take systematic and energetic countermeasures.

(9) In recent years the two fascist regimes still surviving in Europe, the Franco and Salazar regimes, have undergone a profound crisis. In the case of Portugal, this crisis results primarily from the extension of the colonial revolution into the Portuguese colonies (so-called "Portuguese" Guinea, Angola, Mozambique). This undermines the financial stability of the dictatorship through the military expenditures involved, and in the long run undermines its economic stability insofar as it drags Portuguese imperialism, the weakest of all the imperialisms, into colonial wars which it has no hope of winning, and which will finish by destroying its very foundation.

In the case of Spain, the crisis of the regime has more complex causes; it is due to the economic revival, which fostered a renewal of economic struggles by the working class thanks to a decline in unemployment; to the appearance of a new generation of workers and students who do not feel the weight of the demoralising defeat in the civil war; to the influence of the Cuban Revolution and the revolutionary struggles in Latin America; to the necessity felt by the Spanish bourgeoisie to become integrated into capitalist Europe, etc.

The fundamental scheme of the bourgeoisie is the same in both Portugal and Spain: to move from a fascist regime to an "enlightened" and "liberal" Bonapartism without a real upheaval. This would permit them to legalise the economic struggles of the working class, diverting them into purely reformist roads; to solve their colonial problems; and to integrate themselves into capitalist Europe on an equal partnership basis (formal membership in the Common Market -- and for Spain undoubtedly also in NATO, or in a Mediterranean pact -- would register this coveted status). But many obstacles stand in the way of this operation. Despite accelerated industrialisation, which has already made the working class the most numerous in Spain's population, the two countries still have highly explosive agricultural situations. The agricultural proletariat ekes out an existence in terrible misery. The economic situation in the two countries, both of which are clearly "marginal" to the economy of capitalist Europe, is very vulnerable, quite liable to being

hit harder than the others by a Common Market recession (which would involve in particular a massive return of emigrant workers). The gap between the "European" wage level and wage levels in Spain and Portugal remains a source of constant agitation and growth of revolutionary consciousness among the proletariat of the two countries. The revolutionary movement thus has the possibility to defeat the plan of the bourgeoisie and to transform the crisis of fascism into a crisis of capitalist rule instead, opening the way to a proletarian revolution. But the realisation of this possibility depends on political and organisational conditions, the achievement of which has already suffered a serious delay.

III. The Evolution of the Labour Movement in Western Europe

(10) During the past five years the European labour movement continued to undergo the influence of international factors determining the broad lines of the evolution of world politics: the continuation of the colonial revolution which has gained new spectacular victories; the deepening of the crisis of the Stalinist bureaucracy, which resulted in the Sino-Soviet conflict and the prolonged crisis in the international Communist movement; the prolonged period of boom in the United States which bolstered the capitalist prosperity in capitalist Europe, etc. Nevertheless, the determining factor in the evolution of the labour movement in western Europe continued to be the objective situation in which the European working class itself is placed. The strategic and tactical problems posed by this situation can be definitively resolved only through the internal contradictions within European bourgeois society.

The key problem for the west European labour movement continues to be that of successfully resisting the attempts of the bourgeoisie and its agents to integrate the movement deeper into the bourgeois state. This problem is intimately bound up with another key question: the search for and the formulation of an alternative strategy for the labour movement and its revolutionary vanguard as against the ultrareformist if not openly bourgeois strategy put forward by the big parties of the European Social-Democracy, and the neoreformist strategy advanced more and more by the official Communist parties of western Europe. The formulation of this alternative strategy -- indispensable in constructing an alternative leadership -- cannot consist of the simple repetition of past formulas, particularly when these formulas corresponded to an objective situation characterised by mass unemployment, the stagnation of the productive forces and the immediate threat of fascism -- which is not the objective situation in most European capitalist countries today.

(11) In opposition to all the reformists and neoreformists, and a number of centrist currents influenced by them even at the periphery of the revolutionary vanguard, the Fourth International insists that the capitalist prosperity, far from having resolved "all the economic problems," leaves enough economic, political and social contradictions in capitalist society to make revolutionary struggles objectively possible that could end in the overthrow of capitalist rule and the conquest of power by the proletariat. The contradictions persisting within the prosperity itself and the fundamental instability of this prosperity which leads periodically to national or international recessions; together with the inevitable periodic attacks which the bourgeoisie must launch against the living standard and against the most militant unions of the workers, all create

conditions propitious for an outbreak of struggles which, under the influence of a broad vanguard within the mass movement, can be transformed into offensive battles for transitional demands leading to a revolutionary situation and the establishment of organs of dual power.

Such objectively revolutionary struggles, remain possible, as was brilliantly shown by the Belgian general strike of December 1960-January 1961, and to a lesser degree by the revival of the Italian labour movement in 1962-63. In any case, as these struggles demonstrated, there is no direct mechanical connection between the growth of capitalist prosperity and workers' wages and the lowering of the revolutionary consciousness of the masses influenced by communism. But these examples likewise confirm that the actual transformation of workers' struggles for purely economic demands into struggles for transitional demands which objectively pose the question of power, depends on the activity of the subjective factor within the mass movement to a much greater degree than on different objective conditions.

From this point of view, the union movement, especially its left wing (left reformist, centrist or Communist not dominated by Khrushchevist neoreformism), has progressively become of greater and greater importance in the recent evolution of the labour movement in western Europe. This importance corresponds to the nature of the struggles -- almost all of which begin as struggles for economic demands; to the sterility of the mass parties of the working class, and to their increasing differentiation, which does not create any point of crystallisation sufficiently attractive for a coalescence of the various currents of the labour movement. It is still within a united union movement (as in Great Britain, West Germany or in Sweden), or within a class-conscious union (as in Italy or in Greece) that this coalescence can come about with the fewest hindrances.

From this flows a clear danger; namely, that the trade-union milieu will weaken the programmatic content of the alternative strategy formulated by the various left tendencies in the workers movement, and that anarcho-syndicalist tendencies will thus appear which, under cover of workers' "autonomy" or a refusal to be integrated into the organisms of the bourgeois state, will in fact strengthen the tendency towards political apathy among the proletariat, the No. 1 objective of the big bourgeoisie and one that happens to be fostered by the objective situation. For revolutionary Marxists, the only reply possible is to continually link the question of power, of the government, to the defense of the material interests of the workers as the culmination of the whole anti-capitalist strategy, in the absence of which workers' "autonomy" implies tacit acceptance of the permanency of the bourgeois order.

The same danger is implicit in the "turn toward a strategy centered on the job level" which was projected more or less simultaneously by the centrist or "left" forces of the Italian, West German, British and Belgian trade-union movements. In itself, there is nothing reprehensible or negative about paying more attention to the problems of speed up, the bad effects of automation in a capitalist framework, and the need to offer, even on the job level, a workers plan in opposition to "capitalist programming." Under a revolutionary Marxist leadership, an orientation of this kind would lead to the demand for workers control and to propaganda in favor of workers management, the revolutionary

impact of which has actually increased as technical progress brings about increasing exploitation of the worker, as a producer, in the factory.

But when this orientation is divorced from the problems of power and government, when it aims at actually scattering the struggles and refusing to engage in struggles of the class as a whole, the only kind capable of shaking capitalist rule on the job as well as on the state level, it constitutes an ideal platform for neoreformism that leads only to new forms of class collaboration if not to bitter defeats and fresh demoralisation.

(12) The evolution of the Communist parties in western Europe has been profoundly influenced in the recent period by the developments and various ups and downs of the international crisis of the Communist movement. But the over-all effects of this crisis on most of the parties have been contradictory. If "de-Stalinisation," the slow disappearance of all orthodoxy and all "supreme authority," and the wide differentiation engendered by the Sino-Soviet conflict have undoubtedly heightened the critical judgment of Communist members and re-established, to various degrees, the possibility of real political discussion within these parties (however, only the Italian CP has developed anything that resembles genuinely free discussion), the immediate political effect of this change in climate has been to accentuate the rightist course of these parties under the combined influence of the opportunist tradition of the old leaders (particularly Togliatti in Italy and Thorez in France), the Khrushchevist line promulgated at the Twentieth Congress along with "de-Stalinisation" ("peaceful coexistence, general strategy of the Communist parties"; priority of "economic competition between the USSR and the USA" over any revolutionary orientation in western Europe; attempt at rapprochement with the Social Democracy, etc.), and the climate of capitalist prosperity so conducive to the flowering of new rightist deviations in an essentially opportunist milieu.

In Italy in particular this contradictory effect of "de-Stalinisation" has been felt, but other cases -- like that of Sweden where the Communist party openly adopted a reformist orientation, or Belgium where the leaders of the CP argue for the idea of their party being reabsorbed by the Social Democratic party -- confirm this general rule. It is a product of the long period of opportunism in the Communist parties. Only with the profound radicalisation of significant layers of the workers and the outbreak of big spontaneous struggles could this be reversed, bringing forward a broad Communist left in the mass CP's that would move toward a revolutionary strategy under the pressure of the masses and the stimulus of the revolutionary Marxist forces.

In almost all the countries of capitalist Europe, the Sino-Soviet conflict has led to the appearance of nuclei of pro-Chinese groupings. Their members fall generally into two categories: on the one hand youth and militant workers disgusted by the rightist opportunist line of the official CP's; on the other, men of the CP machines who yearn for the days of Stalin. The relationship of forces between the two tendencies determines the relative size of the groupings. These go from obviously ridiculous groups as in Switzerland to formations of a certain strength like the pro-Chinese Belgian, Italian and Austrian organisations. But even in these cases their possibilities for growth were cut off when elements of the Stalinist type took over the leadership, toeing the Chinese line 100% and sinking into sectarianism and demagogy.

Nevertheless experience showed that these groups, particularly when they were forming, brought together a considerable number of valuable elements in search of revolutionary solutions. It is the duty of our sections to find the means to open a dialogue with these elements and to win them to our program and our movement, otherwise the whole experience threatens to end with their being lost to the labour movement.

(13) During recent years, the evolution of the Social Democracy toward the right has proceeded at an accelerated pace in almost all the countries of western Europe. Two motor forces that must be carefully distinguished are at the bottom of this evolution:

(a) In some cases the classical arguments and motives of reformism in a boom period are at work, without this necessarily implying a decline or modification of the traditional working-class base of these parties. This is particularly true of the Austrian Socialist party, the British Labour party to a certain degree indicated below, and the Nenni Socialist party in Italy.

(b) In other cases what is involved is the expression of a profound modification in the social composition of these parties. The administrative bureaucracy of the state and municipalities, the new middle classes, even small and middle capitalist businessmen, have displaced the workers as active members of these parties. The process of degeneration, which has gone farthest in West German and the Netherlands, is marked by a complete break with the ideology of the past, the official renunciation of Marxism and the class struggle, a refusal to even speak of any kind of socialisation of the means of production or the extension of workers rights in the plants as aims of socialist politics, even official promulgation of reactionary concepts like the "inclusion of workers among stockholders" and "deproletarianisation through the transformation of the workers into individual owners."

Even in the case of the Dutch and German parties, the electoral base remains working class, and the phenomenon of an electoral polarisation around these parties can continue to occur when, in the absence of worthwhile alternatives, the proletariat is compelled to consider a party like the German Socialist party as the only possible alternative to the bourgeois parties. But in such cases the votes won by these parties are gained literally despite their program, their leaders and their orientation, and not because of them.

The Labour party represents a special case. Like the Austrian Socialist party, it represents the only Social Democratic party that continues to be followed, due to historical reasons and the structure of the workers movement, by virtually the entire politically conscious working class of the country. The death of Gaitskell and his replacement by Wilson, plus the strengthening of the left wing in the trade unions and the bankruptcy of the rightist policy in the 1959 elections, led to a small shift to the left in this party during 1963-64 in contrast to all the other Social Democratic parties in western Europe. But the financial crisis to which Wilson's cabinet fell heir, together with the classical fear of these reformists, both of the right and the left, to lead a struggle, no matter how weak, against the "national" and international class enemy, led them to place the burden of their difficulties on the backs of the Labour voters and to become worse adherents than ever of the world politics of British and

American imperialism.

(14) To the intermediate centrist formations that appeared in the preceding period, of which the most important were the Danish and Norwegian Socialist People's parties (SFP) and the French United Socialist party (PSU), two new centrist organisations were recently added: the Italian Socialist Party of Proletarian Unity (PSIUP) and the Belgian Left Socialist Union-Wallon Workers Party (UGS-PWT). The latter parties have a quite different origin from that of the Danish and Norwegian SFP's and the PSU, which were ideological movements or "moral" revolts within the SP's or the CP's. Objectively they are products of upsurges in the class struggle in these countries in the recent past and of the actual radicalisation of the first layer of the mass movement that appeared during these upsurges. The Danish, French and Norwegian formations have a programmatic base that is confused in general and just as neoreformist as that of the Khrushchevist CP's if not even further along the road of neoreformism. The PSIUP and the UGS-PWT on the contrary seek a Marxist programmatic base, and without thereby going beyond left centrism, they are farther to the left on some points than the official CP's.

