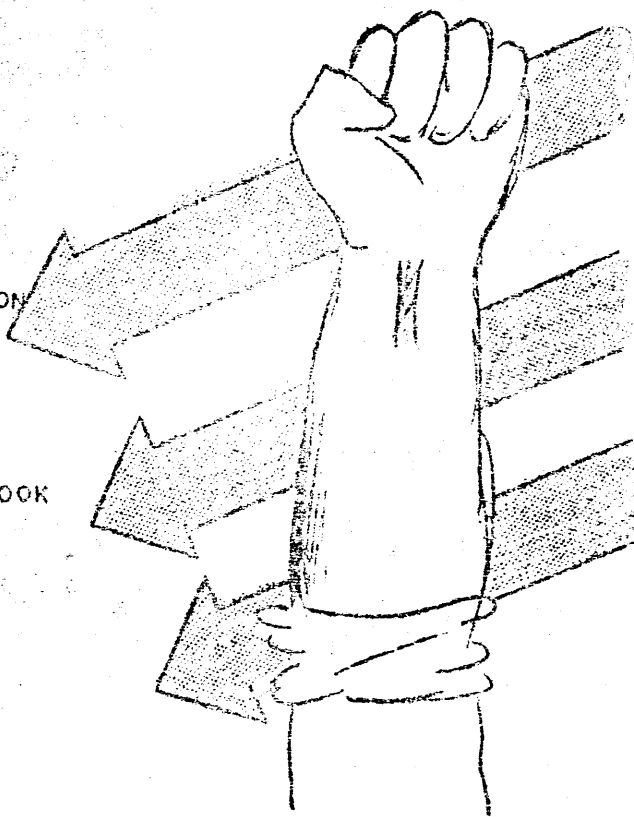


YOUNG SOCIALIST

REVIEW

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EDITORIAL NOTES

WHAT THE YSR IS

The Young Socialist Review is the information and discussion bulletin of the Young Socialist League. The YSR is prepared by the YSL National Office and is edited by Owen Morse.

The aim of the YSR is to constitute a forum for the expression of all points of view within the YSL. It is, therefore, completely open to any member who may wish to contribute his views -- and to any group of members. Contributions from non-members will be accepted, if of sufficiently high interest. (The editor reserves the right to decide on the case of each such article.)

For obvious reasons it should be understood that articles signed by individuals do not necessarily represent the views of the YSL. Any material that is "official" will be clearly labelled as such.

Copy should be submitted to the YSL national office, Third Floor, 114 W. 14 St., New York 11, N.Y. If at all possible, submit copy stenciled, single spaced. If this is not possible, then submit material type-written, double spaced. Non typewritten copy will not be accepted.

It should be clear that the YSR is not restricted to members of the YSL. Though issued primarily for members it is open to all friends and other interested individuals. Members should make every effort to get copies into the hands of this wider audience. Send in your bundle orders now.

All labor expended in the publication of the YSR is donated by members of the NY Unit of YSL.

THIS ISSUE

In the last issue I predicted at least two more before the convention. From the looks of things now, this was a gross underestimation on my part. Though there are only three articles in this issue, they are pretty substantial in their wordage, and so we decided to get it out immediately. The article on Isaacs' book was one of the three articles mentioned in my notes on the last issue, and was not printed at the time it was received due to lack of other matter with which to fill out an issue. When we were flooded with pre-convention material, this got squeezed out. Our apologies to John Novak.

One of the chief reasons this issue is out so soon is because some of the comrades stenciled and mimeced their own articles. Please follow suit and future issues will come out even faster.

The next issue will probably contain NAC Draft resolutions on the International Question, the American Question, Tasks and Perspectives, and Constitutional Amendments; all of which are now being written. Don't be afraid to write an article yourself; as much discussion as possible before the convention is our goal.

I apologize for the technical errors and blunders in this, the last and the next few issues. They are inevitable when the issue is put together overnight on a volunteer basis. The most important error in the last issue was in the NAC Draft Resolution on German Unity. Only the LINE of it was adopted.
-----Owen Morse

The International Question III

Mike Harrington

(This is intended as a continuation of the discussion in the last YSR, Vol. II, No. 1, in the articles Stalinism, Imperialism and Expansionism, I and II. In this section, I will (1) briefly re-capitulate my analysis of Stalinism and add a few comments; (2) present a self-explanatory draft of a political line for the American part of the International Resolution; and (3) comment briefly on Comrade Shane's discussion of my analysis of Stalinism.)

I. Stalinism, Imperialism and Expansionism

In the strict sense of the word, imperialism is an expansion made necessary by the fundamental needs of a social system. Bureaucratic collectivism does not necessarily tend in such a direction. Therefore, in the strict sense of the word, it is not imperialist.

To my knowledge, there is only one instance in the theory of bureaucratic collectivism where an attempt was made to relate Stalinist expansion to Stalinism as a social system. In the New International of April, 1946, an article on "bureaucratic imperialism" states: "The economic policy of the Russians in the occupied countries is not, therefore, merely the 'excesses' of the bureaucracy, not the 'cheating' and 'robbing' by a privileged stratum, but something which is fundamental to Russian economic organization and survival."

The author goes on to hold that Russia could not survive without the satellites. Was this true then? Does Stalinism need further expansion in order to survive?

Secondly, we must carefully spell out the consequences of characterizing Stalinism as expansionist rather than imperialist.

To begin with, it is economically possible, if not probable, that the Eastern satellites are now necessary to Stalinism. In other words, the original move of the Stalinists into these areas, which did not arise out of an inherent necessity of the social system but out of a particular historical configuration, has now been integrated to such an extent that the Stalinists must stay there. This is in no way equivalent to imperialism in the sense in which we define it.

Again, even if the above were not true, political considerations would preclude a wholesale withdrawal of the Stalinists from their satellites. The political impact of a free

Poland is, in all probability, simply too much of a risk for the Stalinists to run. The point made here must be part of a rejection of any naive and simplistic version of the relation between the economic and the political.

In other words, in actual fact, i.e. when the economic is modified by the political and the circumstantial, we are dealing with the possibility that the Stalinists may seek a stabilization and, perhaps, a withdrawal at the periphery.

Finally, there is one more important fact. The United States is imperialist, yet it is possible for it to withdraw from West Germany. The difference between Stalinism and American capitalism in this regard is that the former can seek stabilization as a long-term policy, whereas the latter can make a tactical withdrawal of one form (the military) of its domination, but is continually impelled by its internal contradictions to seek expansion. Thus, the United States may be capable of a tactical withdrawal, but it must assert its political and economic dominance over Europe nevertheless.

II. America in World Politics

(This document, like the one on Stalinism, is not a finished piece of work, but a draft of a political line which is intended to stimulate discussion.)

(1) In foreign affairs, the United States is imperialist. This fact follows from the necessities of its social system. It is with this proposition that we must begin our analysis of America's role throughout the world.

(2) America is the last great capitalist power. It finds itself in a world in which masses are anti-capitalist. In Europe, it shores up the bourgeoisie against these pressures. In Asia, it often finds itself allied with reaction against movements of national independence. The basis of both these tactics is the necessity to maintain a world in which capitalism can function.

(3) In spelling out this generalization, we must place it in the complicated context of the last decade.

(4) Internally, America was unable to solve its own economic contradictions in the Thirties. These were solved by the rise of a war economy during World War II. This is not to say that America consciously sought that war as an answer to domestic crisis. It is to say that, given its social system, America acted in such a way as to bring itself into such a war and, moreover, that the way in which it conducted that war was also related to its social structure.

(5) From the end of World War II on, America was openly challenged, militarily and politically, by Stalinism. Again, this struggle was not consciously created by the United States to maintain a war economy and thus solve the problem of domestic crisis. It was more of a question of America's response, the kind of response, i.e. a defense of the interests of capitalism and the status quo as the method of struggle against

Stalinism. In the particular historical situation, this meant the subordination of the interests of the European workingclass and of the national liberation movements in Asia to the necessities of America's position.

(6) In the first period of reaction to Stalinism (from 1947 to the Korean War), ~~the~~ American policy centered around the concept of economic recovery for Europe and economic development for the backward areas: the Marshall Plan and Point Four. Yet, because of the necessities described above, the recovery and the development were conceived of in terms of capitalist self-interest. Thus, the chief beneficiaries of the Marshall plan were the American and European bourgeoisies, and Point Four clearly stated that it sought to "create a favorable atmosphere for private investment" in the under-developed areas.

(7) There were, of course, military considerations in both the Marshall Plan and Point Four. By 1950, and especially after the Korean War began, these assumed an absolute dominance. In retrospect, for example, it can be seen that Point Four did not even fulfill its modest purpose of capitalist development; it almost immediately began an agency for military development.