Two criteria will prove decisive for the future of these new formations -- their capacity to win a real mass base in the plants and, as a consequence of this, to play an effective role in the trade-union movement, and their determination to play an independent political vanguard role in the labour movement, outflanking the official CP's to the left. If they succeed in carrying out these tasks in a positive way, these parties will be able to serve as poles of attraction to a vanguard within the CP's, exercising a continual pressure on them that can limit their opportunist manoeuvres and thus constitute a positive element in constructing a revolutionary mass party that will include a good many of their members. But if they fail in this dual task, they will rapidly become transformed into more and more heterogenous centrist swamps given to incessant factional struggles in the image of the PSU.

IV. The Tasks of Marxist Revolutionists

(15) The central task of revolutionary Marxists during the entire coming period, insofar as it is objectively determined by the succession of phases of capitalist prosperity and more or less limited recessions, continues to be the one already indicated: to prepare, to justify, to co-ordinate, to widen and to generalise the struggles of the proletariat in defense of immediate material interests (whether against inflation or against the threat of unemployment, against the attempt to slow down wage increases and impose a wage freeze, or against cuts in hours and lay offs) and against the integration of the workers movement into the bourgeois state apparatus, by linking economic demands to transitional demands. These, starting from the immediate aspirations of the masses, could lead to a prerevolutionary situation, even the creation of organs of dual power, if struggles of broad sweep are launched to win them.

Success in these tasks involves maintaining the orientation of integrating our militants in the mass movement while at the same time maintaining an independent sector.

The work of integration will continue to be applied in the CP's in France and Italy, in the Labour party in Great Britain, in the SP in Austria, in the SFP in Denmark.

A modification in tactics, already carried out in large part by our forces, is called for in West Germany and Belgium. In West Germany, the trade-union movement and work in the plants now constitute the center of gravity for the revolutionary Marxists, with work in the youth organisations as a secondary center. The possibilities of work in the German SP will doubtless remain extremely limited; membership in this party is justified only as a factor facilitating trade-union work. This does not mean that it can be excluded in advance that the future radicalisation of the German working class, for example with the next recession that might occur in this country, would find political expression, in its first phase, in the German SP. But this possibility cannot be considered to be certain in view of the extreme political degeneration of this party and the complete lack of participation by the workers in its internal life.

In Belgium, the formation of the PWT-UGS created the possibility of advancing revolutionary consciousness. The revolutionary Marxists must support this development in order to shape a force out of it that can contribute effectively to the birth of a revolutionary mass party.

(16) The general strategy of revolutionary Marxists in western Europe involves formulating a precise program of immediate and transitional demands corresponding to the real needs of the workers' movement and the proletariat in the concrete situation in which they find themselves today.

This program must first of all offer to the proletariat effective means of defense against attacks by the bosses carried out under the slogan of "slowing down wage increases" in a period of full employment, or in the form of cuts in hours or lay offs in a downturn of the economic cycle. The defense against cuts in hours is all the more important since it is in general the marginal revenue of the workers that constitutes the basis for raising their standard of living (buying durable consumer goods on credit), and the loss of these revenues in the workers' budgets can represent a disproportionate fall in their standard of living.

In opposition to the inflationary threat to the income of the workers, revolutionary Marxists demand the sliding scale of wages, the automatic adjustment of wages to rises in the cost of living with the index of the cost of living computed by the trade unions themselves, and safeguards against the imposition of progressive income taxes on the supplements to nominal income.

In opposition to the "incomes policy" and in general against any attempt to tie down the workers movement through a "joint agreement economy" ("économie concertée"), the revolutionary Marxists propose that the trade-union movement demand that the discussion on prices, wages, productivity and profits should be preceded by opening the books of the bosses, doing away with business secrets and establishing workers control over production.

In opposition to cuts in hours, the threat of lay offs, which appear at the time of downturns in the economic cycle, and in opposition to the general

threat of capitalist rationalisation and automation to full employment, the revolutionary Marxists demand establishment of the 40-hour and then the 35-hour week, a guaranteed monthly wage, social insurance (including unemployment insurance) of 75% of the average wages, workers control over hiring and firing. They demand that plants closed by the bosses which the workers believe ought to be kept running should be put into operation under workers control; they demand that along with this, to absorb unemployment where it exists or reappears, new plants should be built at government expense and operated under the management of the workers themselves.

In opposition to the general economic dislocations which capitalist prosperity has left untouched or even accentuated in all the capitalist countries of western Europe, the revolutionary Marxists demand the nationalisation of every big industry and the whole credit system, without purchase or indemnification, running them under workers control and with the elaboration of an economic development plan centered on different priorities (particularly collective consumption) than those of "economic programming." So that there will be no ambiguity about this workers plan and to prevent it from becoming a new tie-in with capitalism like the "counter plan" of the PSU, it must be specified that it can be carried out only by a workers (or workers and peasants) government, and that it involves the creation of dual power.

Against the new alienation suffered by workers as consumers, and in order to face the situation arising from a leap forward of the productive forces and new needs of the proletariat, revolutionary Marxists demand extensive development of free collective consumption -- free medicine (national health service), free collective urban transportation, free education up to the highest university degrees with free meals and free lodging for students, socialisation of building sites and free collective services in big living complexes (national housing service). They press the masses and the workers organisations to oppose the models of bourgeois consumption and to adopt models of consumption that are both more rational from the viewpoint of the individual and more equalitarian and human from the social point of view.

Against the alienation which workers have suffered since the beginning of capitalism as producers and which has been aggravated by the progress of capitalist rationalisation and automation, revolutionary Marxists struggle for workers control over the organisation and speed of work, over the plans for re-tooling plants and plans for production, etc. The slogan of workers control appears as the central slogan of this stage of struggle to which all the other transitional demands lead as the main lever for bringing about dual power within the plants, logically ending in the question of political power, the expropriation of the bourgeoisie and the objective of workers management after the overthrow of capitalism.

(17) This program involves the necessity of formulating for each country a precise transitional slogan on the governmental level to concretise, in accordance with the tradition, the currents of opinion and the prevailing mood of the working class, the general slogan of a "workers government" or a "workers and peasants government." It is a question of accustoming the workers to counterpose to bourgeois governments or coalitions with the bourgeoisie the idea of a government that expresses the political will of the working class, of that will--not as revolutionary Marxists would like it, but as it really is at a definite stage.

For this slogan to have its full mobilising effect, it must be intimately tied up with the transition program which this government is supposed to carry out. It must also be formulated in such a way as not to appear manifestly absurd (a "workers government" headed by Willy Brandt is hard to conceive); that is, the trade unions, the mass workers parties or the left wings of these parties, as the situation may require, must be represented as constituting the essential bases of these governments.

(18) The revolutionary Marxists advance their propaganda and their agitation in favor of a united front of all the trade-union organisations within the Common Market without excluding anyone, favoring representation for the French General Confederation of Labour (CGT) and the Italian General Confederation of Labour (CGIL) within the consultative bodies of the trade unions in the Common Market and broadening this united front to include the trade-union movements of all of capitalist Europe.

The struggle for these objectives -- the realisation of which must be tied to the convocation of a big European Congress of Labour -- becomes of extreme importance as the Common Market takes on structure and more and more institutions are set up, and as the monopolies and bosses organisations gain a degree of strength and organisational centralisation going beyond what has been achieved on a national level. As against this concentration of capitalist power, the labour movement has only a front torn into two or three sectors which refuse to collaborate internationally. The result of this is a steady shift in the relationship of forces in favor of the bosses within the Common Market.

(19) A program and strategy specifically for the Iberian peninsula will be worked out by the Marxists there as an extension of the present text.

The problem of revolutionary leadership there, of a revolutionary party of the proletariat is of primordial importance. Present conditions are characterised by: (a) a considerable increase in economic and democratic struggles of the workers, peasants, the poor, students, etc.; (b) the efforts, at times successful, of the bourgeois opposition, more precisely the Christian Democracy, to head the movement, in order to control it and to try to use it in the final analysis to help bring into being a neocapitalist and Bonapartist system.

The party that is needed will not be built in a laboratory but in struggle. The revolutionary Spanish militants must actively participate in the vanguard of the present big struggles which open possibilities of action infinitely superior to those that existed a few years ago. Participating in the economic and democratic struggles of the workers, agricultural labourers, students and other layers of the population, advancing unifying slogans to raise the class consciousness and militancy of the workers, proposing wherever possible forms of struggle that sweep over the limits more or less "tolerated" by the bourgeoisie, following the magnificent example of the Asturian miners who, at Mieres, attacked the police station where miners were being held, with cries of "U.H.P.!" (the Unión de Hermanos Proletarios of 1934) and "Long live Communism!"; the revolutionary militants must, at the present stage of the struggle, work for the most rapid possible success in coordinating the workers struggles and actions on a national scale, as well as forming an effective alliance between the struggles of the industrial workers and the agricultural workers -- indispensable conditions for

proposing more ambitious mass actions in form as well as content, capable of leading to pre-insurrectional situations.

With regard to one of the central slogans of the present struggle: "trade-union freedom," the revolutionary militants must, in opposition to attempts by the party apparatuses (both labour and Christian Democrats) to create their own more or less clandestine trade-union sections, advance the slogan of factory, local, regional and even national committees or councils, and participate in creating unifying and really representative committees of the workers, organs of the class struggle of all kinds, where of course representatives of the Communist, Socialist and Christian trade-union militants would be represented.

The indispensable unity of action in the plants must find an organic form on a national scale. Revolutionary militants must struggle along these lines to create a genuine workers front of political organisations and groups that would go beyond the vague slogans about "democracy," showing from facts of daily life the need for a socialist alternative to the present crisis of the Franco regime. But one of the indispensable conditions for getting beyond the schemes of the political forces of the monopolies and initiating solutions leading to the socialist revolution is the creation of a revolutionary party of the proletariat. The revolutionary militants must take an active part in the still timid attempts at rapprochement among the revolutionary Marxist groups along these lines.

(20) It is necessary to develop a program of specific demands and activities:

(a) For the defense of the colonial revolution, particularly the revolution unfolding in the colony or ex-colony of the imperialism where each of our sections is operating. For aid, free from all political strings, to the new politically independent states, especially those which, in search of complete freedom from imperialism, are carrying their revolution over into a permanent revolution.

(b) For withdrawal from NATO and any military pact. For a struggle against nuclear arms (for unilateral disarmament, against any multilateral force), and against the threats of world war launched by imperialism in general, a campaign that must combine participation in the antinuclear movement with the struggle for an anticapitalist program, together with the propaganda that only the world victory of socialism will put an end to the threat of a nuclear holocaust.

(c) For the intervention of our movement in the crisis of the world Communist movement, an intervention adapted to the special features of the Communist movement and its differentiations in each country of western Europe.

(d) For specific action of our movement among the youth, who are mostly outside the sway of the traditional organisations, who are particularly vulnerable to downturns in the economic cycle, and among whom definite layers in a state of latent or open rebellion against society in general can be led through action into becoming revolutionary adversaries of capitalism and any society founded on exploitation and oppression.

DRAFT THESES

ON THE PROGRESS AND PROBLEMS

OF THE AFRICAN REVOLUTION

Some ten years after the process of the formation of independent states began on a big scale, the African reality shows considerable differentiation. Nevertheless, while acknowledging their approximate and provisional nature, it is possible to take the fundamental tendencies and common or analogous elements and place them in definite categories or groups.

More concretely, three major sectors can be distinguished: the Africa where colonialism and racism still survive, the Africa of outright neocolonial structure, and the Africa where revolutionary transformations are occurring. An analysis of situations and tendencies in a certain number of countries in each of these sectors will provide us with a rather extensive picture, and enable us to single out the basic tendencies and work out some essential conclusions.

I. COLONIAL AFRICA

Colonial Africa, which geographically coincides in large measure with southern Africa, includes essentially South Africa, Angola, Mozambique, and Southern Rhodesia (Zimbabwe). We will briefly analyze here the two epicenters of South Africa and Angola.

South Africa

The dominant feature in recent years has been the aggravation of national and economic oppression imposed on the indigenous population of South Africa by apartheid rule. Against this, violent forms of struggle have developed, representing a break with the methods advocated in the past by broad sectors of the nationalist movement; and, in principle, a turn was made in this field by the African National Congress (ANC) and the Communist party (PC). However, the liberal sectors in particular sought to draw advantage from acts of violence conducted in distinct separation from a broad mass movement. The hopes of those who thought that acts of sabotage would be sufficient to set off the powder keg have proved to be unjustified. The revolts which broke out at different times in isolated regions met with very harsh repression and were thus crushed.