(8) From the Korean War on, American policy faced an intensifying crisis in Asia. In response to the Chinese Revolution, it supported Chiang; in response to North Korean aggression, it backed Syngman Rhee; in response to the movement of national liberation captured by the Stalinists in Indo-China, it supported the French, and then the moderate nationalists, i.e. the anti-revolutionary nationalists. The over-all result of this tragic policy has been a series of political and military defeats.

(9) In Europe, American policy centered around Nato and Nato centered around German re-armament. Here again, there was no real attempt to counter Stalinism politically. The reliance was upon military strength, and this made it logical to include Franco in the "free world." In terms of this extremely limited policy, the United States did achieve a victory when German re-armament was ratified in Paris. However, in Europe its political position is still shaky, menaced by strong Stalinist and neutralist movements and a multi-class anti-Americanism.

(10) In general, then, we characterize the United States policy as imperialist because the fundamental necessities of the American social system in this period dictate a foreign policy based upon military strength rather than upon political appeal, and drives America to seek to preserve the status quo and repress movements for national independence.

(11) Recent events, however, have indicated the possibility of a shift in American policy. If the Stalinists come forth with a strong political appeal in their negotiations stratagey, the United States may well be forced to revise its tactics. In addition, we must take into account a certain contradictory quality of bourgeois thinking, that it is semi-pacifists even while it is engaged in maneuvers which will lead to war.

(12) In all of this, a fundamental fact will be that America will still show itself to be without a political method of struggle in the world in which it finds itself. Moreover, the withdrawal of its troops from Europe, if this came to pass, would in no sense mean an evacuation of American political and economic dominance from the continent. Whatever the changing patterns of tactics in the struggle with Stalinism, the United States is still basically imperialist. This is the basic reality of American policy.

III. The State Capitalist Criticism

Comrade Shane attacks my position from the vantage of a state-capitalist theory of Stalinism. His position has two major parts: (a) defining capitalism as that society distinguished by free labor, Stalinism is capitalist, albeit "state capitalist" a designation the "great Marxists" have always used to describe a tendency of capitalism; (b) that if we take my view, that Russia is not imperialist, but only expansionist, then it is "progressive" vis-a-vis the United States and must be supported.

(a) The most concise definition of capitalism I know is the one which I referred to in my article (Capital, Vol II, pp. 44-5, Kerr ed.). Since Shane has apparently not bothered to check the reference, I will quote it here: "Whatever may be the social form of production, laborers and means of production always remain its main elements. But either of these factors can become effective only when they unite. The special manner in which this union is accomplished distinguishes the different epochs from one another. In the present case, the separation of the so-called ~~the~~ free-laborer from the means of production is the starting point, and we have observed the way and the conditions in which these two elements are united in the hands of the capitalist, as the productive mode of existence of his capital. The actual process which combines the personal and objective materials of commodity production under these conditions, the process of production, thus becomes in its turn a function of capital, a capitalist process of production..."

Note that it is not merely the question of "free labor" which here distinguishes capitalism. (There was free labor and alienable land in China for centuries; in Italy as a general condition hundreds of years before capitalism, etc.) It is the special manner whereby the free laborer is joined to the process of production. In the United States, the special manner is... ~~commodity~~ commodity production. Under Stalinism, as I pointed out before, it is not. There, the economy does not produce exchange values, the laws of commodity production do not run, e.g. investment is not on the basis of profit, but rather is determined by the needs (in the widest sense) of the bureaucracy. Russia looks different than any capitalism; it talks differently; it acts differently - and not even a slight of hand with the dialectic can keep it from being different.

Secondly, as to the category of State-Capitalism. Shane tells us that "...the great Marxists have always maintained that state capitalism was not only theoretically conceivable, but also was a real tendency of capitalist evolution." Let me begin, then, with a quotation from one whom I suspect Comrade Shane regards as a "great Marxist" - Lenin. He

said, "In the question of state capitalism, our press and party in general commit the mistake of falling into intellectualism and liberalism. We speculate on how to conceive of state capitalism, and we peer into the old books. What was written in them was about the state capitalism that develops under the rule of capitalism...So we are forced to help ourselves without the aid of quotations..." (to the Eleventh Party Congress)

F. Forrest, upon whom Shano relies so heavily, ignored this warning of Lenin. Her major article on the state capitalist thesis (New International, December, 1946) bases itself primarily upon the following statement of Marx: "This limit (of centralisation-mh) would not be reached in any particular society until the entire social capital would be united, either in the hands of one single capitalist, or in those of one single corporation." (Vol I, p 688) It is clear, both from the actual quote and from the context, that Marx is here speaking of a centralisation which occurs under capitalism, a long development through trusts and corporations towards centralisation. At the very outset, we note that as a tendency of capitalist society, this has nothing to do with Stalinist Russia where the present social system, whatever it is, evolved, not out of a long capitalist development, but from a revolution of workers and peasants.

But we need not be mystified by what Marx did mean about state capitalism. In his Socialism: Scientific and Utopian, Engels discusses this social system. "All the social functions of the capitalist are now performed by salaried employees. This capitalist has no further social function than that of pocketing dividends, tearing off coupons, and gambling on the stock exchange." Thus the Stalinist bureaucracy? Is juridical and actual title to surplus value vested in a non-bureaucratic class in Russia? The "great Marxists" are cold comfort to Shano. Berio and Means can live with them much better.

Therefore, the state capitalism which Shano sees in Stalinism has nothing to do with the state capitalism referred to by most of the great Marxists, Marx and Engels included. And anyway, it is clear that in Russia free labor and means of production are not united in the "special manner" of commodity production, i.e. Stalinism is not capitalist in any sense of the word.

(b) Progressive is an abused word. Stalinism is expansionist, not imperialist in the strict sense of the word. It also happens to be the most reactionary, totalitarian force in the world today. By progressive, we mean that a war, or event, will benefit the workingclass struggle for socialism. It is so obvious that one need not argue it that a victory for Stalinism would not represent any such eventuality.

Draft Resolution on the International Situation

By Shane

1. The facts have dominated the international scene since the end of World War II: (1) the polarization of world politics into blocs headed by imperialist super-powers, the United States and Russia, with the promise of perpetual militarization and ultimate atomic annihilation; and (2) the failure of the working class in any country, advanced or backward, to intervene powerfully to reorganize society on a democratic socialist basis.

2. The WFO considers these to be two manifestations of the basic contradiction of our times -- the survival of the decaying capitalist system long after it has become over-ripe for replacement by a new social order. They can only be overcome together---they can only be overcome by the Third Camp.

The Power Struggle

3. The considerable differences between the U. S. and Russia in respect to the degree of totalitarianization of economic and political life that each has attained should not obscure the essentially imperialist character of their rivalry. Both have as a fundamental aspect of their foreign policy the domination and exploitation of alien peoples.

4. U.S. imperialism today enjoys a domination of the world market far more complete than that of 19th century Britain. It has extensive foreign investments, both private and state. Every capitalist power in its bloc is dependent upon it for indispensable aid. Not so immense are the productive forces developed by American capitalism, and so degenerate is world capitalism, that American prosperity can be maintained only by enormously large military expenses, and even the present huge war budget is accompanied by a prospect of economic stagnation and the growth of unemployment.

5. In order even to continue to function, U. S. capitalism must expand its war budget and foreign investments. But, since the end of World War II, large areas of the world have been closed to American investments by Russian imperialist conquest, by the colonial revolution, and by the threat of revolution. American imperialism therefore seeks to dominate the world, both because the struggle against the Russian menace provides a justification for war economy and because only in an American ruled world, governed by safe police regimes, can there be a secure climate for American investment abroad. This explains the preference of Washington for reactionary policemen of the Franco-Chiang type, as against more democratic bourgeois politicians of the Nehru type.

6. But for all its vaunted might, U.S. imperialism cannot undo the decomposition of world capitalism, which is despised and hated by the masses everywhere, welcomed nowhere. Capitalism can gain support only by disguising itself as its opposite, socialism, and that support disappears once the disguise is pierced. Imperialism has already lost most of its Asian colonies; Africa and Latin America are beginning to escape its grasp. In capitalism's birthplace and heartland, western Europe, its days are plainly numbered. European prosperity today is

but a weak shadow of the American boom, nurtured and sustained by American aid, and doomed to disappear with the first onset of crisis in the U.S.

7. The imperialism of Stalinist Russia, while the only serious rival of U.S. imperialism, is by no means able to contend with the U.S. for world domination. It lacks the economic base to do so---especially since its gains in heavy industry have been made only at the expense of a crippling disproportion in the economy as a whole.

8. Stalinist imperialism has followed the policy of the Czar of seeking to conquer only areas geographically contiguous to its existing empire. Unlike the U.S., it has been economically isolationist---it has made no attempt to establish a far-flung net of investments, nor even to carry on large scale trade with the west. Russian policy has been to exploit its colonial areas intensively, to integrate them into the Russian economy.

9. In the key area of conflict with the U.S.---Central and Eastern Europe---Russia is today on the defensive. It therefore appears much more peaceful, willing to negotiate, willing to make concessions. This attitude is due strictly to an unfavorable balance of forces; at a favorable time, at the end of World War II, Russia was eager to seize all it could in Central Europe---even then it wanted the Ruhr. If similarly favorable circumstances should occur in the future it would take advantage of them---but short of complete collapse of the U.S. economy, combined with the passivity of the working class, this is impossible as long as Russia remains relatively backward; which means the better part of a generation, at least.

10. (Section on War)

a. The attitude of the YSL toward wars fought by Russia, the U.S. or other imperialist powers is one of unconditional, uncompromising opposition. This is, in the highest degree, true of the threatened Third World War.

b. A Third World War would involve, on both sides, the mass murder of civilian populations, the destruction of incalculable quantities of wealth, the regimentation of all phases of social life; and these crimes would take place for the sole purpose of preserving or extending the conquests of imperialist exploiting classes.

c. A Third World War would imperil the very existence of human life on this earth. The YSL attempts with all its strength to prevent such a war, and fights against all steps taken by the imperialist powers to prepare for war.

d. In preparation for atomic war there is no distinction between defense and offense. "Civil Defense" is but the converse of, and necessary accompaniment to the construction of intercontinental atomic bombers.

e. If war should come, the YSL will not retreat one inch in opposition to it. It is the first duty of socialists everywhere to oppose their own imperialist rulers. This is particularly true for American Socialists, faced with the world's most powerful ruling class, the mainstay of world reaction. We therefore reject the notion that the victory of America over Russia constitutes a "lesser evil" or that the victory of Russia constitutes the "greatest disaster" possible.

f. Similarly, we call on Russian socialists to oppose their rulers most strongly, to insist that Russian victory is no "lesser evil" as against American victory.

g. During a war, we would express our political opposition to it at every opportunity. We would urge the working class to prosecute the class struggle with ever-increasing sharpness, irrespective of military consequences.

h. The imperialist reactionary war can be transformed into a democratic, progressive war, only if the present capitalist state is destroyed through democratic means, and replaced by a worker's state. The victory of socialism in any one of the contending powers, would unleash such gigantic revolutionary forces as to bring the war to a speedy conclusion. Our program in war, as in peace, is for the establishment of workers power: except that during a Third World War this ultimate task becomes an immediate necessity---it is the sole hope for the survival of civilization, perhaps of mankind itself.

11. The political appeal of Russia to the European masses is based on their anti-capitalism, on their belief that Russian Stalinism represents a form of socialism. This view is based on the completely fallacious idea that nationalized property is, in itself, a socialist institution.

12. The YSL maintains that socialism can be achieved only through the conscious activity of the working class, only through the widest extension of democracy. A nationalization of industry which is accompanied by the crushing of the working class and the elimination of all elements of democracy from society is an anti-socialist measure. Such nationalization merely carries to its logical conclusion the tendency, under private capitalism, toward increasing cartelization and even monopolization of the economy in the hands of a few large trusts, by concentrating all capital in the hands of the state, and thereby in the hands of a totalitarian bureaucracy.

13. Stalinism does not represent a new stage in the development of society, intermediary between capitalism and socialism, nor does it represent a reactionary historical alternative to socialism. To be either, it would have to solve those contradictions of capitalism which place socialism inescapably on the agenda of contemporary history.

14. Stalinism in fact solves none of the basic contradictions of capitalism. Capitalism is marked by the antagonism between production and consumption; it must accumulate capital at the expense of the consumption of the workers. Stalinism is ruthlessly governed by this law. This is proven by the fall of Malenkov, who sought to carry out a policy of developing light industry on an equal basis with heavy industry, a policy which ran counter to the entire historical tendency of Stalinist accumulation. Capitalism, though nationally organized, must compete on a world market and is governed by the laws of that market. Stalinism, for all its proclaimed autarchy, cannot escape from that competition. If it does not keep pace with the western powers it will lose out in that cruelest form of capitalist competition, imperialist war. Capitalism tends to create a reserve army of unemployed as a consequence of development of productive forces. In Stalinist Russia unemployment, nominally nonexistent, is covered up by the agrarian overpopulation, by the colossal inefficiency of industrial labor, by the millions of slave laborers engaged in senseless tasks or tasks that could be better accomplished by far fewer free laborers. Capitalism, whatever repressive measures it may take against it, can never escape the presence of the working class, its historically appointed gravedigger. Stalinism, although its repressive laws are the equal of the Nazi labor codes, is always faced

with the menace of a potentially revolutionary working class.

15. The basic contradiction common to both private capitalism and Stalinism is this: modern productive forces have outgrown exploitative society; their growth long ago made exploitation of man by man unjustifiable---today they are breaking apart every form of class society. Society must either be reorganized to conform with modern technology, or the means of production must themselves be destroyed. Stalinism, a product of degenerate capitalism, does nothing to resolve this contradiction. It merely tries, unsuccessfully, to suppress it. There are still only two choices---Socialism or Barbarism!

16. While statification of the economies of the existing private capitalist states in Europe (and ultimately the U.S.) is a real perspective, the Stalinist parties of these countries will not be its bearers. No Stalinist party has ever taken power in an advanced country by its own efforts. The Stalinist states in Central and Eastern Europe could not have been established without the presence of the Russian Army. (The regimes in Yugoslavia, China, and Viet-Nam represent a special case, to be dealt with further on). The unfavorable economic and military situation of Russia vis a vis the U.S. makes the intervention of the Russian army in Western Europe unthinkable in the foreseeable future.

17. For the Stalinist parties of Western Europe to take power they would have to mobilize the entire working class, to lead it into revolutionary struggle. Such a revolution would then be a proletarian revolution, since it would transfer power into the hands of working class committees, unions, etc. No Stalinist party can possibly lead such a revolution: if it could do so, it would no longer be a Stalinist party.

18. Even if we were to accept the fantastic assumption that the European working class would let itself be immediately swindled out of the power it had fought to establish, Stalinist seizure of power is still inconceivable. Stalinist states in the technologically advanced countries of Western Europe would immediately be uncontrollable by the Kremlin; would constitute for it a menace of staggering proportion. Russia could not permit such seizure of power; therefore, in order to act, the Stalinist parties would have to break with the Kremlin---and if they did this they would also have to break with Stalinism, since they have no independent class base in their own countries.

The Third Camp

19. Those who hold power in the world today, the imperialist ruling classes of the U.S. and Russia, comprise an infinitesimal percentage of the human race. Their satellites and those who benefit from their rule are not much larger in number. The immense majority of the world's people continually find their desire for a decent life frustrated by a handful of exploiters. ~~xxxxxxx~~ The very fabric of their existence forces them to struggle against exploitation and war, and struggle they do. The two major elements of that struggle are the colonial revolution and the working class fight for socialism and democracy.

(cont.)

A. The Colonial Revolution

20. Since the end of the Second World War, over a billion people in Asia have liberated themselves from imperialist and colonial rule. This is the central political fact of our time. It has unleashed a new dynamic force: the revolt of peoples enslaved for centuries, not only in Asia but throughout the colonial world. It has transformed the power structure of the world in unprecedented fashion: at Dien-bienphu the Vietnamese revolution administered a decisive defeat to the army of a mighty imperialist power. It has struck a mortal blow against world imperialism to which the "west" has reacted with the ferocity of a wounded beast: the Americans in Korea, the French in North Africa and Indo-China, the British in Kenya, have resorted to the most atrocious and barbaric tactics against the colonial peoples.

21. In respect to the colonial economies, revolutionary changes have also taken place. Imperialist economic domination has either been entirely ended or seriously weakened. Agrarian revolution has, at worst, made substantial gains, and, where carried through by a peasant war, has ~~taken effect~~ with great thoroughness.

22. These factors: emancipation from foreign rule and the creation of national states; mobilization of the Asian masses in struggle for their own interests; seizure of the land by the peasantry, resulting in the destruction of feudal social relations; and the crippling blow struck against the major obstacle to socialism, western imperialism, determine the immensely progressive role of the colonial revolution, whatever its leadership. The YSL therefore defends it against every attempt at imperialist reconquest.

23. At the same time, we recognize that the colonial revolution, at its present stage of development, offers no answer to the decisive problem of our time: the establishment of worldwide socialism. Socialist transformation is possible only under working class leadership. No colonial labor movement has yet played a leading role in its national revolutionary struggle. The peasantry has often had the decisive part in the independence movements---labor has been predominantly passive.

24. A successful national revolution, if led by any class other than the working class, can result in only one thing: an independent capitalist state. This is a reflection of the entirely bourgeois character of the aims of the colonial revolution: national independence (predominance of native capital), elimination of feudal remnants, and the creation of a class of independent peasant proprietors.