Generally, the fundamental elements of the situation in South Africa remain unchanged. The presence of a high percentage of white masters inevitably points to a perspective of long, stubborn struggle. But, on the other hand, an economic and social structure relatively advanced for an African country, the lack of a genuine indigenous bourgeoisie, the existence of a quite large mass of proletarians and

very broad masses of poor, even proletarianized peasants, are also factors of a nature to stimulate the revolutionary anticapitalist and socialist dynamics of a revolution starting off as a national and democratic revolution. In the final analysis, it is precisely the presence of these factors that explains both the scheme for a neocolonialist operation with the intervention of sectors of world imperialism and the extreme caution of the "liberal" bourgeois forces in opposition to the present racist regime. The neocolonialist operation envisages replacing apartheid rule by the granting of a few "liberal" political rights to narrow layers of the indigenous population.

The neocolonialist operation is, in fact, running into serious obstacles, all the more so since no one can guarantee that the process, once launched, would stop at the point desired by certain "liberal" forces. Nevertheless, the possibility of success cannot be ruled out, particularly if certain conditions were fulfilled. A success would obviously affect the whole development of the revolution in South Africa.

In any case the task of the revolutionary forces at the present stage is to struggle in such a way that Verwoerd's possible downfall would involve the unleashing of a process of permanent revolution and not the reorganization of the country on a neocolonial basis. In relation to this aim, a struggle limited to acts of sabotage or to isolated actions is ineffective, even favorable to the projects of the neocolonialist forces. For this reason it is insufficient to take a position in favor of armed struggle. In truth, it is not at all simply a problem of method but primarily one of content. A neocolonialist and liberal wing can, it is obvious, conclude that in the complete absence of any legal avenues at all it is necessary to fight Verwoerd by means of armed struggle, yet its basic orientation would remain fundamentally opposed to that of a mass revolutionary movement.

In reality, it is not possible to counter the neocolonialist maneuver and actually launch the process of the South African revolution except through a movement based on the broad masses, particularly the peasant masses. The touchstone for a revolutionary leadership is its capacity, starting from a mobilization for democratic and national liberatory aims, to assure at each concrete stage the slogans and actions capable of stimulating the anticapitalist dynamics of the struggle.

The progress realized among the peasants and in the reserves by sectors of the vanguard and the maturing of a considerable number of cadres in the mass movement are unquestionably positive signs.

The formation of a united front of the forces struggling against apartheid and imperialism remains a primary necessity, if only because of the bitterness of the prospective struggle which

thus necessitates organizations functioning on a national scale. But no united front would be worth anything, or could accomplish the tasks for which it was set up, if the preliminary condition were not met of breaking with all the agents of imperialism and neocolonialism, including the indigenous and liberal agents.

Revolutionary Marxists are partisans of that kind of united front and offer their active support to all those who actually struggle, no matter what their specific orientation may be. They support in particular the vanguard sectors of the South African movement that have already succeeded, thanks to stubborn and courageous struggle, in gaining real mass influence, especially among the peasants (above all APDUSA, the African People's Democratic Union of Southern Africa) and the other organizations affiliated to the NEUM (Non European Unity Movement).

Angola

The national Angolan movement has undergone many vicissitudes because of internal as well as international reasons.

The massive effort of Portuguese imperialism, backed by its allies, has not succeeded in crushing the resistance of the Angolan people but it has been able to contain it at certain times. The developments in the Congo situation likewise had a negative influence, particularly after Tshombe, who is directly linked with the Portuguese, came to power. Finally there has been the obstacle of the struggles within the national movement and its cleavages, especially the alternating positions taken by certain African states and the rather heavy intervention of the Soviet bureaucracy, which participated in the effort to discredit the GRAE (Revolutionary Government of Angola in Exile) and the FLNA (Angolan National Liberation Front).

In the case of Angola, the neocolonialist margin of maneuver (up to now very uncertain and vague, probably more under North American than Portuguese inspiration) has been quite limited. An indigenous bourgeois class that could serve as a social and political base for a possible neocolonialist operation does not exist in even embryonic form. The defeat of colonialism -- which would be the result in any case of a broad mass mobilization, particularly the peasant masses -- would create a political and social vacuum that would strongly stimulate the anticapitalist dynamics of the process. In an independent Angolan state, the specific weight of the masses, the peasant masses in the first place, would be determining and the masses would be pushed from the first phases to translate their victory into economic and social terms.

From this it follows that the revolutionary Angolan vanguard must set about elaborating a perspective of permanent revolution, clarifying in a systematic way the need for the national liberation struggle to have an anticapitalist and socialist content. Some of

the militants and nuclei have already reached this conclusion, utilizing the criteria of Marxist analysis and adopting socialist conceptions.

It also follows that the masses, during a probably rather long struggle, undergoing an immense experience, will not tolerate being robbed of their victory. This means that the necessary clarification and the possible elimination of opportunist or cowardly leaders, under the influence of forces foreign to the revolution, will be achieved during the struggle itself, in accordance with its own logic.

It is clear that a genuine revolutionary Angolan leadership does not yet exist and that internal conflicts and struggles of the nationalist movement will probably continue to appear for a whole period. In determining which field of action they will give preference, the fundamental criterion for revolutionary Marxists is who at a given stage exercises real mass influence and who is actually fighting, because that is where the logic of the revolutionary struggle most easily permits the formation of a revolutionary vanguard. The line of a leadership or a few leaders cannot be a decisive criterion, all the less so in the case of insinuations or suspicions about this or that person.

In the fifth year of the Angolan struggle, the following objective balance sheet, by and large, can be drawn up:

(a) The armed struggle inside the country is continuing and has even undergone a revival recently. The Angolan armed forces outside the country continue to exist, despite the grave limitations imposed on their struggle by the reactionary Congolese governments.

(b) The armed struggle inside Angola -- which is being conducted especially by forces of peasant social composition -- is being organized essentially by the FLNA, which represents the base of the GRAE. The MPLA (People's Movement of Angolan Liberation) succeeded during 1964 in establishing a base in the enclave of Cabinda where contingents of the FLNA were already in existence. Despite the considerable backing the MPLA has abroad and the explicit support of the Soviet bureaucracy, it has not been able to reverse the existing relationship of forces and cannot be considered at present as representing more than a minor component of the Angolan movement so far as mass influence is concerned.

(c) On the plane of conscious leadership, the MPLA claims to have a more progressive, even socialist, orientation. However, this has not prevented it from having ties with dubious formations and from continuing to follow a confused line. Its relative strength in negotiations is derived less from its intrinsic influence than from the support granted it by the wing of the Communist movement adhering to the Soviet bureaucracy.

Due to its size alone, the FLNA appears more heterogenous than the MPLA, including the leadership level. A whole series of its elements have not crystallized politically, move in zigzags, work in a completely empirical way. It is very likely that some of them have been under imperialist influence in the past or still are. However it would be a mistake not to note that certain representatives of the FLNA are evolving, even rapidly, and that in the light of bitter experiences, they have a tendency to move toward "Chinese" positions (if only tactically). It would likewise be an error to leave out of consideration the fact that after splitting from the MPLA, a series of vanguard elements with a Marxist education and having a quite left orientation have entered the FLNA.

(d) The attitudes of certain African states, including the more progressive, or those considered to be more progressive, have changed position on the Angolan national movement abruptly at times and without clear explanation. Their attitudes thus cannot be taken as a reliable criterion. No doubt particular diplomatic or tactical considerations have come into play most often, taking precedence over an analysis of the actual forces, the relationship of forces and the dynamics of the movement.

Without hiding its criticisms and while developing its own concepts on the nature of the Angolan revolution, the Fourth International will continue to solidarize with the forces in actual struggle, which are primarily the peasant forces organized at the present stage essentially in the FLNA. The Fourth International holds that the unification of the FLNA with other existing forces would prove profitable, naturally on condition that it be realized in the struggle, on the basis of a clear anti-imperialist and anti-colonialist program, without which the indispensable unity in the armed struggle would suffer.

An upsurge of the struggle in the other Portuguese colonies, particularly in Mozambique (in so-called "Portuguese" Guinea the movement has already reached spectacular dimensions) would multiply difficulties for the colonialists, could lead them to give up certain positions and possibly offer some compromises -- with the aim of strengthening the most important rampart. For a whole series of reasons, both geographic and economic, it is most likely that Angola will prove to be the place where the Portuguese will decide to hang on to the end. From this viewpoint, too, the perspective of a prolonged struggle is justified.

II. NEOCOLONIAL AFRICA

The countries that can be listed in this category -- the countries of North Africa like Tunisia, Morocco and Libya, most of the former French colonies of west Africa, the former British colonies in the same region like Nigeria and Sierra Leone, the Congo, countries of east Africa like Ethiopia, Somalia and the former

British colonies there, etc. -- shows in itself the broad character of this classification and the rather wide differences that are involved. We will limit ourselves to referring to a few of the more significant cases in the various zones.

The Congo

The Congo offers in concentrated form the multiple contradictions of an Africa in upheaval in the process of emancipation. The central government rests in the hands of the man most detested by the African revolutionists and even by certain moderates, and vast regions are the scene of a ferocious war, the current situation being due just as much to foreign intervention as to the limitations and internal conflicts of the forces on the scene. The struggle in the Congo is not only for the territory itself. Involved in this struggle is the threat of consolidating a counterrevolutionary government that would bear down on other African countries and accentuate the differences in the Organization of African Unity (OAU) where a wing is already inclining in Tshombe's direction as the "legal government."

From the point of view of imperialism, the Congo of the late fifties had reached a point where domination in the old style could not be continued any longer; nevertheless hardly anything had been done to prepare an alternative of even the most fragile kind. Because of this, particularly because of the absence in the Congo of even an embryonic indigenous ruling class, the 1960 operation ended in a chronic crisis. Not even the most moderate neocolonialist setup could be stabilized, so that in 1964 the imperialists went back to direct intervention, hardly camouflaged behind the hypocritical mask of rescuing whites and helping the "legal" government of Tshombe.

As for the anticolonialist Congolese forces, their fundamental deficiency has been the absence of a genuinely unified political organization, the Lumumbist organization itself having only limited forces. That is why the solution envisaged at the "round table" quickly blew up and Lumumba, the only figure in position to play a national role, was eliminated. For a whole period, the splintering of the movement and the lack of leadership slowed down resumption of the revolutionary struggle. The resistance could pick up again only later, first on a local and regional scale. The most concentrated proletarian force -- in the Katanga mines -- could play no role because of the pressure brought to bear by the whole colonialist and Tshombist machine. There is no doubt that the root of the weaknesses of the national movement is to be found in the absence of a national party, caused in the final analysis by the tribal divisions and the backward character of most of the country. It must nevertheless be added that the international forces interested in counteracting the negative evolution of the Congo -- the progressive African states and the workers states -- even if one leaves aside the crim-

inal responsibility of the Soviet bureaucracy in facilitating the intervention of the UN in July 1960, could not or did not want to contribute in a decisive way to lancing the Congolese abscess, even if they have granted the insurgents considerable aid since then.

As a result of the most recent events, the struggle has become explosive for imperialism and neocolonialism, and, in short, more to the advantage of the revolutionary forces that have sprung up in different zones of the country. Thanks to a brutal and cynical policy, which does not bother about any camouflage and completely accepts the logic of a war of extermination, conducted particularly by foreign mercenaries, Tshombe reconquered some positions; but only partial successes are involved. The truth is that the Tshombist "solution" has now been put in question.

The deficiencies and weaknesses of the national movement have not been overcome, however. Coordination and unity are not yet assured. This is not specially due to the quite real geographical difficulties. Grave political differences remain. The reaction to the "Adoula" plan to stop the armed struggle in return for a neocolonialist solution spoke eloquently in this respect. If there is an intransigent wing that wants to go all the way and reject an equivocal solution (Mulèlé), there is also another tendency, represented at the top and even in some sectors of the combat forces (for example, Gbenyé), that is willing to accept a moderate neocolonialist solution in the final analysis. But such a solution would be impractical or short lived. The centrifugal tendencies would quickly reappear, the struggle would be resumed and the only result would be a grave division and confusion in the nationalist movement. The only feasible solution is to defeat not only Tshombe, but especially the domestic and international forces hiding behind him. Such an outcome is possible only through the united national action of a revolutionary army -- helped militarily by revolutionary Africa and the workers states -- on the basis of a political movement that struggles to uproot the imperialist domination (expropriation and nationalization of foreign holdings) and to eliminate the indigenous bureaucracy, allied to the neocolonialists and incapable of governing the country.