25. The form of capitalism adopted by these countries is the most "advanced" form known to the West: State Capitalism, often totalitarian State Capitalism. The Chinese revolution, the single most important colonial revolution, has taken this latter path, under Stalinist leadership.

26. The new state-capitalist regimes, coming into being in the epoch of the death agony of world capitalism, are as lacking in a progressive historical perspective as is advanced western capitalism. Their desperate need is to accumulate capital, for only by rapid capital accumulation can their quickly increasing populations be absorbed only through speedy industrial development can they maintain an in-

dependent existence in the world market.

27. The immense scope of the problem that faces them can be grasped only if we realize the stark backwardness that governs the Asian countries today. Backward Czarist Russia, in 1915 possessed a per capita steel capacity ten times that possessed in 1950 by India or China. This desperate backwardness can be overcome in two ways only: massive aid from the West or intensive exploitation of the native workers and peasants.

28. Large scale aid from the West is inconceivable on any but an imperialist basis: i.e., a substantial guaranteed profit plus sufficient political control to assure the safety of invested capital. Such aid would negate every gain of the national revolution. Burma felt compelled to reject even the miniscule Point 4 aid offered by the U.S. because of unacceptable political conditions attached to that aid.

29. The only course open to these countries is to accumulate capital at the expense of the workers and peasants. This course reinforces the state-capitalist character of the new Asian nations. Not only is the state the only agency capable of gathering and controlling the amounts of capital needed for industrialization, it is also the only agency capable of forcing the people to accept a low standard of living as the price of industrialization, the only agency capable of suppressing the working class struggle against intolerable conditions of exploitation.

30. The reactionary (because it is anti-working class) program of industrialization at the people's expense comes into conflict with the colonial revolution. The peasants have not thrown off feudal-imperialist exploitation in order to submit to equally intense exploitation by the state. The workers, who have experienced a substantial betterment of their class position relative to what it was under imperialist rule, are unwilling to give up their gains.

31. Thus the problems of socialism are inescapably posed. A progressive program of industrialization, one which would maintain a balance between heavy and light industry, which would be controlled by the workers; and would not be a means to establish capitalist class rule over them, can only be instituted on the basis of aid from a socialist Europe and America utilized through an Asian federation. Such a program can only be carried through on the basis of socialist cooperation between Western and Asiatic working classes. It requires the overthrow of capitalism in both Asia and the West.

32. The regimes established by the course of the colonial revolution to date have a profoundly contradictory character. Insofar as they represent a movement which expels the imperialists, destroys feudal agrarian relations, emancipates the women, etc, and insofar as they combat imperialism and defend their national independence, they play a progressive role. However, being capitalist regimes, they suppress the working class and fight against socialism. Thus by their very nature they are defined as reactionary. Therefore, while defending them against imperialism, socialists should carry on a constant struggle to replace them with consistently democratic working class regimes.

33. The above considerations apply as well to Stalinist as to non-Stalinist regimes. These regimes (China and Viet Nam) are authentic

representatives of the colonial revolution---they were carried to power solely by the colonial revolution, and possess an enormous and potent base in their own countries. Their relationship to Russia is one of alliance forced by the threat of American imperialism. If their national interests required, they would be as willing to change allies as were the Yugoslav Titoists.

34. Do the revolutions in Asia point the way to the rest of the colonial world, Africa and Latin America? The conditions for the creation of independent state-capitalist regimes as a result of the colonial revolution are threefold: revolutionary feeling of the entire nation against imperialist rule, a weakening of imperialism such that it cannot successfully resist, and the passivity or disorientation of the working class. The government of Nasser in Egypt today is proof that such regimes can be created outside of Asia. Guatemala and Bolivia were prevented from gaining independence in this way only by the fact that U.S. imperialism remains powerful enough to prevent it. However, where powerful and organized labor movements exist (e.g. North Africa), they have a far better opportunity than movements based on the petty-bourgeoisie and intelligentsia to take leadership of the colonial revolution---and carry it in a socialist direction.

35. The colonial revolution has become irrepressible---dying imperialism cannot halt it. It is a powerful and decisive element of the Third Camp, for it comes into being against the imperialism of the American bloc and independent of the Kremlin, and its triumphs, by depriving imperialism of its colonies, make easier the triumph of the working-class socialist movements in the metropolitan countries.

36. Even when the colonial revolution is led by state-capitalist forces, even when these are totalitarian Stalinists, its potential for development toward socialist revolution is immense; the victory of the colonial revolution necessarily raises problems which the working class is forced, by its struggle for ~~survival~~ survival, to answer in a socialist fashion.

B. The Situation of Europe

37. West European capitalism has at last recovered from its most recent world war. Indices of production in all countries are at all-time highs, unemployment has reached post-war lows.

38. This prosperity has been dependent upon three factors: large scale American aid, acceptance by the working class of low living standards, and the continued postponement of the onset of crisis in the U.S. Prosperity dependent on such factors cannot but be superficial and tenuous in the extreme. Exactly how tenuous was shown by the reaction of the British government to the partial railroad and dock strikes this spring: it claimed that the strikes threatened to destroy the recovery that Britain had made.

39. The true picture of the crisis of European capitalism is most evident in the political field. Not only have the European bourgeoisies failed to achieve European federation, to play a really independent role in world affairs, to get foreign armies withdrawn from Europe, they have been unable to establish political stability in their own countries, notably France and Italy.

40. The basic political problem of Europe is the continued exist-

ence of the nation-state system, obsolete since 1914. This system has placed crippling fetters on the economic development of every nation. Both World Wars represented blind, reactionary efforts to destroy these fetters, to solve the problem of European unity on a capitalist basis. They not only failed to solve it: their failure intensified the problem by dividing the already divided Europe into spheres of influence dominated by the imperialist super-powers, the U.S. and Russia.

41. Since the war, the rulers of Europe have produced much talk about federation, but the only concrete steps they have taken toward unity have been reactionary in nature: the "Schuman plan", a "new look" version of the cartels of the inter-war period; and the "European Army" plan, an effort to ~~xxxx~~ mobilize European military strength as an instrument of U.S. imperialism in the Cold War.

42. The capitalist classes of Europe have been and will continue to be impotent before the problem of European unity. The economy of every country has grown up on a national basis: such measures of statification as have been taken greatly intensify this nationalistic character of the European economies.

43. To attempt to integrate these competing, self-contained economies on a capitalist basis would result in catastrophic economic dislocations in all countries. It would be a disaster for every capitalist class.

44. European unity therefore requires a planned economy governed by a centralized political authority. This can be achieved in either of two ways: by one capitalist class seeking through military predominance to organize and dominate the continent (as was attempted with such disastrous results, in the two World Wars), or through establishment of working class rule throughout Europe. Europe can be unified on a progressive basis only through a Socialist United States of Europe.

45. If the establishment of federal government is the central historical task facing European politics, the most pressing immediate problem is that of German unity.

The German Question

46. The partition of Germany between the Western powers and the Russians was one of the most reactionary consequences of the second imperialist world war. Germany is the natural organizer of Europe--- because of its technological skills, its industrial plant, its central geographical position, the size and industriousness of its people. German unity is the first step toward European unity, an indispensable first step since the German people cannot seriously attempt to achieve European unity until they have solved their own overbearing national problem.

47. The above considerations only represent a part of the enormous progressive potentialities inherent in German unity on any democratic basis. In a united Germany the dominant political force would be the working-class parties, since the Eastern section of Germany has always been the stronghold of the extreme left. That Stalinist rule has ~~not~~ diminished this was shown by the June 1953 uprising---in fact, through the proletarianization of the other classes, the power of the

East German working class has relatively increased under Stalinism.

48. If there is one political issue on which the Russian and American imperialists and the reactionary West-German government of Adenauer are in agreement, it is in opposition to German unity, despite the verbal declarations of all three in favor of a united Germany.

49. The reasons for their opposition are evident. Adenauer's dream of a Catholic, capitalist "little Germany" in a Catholic, capitalist "little Europe" would be wrecked by unity with socialist, Protestant East Germany. Russia's East European empire would be menaced in the most serious fashion by the political and economic gravitation exerted by a united Germany, especially a socialist-run Germany. The American camp would find its military plans destroyed by a neutralized Germany which would be merely the core of a neutralized Europe. From the U.S. standpoint, such a Germany would be, at best (under capitalist rule) a dangerous imperialist rival, and in the event of working class victory in the elections, socialist Germany would be the liquidator of European capitalism.

50. Russian propaganda has advocated a reunified, neutralized Germany on the basis of free elections, at the same time that Russia is making serious political retreats and concessions elsewhere. These retreats are the consequences of the change in the balance of power in Europe, marked on the one hand by the recovery of West European capitalism (particularly the spectacular resurgence of West Germany) and on the other, by a severe economic crisis in the Stalinist countries (a crisis whose precise depth and extent cannot be known to foreign observers, but whose existence, at least in agriculture, is manifest).