The present attitude of the African states is contradictory. The OAU has zigzagged; the neocolonialist states with moderate governments support the "legal" government; some progressive states of Africa grant the indispensable aid. Thus, not only are antagonistic internal forces in opposition to each other in the Congo, but also the different African tendencies, plus, of course, international forces. Hence the significance of a struggle whose possible victorious outcome could very shortly modify the tendencies in southern Africa, by creating the preconditions for the collapse of the most reactionary rampart on the continent.

Nigeria

Nigeria, in the British scheme of things, was to play the role of a pilot test in neocolonialism. It is by far the most populous country of Africa, centrally situated, and, thanks to these factors, capable of greatly influencing the general evolution of the continent. Moreover a series of conditions existed that could justly be considered to be favorable from the neocolonialist point of view:

(a) The presence of a considerable amount of foreign capital in industry and finance as well as agriculture (plantation ownership).

(b) The existence of a relatively substantial nucleus of an indigenous ruling class in comparison with other African countries.

(c) Sufficient differences within this class and among the different zones of the country to assure the possibility of diversionary maneuvers to prevent the process of national anti-imperialist unification from coming to a head.

(d) The prior formation of a political layer, trained in the British school, a layer that even included some of the moderate trade-union leaders.

(e) Considerable economic resources, open to foreign exploitation.

All of this was crowned, so to speak, with another essential element: independence was handed down without a revolutionary struggle involving the masses in a big way.

Five years after independence, Nigeria remains under neocolonial rule, suffering from a conservative, even reactionary government. No measures have either been taken or projected with regard to the imperialist holdings or in an at all progressive direction. In the field of foreign policy, Nigeria continues to take retrogressive positions, especially in relation to the most burning African problems, thus constituting one of the strongest counterweights to the action of the progressive African governments.

Nevertheless the situation is far from having crystallized. In fact, as the events at the end of 1964 and beginning of 1965 showed, the country is undergoing a profound crisis. The regime is completely unstable, the ruling-class forces -- even those that constituted the base of the governmental system for a whole period -- are divided and in sharp internal struggle, mass opposition, particularly in the most developed regions, is growing. The political topography remains fragmented and contradictory (different and opposing political forces rule in different regions) and the unity of the federation itself is threatened. The British-style democra-

tic parliamentary structures are only a masquerade, as is proved by the colossally fraudulent elections among other things, the measures taken against political opponents, even the most moderate, the harsh repression of representatives of the vanguard of the labor movement. In reality, the entire foundation of the political system inherited from the British empire is extremely precarious.

All this obviously reflects the structure of Nigerian society. The country is politically divided, even at the ruling-class level, because the degree of economic and social development is quite differentiated. As against the relatively developed regions stands the North, where feudal-type relations are still prevalent. In this context, tribal and religious factors play a big role. Of course this does not mean that the situation is completely static. On the contrary, Nigerian society is in movement and capitalist relations have begun to penetrate even the North. However this penetration is not wiping out the influence of the feudal elements. What is occurring instead is a symbiosis such as other societies have undergone during transition periods (for example, feudalists also become contractors; the break-up of communal structures occurs in favor of tribal chiefs who seize the land, etc.).

A highly progressive element, one capable of playing an even bigger role in the future, is the dynamism displayed by considerable sectors of the urban masses, those most integrated in the modern economic web (e.g., the Lagos dockers strike, the June 1964 general strike, etc.). Due to this situation and also to the international experience accumulated by young cadres (particularly during studies in Europe), vanguard groups already exist in Nigeria that proclaim themselves to be Marxist or revolutionary Marxist, who criticize the British-type trade unionism and who are wrestling with the vital problems of the Nigerian revolution and big international questions, going through conflicts and splits in the process. Among the recent experiences that should be mentioned in this respect are those of the Socialist Workers and Farmers party (SWFP) and the Nigerian Labour party (NLP).

An essential problem remaining to be clarified is the attitude to be taken toward the national bourgeoisie, which in Nigeria is not as spectral as in some other African countries, and which in any case has already revealed beyond mistake its conservative and pro-imperialist nature. Thus the problem is not at all to seek an alliance with this social layer -- as the Nigerian partisans of the line of the Soviet bureaucracy maintain -- but to appeal to the sectors of the people still under the influence of a vaguely progressive outlook (for example, the Action Group) on the basis of a revolutionary platform and to organize them under a consistent socialist leadership.

This specification is imperative in the more general case of the fundamental problem of the alliance with the peasant masses who

constitute the overwhelming majority of the population and who are quite variegated socially (extending from agricultural laborers on the plantations to the classical poor peasants and serfs of the feudal zones). The elaboration of a transition program for the agrarian revolution and the mobilization of the peasants (who in part still constitute the base of the most conservative tendencies) are key tasks for the Nigerian vanguard.

Ethiopia

In east Africa, the rampart of conservatism is the kingdom of Ethiopia, a backward society featured by feudal-type relations on which rests a genuinely despotic political regime. The feudal class welded together around the Negus and his family aims at consolidating its position through an alliance with foreign capital. The industrial sector, still quite limited, is entirely in the hands of capitalists of other countries who enjoy very favorable conditions for their investments. The prestige acquired at the time of the fascist aggression, and especially the hypocritical position in favor of unity voiced at meetings of the African states by the emperor, constitute a cheap "progressive" ideological cover that among other things diverts attention from the concession of military bases in Ethiopia to American imperialism.

The revolt in 1960 was a preliminary grave sign of the tendencies undermining the kingdom's system. The quick defeat of the revolt is ascribable to its timorous character and to the nature of its leadership which had neither the ability nor the wish to bring broad sectors of the masses into action. More recently other straws in the wind have appeared -- insubordination of military contingents; student actions; peasant demonstrations; strikes, occasionally led by militant underground trade unionists, at other times occurring in more open and spectacular ways (for example, the Ethiopian Air Line strike in 1964).

The opposition, extending from the most moderate positions among the "enlightened" sectors of the upper layers to the armed resistance of sectors of the people, primarily peasants, is even expressed in organized forms. The Ethiopian People's Movement Council (EPMC), holding to a program of advanced views and having cadres close to Marxist and revolutionary Marxist concepts, represents at the present stage a broad vanguard. Its struggle for a republic, for the abolition of the feudal system, for a radical agrarian reform, for really popular government, against American imperialism and neocolonialism constitutes a foundation corresponding to the needs of the Ethiopian revolution at the present stage. The solidarity of the revolutionists of Africa and the entire world toward the EPMC and all those who are struggling with analogous aims is all the more necessary in view of the fact that the Ethiopian opposition has been received with coldness, if not hostility, by the most advanced African states and leaders due to their desire to avoid any diplo-

matic complications in their relations with the imperial government.

An important aspect of the situation in Ethiopia is the existence of strong national minorities struggling either for autonomy or for separation from the kingdom. In the case of Eritrea the movement has mounted armed peasant guerrilla actions for several years and has projected a political line of socialist coloration.

The Former French Colonies of West Africa

The former French colonies are, together with Nigeria, the main links in the neocolonial system of west Africa. Granted independence from above, without big struggles and popular victories, on the basis of a compromise with the former imperialist master, these countries have offered a favorable soil for neocolonialist operations, first of all because of their artificial boundary lines, their Balkanization. It can be said quite aptly that for them independence amounts to a flag and a national anthem. The economic positions of foreign capital, most often French, have been maintained. At the same time, nuclei of often rather substantial indigenous exploiting classes have been consolidated (landlords, merchants, small industrialists, entrepreneurs in transport, intellectuals with a privileged standard of living and an aristocratic outlook, etc.). The tribal divisions, despite their declining influence, have been kept up in order to be utilized for conservative aims by the indigenous privileged layers and imperialism.

An important role -- relatively new in relation to the period before independence -- is being played by the bureaucratic layer in control of the state whose social privileges are based on this control. In other countries or at other times, layers of this kind either underwent osmosis with the economic forces or crystallized out as an instrument of economic expansion, giving birth to and nourishing what could be called a bourgeoisie of bureaucratic origin (e.g., the Mexican experience of the forties and the Indonesian experience after the departure of the Dutch). In other instances, these layers acquired a Bonapartist political physiognomy instead, seeking to balance between the different indigenous privileged sectors, imperialism and the mass movement. In general these layers swell completely out of proportion to their real functions and assume privileges for themselves that are all the more hated in view of the miserable standard of living of virtually the entire population. They display the most notorious corruption and malfeasance in office.

These two variants are to be found in the countries of neocolonial structure in west Africa. On the international level, these countries are tied to imperialism through France and through the Common Market. They represent the conservative wing of the African states, being surpassed in this only by the racist government of Verwoerd.

In such a situation the single party is an instrument par excellence of political control and repression. Any signs of opposition are harshly crushed even by figures who like to present themselves as the sponsors of a "democratic" and "nontotalitarian" Africa. In the final analysis this is a product of the intrinsic weakness of these systems which are incapable of freeing themselves from foreign domination, of guaranteeing the indispensable economic takeoff, and of ameliorating however little the standard of living of the masses. (Occasionally a decline in the standard of living appears, due to the fact that the dissolution of the former precapitalist economic and social forms destroys certain possibilities of cooperation in eking out a living without assuring by way of compensation new openings, particularly through absorption into the expanding modern sectors.)

This does not mean that it is excluded that a precarious, crisis-ridden situation cannot be prolonged for a time by maintaining the present regimes (which could include changes at the government level and in political personnel). A radical reversal of the situation will not really be possible until after imperialism is defeated in other sectors of Africa and the world or until the oppositional forces become capable of developing a consistent line of opposition and of establishing solid ties with the masses, especially the peasants, or through a combination of the two.

Tunisia and Morocco

In north Africa neocolonialism established two relatively solid bases in Morocco and Tunisia where formal independence was gained following the struggle of a national movement but where economic power remained in the hands of privileged indigenous layers as well as foreign owners, often resident in the country.

The balance sheet of the years of independence is clear, confirming the easily made forecasts. The two countries have not overcome economic stagnation. A certain limited development, quite artificial in nature, has affected only very thin layers in the towns. The proletarian and plebian masses, and the broad mass of the peasantry still suffer the utmost destitution.

In addition to the blindness of certain layers wedded to the status quo, it is this situation and the deep discontent of the masses that are at the bottom of the most recent developments in Tunisia, and the relative shift to the left undertaken by Bourguiba, who still retains considerable influence. In Morocco the task of the conservatives is more difficult due to the fact that a rather large working class exists there, concentrated and organized, while power is held by a leadership, the prestige of which does not derive from any participation in the struggle for independence. Hence the very sharp character of the social and political conflicts, the much clearer differentiations, including those in the ranks of the opposi-

tion, and the violence and repression employed by the regime where the king remains the pivot although his authority has been weakened. The recent explosion in Casablanca foreshadows the grave conflicts now maturing.

In the case of Morocco, it is particularly clear that the sole perspective for real progress is an anticapitalist struggle for socialist solutions. Any strategy aiming at collaboration with the so-called national bourgeoisie will prove to be impractical and fictitious; because the existing system of exploitation and oppression is exercised directly -- even if in good part for the benefit of foreign capital -- by indigenous owning layers, including a bourgeois layer, and the struggle against them cannot be separated from the struggle against the landlords and the foreign proprietors.

III. THE AFRICA OF REVOLUTIONARY TRANSFORMATIONS

The countries in this category reached independence with or without mass struggles, have adopted progressive, anti-imperialist and even anticapitalist measures, and, at least at a certain stage in their evolution, have played a role in the breakup of the colonial and neocolonial system.

The most significant experiences up to now have been those of Ghana, Mali, Guinea, Egypt, Zanzibar and the Algerian Revolution.*

Mali

Mali gained independence following a gradual process, but through the action of a centralized and militant political party having a rather advanced ideology. This means that Mali never experienced the political vacuum suffered by other African countries or the conservative retrograde evolution of which the parties of west Africa were protagonists although they were connected for a rather long period with the Union Soudanaise-Rassemblement Démocratique Africain (US-RDA).

When independence came, Mali was an extremely backward country, with an almost completely agricultural and subsistence economy (around 80%). It was the same five years later, the proportions of the different economic sectors not having changed.

The Malian leadership adopted a line rigorously favoring a mixed and planned economy. So far as the expansion of production is concerned, this has not yet yielded substantial results. The growth

*A genuine revolution occurred in Zanzibar in 1964. But the situation was complicated by the fusion of Zanzibar and Tanganyika which, at least at this stage, had the aim and in part the result of putting a brake on the Zanzibar movement.

of production has been limited, having been deliberately and to a large degree inevitably concentrated in the agricultural sector. Most often the increases have been absorbed by a rise in consumption. This has meant stagnation in means for investment.