51. While, for the reasons cited above, we do not believe that the Russian proposals on Germany are sincere, we nevertheless recognize that their demagogic slogan of "neutrality" embodies the basic principle of a democratic solution to the German problem: non-alignment with either war camp. It is a principle that the Russian and American imperialists can take seriously only if compelled to do so by mass pressure from the international labor movement as well as the German people: pressure brought to bear by all possible means, in favor of German unity and the immediate and unconditional withdrawal of all occupation troops. The Russians should be challenged to press their proposals on the Americans, who should be challenged to accept them.

The European Working-Class Movements

52. The political life of the European working class is today, as it has been for the past generation, dominated by two political tendencies, Stalinism and Social-Democracy. These forces have been antagonistic to each other in most European countries throughout most of the post-war period; nevertheless they both bear responsibility for the fact that European capitalism has been able to stabilize its rule: they are responsible for the fact that the working class has wasted every one of the numerous opportunities to make substantial progress in a socialist direction that it has had since the end of the war.

53. The Stalinist parties' political course has been determined by one consideration alone: the desires of the Russian ruling class. Consequently their policies have swung between opportunism and adventurism with consistently disastrous results.

54. Immediately after the war the "communist" parties throughout Europe entered capitalist coalition governments, disarmed the pre-revolutionary resistance movements, and opposed class struggle under the pretext of "restoring production". After the initiation of the Marshall plan they switched to a policy marked by political strikes, riots, and sabotage. Today the C.P.s once more are pushing a "popular front" line, offering to support neutralist bourgeois governments.

55. Their record of constant defeat and the growing realization by the European masses of the anti-working-class character of Stalinist rule in East Europe have resulted in a ~~xxx~~ sweeping decline of Stalinist influence in every European country. Today the CPs can boast of important influence within the working class only in France and Italy. In every other West European country Stalinism is an insignificant force, both within the working class and in the political life of the nation. Even in France and Italy the CPs have held their own only in regard to parliamentary elections. Their membership, the circulation of their press, and their strength in the trade-union movement have all declined sharply, and are continuing to decline.

56. In terms of their internal structure the CPs are totalitarian, rigidly controlled by an all-powerful leadership. This situation reflects the total dependence of the leadership on the totalitarian ruling class of Russia. In class terms, this leadership, entirely dependent on an anti-working-class force, must be itself defined as anti-working class.

57. At the same time, the preponderance of the membership and militants in most West European CPs and especially in France and Italy, are workers. This fact defines the dual nature of West European Stalinism. The worker-Communist, despite his illusions in regard to Russia looks at the CP not as an instrument of the Kremlin, but as his own class party. He expects it to carry out its program of struggle for his interests: which no CP can effectively do, because of its ties to Russia.

58. The disillusionment of these advanced proletarian elements, ~~xxx~~ stemming from the failure of the CP to act as a real working class party, reacts upon those segments of the leadership who are closest to the working class. The result is splits from the CP, nominally on a "left-Stalinist" or "Titoist" program; actually they are searching for a revolutionary socialist program. Such groups have played, and will play, an important and valuable role in the developing European left wing.

59. The relative stability of the Social-Democratic parties stands in marked contrast to the decline of European Stalinism. Social-Democracy is an important influence in the working-class of every European country: in fact, in all European countries except France, Italy and Spain, the vast preponderance of the working class are members or supporters of the Social Democracy.

60. The basic difference between Social-Democracy and Stalinist parties lies in the fact that the Stalinist parties are essentially dependent not on their working class members but on the Russian Stalinist state. The Social Democracy on the other hand, bases itself upon the trade-union bureaucracy and upper sections of the proletariat ("labor aristocracy"). Since these elements are part of the working class as a whole, Social Democracy can therefore be defined

as a working class movement, and Social-Democratic parties have in general been better defenders of working-class interests than have Stalinists.

61. The political position of Social-Democracy however, is, as it has been since World War I, reformist and pro-capitalist. The Social Democratic parties have been mainly concerned with propping up the decaying capitalist social order by means of reforms and partial rationalization of industry. They have constantly participated in coalition governments with capitalist parties.

62. On no major issue of foreign policy have the Social-Democratic Parties opposed their own capitalist class. (There are two major exceptions to this: the opposition of the German Socialist Party to German rearmament, and the position of the Italian Socialist Party (Menni) which has adopted toward Russia and Stalinism an attitude similar in most respects to that of orthodox Social Democracy toward its own ruling class). Similarly, European Social-Democracy has placed itself unequivocally in the "American Camp", and has followed the main lines of U.S. Cold War policy.

63. On colonial questions the position of the Social Democracy has been particularly shameful. Not only have the Social Democratic parties not supported ~~supported~~ the struggles of the colonial peoples for national independence; they have at every turn endorsed and participated in the savage repressions (Indonesia, Kenya, Viet-Nam etc.) attempted by the imperialist governments in which they are or were cabinet ministers.

64. On internal political and economic questions the reformist approach of Social-Democracy is premised on the continued existence and functioning of nationally-organized capitalist states. Such measures of statification as the nationalizations initiated by the British Labor Party have been conceived entirely bureaucratically, without any provision for participation by the workers in the management and control of the newly statified industries. These nationalizations therefore have served a pro-capitalist function: strengthening the bureaucratic capitalist national state.

65. The attitude of every Social-Democratic leadership to the working class, both outside and inside its party, is itself profoundly bureaucratic.. This leadership seeks to restrain every independent mass movement of the workers, to reduce it to a mere instrument of parliamentary maneuvers. The internal regime in every Social-Democratic party is also bureaucratized, although not totalitarian like the Stalinist parties.

66. European Social-Democracy is therefore impotent. Because it is committed to the foreign policy of U.S. imperialism, it can play no independent role in the struggle for peace. Because its entire theoretical approach is that of a reformed statified national capitalism it cannot bring about the integration of Europe: it can neither propose nor achieve the "United States of Europe." Because it is unwilling to mobilize the working class for independent class struggle, even its attempt to defend the day to day interests of the labor movement is severely hampered.

67. In reaction to this impotence of the Social-Democratic leadership, left-wings arise in the European Socialist movement; notably

the Devanites in England. (The opposition of the German Socialist Party to rearmament is also largely shaped by left-wing ~~xxxx~~ pressure from below.)

68. These left groups are more or less unclear on most political issues, especially the need for thorough-going factional organization within the existing Social-Democratic parties. But they do seek to base themselves on general Third Camp principles: independence from the U.S., anti-capitalist offensive, workers' democracy, opposition to Stalinism. Thus they have a great potential for growth among the Socialist workers of Europe who become disillusioned by the defeats and rotten compromises that are all their leadership can achieve.

69. The basic need of European working-class politics is for a revolutionary socialist party, capable of leading mass struggles for peace and for the establishment of socialism. Such a party is today in the first stages of birth: out of the oppositional movements within both Stalinism and Social Democracy and the growing left groups independent of both.

69. The YSL does not propose a detailed program to this growing left wing in Europe: all specific problems must be solved, on the basis of practical experience, by the national working class movement, in the absence of a revolutionary International.

But we can and do enumerate the basic points which should be the foundation for every internationalist socialist program.

- Against Both War Camps! No support to the political maneuvers of either Russia or the U.S. Opposition to the wars and war preparations of both, and to the wars and war preparations of the imperialist allies and satellites of both.
- Unconditional and unqualified support for the self-determination of all colonial peoples. Unconditional and unqualified opposition to colonial and imperialist wars.
- For Unity of the European working class. A single union movement, based on principles of workers' democracy. Counterpose the united front of the workers to a "popular front" with the capitalists.
- For European Unity -- withdrawal of all U.S. and Russian forces from Europe--for a Socialist United States of Europe.

The End

(The above is offered as a draft resolution. It is by no means in "finished" or "polished" form, and unquestionably contains some defects of style and structure; defects which I hope will be exposed and remedied in the course of discussion.

I offer this resolution as a sufficiently clear exposition of my political position to serve as a focus of pre-convention discussion; and as a basis for the election of delegates to the YSL convention, as well as in the hope that it will be adopted by the convention.)

The Tragedy of the Chinese Revolution
by Harold Issacs
Stanford University Press, (Stanford, California) 1951
382 Pages, \$5.00
By John Movak

Harold Issacs classic work, "The Tragedy of the Chinese Revolution", has finally been reprinted by Stanford University Press. This excellent study of the Stalinist betrayal in the 1925-27 revolution was first printed in England in 1938. It is now presented in a new edition. Issacs has replaced the three chapters in the original edition, which described the principal developments of the decade 1927-37, by two new concluding chapters. In these he attempts to present a clearer understanding of the present Chinese state, both through the historical perspective given, by a knowledge of the 1927 events, and by an analysis of the twenty years preceding the victory of the Chinese Communist Party. To Issacs the new Mao-Tse-Tung government represents only a new aspect of the old tragedy, which has befallen the Chinese people in their attempts to solve their social problems, the tragedy of the Russian impact on China. Many persons today, while admitting the totalitarian nature of Stalinism, still see it as a progressive force in the colonial revolutions. Issacs helps to clear up the illusions, and lay bare the actual reactionary role of Stalinists both in the past and today.