In industry, trade and transport, the government has affirmed the primacy of the state sector. Companies have been set up that belong completely to the state or in which the state holds the majority of shares (ENCON, SEMA, RTM, SOENA, etc.). The same system has been adopted for the banks (People's Development Bank, Malian Bank of Credits and Deposits). A state company has also been formed for investments, but private initiative continues, regulated by a statute on investments. In principle it is to come under state control in ten years. An important role is played in addition by Somiex, an export-import company that is supposed in principle to exercise a kind of monopoly over foreign trade. However, Somiex has not eliminated private trade, which continues, even in the form of trade carried on by foreign companies. In the countryside, the regime chose the road of using and gradually transforming the communal tribal structures by introducing what is called the "collective field." It should be recalled that before independence, the land already belonged in substance to the peasants, the privileges of the traditional chiefs having been considerably curtailed. The experience with collective fields remains limited, however, since on the one hand it is not general and on the other only a quite modest part of the labor of the peasants is devoted to this sector.

The backbone of the independent regime is the single US-RDA party, led by cadres with a trade-union and Marxist education (insofar as an education acquired in the circles of the French Communist party can be called Marxist), who have adopted democratic centralism and elaborated an indigenous version of Marxism. According to this, Mali is a society without classes, whether feudalistic or capitalist, which is gradually moving toward socialism. In such a society, the tasks which it is the lot of the proletariat to carry out in industrial societies are accomplished by a people's movement that is not specifically proletarian, the vanguard of which is composed of white-collar workers, teachers and manual workers allied with other layers of the population (peasants and artisans). In other words, these layers of the people are supposed to represent the historic equivalent of the proletariat. Referring to Lenin, the theoreticians of the Malian party explain in addition that it will be possible to "leap over" the capitalist stage and advance towards socialism without passing through the other historically antecedent stages.

It is not denied that social differentiations can come about (by the formation, for example, of commercial layers and bureaucratic layers detached from the masses), but it is held that the fundamental dynamics is counteracting these tendencies.

The concept concerning trade unions merits attention. The Malians reject any reference to the traditional role of trade unions and set education and propaganda as their essential tasks (education in a trade, campaigns for production, etc.). "Laborite" tendencies are violently criticized and strikes are denounced as completely counterrevolutionary. Trade unions are denied any role in the struggle over division of income and even in the defense of employment levels. This is carried so far as to include in trade-union tasks the duty of explaining the need for a wage-freeze (in fact, after independence, even wage reductions occurred).

Mali thus presents quite specific features and its sociological classification does pose a problem. It is clear, in fact, that it has no genuine indigenous capitalist class (either industrial, commercial, or landholding) and one cannot speak of domination by foreign capital. In this way it cannot be affirmed that the present political ruling layer directly serves capitalist or imperialist interests. However, a rather clear social stratification exists that does entail class conflicts.

First of all the state companies by their very structure do not exclude the participation, if only as a minority, of private interests. Secondly, a private sector exists; the commercial layers in particular enjoying privileged conditions which Somex has not suppressed. Thus capitalist profits are formed in all these sectors and the social layers which get them have interests opposed to those of the other social groups in the country. On the political level this is occasionally concretized in reactionary movements. It is necessary to take into consideration finally that even if the few existing foreign activities be left out of account, Mali, as a backward country which must face the advanced countries on the world market, suffers indirect exploitation by international capital. It is moreover an associate member of the Common Market.

As for the rural sector, there are few cooperatives or collectives, the traditional structures still predominating. An agricultural society of this kind may not experience the tragic conflicts of a capitalist society or a society in transition to capitalism, but it is condemned by and large to immobility and, in the final analysis, cannot avoid a whole series of imbalances following the finally inevitable breakup of the former equilibrium. The circle of the subsistence economy is no longer a closed one, problems of displacement arise which purely negative measures obviously cannot resolve.

The political ruling layer, the source of which is in general the party and trade-union apparatuses (at the top, moreover, the same people are often involved), receives its income on the basis of the functions it performs in the state, the government, the economic machine, etc. In the given context, it is inevitable for tendencies toward the crystallization of privileges to appear despite

the real or claimed equalitarian orientation of some of the leaders. Inevitably this layer is led to exploit its positions of power in order to assure for itself a stable standard of living distinctly higher than that of the rest of the population. The official documents themselves indicate that such tendencies have already become established.

As against this, the tendency for the positions of political-bureaucratic privilege to fuse with the positions of privilege of economic origin, although inherent in this kind of society, has not separated out in a distinct way up to now. This could occur in the future, for example, by the overlapping of the commercial sectors with sectors of members of the political apparatus. Moreover, cases of corruption, officially denounced, do not constitute incidental phenomena but have a deeper significance. In actuality, where an osmosis is not occurring between the political rulers and the owning layers in which certain privileges cannot be, or cannot yet be, legalized and consolidated (particularly because it would be politically inopportune), the "illegal" avenues and a hypocritical cover constitute an almost obligatory variant.

In any case it is clear that in the final analysis the social nature of the ruling layer of Mali will be determined by its concrete content; i.e., the kind of relations of production and social stratification which it objectively maintains and consolidates. Up to this point, its course clearly points to the establishment of relations with the privileged economic layers, including foreign ones. Only a deep-going popular revolution, bringing forward a revolutionary leadership, could open up a different perspective. Despite its specific traits and the progressive measures that have been carried out, Mali remains within the framework of structures fundamentally of the past.

Guinea

Guinea achieved independence by voting to secede from the "French Community" in the Gaullist referendum of 1958. Its evolution has been analogous to that of Mali in a number of ways:

(a) An economic structure in which the agricultural sector and a subsistence economy hold preponderant weight.

(b) The absence of an indigenous owning class (landowners, industrial capitalists, etc.) and the existence of a political ruling layer whose base is in the state apparatus, the government and other political structures.

(c) A breakdown of the domination of the traditional chiefs before independence was achieved and a substantial restoration of the land to the peasants.

(d) The decisive role of a single party led by men who had a Marxist education and who worked out a specific analysis of their society.

During the first phase of its independence, Guinea played a vanguard role in Africa. In the economic field, the new regime envisaged economic planning and a considerable rise in the rate of accumulation, asserted the primacy of the public sector, represented by nationalized industries the construction of which was projected by the State Bank, by the Guinean Department of Foreign Trade (an export-import company whose aim was to assure an extensive state monopoly of foreign trade) and by the Guinean Department of Domestic Trade whose aim was to control domestic trade. At the same time, the formation of mixed international companies was envisaged (Guinea's participation to be 50%), price regulations were introduced, and wage increases were passed. In the countryside measures of a cooperative type were advocated. The "human investment" was to be one of the important elements in the economic takeoff. In the field of international relations, Guinea signed agreements with the USSR, China and other workers states and became one of the main spokesmen of revolutionary Africa and African unity.

Subsequent evolution did not bear out the promises, reassuring those who feared the birth of a "Communist" state in west Africa. This has also been reflected in foreign policy, where the retreat has at times taken spectacular forms.

In the economic field, the relative isolation imposed by imperialism in the first phase cost the country dearly -- a monetary crisis was accompanied by a crisis or by stagnation in production. In industry little progress was made. Aside from isolated achievements (a cigarette factory, the Lumumba printing plant), advances were limited to the infrastructure (docking and airport facilities in Conakry, etc.). In the agricultural sector, coffee production, which was scheduled to rise, took a sharp dip during the three-year plan, due among other things to a plant disease. Control over foreign trade turned out to be largely formal. The wholesalers and the retailers rule the roost. Speculation and smuggling (particularly in rice) have caused serious losses to the national economy. Statized domestic trade went bankrupt and was largely ended by 1963. The freezing of prices failed also. A situation of scarcity followed which still remains. The gravity of the general economic situation, the extensiveness of smuggling, the wide speculation in money led to the new measures in November 1964 (reissuing of commercial licences, checking of the wealth of party functionaries and officials, capital punishment for illegal trade, etc.), all of which were more spectacular in appearance than in real influence.

But the main element of the situation in Guinea is the fact that the exploitation of the mineral resources and industrial production remains entirely under the domination of foreign capital.

Even in the radical periods, assurances and guarantees were still given to foreign capitalists. Significantly, the 1960 measures included a major exception in favor of the mining companies, the insurance companies, the air and maritime transport companies and the banks. Later a very lucrative investment law was adopted. In 1963 they even went so far as to denationalize the diamond mines. In November 1964 handicraft diamond operations were banned. The fact is that the basic resources of the country (bauxite, alumina) are exploited by the big international companies, with greater and greater participation by the Americans along with the French, the Swiss, the English and the Germans. For the exploitation of iron ore, a foreign French-British company has entered the scene (Société de Conakry) to join Fria, Péchiney, Harvey Aluminium, etc., in exploiting the country.

The picture as a whole is thus clear. Guinea is a neocolonial state in the sense that foreign companies draw profits from it, that international and indigenous merchants take a commercial profit -- often exorbitant -- that raw materials flow to the world market under the well-known disadvantageous conditions, involving the collection of surplus value by international capital in this form, too. And a big part of the agrarian economy is stagnating at the subsistence level.

The ruling political layer has crystallized progressively through a series of privileges, associated in origin, in Guinea as elsewhere, with the exercise of functions (advantages drawn from the very high remuneration granted to functionaries in the colonial administration, even special remuneration granted retroactively, material advantages more or less in accordance with posts in the hierarchy, etc.). These positions have been consolidated on the economic level. Modest forms of accumulation (purchase of apartments from which rent is drawn) are sometimes widened and made clearer (birth of a merchant who is at the same time a government official), extending to the very significant symbiosis of government officials in business administrations and their gaining the status of stockholders. In these cases, the genesis of a bourgeoisie of bureaucratic origin is visible concretely.

This whole process has been accompanied by a hardening of the bureaucratic apparatus and the adoption of repressive measures with regard to opposition demonstrations which can in no case be confounded with reactionary or pro-imperialist intrigues.

Egypt

Egypt differs markedly from the other African countries, having a much more advanced economic structure in which the specific weight of the industrial sector has grown considerably. The transformations of the most recent period have thus occurred not within the framework of a little developed or fluid primitive society, but

in a society penetrated by capitalism in all its classic forms for many decades.

The development of Egypt after the revolution of 1952, represents without any doubt an exceptional historic phenomenon. The revolution began under a revolutionary petty-bourgeois leadership that revolted against the incapacity and corruption of the old regime. It proposed to modernize the country by striking at the old conservative and parasitic classes and by stimulating economic progress and particularly by seeking to end the imperialist domination. Playing a preeminently Bonapartist role, this leadership objectively favored the strengthening of the industrial bourgeoisie in relation to the other ruling layers. It brought about, first of all, a change in political personnel at the top, began a series of reforms, struck directly at British imperialism and made itself the spokesman of the aspirations for Arab unity. These aspirations met with a favorable echo among the masses, but corresponded also to the aims of at least a part of the bourgeoisie, for whom the creation of a united Arab state would provide a considerably wider market.

The anti-imperialist measures -- of which the nationalization of the Suez Canal was the most spectacular -- strengthened the new regime, whose prestige spread to the other countries of the Middle East. The first agrarian reform was unquestionably of moderate nature, since it assured substantial indemnification, distributed but a very limited percentage of land, and brought no benefits to the great majority of poor peasants and field workers. But, among other things, owing to the reduction of land rents, the class of landowners was hard hit both economically and politically and could no longer regain its position. The unification with Syria, undertaken after much hesitation, again increased Nasser's prestige for a time. It was greeted not only by the Egyptian bourgeoisie, but still more so by the Syrian bourgeoisie who considered it the only healthy course at a particularly critical conjuncture.

But the measures taken in the first stage of the revolution did not give the results the leaders counted on. The old ruling classes maintained a hostile attitude. Despite the precautionary measures taken by the group in power, the capitalists involved in the state sector resorted to obstruction or blackmail, even refusing the necessary economic aid on certain occasions. Last but not least, capital did not flow toward the modern economic sectors; its owners generally preferring speculation or real estate.

Nasser had no way out but to considerably widen the state sector and to attempt to consolidate his position by winning mass support. A major measure was taken in 1960 with the nationalization of the Misr Bank, the pivot of finance and industry in Egypt. The Syrian affair -- in which the downfall of Nasserism was threatened -- gave a decisive impulse toward the new course which was concretized in the radical measures of the years 1961, 1963 and 1965.

Thus, not only was a second agrarian reform undertaken, but at the same time the state established its control over 80% of the means of production; i.e., over all of heavy industry, the big banks and wholesale trade. The percentage of state investments rose, in relation to total investments, from 82.6% in 1961-62, to 93.7% in 1963-64. Imperialist ownership virtually disappeared.

At the same time, the regime posed the problem of renovating the political structures. The Nasserite movement was reorganized. In the national assembly, a formal majority of seats was granted to the workers and peasants. Rights were granted to the workers in the factories. A percentage of the profits was earmarked to be used for the needs of the workers; and minority participation by workers, chosen through elections, was envisaged on management boards. Parallel to this, the ideological evolution of "Arab socialism" became noticeably more anticapitalist. Nasser's socialism now advances the idea of a society characterized by the transfer of the means of production to the state, centralized planning, the continuation of small and medium land holdings, and the development of cooperation. However, up to now cooperation has been limited to the buying of machines, fertilizers, and to the financing and sale of products.

Egyptian society is thus in a process of transformation that raises the question of its fundamental class nature. Some who characterized Nasserism as reactionary only yesterday are today ready to proclaim that Egypt is on the road to socialism; but even for those who have not conceded to impressionism or to diplomatic or propagandistic considerations, the question is raised whether the capitalist regime has been done away with and whether a workers state has been instituted.

There is no doubt that the petty-bourgeois revolutionary leadership that came to power in 1952 has undergone a profound transformation, becoming extremely radical. Does this mean that the creation of a workers state has occurred? No; for the following reasons:

(a) The agrarian structures up to now have not involved any collectivist element, being based essentially on private property (cooperation not being practiced on the level of production), and the free buying and selling of land by the bourgeoisie up to a certain ceiling has not been excluded. If the existence of a private sector in agriculture is not in itself a criterion showing the non-existence of a workers state, this peculiarity of Egyptian agriculture is nonetheless symptomatic.

(b) Bourgeois layers of various origin remain which receive returns of a capitalist nature. They are often state "rentiers" (revenue from companies in which the state is not the only stockholder, revenue coming from indemnification or interest on state bonds also distributed by way of indemnification).

(c) Finally, private sectors remain (small and medium industry, trade, real estate).

(d) The state structure inherited from the former regime remains largely intact.

(e) There has been neither mass revolutionary action, nor an anticapitalist mobilization of the masses, who do not have a deep socialist consciousness; nor is there a revolutionary-socialist party, all the transformations up to now having been decreed from above.

Under these conditions, despite the sweeping statization of industry, commerce and banking, Egypt still faces the problem of making a qualitative leap in order to establish a workers state. As yet, history has not furnished us with an example of any country achieving this without a deep-going popular revolution. Egypt will not prove to be an exception to the rule.

Many forces are pressing Egypt in the direction of a new revolutionary upsurge -- the objective demands of economic development, the weakness of the old ruling classes, the country's position in the international situation, the pressure of the masses of workers and peasants. But there are powerful obstacles also -- the extremely bureaucratic character of the Nasser leadership, its active opposition to revolutionary mobilization of the masses, its deliberate policy of blocking the development of an alternative revolutionary-socialist leadership, the powerful levers still in the hands of imperialism (military-diplomatic pressure, plus concessions such as shipments of food), and the pervasive counterrevolutionary influence wielded by the old state apparatus.

In addition, the fresh bureaucratic layer crystallizing in the state apparatus is closely linked with the directing apparatus of the economy, giving it a vested interest in maintenance of the status quo. This layer is on the whole a conservative force despite its capacity to use a revolutionary and socialist phraseology and even to take quite radical measures.

Nor should it be overlooked that the Egyptian process continues to develop under conditions that are difficult from many angles. The rate of growth in production remains limited, not even expanding as rapidly as the population. Thirteen years after the downfall of Farouk, per capita income remains stagnant, even if in some sectors, particularly the cities, some improvements have occurred. Unemployment and underemployment remain tragic. Foreign aid -- even though above that enjoyed by many other countries -- is not an inexhaustible source and cannot by itself substitute for the impetus that could be provided by establishment of a workers state.

The outstanding feature of contemporary Egypt is its ripeness

for the establishment of a workers state and the ease with which a proletarian victory can occur there with the resurgence of the masses.

The Algerian Revolution

Without repeating in detail the analyses made in many previous documents of the International, the fundamental features of the Algerian revolution before independence was won can be summarized as follows:

(a) From the very fact that it unfolded in a country occupied by a mass of foreign colonialists and against a big imperialist power committed to defending its positions to the end, the depth and duration of the Algerian revolution was translated into a profound mobilization of the masses and various social layers.

(b) Beginning as a national liberation movement, the revolution involved from the beginning two components of opposite tendency: On the one hand, the disinherited peasant masses (the majority of the fighting army), the toiling and plebian masses of the cities, and the radicalized petty-bourgeois layers for whom the struggle had both a national democratic and social content; on the other, the very thin layers of the indigenous bourgeoisie and well-to-do petty bourgeoisie whose aim was formal political independence and the replacement of the ruling colonialist class by a native ruling class.

(c) Despite certain progressive positions (with regard, for example, to the need for an agrarian reform), the Front de Libération Nationale (FLN) in itself was a socially undifferentiated front with vague political contours. For a considerable time it succeeded in presenting itself publicly as fundamentally united. Unity of this kind, which was maintained moreover by a rigid apparatus, bureaucratic methods of leadership and compromises at the top, did not at all prevent a process of differentiation from occurring among the various military sectors and among the various levels of the movement as well as conflicts over orientation in the Provisional Government of the Algerian Republic (GPRA) itself, where in general the moderate wing held sway.

Following a protracted development of grave contradictions (among other things different and even opposing attitudes towards the Evian agreement) topped by the urgency of the problems in the political and economic vacuum that appeared at the end of the colonial domination due to well-known conditions, the FLN burst into fragments with the breakup of the government and the division of the military forces. The crisis in the summer of 1962 developed along lines that were sometimes unclear, involving among other things equivocal and ephemeral alliances and the momentary passivity of healthy elements and forces, but it marked fundamentally a victory for the Ben Bella-Boumedienne team, which, at the time, at the level

of the mass forces, was the most conscious and most resolute expression of the outright anti-neocolonialist, revolutionary-democratic and socialist-minded orientation. Thus the second stage of the revolution opened, featured by a dynamics tending to cross over to socialism. It was primarily the vacuum created by the emigration of the colonialists that determined the mass actions and the decisions by the leaders that led to the rapid social deepening of the revolution.

The rising curve reached its climax in March 1963, extending to the new measures of expropriation taken in October the same year. The landholdings of the colonialists were expropriated in their entirety, the Algerian landholders being hit at the same time. A part of the industrial sector was also taken away from the former masters. The expropriated sectors were turned over to self-management by the workers under very advanced forms. Particularly during the decisive weeks of March-April, the adoption of all these measures was accompanied by immense mass mobilizations, in which the union of the most advanced wing of the leadership with the masses occurred at the highest pitch. This wing, expressing the interests of the workers and peasants up to the government level, drove the conservative and probourgeois elements away from the Political Bureau and the government.

At the same time, the Ben Bellist nucleus and a rather broad layer of cadres developed their own ideological concepts, going as far as to adopt ideas close to revolutionary Marxism on certain problems and to critically considering some of the main experiences of the international labor movement and of the establishment of workers states. The Algiers Charter, approved by the April 1964 congress, was the ideological expression of this process of growth.

In noting this process, the United Secretariat of the Fourth International called attention in February 1964 to the fact that a Workers and Peasants Government had been established in Algeria. Among other observations, the United Secretariat declared:

"As is characteristic of a Workers and Peasants Government of this kind, the Algerian government has not followed a consistent course. Its general direction, however, has been in opposition to imperialism, to the old colonial structure, to neocolonialism and to bureaucratism. It has reacted with firmness to the initiatives of would-be new bourgeois layers, including armed counterrevolution. Its subjective aims have repeatedly been declared to be the construction of socialism. At the same time its consciousness is limited by its lack of Marxist training and background.

"The question that remains to be answered is whether this government can establish a workers state. The movement in this direction is evident and bears many resemblances to the Cuban pattern. A profound agrarian reform has already been carried out, marked by virtual nationalization of the most important areas of

arable land. Deep inroads have been made into the old ownership relations in the industrial sector with the establishment of a public and state-controlled sector. Yet to be undertaken are the expropriation of the key oil and mineral sector, the banks and insurance companies, establishment of a monopoly of foreign trade and the inauguration of effective countermeasures to the monetary, financial and commercial activities of foreign imperialism."

Through the 1963 measures, Algeria thus entered a phase of revolutionary development characterized among other things by the following elements:

(a) The positions of colonialism were eliminated in the agricultural sector of the economy and dealt a serious blow in the industrial sector.

(b) The indigenous landholding bourgeoisie were likewise dealt some blows, while certain measures, apparently secondary, were passed which in principle can hinder or block the process of embryonic capitalist accumulation and possible consolidation of indigenous bourgeois nuclei (expropriation of movie houses, hotels, cafés, etc.).

(c) In the most dynamic and economically most important sector of agriculture (most important likewise from the angle of the formation of the surplus product) not only has ownership, both landlord and capitalist, been ended, but forms of democratic management have been introduced capable of assuring consolidation of the mass bases of the revolution.

(d) On the economic level in general, a mixed economy is envisaged in which the public sector -- government operated or self-managed -- is conceived as coming to be the most dynamic, the specific weight of the private sector being gradually limited.

(e) The Algerian state has established international links with the workers states, involving particularly Cuba and its revolutionary experience, and placing itself in the front vanguard of progressive Africa.

However this process has not developed in a straight line. In fact, a period of slowing down, of pause, even of stagnation, opened after the rise of 1963. This cannot be explained solely as due to the objective need to "digest" the results already achieved nor due to the unquestionable existence of serious obstacles. The subsequent progress of the revolution has been held back particularly by social and political resistances. The forces hostile to the new measures (for example in the area of agrarian reform) have made gains. This is not in contradiction to the successes won by the régime in its struggle against the open and illegal opposition. The extreme right wing (Chaabani) could not gain any serious base; the

Kabyle wing (Ait Ahmed) had no real perspective, being compromised by a whole series of actually counterrevolutionary attitudes and its taking to the road of adventure; the sector headed by Boudiaf and Khider did not elaborate a line and lost all prestige. The forces hostile to the revolution, both on the domestic and international level, never seriously counted on these opposition movements and, beginning with 1963, chose the tactic of obstruction, sabotage and struggle within the regime, its state apparatus and even the party. The FLN congress in 1964 was significant in this respect, the conservative and rightist elements not engaging in struggle over the program -- adopting it unanimously and without much discussion -- but infiltrating into all levels of the party, including the Political Bureau, acting as a brake and as a stubborn opposition which is far from finished and which has undoubtedly gained results. French imperialism itself has followed a line up to now not of rupture but rather of seduction, of setting conditions, of pressure extending from blackmail to threats of rupture.

Due to the pause during 1964 and the beginning of 1965, in which some measures were passed that were more spectacular than of real import (such as the expropriation in October 1964 of collaborators with the counterrevolution), the economic and social structures of Algeria have become crystallized into a series of different and opposing sectors. If, in a stage of overturns, the relative rise of percentages is more important than the absolute figures, in a static period it is the absolute proportions that represent the decisive criterion.

Algerian society is marked at present by the coexistence and conflict of different and antagonistic forces and sectors. On the one side stand: (a) the modern, self-managed agricultural sector; (b) the self-managed industrial sector; (c) the state industrial sector; (d) the state sector of transport and services; (e) the secondary self-managed sectors. Against these there remain: (a) a considerable agricultural sector dominated by Algerian landowners; (b) the private capitalist sector, which includes industries, banks, commercial enterprises; (c) the sector of foreign capital (oil, gas); (d) the still heavy weight of French imperialist aid (direct subsidies to the budget and investments) and American aid (distribution of food to the mass of unemployed); (e) the quantitatively preponderant sector of agriculture which was not touched by the agrarian reform and which includes the gamut of poor peasants and small peasants in general.

At the same time Algeria remains integrated in the zone of the French franc and a very high proportion of its foreign trade is with France.

In the social field, the following opposing interests of classes and social layers can be listed: (a) the industrial working class and the workers on self-managed farms; (b) the poor peasants;

(c) the poor masses in the towns; (d) the urban petty bourgeoisie (white collar workers, intellectuals, etc.); (e) the big and middle Algerian landowners; (f) the capitalists, particularly the big and middle native merchants; (g) the well-to-do petty bourgeoisie; (h) international capital (oil companies, banks).