Issacs characterizes his political beliefs in the following manner: "the basic approach in this work is one that seeks to contribute to a radical transformation of all social relations and political institutions to bring about the fuller popular acquisition of greater material welfare and political and cultural freedom." As far as one can gather from his writing, he appears to be a third camp socialist.

Issacs spent four years of intensive research while working on this book, during which time he met and talked to many of the leading figures connected with the events in China. Among these were Trotsky, H. Sneevliet (Marling), and Albert Treint. Although "The Tragedy of the Chinese Revolution" is a fully documented and scholarly work, Issacs powerful literary style provides one with an intense emotional experience as he unfolds the aspirations and struggles of the Chinese people for a better and more just social order.

The book begins with an analysis of Chinese society before the advent of foreign capitalism. Only a few features need be presented here. First, China was based mostly on a feudal economy. There had never been a capitalist development. Production and commerce did arise in the cities, but these were mostly restricted to luxury products. The ruling class was composed of the state bureaucracy, landlords, merchants and usurers. They all cooperated in exploiting the peasantry, on whose shoulders the entire society rested. He provided rent for the landlord, interest for the merchants and usurers, and taxes for the state. The peasantry was organized in small agricultural units, thus allowing for more intensive exploitation by the landlords. Each year all the surplus product and part of the means of subsistence were taken from him. Such a situation maintained a permanent agrarian crisis. It was from this crisis that the peasantry was forced to rise up in periodic peasant wars. But the peasantry always proved itself incapable of independent political activity. Ambitious political cliques, headed by landholding nobility, would seize control of sections of the peasantry, and attempt to utilize them in overthrowing the existing dynasty and setting themselves up in power. It was through this manner that the Manchu dynasty came to power in the 17th century. But by the 19th century, it had already started on its decline. The growth of population and the renewed pressure on the land brought with it a new series of peasant revolts. It was at this point, with China on the brink of another great peasant war, that foreign capital arrived, bringing with it even more poverty and misery. "this new pressure on the old Chinese society, generated conflicts which soon accumulated, gathered momentum,

and drove the country and its people convulsively forward in search of new solutions."

The trade set up by the foreign capitalists soon led to an unfavorable balance for them. Silver, the main metal of exchange for Chinese commodities, began to drain from India. In order to check this tendency, the British undertook the importation of opium into China. The effects of the opium, and later the importation of cheap commodities, ruined Chinese economy. The peasantry found itself undergoing mass pauperization, and handicrafts were being driven out of existence. At the same time, China was undergoing political annexation. All of these factors were hastening the downfall of the Manchu dynasty, and stimulating more extensive agrarian revolts.

This economic and political impact of foreign imperialism on China, had a still further effect, the creation of the Compradore class, "the brokers for foreign capital on the Chinese market." This class which stemmed mainly from the landed gentry derived a tremendous wealth from the trade with the foreigners, for little of the profit ever went back to the original producers. Blocked from indigenous capitalist development by the economic and political superiority of the imperialists, most of their money went back into the land, either into the formation of large estates, or lent out at tremendous interest rates to the peasants. Part of the wealth was used to obtain posts in the government bureaucracy, thus enhancing the political strength of this class.

The chaos of the Chinese economy soon led to a new peasant war, the Taiping rebellion. Interestingly enough, this movement, although primarily a peasant rebellion, showed certain tendencies toward a "normal" bourgeois development. In the regions that it gained power it suppressed opium, checked the silver drain, stimulated the internal market and through the expropriation of landlords and the division of the land, increased agricultural activity. THE Taiping rebellion thus came into direct conflict with the compradores and landed nobility, whose interest lay in maintaining the semi-feudal relationships. The imperialists first saw in it an ally, for it stimulated trade and restored tranquility, both of which the compradores were unable to do. But foreign capital still derived a tremendous profit from the opium trade. This trade provided for primitive accumulation of capital which at a later date would make the marketing of legitimate commodities profitable. Thus imperialism found itself forced to oppose the Taiping rebellion. The British and the French therefore used the ensuing period of civil war as a means of consolidating their power. Through the opium wars they first reduced the Manchu dynasty to an impotent tool, and extracted formidable economic and political privileges; opium was legalized, and the entire country opened to foreign penetration. Having established such a commanding control over the Manchu, they now had every interest in the dynasty's existence. They therefore embarked on a successful but bloody destruction of the Taiping rebellion. Thus we see that imperialism made impossible the peasants' traditional answer to economic impoverishment, the overthrow of the old dynasty and establishment of a new one through great peasant wars. At the same time the impact of imperialism made some sort of a social change necessary. But while it forced the Chinese people toward social change, both through the intensification of old contradictions in the society and the introduction of new ones, imperialism allied itself with everything reactionary, everything which had an interest in preventing such solutions. In this paradoxical nature of imperialism, we find a clue to the entire future history of China.

Four basic problems faced the Chinese people. First, the redistribution of the land. An old problem to the peasants, but now with the impact of capitalism and the intensification of the struggle between town and country an absolute necessity. Secondly the introduction of China into the world market posed the urgent problem of industrialization. Third, the unification of the country and, of course, the very existence of imperialism constituted the fourth problem. In western Europe the bourgeoisie had been able to play a progressive role in solving

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these problems. But the Chinese bourgeoisie, the compradore class, when it arose, found itself confronted by a capitalism immensely more of a political and economic superiority, a capitalism which had had two centuries head start. With such a power it could not effectively compete. To add to the hopelessness of the situation it depended for its wealth and income on the imperialists. Thus unable to compete successfully with imperialism the compradores were forced as has been indicated to invest their money in the land. But by this act they were no longer able to play a revolutionary role, as the western bourgeois had, in the division of the land.

Their interests were now tied in to maintaining the present exploitive land relationships, and of course they were incapable of really industrializing the country, ousting the imperialists, or unification. All these acts meant a break with the imperialism on whom so much of their profits were dependent and to whom they were connected by very strong political and psychological ties. The Imperialist, interested only in gaining a new world market and cheap labor, would hardly set up China to become their competitor. The peasantry, as we have seen was a revolutionary force but needed allies. It had proven itself throughout the history of China and the western world incapable of independent political activity. Little need be said of the progressive potential of the Manchu dynasty. So, for the present, the situation seemed hopeless. China seemed incapable of producing forces which could crive forward to progressive change.

Despite their situation the compradores with their vast wealth, could not help but be fascinated by the profits in Capitalism, and toward the end of the 19th century began feeble attempts at the industrialization of China. From the beginning they were doomed to failure. The economic and political dominance of the imperialists was simply too great. Thus hesitatingly and unwillingly they found themselves beginning to think of political revolt. At first, through reform and when reform fell - through - to revolution. But due to their very physiognomy, such attempts were shaky and apologetic in theory and meaningless in action. Unable to combat the imperialists their only hope was to overthrow the dynasty. Unable to lead the peasantry, since they were opposed to land division, they turned to military insurrection. Sun-Yat-Sen was the principal figure in this movement, and the revolution of 1911 a product of this movement, showed the impotence of such action. Its only results was to overthrow the Manchu dynasty, already on its way out. No new class came to power, and control merely passed to regional war lords, who came to represent the various imperialist powers in China.

But the First World War was to have revolutionary effects on China. The years following the downfall of the Manchu dynasty had brought even more hardships on the people. The civil wars between the war lords, further aggravated the agrarian problem. Ever increasing taxation and military requisition led to mass pauperization. Agricultural production declined to the point where China was forced to import food. Huge numbers of starving peasants driven off the land were swarming into the cities. It seemed as though industry would never be able to absorb them. But the war called for the entire output of the Western nations, and so Chinese industry found itself

temporarily freed from the continual pressure of foreign competition. Chinese production increased tremendously, with the consequent modernization of the economic life. Corporate forms were more widely adopted, banks multiplied, and as machines replaced handicraft, production in ever increasing measure, the old master-journeyman - apprentice relationships changed to the stockholder-manager-worker relationship. This rise in productive forces brought with it a new struggle between the Chinese capitalists and the entrenched foreign interests with their economic and political privileges. But more important it brought a new class into existence in Chinese society, the industrial workers, who increasingly found themselves coming into conflict with both the Chinese and foreign capitalists. This class arising from the peasantry, and thus hating the landlords, exploited by both native and foreign imperialism, found itself in direct opposition to everything reactionary in Chinese society. It was by its situation able to solve all the four problems of Chinese society.