This general outline is sufficient to show that criticizing the prolonged pause of the revolution does not signify giving way to revolutionary phrasemongering but is based on recognizing that in the absence of fresh measures breaking things up, a situation is crystallizing in which capitalist-bourgeois relations, including the presence of foreign capital, remain preponderant. The orientation placing the collective sector in opposition to the private sector has no real progressive content -- in the Algerian context -- unless a constant change in the relation of forces occurs and the collective sector is actually conceived as an instrument to wear away the private sector. If this does not occur, the state collective sector can become either complementary to the private sector -- in the final analysis in the interest objectively of preserving the latter -- or can be partially or gradually reabsorbed in the private sector insofar as this proves to be profitable. The problem is particularly serious for the collective self-managed sector since the private sector is specially interested -- more from the political and social angle than the economic -- in bringing it into difficulty. As long as the private sector remains preponderant in industry, finance and trade, as long as there is no genuine monopoly of foreign trade, as long as planning has not been introduced to block or control the free play of the market in accordance with the logic of capitalism, self-management will be gravely handicapped and threatened with bankruptcy or with being drained of its revolutionary social content.

The delay in carrying out a new radical agrarian reform threatens to be damaging on the political level, since it can open up fissures in the revolutionary front. The landless peasants will cease offering active support to the revolution if the new regime introduces no change in their economic and social conditions, a change which they expect in return for their major contribution to the armed struggle.

In addition to the resistance already referred to of the conservative social layers, two factors have served in particular as a brake in the revolutionary process; i.e., the composition and structure of the state apparatus and the government in general and the defectiveness of the party.

The state and government structure remains essentially as it was set up by the colonial regime. This means that far from being a means of transmitting the will of the masses and an instrument for translating a revolutionary orientation into practice, this apparatus constitutes a barrier separating the masses from the real exercise of power, a means of paralyzing and rendering null decisions that are

abstractly correct, an arena for the crystallization of conservative and reactionary forces and tendencies. The integration into this apparatus of elements who participated in the struggle for freedom does not bring about any qualitative change, the problem is political, social and structural, not one of the composition of the personnel. In fact it is the logic of the apparatus, as it was constructed, that is operating and it is precisely through the medium of this apparatus that the conservative forces, including the foreign ones, express their influence and maintain political force, whatever the composition of the government and the executive power may be in general.

In the case of Algeria, the question of the apparatus is also important in another way, since it engenders and consolidates a bureaucratic layer which, in the absence of democratic structures based on the active and decisive participation of the workers and peasants, is concentrating enormous power in its hands, inevitably nourishing privileged positions. Although certain nuclei of the FLN, including the tops, are aware of the problem in theory, the bureaucracy has developed and become relatively crystallized. To the old layers of the colonial period have been added new layers, issuing from the ranks of the revolution. Thus another element must be included in the Algerian social stratification: a bureaucracy of the state, the government, the growing economic apparatus and the military apparatus, a bureaucracy that in reality enjoys a privileged share of the national income, even if the quantity is still modest, and that holds a position of strength in relation to the popular masses. The right wing of this bureaucracy is trying, in a more or less conscious way to consolidate a neocolonial type regime. Its left wing is partisan to an authoritarian-bureaucratic socialism. Objectively both of them play a conservative role. The left wing itself not only is opposed to constructing a socialist society based on the self-government of the masses, but is also blocking the elimination of capitalist and imperialist structures, the survival of which is not necessary, however, to maintaining its own functions and privileges.

The fact that the problem that exploded in the summer of 1962 -- of reconstructing the FLN on a new basis -- has not yet been resolved and that the party is still functioning in a precarious and bureaucratic fashion, with real activity concentrated particularly at the top, has served as a concomitant factor in reinforcing the bureaucratic tendencies as well as the uncertainties and the retreats of the stage that followed the measures of 1963. The same can be said of the trade unions whose profound crisis has not been overcome and whose main deficiencies were recognized officially, so to speak, at the March 1965 congress. In reality, the bureaucracy is rooted in the party as well as the trade unions; the proclamations about the need to separate the state apparatus and the party apparatus have remained without practical results up to now.

The political and leadership system adopted entails, more-

over, the logic of a Bonapartism personalized to the extreme. The real power of decision -- of decision and not of application, since after a decision the forces come into play to block or neutralize it -- is concentrated in the Central Committee and particularly the Political Bureau to which all the other bodies, from parliament to the trade-union leaderships, are subordinated in the final analysis. The multiple functions and omnipresent activity of Ben Bella by themselves stamp and symbolize the Bonapartist concentration. In certain situations of confusion and general deficiencies, this Bonapartism was able in the past to play a positive role objectively, particularly when the Bonapartist action, in conjunction with the movement of the masses, broke the conservative resistance; but it is obvious that it cannot be conceived as a permanent element, as the norm in the exercise of power. In the long run, it would inevitably be risky; and, in a context little favorable at present to a mobilization of the masses, the conservative bureaucratic forces are benefited by it. In periods of sharp crisis, of a political and social vacuum, even of empirical concepts, of the initiative of narrow nuclei linked to the masses, a crude instrument can assure major successes. But it is unrealistic, to say the least, to assume that this can suffice to assure a victorious outcome in a profound revolutionary process requiring the overturn of powerful social and economic positions, a settlement of accounts with imperialism, a sharp and prolonged struggle against the bureaucratic tendencies that are surging up and multiplying.

The platform of the revolutionary left trying to work for the triumph of an orientation corresponding to the fundamental necessities of the revolution must begin from this. It should be concretized around the following essential points:

(a) To stimulate a dynamic growth of the noncapitalist sector of the economy, the specific weight of which must constantly increase at the expense of the private sector. This means that it is necessary to envisage new expropriations in the industrial sector and the resolution of the problems of nationalization of credit and the commercialization of the products of the public sector.

(b) To give priority to the sector of self-management in the noncapitalist sector that already exists or that must yet be set up.

(c) In the sector of gas and oil not to accept the perspective of a crystallization of the present situation involving the formation of veritable imperialist enclaves. It is necessary to work for the deepening of the contradictions and the progressive erosion of the positions of international capital. Workers control should be the concrete form for carrying this out.

(d) To establish an effective monopoly of foreign trade and to introduce economic planning. Such measures have been shown to be necessary to prevent, among other things, the strangulation or

the distortion of the self-managed sector.

(e) To apply a radical agrarian reform in the sectors not touched by previous measures, by expropriating the big Algerian proprietors, introducing rigorous limits on the right to own land, banning the free buying and selling of land, reorganizing the traditional agriculture on a cooperative basis and modernizing it.

(f) To elaborate an over-all plan based both on the new agrarian reform, the human investment and industrialization, with the aim of absorbing in the near future unemployment and under-employment, the main plagues of the Algerian countryside.

(g) To completely rebuild the state and government apparatus by creating organisms of workers and peasants power and putting up a new government structure corresponding to the new economic structures, particularly the structures of self-management whose real functioning must be imperatively assured. To replace the present Bonapartist pyramid with a popular power built on a diverse and extensive framework. To find at each stage the formulas and means best suited to realize this objective. To wage a stubborn struggle against bureaucratic privileges by stimulating the equalitarian tendencies (limitation of remuneration, necessary common sacrifices, participation by all in production, if only for limited periods, etc.).

To assure the defense of the revolution both externally and internally by genuine, nonprofessional workers and peasants militia.

(h) To democratize the party by assuring real elections at all levels and by guaranteeing freedom for tendencies (naturally with discipline in action), rigorously separating the party apparatus from that of the state.

(i) To democratize the trade unions, the leaders of which must be elected by trade-union bodies, leaving out of consideration membership in the party. The right to strike must not be put in question by any a priori limitations. The decision as to the economic or political opportuneness of a strike must not be the prerogative of bureaucrats, of leaders at the top, or the state power, but should belong to the workers involved, who will know how to weigh all the implications of their attitude in each instance. Self-management does not end the need to use the right to strike, economic high-handedness not having been eliminated on a national economic level. Trade unions should not be conceived exclusively as an instrument of education, of propaganda or of stimulating production, but also as an instrument of struggle against both the opposing classes and the bureaucracy, as an instrument of the workers in the struggle over distribution of the national income.

(j) To conduct a systematic campaign for a revolution in

the field of customs, against all forms of traditionalism, and in the first place for the genuine liberation of the women in Algeria.

(k) In maintaining respect for the freedom of religion and opposition to any administrative or repressive measure in this field, it must not be forgotten that religion plays an objectively conservative role as an ideological cement. Thus, confusionist formulas must be rejected, and with all the more reason, state financial support in any form for a church or defense of any concepts in the field of customs that in the final analysis weaken revolutionary mobilization.

The objective context of the Algerian revolution, within the still dynamic African and international framework, favors the left despite all the obstacles emphasized above and despite a dangerously prolonged pause. Elementary needs, powerful stimulants, determine at bottom the attitude of the masses. Even if there have been no big mobilizations since 1963, the masses do not feel beaten and they are not inclined to let their victory be stolen by partisans of a neocolonial regime or by a parasitic bureaucracy. Signs of movement in recent months -- reflected in the trade-union congress -- indicate that important sectors of the masses still display great vitality and that they are much more advanced than the left wing of the leadership.

IV. CONCLUSIONS, PERSPECTIVES AND TASKS

Africa today is the scene of conflict among social forces and political tendencies, which, while retaining their marked specific features, are part and parcel of the dynamics of the contemporary world. Problems are posed belonging to communal tribal societies, the struggle against colonialism, traditional racism and the new forms of neocolonialist exploitation at one and the same time as problems flowing from the formation of quite special social layers and the more general problems of transitional phases.

With regard to the sector of Africa that is still colonial and racist, the resistance of the reactionary classes and forces cannot be regarded as simply a rearguard action. Historically the regimes of Verwoerd, Smith and Portuguese colonialism are obviously hopelessly doomed. But this does not necessarily imply victory for the anticolonialist forces within the near future. The fierce and stubborn nature of the resistance, the effectiveness of a very rigid and relatively solid apparatus of domination and repression, the quite considerable interests of international capital, including some that are important to its political strategy, justify the hypothesis of a very difficult and protracted struggle. In any case what is most important is that no major victory can be gained without mobilizing the masses, without big struggles, including armed struggles in particular, and without substantial material aid from the progressive African states and the workers states. Mobilizations of this charac-

ter are likewise necessary to avoid pseudo-liberal diversionary operations, such as those being prepared by certain forces in South Africa for example. In these instances, the problems of a consistent line of struggle, of active mobilization of the masses, above all the peasant masses, of careful delimitation with regard to forces committed to questionable platforms, are posed in a particularly sharp and urgent form.

In neocolonial Africa, the reality is quite varied and multi-form. Nevertheless, one general characteristic is observable -- while international capital has a certain room for maneuver, it is difficult for it to consolidate a relatively stable indigenous base. Virtually all of the neocolonial regimes appear very precarious, resting on autocratic structures and under the constant necessity of using ferocious repression to smother any germ of opposition, however weakly organized. Revolts of broad layers of the population, of sudden revolutionary movements and abrupt reversals of the situation, are always possible. In the critical conjunctures to be expected, where recourse to pure and simple repression proves impossible, the variant of spectacular turns cannot be excluded. Under conditions of this kind, a new dynamics and even reversals of a tendency can occur.

The essential task of revolutionists in this sector of Africa is to work for the political crystallization and organization of oppositional forces among the urban workers, the plebian masses of the shanty towns, the agricultural workers of the plantations and the broad peasant layers. In certain cases, critical support must be granted to existing organizations, while trying at the same time to advance the work of political clarification. Under certain conditions, the unions can be used effectively in mobilizing sectors of the masses and educating them. The program of struggle must place on the agenda the expropriation of international capital and whatever native appendages it has, a radical agrarian reform, and a struggle against the privileges of the bureaucratic summits of the state apparatus and the bourgeoisie of bureaucratic origin.

The countries of Africa in revolutionary transformation are not yet differentiated from the countries of neocolonial Africa in the field of economic structure and social base. The differences involve primarily the political context, the historical process, the specific genesis of independence, the degree of mobilization of the masses during the anticolonialist struggle or at the present stage, the existence or absence of progressive political organizations playing a unifying role and offering a relatively homogeneous leadership with genuine mass influence. Consequently, the objectives of revolutionary struggle in this sector can be identified in large measure with those called for in the neocolonial countries; i.e., elimination of foreign capitalist properties, agrarian reform, struggle against the indigenous capitalist layers, particularly the commercial layers, struggle against the privileges of the state bureaucracy, utilization

of the unions to assure a more favorable distribution of the national income to the wage workers and the disinherited layers, effective monopoly of foreign trade, etc.

However, the strategic and even more the tactical orientation of this revolutionary struggle must be different. In certain cases the particular problem for quite a while will remain that of becoming integrated in the already developing struggle and participating as the most consistent elements, seeking to further the process toward its logical outcome while at the same time critically supporting the progressive measures adopted by the current leaderships (for example certain measures taken in Mali and Guinea during the period of upsurge). It is obvious that quite particular tasks are posed in Algeria and Egypt as indicated above.

The theoretical amplifications carried out by our movement on the basis of certain Asian experiences and the Cuban revolution are likewise pertinent in relation to Africa, particularly with regard to the dynamics of the revolutionary process, the fundamental motor forces, the special role of the poor peasants and the nature of the leaderships, which, under the pressure of objectively powerful factors and in conjunction with mass movements, can take a far-reaching anti-imperialist and anticapitalist course despite their empiricism, their bureaucratic deformation and their nonproletarian origin.

It is necessary to add however that in countries where a considerable communal tribal sector exists, the revolutionary processes will unfold in very specific forms; and it will probably be possible to avoid the conflicts and difficulties that are inevitable in countries of different historical formation and different agricultural structure. But the peasant sectors there will play a much less important role as a revolutionary striking force. In Mali and Guinea, for example, the overturn brought about by the campaigns to defeat the traditional chiefs helped and enormously stimulated the struggle for independence, but at the crucial moments, the fundamental support came from other sectors (radicalized urban petty bourgeoisie, wage workers, plebian masses).

The problems posed by the survival, sometimes considerable, of tribal factors cannot be projected in broad general formulas, but must be examined in each concrete context. If, in principle, such factors will not die away until after the progressive dissolution of the old structures and the penetration of modern economic forms (industrialization, spread of the means of rapid transportation, etc.), their negative influence (disintegrating tendencies that objectively aid the maneuvers of imperialism and neocolonialism, etc.) can be counteracted by the action of national unifying political formations that overcome tribal characteristics in the composition of their membership as well as within their leadership. A centralizing and unifying struggle against tribal limitations has a progressive meaning, of course, only if it avoids any repressive or

administrative measures and is not a hypocritical cover for domination by a particular tribe. The advanced nature of the process in certain of the states of Africa in revolutionary transformation, including Mali and Guinea, is linked among other things to the existence of national centralizing political movements.

The African revolution as a whole is developing against the background of enormous revolutionary developments on a world scale, the lessons of which have been absorbed in a certain elemental way by the masses throughout the continent. "Darkest" Africa has become at the same time the Africa of the transistor radio, the Africa learning about guerrilla war from the Chinese and the Cubans. The masses are aware of the successes of the Soviet Union and how they came about, of the revolutionary victory in China and what this signified for a quarter of the human race, of the great liberating struggles in Vietnam. Cuba's brilliant example has inspired them. Added to this are successes in Africa itself, beginning with Algeria. In contrast, imperialism stands as a colossal obstacle, not an example -- the main enemy to the great mass of people, the hated foreign colonizer who invaded their countries and devastated them, pumping away their wealth and leaving them in poverty and desolation, ravaged by innumerable social and economic ills. Thus socialism has become a popular goal even for those sectors barely emerging from the tribal structures of the stone age.

This great leap in the understanding of the African masses is one of the main sources for the enormous pressure in all these countries to expropriate the imperialist properties, to block the birth and crystallization of national capitalist sectors (or to eliminate them progressively where they exist), to carry out agrarian reforms, to introduce a monopoly of foreign trade and to block out economic plans, to strike at the power of the traditional ruling classes linked with the foreign imperialists and their economic system and to establish close ties with the workers states. Such measures not only meet the objective needs of economic development in breaking through the ancient pattern of poverty and misery -- they are immensely popular. That is why political leaders throughout Africa, who make any pretense at all of voicing mass aspirations, talk in terms of socialism. That is also why many of them are capable of undertaking radical measures.

But experience, fully confirming Marxist theory, has shown that measures along these lines are not stable unless they are backed by a profound revolutionary upheaval. The experience in Cuba, which is particularly germane for Africa, speaks for this in the most positive way. The experience in Guinea, on the other hand, offers negative evidence. In Guinea, where no profound revolution occurred, the apparently revolutionary measures proved to be without genuine substance, forms without much content, and they did not prove to be enduring. In Cuba, on the other hand, the deep-going mass revolution not only assured the stability of the revolutionary measures, it made

possible the rise of a new revolutionary leadership which evolved from petty-bourgeois positions to revolutionary Marxism, rapidly emerging on the world scene as a new ideological force with an international political influence completely disproportionate to the size of Cuba and its economic weight.

The lesson of Cuba and Guinea should not be lost on the African vanguard. In fact, it can be confidently predicted that as in Cuba, revolutionary leaderships will rise in the very course of revolutionary struggles. The experience of Zanzibar is most enlightening in this respect, even though it occurred only on a small, almost laboratory scale. The repeated resurgence of the revolutionary struggle in the Congo speaks again in the same sense. Both theory and experience point to this.

It can therefore be expected that Africa, so long considered in the white, imperialist West as the most backward of continents, will enjoy the historic privilege of providing the world with some of the most inspiring examples of man's capacity to leap across entire ages and to make unique contributions to the revolutionary heritage of mankind.

The problems of the African revolution cannot be posed exclusively from the angle of rejecting neocolonialism and struggling against bureaucratism in itself. Unquestionably, Africa has gigantic economic problems that involve extreme perhaps insurmountable difficulties even for a country completely freed from any neocolonialist domination and organized democratically. These problems can be outlined as follows:

(a) The backwardness of some of these countries which lack even a minimum material infrastructure and the cultural knowledge necessary to put into operation contemporary techniques (existence of nomadism, illiteracy, extremely primitive agricultural technology, etc.).

(b) Economic growth, where it exists, is in any case slow and deformed. Most often it is not even succeeding in keeping up with the growth of the population.

(c) The margin for investment is narrow. Internal sources are generally insufficient and often, even leaving aside the growth of population, the increases in production are absorbed by increases in consumption that are objectively necessary, even to increase the productivity of labor. Investments of the neocolonialist type, besides extracting surplus value from the indigenous workers, are incapable of bringing about an economic takeoff because of their limits, their unilateral character, the drainage of resources which they involve. With only a few exceptions, help from the workers states is limited (in addition aid is sometimes applied in a negative way) and it is difficult for such aid to play a completely

determining role in the relatively near future.

(d) The problem of sources of accumulation is often complicated by the existence of very large, even preponderant zones of a subsistence economy and, more generally, structures involving stagnation in production. This is particularly negative due to the fact that in these countries the economic surplus can only come mainly from the agricultural sector. Nevertheless the problem can be solved in part thanks to the human investment, particularly in light of the existence of a relative abundance of land.

(e) The splintering of Africa into often very small states involves complex problems both on the plane of normal economic functioning (limited resources, too narrow markets, etc.) and on the plane of phenomena like smuggling, illegal exports, speculation in money etc., which often have grave effects on the economy in general.

(f) As backward countries furnishing raw materials, almost all the African countries participate in the capitalist market under unfavorable conditions and suffer the exploitation inherent in economic relations of this kind, even leaving aside the steep conjunctural drops in the prices of raw materials which sometimes affect the balance of trade, financial reserves, etc. (for example, the consequences for Ghana of the evolution of the price of cocoa). An immediate effective reaction against this state of things would be possible through collective action of all the underdeveloped countries, particularly through setting up a single world pool of raw materials. This, however, requires governments really freed from imperialist influence.

All this shows in the most decisive way that the development of the African revolution is intimately linked to a whole series of inter-African and international factors. It is particularly clear that the fundamental economic problems cannot be resolved within the framework of the present national entities, of separated economic structures, all the more so since many of the African states are artificial creations due to the imperialist insistence on Balkanizing them. Hence the demand for African unity or at least, during a transitional period, of sufficiently large regional units. The attempts made up to now have unfortunately failed, having had only a mere propagandistic scope. But they imply recognition of a fundamental tendency. This also applies to the Organization of African Unity whose appearance was unquestionably due to the multiple demands for African unity -- unity in the struggle against remaining colonialist ramparts, unity to counteract neocolonialist domination, unity for economic growth. However, the OAU was conceived with the objective of self-preservation by most of the governments belonging to it; that is why it has suffered setbacks and is now going through a crisis which could reduce it to a formula without any real content.

At the same time there is a demand for disinterested aid, on

a very big scale, from the economically advanced workers states. In other words, African reconstruction requires access to resources such as could be provided by workers states in the industrialized countries of western Europe and North America. In this way, revolutionary victories in this sector of the world correspond to very concrete and immediate interests of the African revolution.

The dynamics of the African revolution are thus in all respects the dynamics of permanent revolution. Within each country, the fundamental tendency is to cross over, i.e., to continue uninterruptedly from the bourgeois democratic stage to the socialist stage. At the same time the inescapable need to go beyond the frontiers of the national states becomes ever clearer. This in no way means that the objective necessities will be automatically met. Revolutionary leaderships and revolutions are required. The necessity for economic growth and the satisfaction of elementary needs, which has pushed the masses into struggle, requires going beyond the bourgeois democratic stage and divisions along national lines. This implies -- from the social and political angle -- that an alliance with the so-called national bourgeoisie in carrying out the indicated objectives cannot possibly work out. It goes without saying that the conservative forces, the national bourgeoisie, the neocolonialists can prevail thanks to a given relationship of forces. But in this case, there is no economic growth, no satisfaction of the elementary needs of the masses, the new ruling class having imposed structures that block any expansion of production and any amelioration of the standard of living as they seek to tie down the springs that have driven the process forward from the beginning.

The abysmal record of both the Social Democratic and Communist parties in the West during the previous stages of the African revolution, compounded by the bankruptcy of the African reformist or Stalinist parties (for example in Algeria, Egypt and South Africa), has given rise to grave questions about Marxism among many sincere African revolutionists. This stands in contradiction to the immense respect they have for the Soviet Union and above all for China and Cuba. The lack of confidence in Marxism arises from an inadequate knowledge of its real history and theory on the one hand, and of bitter experience with the Social Democratic and Communist parties on the other.

But this bad experience will be overcome by the African revolutionists themselves. In party building and in theory, they will sooner or later make their own specific contributions. In this process they will demonstrate that whatever the specific features of the revolution in their various countries and in their continent as a whole, still it has features in common with the socialist revolution on an international scale, expressing the unequal and combined features operating in the contemporary world as a whole which in the final analysis determine the African revolution as it does the revolutions on all other continents.

The task of revolutionary Marxists is to struggle for policies that will enable the exploited masses of Africa to bring their revolution to a successful outcome, completely destroying the power of imperialism, the neocolonialist forces and the indigenous propertied classes. To accomplish this it is necessary to organize genuine revolutionary parties of the workers and the poor peasants, to fight for the complete expropriation of capitalist property, for genuine workers management of the expropriated enterprises, against any crystallization and consolidation of a privileged bureaucratic layer.

These tasks cannot be carried out effectively without directly participating in the struggles of the African revolution, without mobilizing the forces of the International in solidarity with this revolution, without the development of Trotskyist cadres among the ranks of the oppressed African masses themselves.

The Fourth International already has a positive balance sheet in this respect. From the beginning of the trade-union and political struggle of the Egyptian workers, Trotskyist cadres joined in the struggle for a revolutionary Marxist leadership.

The entire International participated in the defense of the Algerian revolution, and is proud to have been the first and for a long time the only tendency in the labor movement in many countries to come to the aid of the FLN militants during the most difficult period of their struggle.

The appearance of an independent workers movement in Nigeria, as shown in the remarkable general strike in 1964, led to the creation of the first Trotskyist nucleus integrated in the mass movement and trying to influence it in a revolutionary direction.

In South Africa in particular the Trotskyist movement has a long tradition going back thirty years; it has many cadres tempered in a struggle that has been marked by an especially harsh repression; it has been able to win a place in the front ranks of the anti-imperialist organizations; and it has worked out, with the aid of the International, a correct line of armed insurrection based on the peasant masses. Here our movement is destined to play an important role in the vanguard of a revolution that will have an impact on all of black Africa.

The revolutionary Marxists participate in the national anti-imperialist liberation movement in every country. They grant critical support to every step forward taken by this movement under nationalist leadership in the struggle against imperialism and its neocolonialist agents (nationalizations in Egypt, Guinea's leaving the zone of the French franc, seizures of imperialist properties in Tanzania, aid granted by Ghana to the Congolese revolution, etc.). At the same time, they warn the masses of the people that they must

press this anti-imperialist struggle forward to a complete break with foreign and domestic capitalism in order to achieve their own freedom.

In the course of this struggle, they seek to establish ties with the most radical and most conscious elements of the anti-imperialist movement, to educate them in the principles of revolutionary Marxism, to create together with them the first Trotskyist nuclei and to determine, on the basis of the particular conditions in each country, the ways and means to build genuinely revolutionary tendencies and parties.

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