Fresh political currents arose in China at the end of the war. The Koumintang, the party of Sun-Yat-Sen, heir to the revolution of 1911 was impotent. Pledged as it was to Military conspiracy as a means of achieving power, it had from 1911, attempted to use the lesser against the greater war lords. The only result was to leave them helplessly tied to first this and then that war lord. Its theoretical program, the "Three Peoples Principles" of Sun, was equally impotent. These principles consisted in: (1) Nationalism, under which it was understood that the privileges of the imperialists were to remain intact, and payments on their loans guaranteed. Sun envisaged the foreign powers helping him in building what he called a "socialist" society, and from which both China and the West would profit. (2) Democracy, which meant simply benevolent dictatorship, under the guidance of Sun and the Kuomintang. (3) Peoples livelihood which spoke of "restriction of capital" in vague language. Also under this heading comes the so-called program of equalization of rights. This meant that "Those who have had property in the past would not suffer from it". Sun's favorite saying appropriately enough was that "in China there are only the poor and less poor." Needless to say, he rejected the class struggle. But this party was revitalized by the general political awakening that swept the country in 1919. In 1920 the CCP (Chinese Communist Party) was formed under the leadership of Chun-Tu-Hsui.

The workers themselves had already begun to embark on the revolutionary path. Their activity had awakened the peasantry to more political conscience and set them into motion. In a short number of years this development led to a tremendous movement which threatened to destroy everything reactionary in Chinese society and pose a solution to its deep problems. But it was also at this point that Stalinism appeared on the scene and in the name of serving the Chinese revolution helped to dig its grave. The decisive influence of Russia at this stage on the history of China necessitates a survey of the Bolshevik theory of colonial revolution, developed through the experiences in Russia in 1905 and 1917, and an analysis of why they were never carried out by the Stalinists. The theory and its implications on China are clearly and concisely set forth by Isaacs. "With the world as a whole maturing for socialism, an entirely new political perspective opens up for those backward countries which have not yet fulfilled the tasks of the bourgeois revolution, i.e. achievement of national independence and unification and breakup of pre-capitalist forms of rural economy. These tasks can now be carried through to completion only by a proletarian revolution, taking place

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in a context in which more advanced countries of the world are converting themselves from capitalist into socialist states.....For China these ideas had unique and overwhelming significance. They opened a way through what was otherwise a blank wall. The world had no place to offer it as a new and free national state based upon a freely functioning capitalist economy. The hope of budding Chinese capitalists for national sovereignty collided with the political and economic and territorial positions of the foreign Powers. China's hope for expansion on a capitalist bases collided with the superior competitive position of foreign capital, which was far more interested in extracting immediate profit from Chinese raw materials and cheap labor in the classic manner of colonial exploitation than it was in the systematic development of a new productive economy for the Chinese people as a whole. Finally, the ruling class in China could not by its own efforts revitalize the internal Chinese market without solving the agrarian problem and it could not solve the agrarian problem as we have seen without destroying itself. With the rise in China of an urban working class of substantial proportions and weight in the society the underlying ideas of the Russian revolution offered a radically new point of departure."

Lenin at the Second World Congress of the Communist International worked out the concrete application of these theories to other colonial countries.

"There are to be found in the dependent countries two distinct movements which every day grow farther apart from each other. One is the bourgeois democratic nationalist movement with a program of political independence under the bourgeois order, and the other is the mass action of the poor and ignorant peasants and workers for their liberation from all sorts of exploitation. The former endeavor to control the latter and often succeed to a certain extent, but the Communist International and the parties affected must struggle against such control and help develop class consciousness in the working masses of the colonies.... the proletarian parties must carry on vigorous and systematic propaganda for the Soviet idea and organize peasants and workers Soviets as soon as possible."

What Lenin is proposing then, is that the Communist parties in the colonial countries concentrate in organizing the workers and peasants and provide them with a consistently radical leadership. To do this they must realize that the Nationalist bourgeois groups, which are incapable of solving the problems of the colonial masses, will attempt to control and dominate them, for their own ends. This was practical and intelligent advice. But it was never applied in China. Although Stalinism came to China with the enormous prestige of the Russian revolution, it did not come with the theories that had made the Revolution a success. By 1924, the Stalinist bureaucracy was fairly well entrenched in Russia. With its theories of Socialism in one country, the abandonment of the international views of the Bolsheviks, it came to China not to aid the Chinese revolution, but its own narrow national interests. It wanted an ally in China to help blunt the pressure of the Western powers, notably England. To this end it was willing to sacrifice everything even the CCP. To them, the daring ideas which had made the Russian revolution, were exactly that--to daring. Stalin viewing an alliance with the workers

and peasants too risqué and unsure, therefore, sought an alliance with the Kuomintang, the Nationalist bourgeois party. This was but the first of Stalin's many tragic betrayals of the Chinese people. The Chinese CP was directed to merge with the Kuomintang and cease its own independent activity. It was to serve primarily in organizing the workers and peasants to support the Kuomintang and to aid its victory. In order to make this feasible, Maring, the Comintern representative in China, met with Sun-Yat-Sen and promised him Russian aid. As a result Sun became more receptive to Maring's arguments on the advisability of utilizing mass movements as a means of gaining power.

The CCP worked night and day propagandizing for the Kuomintang. It taught the workers and peasants not only that the Kuomintang was the only revolutionary party, but that it was a party of Workers and Peasants. In so doing it ensured the victory of the Kuomintang and kept the masses under its political hegemony, i.e. the hegemony of the nationalist bourgeoisie. Thus, the political activity of the people served only the interests of the Kuomintang. It was through this situation that Canton was captured by the Kuomintang on May, 1925.

The workers showed themselves time and again, politically mature for independent action. During the series of strikes that spread from Shanghai on May 30, the workers were superbly organized. They created their own organization, strikingly similar to the Russian Soviets and carried out coordinated raids of opium dens, set up their own police force, courts, etc., but the CCP instead of supplying them with political leadership attempted to coordinate their actions with the Kuomintang. Thus again the Kuomintang was able to consolidate its power, this time over the entire Kwantung province. On June 19, 1925, they proclaimed a new National Government of China. The Kuomintang was satisfied; through the work of the CCP it was able to use the mass movement as a tool to consolidate power and move from one victory to another. But even the Comintern could not prevent the inevitable collision of the workers and peasants with the Kuomintang. Peasants did not discriminate between Chinese nationalist landlords and the anti-Kuomintang landlords, they would seize and redivide the land of both. Neither did the workers care whether the capitalists who exploited them were native or foreign. They fought against both. In this they showed more political wisdom than all the theoreticians of the Comintern. But the Stalinists interested only in preserving the "one revolutionary party in China", were embarrassed by such actions. Thus, when the Kuomintang began complaining about the "excesses" of the masses, Stalin hastened to make sure that the masses would remain willing tools.

Moscow saw the Kuomintang as the prime revolutionary force in Asia. It spoke of it as the party of "workers and peasants, intellectuals and urban democracy (i.e., bourgeoisie) on the basis of a community of class interests of these strata in the struggle against the imperialist and the whole militarist-feudal order." Yet, when the Kuomintang cried of excesses it suddenly lost this character of a "community of class interests" and the CCP was informed that radical reforms, especially agrarian could not be introduced in Canton because the Kuomintang "in view of its mixed class composition" could not "undertake the confiscation of private property". This is the same Canton which was at the time considered as follows: "The Canton

government is the vanguard in the Liberation struggle of the Chinese people and serves as a model for the future revolutionary democratic order of the whole country". What all this meant was simply that all class interests were to be subordinated to the class interests of the bourgeoisie. The leaders of the Kuomintang of course liked this sort of revolutionary talk, and learned to mouth it even better than Stalin and the Comintern. They spoke of World Revolution and Communism at every opportunity.

In the real Canton, there were a thousand political intrigues afoot for dominance and control of the Kuomintang. Through a coup on March 20, 1926, Chiang-Kai-Shek managed to win out and become the virtual dictator of the party. This day marks the beginning of open reaction. Chiang who spoke proletarian revolution for the benefit of Borodin and Stalin, was directly tied in with the most conservative of the bourgeois interests. Chiang did not delay long in consolidating his power. The job was relatively easy. The CCP was frightened. The masses confused and uninformed.

His first act was to straight-jacket the CCP even more into the service of the Kuomintang. "All instructions henceforth issued by the Communist Central Committee to its own members were to be submitted first to a special joint committee of the two parties for approval." In order to maintain the myth of a revolutionary Kuomintang and Canton, the news of the coup was suppressed from all official CP publications. All news of it was denied. Unity with the Nationalist Bourgeoisie was to be maintained. Thus Borodin knowing the full facts of the coup promised to support Chiang in a Northern expedition. But pressure was very strong among the rank and file of the CCP for separation from the Kuomintang. As a result, a letter asking for party independence was sent to the Comintern; this proposal was completely rejected.

When the landlords heard of Chiang's victory, they hastened to consolidate their power in the countryside. They carried this out by a brutal suppression of the peasant movement. The peasants were without any exaggeration, massacred. Shortly after the Northern Expedition on July 29, martial law was proclaimed in Canton "forbidding all labor disturbances for the duration of the Northern Expedition." This was followed by the mobilization of the gangsters of Canton into "central unions" which were turned loose by the Canton government (the model for the future revolutionary democratic order of the whole country) in armed attacks on the workers, who were leaderless and uninformed and thus defeated. Of all this, the CP kept still.

Meanwhile the Kuomintang swept northward on the back of the spontaneous uprisings of the people, who welcomed it as their liberator. The counter revolution in the rear was kept a secret from them. The people did not know that the Kuomintang was merely replacing the power of the old militarists with its own. They were to find this out, as they attempted to seize the land from the landlords. To add to the irony of the situation, the Kuomintang was admitted as a sympathising party into the 3rd International in October, 1926. Only one vote was cast against this action, and that was by Trotsky, who declared, "In preparing himself for the role of an executioner, Chiang Kai-Shek wanted to have the cover of world Communism--and he got it". Trotsky, in fact, was the only one who consistently opposed Stalin's policies.

He wrote, "The policy of a shackled Communist Party serving as a recruiting agent to bring the workers into the Kuomintang is preparation for the successful establishment of a fascist dictatorship in China at that not very distant moment when the proletariat, despite everything, will be compelled to jump back from the Kuomintang...To drive the workers and peasants into the political camp of the bourgeoisie and to keep the Communist Party a hostage within the Kuomintang is to carry on a policy equivalent objectively to betrayal...The Kuomintang in its present form is the embodiment of an 'unequal treaty' between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. If the Chinese Revolution as a whole demands the abolition of the unequal treaties with the imperialist Powers, then the Chinese proletariat must liquidate the unequal treaty with its own bourgeoisie."

As might be expected the article in which the above passage appears, as many of the other criticisms of Stalin and his policies, was not allowed to appear in print. Stalin continued his concessions to the Kuomintang. He wired the CCP to keep the peasant movement in check in order not to drive away the generals who were leading the "victorious march." This meant that the Peasants should only seize the land of the anti-Kuomintang forces. Thus the CCP was faced with an impossible situation. As they helped the Kuomintang to seize more and more territory, fewer and fewer peasants were capable of achieving land division. Indeed in many instances the anti-Kuomintang forces seeing the victory of Chiang's troops came over to his side, and very profitable it was for them, too. Under the banner of the "Revolutionary Kuomintang" they could retain all their old forms of exploitation and prestige.

Chiang's troops marched victoriously to Wuhan and then down the Yangtze to Shanghai. Twenty-five miles from Shanghai with nothing to prevent them from seizing the city, the troops stopped. Chiang had decided that now he no longer needed to put up with the excesses of the masses and so schemed for a means of begetting its destruction. On February 19, the General Labor Union had called a strike, in Shanghai, in anticipation of the arrival of the Nationalist armies. The slogans put forth by the CCP were "support the northern expeditionary army", and "Hail Chiang!". Li-Pao-Chang, garrison commander in Shanghai, began a ruthless counter offensive. Strikers were brutally attacked and shot. At first, bewildered by the failure of the troops to arrive, the workers began to arm themselves and fight back. An uprising was called for the 22 of February. Again everything was organized with the idea in mind that the Nationalist troops would march in and aid them. But their liberators did not stir. As a result, the insurrection was put down with a great deal of slaughter. The answer for the failure of the troops to march lies in a wire sent by Niu-Yung-Chien, to Chiang calling for "cessation of the advance for the time being." Nui was the local chairman of the Kuomintang! The tactics of the Kuomintang were obvious. Let Li, the garrison commander, kill as many workers as possible, they are our only threat, and with them destroyed, consolidation of power will be so much simpler. A few weeks later

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Li was rewarded by Chiang for his excellent work by being made a commander of the 8th National Army.

But the workers still pressed for victory. On March 21, a well planned strike and insurrection was organized. And though delegates of the workers sent to the troops to ask them for aid, were rejected, nevertheless the revolution in Shanghai was successful and the city fell to the workers. But again the CCP failed to play a truly revolutionary role, as the party of the workers. Its only desire was to hand over the power to Kuomintang. When Chiang entered Shanghai, he was hailed by the Communists as the hero and liberator of the working class. Chiang had other plans. He proceeded quite openly to contact all the reactionary powers of the city. The bankers and merchants trusted Chiang completely. They had secretly hailed the strikes of the workers, for they provided a lever against the imperialists, but now someone was needed to put the workers back in their place. They understood quite well that Chiang was the man for the job, and to this end presented him with a fifty-million dollar loan. Chiang did not waste any time in undertaking the job. One of the first persons he met was Huang-Ma-Pi - leader of the underworld. With him, Chiang made plans for the mobilization of the "Green Gang", a group of thugs and gangsters.

The tragedy that was to befall the Shanghai workers was already being rehearsed in other provinces. In Kanchow, Nanchang, Hangchow and other spots, open repression of the workers by organized underworld gangs, usually appearing as they had in Canton under the name of Workers Trade Alliance, Central Labor Unions, etc. was taking place. The news of all this was again and again hidden by the Comintern. The workers of Shanghai were left completely uninformed as to the real nature of their "liberator". That the Comintern knew of all these events, is evidenced by the torrent of facts and denunciations that were to come out immediately after the coup. The CCP tied in completely with the concept of unity with the Kuomintang at all cost, did all it could to propitiate itself to Chiang. On March 29 a plan for a provisional municipal government was inaugurated by the CCP with the majority voluntarily assigned to the bourgeoisie. Chiang, busy setting up the structure for a more "efficient" state, refused to recognize the government. The bourgeoisie took the cue from Chiang and refused to participate, leaving the CCP, which was too short sighted to set up a workers state, wandering about confused and frightened. Having offered Chiang power and been rebuffed, the CCP now proceeded to make sure that Chiang would have no trouble seizing power and carrying out his counter revolution. Under directives from the Comintern, they proceeded to advise the workers to hide their arms. Bucharin tells us "was it not better to hide the arms, not to accept battle and thus not permit oneself to be disarmed?"

But, if the CCP was not accepting battle, Chiang was. On April 12, 1927 at 4 AM, the coup began in Shanghai. The workers, betrayed by the CCP, their arms hidden, were annihilated. Instead of informing the workers of the true nature of Chiang and leading them in armed resistance, the CCP led them to slaughter. It was one of the most brutal tragedies yet to occur. Moscow of course, declared after the coup, that it had foreseen these events. Stalin himself announced that events had "fully and entirely proved the correctness of the Comintern line. But bureaucratic attempts at infallibility could not change the facts. In Shanghai the workers had died on the party line of unity with the Kuomintang at all costs. Now the Militarists and Bankers placed in power by this slogan, gambled and bargained for
the spoils

Attempting to save face the Comintern now proclaimed Wuhan the new revolutionary center. Wuhan was the supposed existence of a left Kuomintang. This group had split with Chiang before the Shanghai coup. But their split did not reflect their more revolutionary spirit. On the contrary, they merely desired to wrest control of the Kuomintang from Chiang for their own personal benefit. The Kuomintang of Wuhan was no more revolutionary than the Kuomintang of Chiang-Kai-Shek. Having learned nothing from the events in Shanghai, the CCP now devoted all its energies to "unity at all cost" with the Wuhan group. This meant, as we have seen, the subordination of the CCP and the needs of the population to the nationalist bourgeoisie. In Wuhan this led to an even more complete capitulation. No protest was made when the soldiers of the "Left Kuomintang" began executing peasants for seizing the land. The sophisticated tactic of hiding arms was carried even further. In Wuhan, the CCP handed over the arms of the workers to the Koumintang. The Nationalists, therefore, obligingly returned this favor by using them---on the workers.

It was at this point that Moscow informed the CCP that a new stage in the Revolution had been reached. Alliance with the Kuomintang was no longer profitable. The correct line now was the leadership of the workers and peasants in independent revolutionary activity. But now, that the Comintern had discovered the correct line, one thing remained missing---a mass movement. In their unity with the Kuomintang the CCP had aided the militarists in crushing this movement completely. All that remained was the militarist, vying among themselves for political control.

Twenty-two years later in mid October, 1949, the CCP entered Canton. The city of their first defeat, now saw them as the victors. But the CCP had not changed. It is still tied to Russian Stalinism and willing to serve its interests in the present world struggle. In China itself, the CCP is replacing the tyranny of Chiang, with that of Stalinism. From the tactics of Mao in Korea, we can see that the Chinese Stalinists are more interested in serving the strategy of the Comintern than the peoples of Korea or even China. Already on February 20, 1951 a purge was started by the New Peoples Democracy. The Chinese people are still faced with the problems imposed on them by Western Imperialism, and the new ones constituted by Stalinist totalitarianism.

by John Novack